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Understanding contrasting municipal standpoints on mining investments in relation to framings of mining and rural development

– A comparative case study of Karlsborg and Jokkmokk municipalities in Sweden

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Abstract

Overs the last couple of years, Sweden has seen an increasing trend in mining investments. New to this trend is that also places in southern Sweden are involved; places that may not historically be familiar with mining. Many of the places that face potential mines are rural places with different challenges and opportunities in relation to their rurality. In Sweden, the municipality is the governmental body closest to the citizens and is responsible for many welfare related services. At the same time, the municipalities are also excluded from certain decision making process that affect them, e.g. due to Swedish mining laws. This thesis explores contrasting standpoints on mining investments by Swedish municipalities in relation to framings of rural development, by probing the two cases of Jokkmokk municipality in northern Sweden and Karlsborg municipality in southern Sweden, who have taken contrasting official municipal standpoints on potential mining investments in their respective municipalities. An analytical framework is formulated which highlights linkages between understandings of mining and rural development and the standpoints that are taken. Results indicate that negative standpoints are connected to an economy, population and employment related framing of mining and rural development, and positive standpoints to a place or community related framing, and that governance is an important layer in the understanding of the standpoints. Furthermore, this thesis highlights the importance of including the Swedish municipality in research on processes of natural resource extraction and rural development.

Key words: rural development; mining; frames; framing; Sweden; municipality

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List of abbreviations

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
CAB	County Administrative Board (*Länsstyrelse*)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
SAF	Swedish Armed Forces

Swedish-English glossary

Bergsstaten	The Mining Inspectorate of Sweden
Kommunalråd	Chairperson of the municipal board (‘prime minister’)
Kommunfullmäktige	Can be seen as the municipality’s parliament
Kommunstyrelse	Municipal board (appointed by the *kommunfullmäktige*)
Länsstyrelse	County Administrative Board (regional body)
Riksintresse	Item of national interest
Strandskydd	Shore protection law; part of the Environmental Code
Undersökningstillstånd	Search/examination permit (part of the mining process)
Urminnes hävd	Juridical concept, right by ‘immemorial custom’
Yttrande	An official opinion or statement

1 Introduction

Whether, and if so how, mining can be part of rural development in Sweden has been a debated topic in recent years (cf. Land 2018; SVT Nyheter Opinion 2013). Historically, most Swedish municipalities[1] have agreed that mining should be supported. But seen to recent developments, there seems to be a change in municipal attitudes towards mining. In the cases of Karlsborg and Jokkmokk municipalities, the official municipal standpoints on introducing a new mine differ: Karlsborg takes a *negative* stand while Jokkmokk takes a *positive* stand. Karlsborg municipality has issued official objections to mining plans at an early stage, whereas Jokkmokk municipality has seen heavy efforts by political parties to attract new mining projects (cf. Karlsborg kommun 2017; NSD 2018; Sveriges Radio 2018).

Jokkmokk and Karlsborg municipalities are located in different parts of the country but share several features. Their population sizes are roughly the same (although in Jokkmokk dispersed over a much larger area), they have very similar political party share in municipal politics (dominated by the Social Democratic Party), and they are both potentially facing a new open-pit mine. The municipalities are, however, also different in some respects, including closeness to (other) urban centers, historical experiences of resource extraction, and unanimity or lack thereof within the *kommunfullmäktige* (municipal council) regarding whether mining should be a part of rural development or not. The fact that the two municipalities are similar in many respects, but also include some important differences allows for a comparison to uncover what distinctive factors determine the different outcomes (i.e. standpoints on mining investments).

This master thesis delves deeper into this situation of diverging standpoints on mining by examining municipal decision-making from a comparative point of view that highlights understandings of mining and rural development. It contributes to a new perspective on mining and rural development in Sweden by focusing on the municipality as key actor for understanding the new mining landscape.

[1] Here, and generally throughout the thesis, *municipality as a political body* refers to the political and civil servant part of the Swedish municipalities. This distinction needs to be made as the word *kommun (municipality)* in Swedish can refer to both the geographical/administrative area as well as the organization that runs it. In this thesis, it is the latter that is of interest, thus popular opinion and citizen mobilization will not be the primary focus.

The point of departure for this thesis is that the basis for Swedish municipalities' decision to take a stand for or against a mine can be found in their understandings of rural development. Two common arguments both for and against mines relate to employment and environmental impact. Furthermore, the Swedish self-image as a modern industrial nation with a strong welfare system is firmly connected with the northern parts of the country. Revenues from natural resource extraction (mainly forestry and mining) came to be an important part in financing Sweden's modernization on a national level, which shaped the region's self-image as closely linked to natural resource based business as mode to compete economically with other regions (Westin and Eriksson 2016). Many of the places that today are home to mines in Sweden are rural. Therefore, linking the municipalities' understanding of rural development to mining processes provides a plausible starting point for understanding mining standpoints within the Swedish context.

1.2 Research aim and questions

The aim of this thesis is to *explore contrasting standpoints on mining investments by Swedish municipalities in relation to framings of rural development*.

The aim will be met through answering the following overall research question: *How do different framings of rural development and mining shape contrasting municipal standpoints on mining investments?*

Operationalization of this research question will be done through the following sub-questions:

a. How do municipalities frame mining and rural development in terms of economy, population, and employment?
b. How do municipalities frame mining and rural development in terms of place(s) and community?
c. How do municipalities frame mining and rural development in relation to and in terms of governance?

1.3 Outline of thesis

As mentioned, the research questions will be answered by comparing two cases of proposed mining investment in rural Sweden: Karlsborg municipality in southern Sweden, where the

municipality has taken a negative position on mining investment(s), and Jokkmokk municipality in northern Sweden, where the municipality has taken a positive position on mining investments. The cases will be described in detail in the section “Background”.

Data collection for the thesis consisted mainly of interviews with a strategic selection of municipal representatives from Karlsborg and Jokkmokk municipalities. The interviews were carried out in March of 2018 which marks the end of the time delimitation of this thesis. Additional data was collected from key documents (listed in the methodology section). Ryser and Halseth’s (2010) compilation of recurring research themes within rural development in industrialized economies since the 1980s, as well as literature on mineral extraction and economic development constitute the theoretical point of departure. The concept of frames is introduced as a way to understand how the municipalities understand the situation at hand (a possible mining investment). Together, the research themes and the concept of frames is married into an Analytical framework that guides the data analysis. Using the method of content analysis within the design of a comparative case study in examining two cases which share a number of key features in relation to documented research themes on rural development, allows for the complexities of each case to be better understood.

2 Background

This chapter starts with presenting an overview of the history and current context of mining and rural development in Sweden and introduces the reader to the Swedish municipality and its strengths and limitations in relation to mining and rural development. After that, the chapter zooms in on the historical background and current context of mining and rural development in Jokkmokk and Karlsborg municipalities. Finally, key differences between the two cases are highlighted and build a bridge towards the following chapters.

2.1 Rural development and mining in Sweden

Before zooming in on Karlsborg and Jokkmokk municipalities, it is important to create a common understanding of the rural development and mining landscape in Sweden. Mining is a controversial topic, and so is rural development. There are many opinions of what the two are and should be, and what the linkages between them are. This chapter aims to provide an understanding of this complex topic, starting with mining and continuing to examine how development is viewed in terms of e.g. urban—rural divides. The chapter will create an understanding of the context in which the two cases of Karlsborg and Jokkmokk are situated. Finally, an overview of the actual mining process in Sweden and how the municipality is located within it is provided.

Minerals and mines are seen as important for Swedish economic development and competitiveness. In *Mineralstrategin* (the Swedish mineral policy from 2013), the following view on mining and development is presented.

> …each mining region shall have the opportunity to grow, departing from its own context specific conditions. Mining regions and mining municipalities shall attract, sustain, and develop businesses, competencies and capital so that they contribute to national growth in a long-term and competitive way … The expansion of the mining industry is of strategic importance for growth and employment on regional as well as national level (Regeringskansliet 2013, p.29, *my translation*).

It is *Bergsstaten* (the Mining Inspectorate of Sweden) that oversees mineral related issues in Sweden. Bergsstaten is a specific decision-making body belonging to the Geological Survey of Sweden (a Swedish authority).

According to the Mining Inspectorate,

> The mineral sector is … very important for employment in certain regions and is of great importance for the development of the Swedish mining equipment industry. … Access of, and knowledge about how ore and minerals can be used are an important contribution to the Swedish wealth of today. The technological products of modern society, for example that which is energy effective and environmentally friendly, are completely dependent on metals and minerals. /…/ It is the mineral business which supports the [technology] industry with important metals and minerals. (Bergsstaten n.d., *my translation*)

Here, mines are presented by the government as an integral part to the economic status of today's Sweden, and as an employment-creating sector. Furthermore, it is emphasized as important for modern and green technology.

This view can be seen also in the positioning of *SveMin*, the sectoral organization for mining and mineral and metal producers in Sweden. SveMin state that mines are important to Sweden because they offer a contribution to a shift towards green energy solutions via extraction of minerals such as cobolt and lithium; because they provide employment opportunities, especially in rural areas; and because they are important for Sweden to be self-supplying of resources needed to uphold the standard of living in Sweden (SveMin n.d.). In a debate article arguing for increased metal production and mining investments, professor Pär Weihed and ex-CEO of SveMin Per Ahl argue that continued mining expansion in Sweden will benefit both municipalities and Sweden as a whole.

> Many of the employment opportunities [within the mining industry] are created in sparsely populated rural areas that have long seen a negative trend [in employment]. This will in turn increase the possibilities for many municipalities to sustain and improve service for their inhabitants /…/ New estimates show that Swedish mining production could triple until 2025, which could create around 50 000 new jobs. (Svenska Dagbladet 2012, *my translation*)

With this perspective, mining is presented as something not isolated and removed from the rest of society, but rather as a positive force for societal development in rural areas.

The Swedish government acknowledges that rural areas will be facing major challenges in the coming years, including continued out-migration, increased average age of people active in the agricultural sector, and a decrease in employment opportunities (Jordbruksverket 2016;

Regeringskansliet 2017). As a way to tackle these challenges, *Landsbygdsprogrammet 2014-2020* ("Rural program 2014-2020")—a national policy document stating the Swedish governments' intentions on rural areas—focuses on three goals for rural development: (1) to promote and strengthen the agricultural sector's competitiveness; (2) to ensure that natural resources are managed sustainably and that climate actions are taken; and (3) that rural economic and societal development is being evenly spread geographically (Näringsdepartementet, 2015). It is thus three areas of rural development that are highlighted as important: agriculture, well-reasoned natural resource use, and equal share of development within Sweden. The last two of these areas are of special importance for this master thesis. Mining (one type of natural resource use) is described above as a way to reverse negative development trends in rural areas. It is portrayed as one way to make sure not only urban centers get to benefit from development. Still, despite what has been outlined above, the relationship between mining and creation of employment opportunities and promise of development should not be taken for granted.

In a pilot-study research report from 2014, partly funded by the Norrbotten County Administrative Board and authored by several researchers from Luleå University in Sweden (including Pär Weihed, co-author of the debate article above) current knowledge and research on the future of mining in Norrbotten County is summarized. The main focus lies on the future potential of mining in the Norrbotten region of northern Sweden, seen to actual mineral resources, development, and ways to minimize environmental impact of mining. What is interesting is that on analyzing the mining industry's effects on regional economies, the authors come to no clear answer as to whether mines in fact *do* contribute to regional or local economy or not, stating that

> expectations are often high in relation to specific mining investment cases' effects on the local and regional economy …[but] these effects are not pre-determined but depend on multiple aspects, such as prevalence of higher educated engineers, sub-contractors with appropriate competence, good living standards in the municipality, world market prices [on minerals] etc. (Alakangas et al. 2014)

It seems thus that the promise of employment opportunities as a fixed outcome of a mining investment might needs to be taken with caution. Prevalence of higher engineering competence as well as global mineral prices, as indicated in the quote above, seem to be important factors determining how many jobs a mine actually generate and how the local population would benefit directly. Swedish journalist Arne Müller has been writing on the relationship between mining

investments and the direct benefits to the local community and is critical towards the promises made by the mining companies.

> I have to say that it is remarkable on how loose grounds that these promises have been made … A clear example is that in all prognoses on the number of jobs that these mines would generate … it is assumed that from the day that the mine opens, technical developments of the mining industry stops. (SVT Nyheter Norrbotten 2015, *my translation*)

What Müller points at are technical advances within the mining industry that have been made over centuries, and especially modern technology developments in the last decades. For example, a mine of today does not need as much manpower as 20 or 30 years ago. Müller's argument is thus that it is unreasonable to expect that similar technical advances are not made also in the future, and that these advances (resulting in need of fewer human working in the mine) need to be taken into account when making prognoses on jobs generated over a longer period of time into the future. Furthermore, Müller questions that all jobs promised in relation to a new mining investment will benefit the local community. Special competences are needed that may not automatically be found in rural areas, and furthermore it seems that many of the mining companies in question do not intend to place their headquarters in the local community but rather in a bigger Swedish city (or even abroad). Employment opportunities that are calculated to be generated from a mining investment may thus in reality be located outside of the municipality where the mining investment is planned (Müller 2015; SVT Nyheter Norrbotten 2015).

Another crucial issue related to mines and mining are the environmental effects. When it comes to the Swedish context, the process from assessment to having a mine in place contains several different steps, starting with obtaining an *undersökningstillstånd* (search/examination permit) and ending with the exact spot for the mine to be decided upon. In between, processing concession (i.e. permission to extract) and permission in accordance with the Swedish Environmental Code need to be obtained (Bergsstaten n.d.). The Swedish Environmental Code is designed to "promote sustainable development, which means that now living as well as future generations are guaranteed a healthy and sound environment", and dictates land- and water use in relation to e.g. human health, protection of culture and biodiversity, and sustainable natural resource management (Regeringskansliet 1998).

In theory, every new mine since 1998 (the year the Environmental Code was established) should therefore live up to societal and environmental expectations and regulations as they have been assessed based on the Code. Still, mines *do* have environmental impacts. Not only do they change the surrounding landscape[2], but they also contribute to air and water (including ground water) pollution, and give rise to noise and waste disposal issues (Sveriges geologiska undersökning 2017). Getting go-ahead based on the Environmental Code is thus no guarantee for zero impacts from a mine on the environment. Mining waste needs to be handled properly, not only when the mine is up-and-running but also when production has stopped, and transportation routes in remote areas are usually needed that may affect other businesses and land use.

An example of the complexities related to the Swedish Environmental Code and the mining industry can be seen in the case of the *Blaiken* mine in Västerbotten County. In 2012, the owners Lapland Goldminers declared bankruptcy without having secured enough funds to ensure continued waste management and eventual sanitation of the mining site. In order for hazardous substances to not leak and reach the nearby Ume river (part of the Baltic Sea drainage area), the Swedish government had to secure a substantial multi-year funding based on tax money in order to prevent an environmental disaster (Sveriges Radio 2013; SVT Nyheter Västerbotten 2018). The *Blaiken* case has resulted in a revised legislation regarding how mining companies must include preventive measures of post-mining environmental effects already at the initial planning stage (Müller 2013, p.206). Still, the case provides valuable lessons on potential environmental disasters and the roles of the mining company, state, and/or local government structures.

Moving on, this chapter will now introduce a central part of this thesis: the Swedish municipality. Some readers may already be well informed about what a municipality is, how it is organized, and what it can and cannot do in relation to its geographical area and its inhabitants. However, as it is at the core of this research, it is important that also the reader who is *not* so well acquainted with it gets at least a general understanding.

[2] As an example, the open pit mine Aitik—Sweden's largest mine to date—has an area roughly the size of inner-city Stockholm (the capital of Sweden). See https://www.sgu.se/om-sgu/nyheter/2016/mars/fran-dagbrott-till-underjordsgruva/ [Accessed 2019-02-03]

The role of the municipality within the Swedish governmental system is complex. It is to many extents independent from the national government, but at the same time obliged by Swedish law to fund and carry out important (often welfare-related) societal functions such as health care and education within its geographical boundaries. Its main income is tax from residents, thus population size important (but not the sole determining factor for municipal well-being).

In Sweden, municipalities have what can be best described as a "local parliament" called *kommunfullmäktige*. Every four years, in connection to Swedish general elections, the members of the *kommunfullmäktige* are elected by the municipality's population. The *kommunfullmäktige* is responsible of appointing the so called *kommunstyrelse* ('municipal board') which can be seen as the municipality's government. It is the *kommunstyrelse* that has the mandate to lead and coordinate the management of the municipality and the *kommunstyrelse* is the executive body of the municipality. It is also in charge of the contact with neighboring municipalities as well as with the Swedish government. The chairperson of the *kommunstyrelse* is most times called *kommunalråd*. This person can be seen as the 'prime minister' of the municipality (Norén Bretzer 2014). In bigger municipalities, there may be more than one *kommunalråd*. In Karlsborg and Jokkmokk however, there is only one *kommunalråd* for each of the two municipalities respectively.

When it comes to decision making, how decisions are being made in Swedish municipalities is regulated by law, which refers to the *kommunfullmäktige* as the decision making body within the municipality. This means that decisions are made by the politically elected representatives in a parliamentary-like setting. Still, many decisions are today being made in the different boards that have been formed to handle different aspects of municipal life (*nämnder*). This is both *de facto* and *de jure* decision making, in that some boards have specialized laws granting them decision making status, and others are being delegated decision making in specific questions by the *kommunfullmäktige* (Montin and Granberg 2014).

While the municipality is 'independent' in some ways, it may have also little or no say in relation to certain Swedish regional and national bodies. In the case of mineral extraction for example, the County Administration Boards (CABs), *Bergsstaten* (the Swedish mining inspectorate), as well as

the Swedish government are powerful in determining outcomes of mining processes. The municipalities lack a formal role particularly in initial planning and prospecting and can thus be seen as having little to say about how its mineral resources are planned and used.

2.3 The two cases: Karlsborg and Jokkmokk municipalities

Karlsborg municipality

Karlsborg municipality is located in the southern central part of Sweden, right at the north west corner of Lake Vättern, Sweden's second largest lake. The town of Karlsborg dates back nearly 200 years ago, as it was established in 1819 as a stand-by capital of Sweden should the country be drawn into war. Today, the Fort of Karlsborg (built as a military stronghold) is part of the K3 regiment of the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF), one of the municipality's main employers which employs approximately 30 percent of Karlsborg's inhabitants (those over 16 years old). The other main employer is the municipality itself, and there are also various small businesses employ people mainly within the manufacturing and service sectors (Karlsborgs kommun n.d.).

The municipality covers approximately 400 square kilometers, and has approximately 7000 inhabitants, with an average age of 46,3 years and a population density of 17 persons per square kilometer. The unemployment rate within the municipality is approximately 6 percent (Statistiska Centralbyrån 2017a; 2017b)[3]. Since the mid-1980s, population size has decreased (see figure 1 in chapter 2.4 below). An important disruption in this trend can be seen between the year of 2015-2017. This is largely related to the influx of migrants to Sweden during those years (as part of a bigger trend of increased migration into the European Union). This rapid increase in population size of Karlsborg contributed to a positive development of the municipality's economy between 2015-2017 (Karlsborgs kommun 2018).

Located at the northern parts of the municipality is Tiveden National Park, one of Sweden's 30 national parks. Established in 1983, Tiveden National Park covers 2030 hectares of land an sits on the border between Örebro and Västra Götaland Counties in south-west Sweden (Sveriges Nationalparker n.d.). Tiveden is important for tourism in Karlsborg. In 2017, investments were made to strengthen tourism opportunities in and around Tiveden, and cooperation on Tiveden

[3] To find the statistics for Karlsborg municipality, enter "Karlsborg" into the "Välj en kommun" box and click enter.

between Karlsborg and two bordering municipalities (Laxå and Askersund) has increased in recent years. Tourism is important for Karlsborg's development, and the municipality's "unique location with water and forest creates many different opportunities" for recreation (Karlsborgs kommun 2018). In the municipality's 'municipal plan' (the foundation for all use of water and land areas in the municipality) for 2014 onwards, the importance of Karlborgs nature values and their connection to tourism is emphasized.

> The preconditions for tourism in Karlsborg municipality are very good … [lake] Vättern and Tiveden are through their many activities much visited destinations for fishing, horseback riding, hiking … In studies on what defines attractive tourist destinations, nature values are often emphasized as one of the most important pre-condition … nature values seen as separated environments are difficult to translate into economic values but seen to their context they have a very important role. (Karlsborgs kommun 2014, *my translation*)

4 kilometers west of Tiveden, lake Unden is situated, which Karlsborg shares with Laxå, Töreboda and Gullspång municipalities. Unden is one of many lakes and waters in Karlsborg municipality. It is part of the Vättern lake drainage area, and it is also a *riksintresse* (item of national interest) due to its "species-rich fauna, unclouded water, relatively unaffected drainage area, and the nice beaches" (Länsstyrelsen Örebro 2017, *my translation*). Furthermore, an area in the northern part of the lake is a *Natura 2000* area, an area which is part of a European network of 26 000 protected nature sites (European Commission n.d.).

In the autumn of 2017, the Australian mining company European Cobalt Ltd. was granted permission from *Bergsstaten* to search for nickel, cobalt, zinc, copper and gold in an 868 square meter area at the southern shore of lake Unden. This sparked heavy community protests, and mobilized inhabitants from all around lake Unden against the mining plans (Skaraborgsbygden 2018; Sveriges Radio 2017; SVT Nyheter Örebro 2018). A community-based protest group was formed, which put heavy pressure on the local politicians of Karlsborg municipality, resulting in an official appeal from the adjacent Laxå municipality against the mining company's decision (SVT Nyheter Örebro 2017). To many of the protestors, it is the lake and its water that lies at the core of the dispute. Not only is it home to a diverse fauna, but it is also a source of drinking water, both in itself but also as it is part of the lake Vättern drainage area (another important drinking water source for various adjacent municipalities). Engaged community members as well as

concerned municipal representatives from around lake Unden worried that a mine would have extensive environmental impacts on the nature and water in and around the lake, emphasizing water pollution as one main concern (ibid.).

Initially, Karlsborg municipality did not oppose the proposed mining investment. However, as a result of the heavy protests from the community, the municipality revised its position and made a clarifying statement regarding the mining plans, arguing that:

> With the now known preconditions [regarding a mine], the municipality wants to clarify that we will not take a positive stance towards a potential mine /…/ With this clarification as a foundation [and] together with the strong public opposition that *Bergsstaten*'s decision has caused, we believe that the decision … should be cancelled (Karlsborg kommun 2017, *my translation*)

To summarize, the mining investment in Karlsborg is characterized by heavy community protests and a unanimous political leadership against the proposed mine. It is a foreign company that has received permission to prospect for minerals, more specifically minerals that are mainly linked to "green technology", such as for example electric cars and solar panels. The proposal is located in a municipality in southern Sweden, close to other municipalities and cities. There are one or two major employees, and tourism is an important business sector for the municipality.

Jokkmokk municipality

Jokkmokk municipality is located in the north western part of Sweden, bordering to Norway in the west. Four national parks lie within the municipality's borders: Sarek, Stora Sjöfallet, Muddus and Padjelanta. Furthermore, the Lule river runs through the municipality, emanating from the mountains in the west and merging together with the Baltic Sea in the east.

The history of Jokkmokk is intricately linked to the Sami culture, as well as to the forest and hydropower industries from the early 1900s onwards. The Sami are one of the indigenous peoples of the world, and the only one in Europe. Long before the nation state borders were drawn, the Sami people inhabited, and still do today, the area of Sápmi, which constitutes of the northern parts of Scandinavia and today's north-western Russia. It is estimated that a number of between 80 000 and 100 000 Sami people live in all of Sápmi (Samer.se n.d.). Although knowledge about the Sami culture is constantly being updated, the physical presence of the Sami in Sápmi can today be traced

9 000 years back to when the ice sheet which had covered much of northern Europe melted and the landscape re-appeared.

From the 1300s onwards, the Sami were pulled into the nation state systems, with taxes, regulations and colonization of Sápmi. In the 1600s, then Swedish government made a move to control the Sami population through constructing churches, with the result of the establishment of settlements for the then-nomadic Sami. It is in relation to this that the village of Jokkmokk has its origins.

> When permanent market and church locations were to be established, [what was sought were] places that were reachable during winter and that were located in proximity to areas where the Sami's reindeers grazed. The Jockmock [sami] village had since a long time back its winter grazing lands in the forests close to the Small and Large Lule rivers … [and] was chosen as location for the first church of Jokkmokk (Jokkmokks marknad n.d., *my translation*)

Established in the early 1600s, Jokkmokk has been, and is still today an important meeting place for the Sami population, hosting the Jokkmokk market early in the year on an annual basis, and drawing around 25 000 visitors each year.

In the first half of the 20th century, the area equaling today's Jokkmokk municipality saw an influx of people to work in the then booming expansions of both hydropower (in both the small and large Lule rivers) and forestry industry, the construction of the *Inlandsbanan* inland rail road, and the *Malmfälten* mining area. In the 1960s, at the peak of these expansions, as many as 12 000 persons inhabited the municipality (Jokkmokks kommun n.d.). This stands in quite stark contrast with today's figure (see below).

The municipality of Jokkmokk covers approximately 17 500 square kilometers. Today it has approximately 5000 inhabitants, with an average age of 45,8 years and a population density of 0.3 persons per square kilometer. The unemployment rate within the municipality lies around 6.5 percent (Statistiska Centralbyrån 2017b)[4]. As for the year 2016, the main employment sectors for women were healthcare, education, business services, and cultural services. For men, the main

[4] To find the statistics for Jokkmokk municipality, enter Jokkmokk" into the "Välj en kommun" box and click enter.

employment sectors for the same year were in construction, agriculture, forestry and fishing, and energy and environment (Statistiska Centralbyrån 2017c). Similar to Karlsborg, the tourism is important for the municipality, employing 226 Jokkmokk inhabitants (calculated as full-year fulltime employments) in 2016. For the same year, 396 000 overnight stays of tourist character were registered in the municipality (Jokkmokks kommun 2017).

In 2013, the British mining company Beowulf Mining obtained permission by *Bergsstaten* to carry out a trial drilling in the area of Kallak outside of Jokkmokk village in Jokkmokk municipality. In the summer of 2013, when trial drillings were carried out, heavy protests from the Jåhkågasska and Sirges Sami villages took place, who claimed that Beowulf Mining did not respect Sami rights. Voices were also raised that the proposed mine would disturb Sami practices such as reindeer herding, as the proposed mining area would become a "wall" cutting off the Jåhkågasska Sami village's reindeer herding area (Müller 2013, pp.156-161; SVT Nyheter Norrbotten 2013a; 2013b).

Having a large symbolic value and being part of Sami tradition, today the reindeer and reindeer herding is also a profession. An integral part of reindeer herding is the fact that the reindeer "migrate" depending on season, moving often long distances from winter to summer grazing areas. Today, this migration is controlled by national regulations, as the grazing lands and therefore also possible migration routes are tied to geographical areas designated to the different Sami villages. The Sami's right to land for reindeer herding, hunting and living can be found in what is called *urminnes hävd* ("immemorial custom"), "the right by law to property acquired through having used an area over a long period of time, without being hindered to do so" (Sametinget 2018).

To date, the Kallak case has moved up to now being handled at national government level, as a result of the Norrbotten CAB rejecting the mining company's official mining application in 2015. Having at first mainly concerned reindeer herding and general environmental effects, the conflict now also involves the aspect of possible effects of a mine on the *Laponia* UNESCO world heritage site which is situated within the borders of Jokkmokk municipality. According to the CAB, the possible effects of a mine on nearby Laponia have not been sufficiently examined, which hinders the CAB from either approving or rejecting a mine at this point (Dagens Industri 2017; Länsstyrelsen Norrbotten 2017; SVT Nyheter Norrbotten 2017).

Disputing the arguments of disturbed reindeer herding, the mining company claims that a mine in Kallak "has the potential to provide around 250 direct jobs and SEK 600m in additional tax revenues to the municipality of Jokkmokk over 14 years" (Copenhagen Economics 2017, a report commissioned by Beowulf Mining). This view is represented also in the standpoint of the Social Democratic party in Jokkmokk, who has worked actively to attract new mining investments in the municipality focusing mainly on new employment opportunities (Sveriges Radio 2018). On the other hand, the Green Party in Jokkmokk has been vocal about negative effects of a mine, and has claimed that the political opposition in the municipality has not been given proper opportunity to include their opinions in official standpoints sent to the Swedish government (Sameradion & SVT Sápmi 2018). The promise of new employment opportunities have also been questioned as portraying the municipality in a one-sided way, in that new jobs created by a mine could eliminate jobs related to Sami practices as those would be negatively affected by the effects of mining activities (Müller 2013, pp.156-161).

To summarize, the Jokkmokk case is characterized by heavy protests from the Sami population, and a polarized political situation on the matter. The case is situated geographically in a region traditionally accustomed to mining, and which has over the last decades seen a dwindling population size. The Sami villages, with their *urminnes hävd* right to reindeer herding, are an important feature of the case, and so is the closeness to the *Laponia* world heritage site as a tourism attraction. Furthermore, the question of jobs generated by a mine is disputed.

2.5 Key differences between the two cases

This summarizing chapter aims at highlighting key differences between the two cases of mining investment processes in Karlsborg and Jokkmokk municipalities respectively.

Figure 1 below shows the trend in population change between the two municipalities. As can be seen, both have experienced an overall slow but steady decline since the mid-1900s, with a slight increase since the year 2015. While the trend visible in Figure 1 points at possible shared challenges (as will be developed in chapter 3, a declining population is also likely to lead to e.g. declining tax incomes for the municipalities), it is important to contextualize these trends.

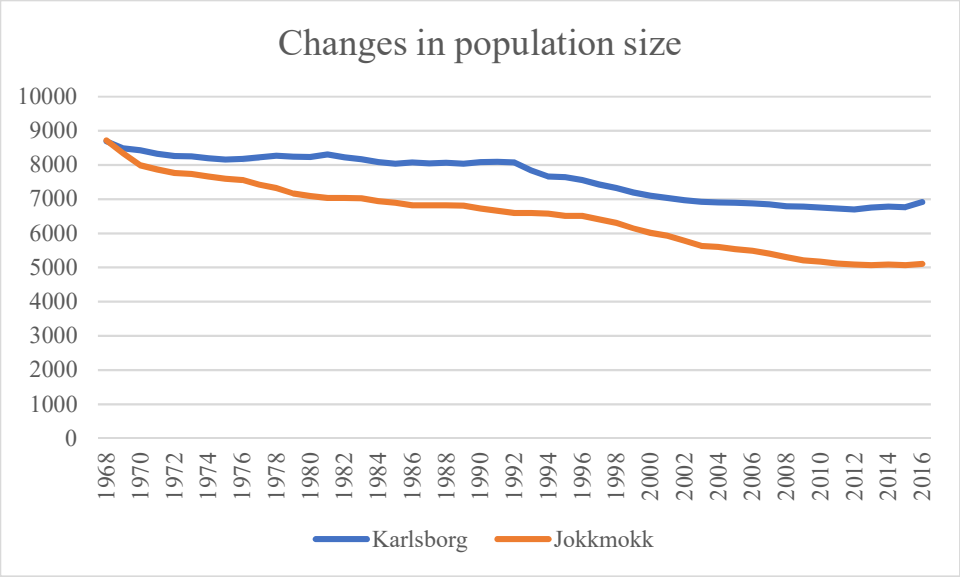

Figure 1: Changes in population size between 1968 and 2016 (data from Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2018)

To start with, an important aspect separating the two cases is the population density, which is connected to both size of the population and size of the municipality itself. As seen in the two previous chapters, the population density between Karlsborg and Jokkmokk is quite different. While Karlsborg municipality has a population density of 17 persons per square kilometer, the population density of Jokkmokk is only 0,7 persons per square kilometer. This is important to highlight, as both municipalities have a similar total number of inhabitant (7000 and 5000). It can be assumed that the difference in population density generates different challenges and opportunities for the two municipalities. For example, travel distances should be longer in Jokkmokk, whereas land available for exploitation would be scarcer in Karlsborg.

Furthermore, the accessibility to a larger urban center differs between the two municipalities. When looking at an advanced classification of what constitutes a rural municipality in Sweden, an important difference between Karlsborg and Jokkmokk become evident. Jokkmokk is categorized as a *very remotely located municipality*, meaning that the **entire population** lives in rural areas and require at least a 1,5-hour car ride to get to a town of at least 50 000 inhabitants. Karlsborg, on the other hand, is categorized 'only' as a *remotely located municipality*, where more than 50 percent of the population lives in rural areas and where less than half of the population can reach

a town of at least 50 000 inhabitants **in 45 minutes or less**. In light of this, it becomes evident that although the two municipalities are of roughly the same population size, and are on a general level rural municipalities, Karlsborg enjoys the benefit of being located within what could be seen as reasonable commuting distance from an urban center (which, in this case is the city of Skövde) and is therefore part of a bigger web of employment opportunities (Tillväxtverket 2018).

The two cases also differ in terms of 'historical closeness' to mining and mineral extraction. As has been mentioned in the previous chapters, the northern parts of Sweden have historically been crucial in Sweden's mining industry, and the mining industry is in many areas deeply intertwined with the history and self-image of many regions and towns. Jokkmokk is part of this, both in that it has been a node for natural resource use in general, but also since the surrounding mining towns have been an important source for income also for Jokkmokk inhabitants. Karlsborg, on the other hand, is situated in a part of southern Sweden which has not, in general, been as connected to the mining industry. Mining has not been a sector which is remembered to be the main employer. While this thesis does not focus on e.g. aspects of shared community memory or the more psychological aspects of mining, this difference (i.e. in how the two municipalities are 'related' to mining and natural resource extraction historically) does provide an interesting point of view to the analysis.

Another important differing factor between the two cases is the fact that the Jokkmokk case includes the Sami villages component. In terms of the role of place or community (which will be examined more in depth in chapter 3), and which groups are and have been (or are not and have not been) included in decision making processes, the presence of Sami villages is important as it might provide one piece of the puzzle of the polarized political situation on the mining investment in Jokkmokk.

3 Theory and analytical framework

This chapter presents three recurring themes in research on rural development in industrialized economies: *changing circumstances of rural development*, *role of place or community*, and *governance* (Ryser and Halseth 2010). These form the conceptual base of this thesis. It then moves on to the concept of frames and its importance for decision making and policy as well as its relevance for this thesis. In the last section, the concept of frames is married to Ryser and Halseth's themes, outlining an analytical framework on the connection between rural development and mining and municipal standpoints on mining investments.

3.1 Central themes to rural development

3.1.1 Changing circumstances of rural development

Rural places are changing: aspects of and changes in demography, economy, society, culture and environment affect rural areas' access to change and development. Regarding economic development in rural places, greater emphasis is put on services, on behalf of primary production which has historically been the backbone of many rural economies (Hedlund et al. 2017; Ryser and Halseth 2010). Two key features in research on rural economic development in industrialized economies since the 1980s are *restructuring* and *barriers/challenges to development*. Restructuring refers to modifications and shifts in distribution of for example money, people, goods, or immaterial things such as knowledge or cultural and social opportunities. Barriers and/or challenges to development refers to those factors that improve, hinders, or at least alters rural places' abilities to develop. Examples of this is lack of funding or geographical or economic isolation.

One type of rural restructuring has to do with labor. Centralization of certain job sectors to urban areas, and professionalization and mechanization of labor (affecting the size of the needed labor force and the labor target group) are two important aspects of labor restructuring of rural areas (Ryser and Halseth 2010). For example, in the agricultural sector (a sector often important for or associated with rural areas), specialization and technical advances along with policy decisions have yielded increased output *without* increase in employment opportunities, mirroring these changes in size of needed labor force (Hedlund et al. 2017). Also the mining sector has seen a trend in professionalization and mechanization of labor. As was shown in chapter 2, the mining industry

in Sweden today is less reliant on large groups of man-power to work below ground, and many of the more technical jobs in the industry require several years of higher education, which may not always be attainable in the locations of mining investments. Centralization of many positions to urban areas, where mining companies may have their head offices located, is also a sign of restructuring of labor related to mining.

Urbanization, migration and an aging population are all examples of population restructuring. They are also processes that alter the characteristics and size of the working population (Ryser and Halseth 2010). Seen to the Swedish context, there is an overall trend of (especially young) people leaving rural areas to search for jobs and/or seek education opportunities in bigger cities (Hedlund and Lundholm 2015). These processes have wider effects on rural areas: when the working population decreases, there are fewer people paying taxes, which affects the *resources/funding* available. Coupled with a decrease in reliance on the (especially for rural areas) historically important natural resource-based sector, this means that rural areas face an increasing need to diversify their economies, in order to be able to compete with bigger economic regions or cities (Hedlund and Lundholm 2015; Ryser and Halseth 2010).

Resources can be economic, but it is important to remember that they can also be infrastructural, meaning that development in rural areas can also be affected by lack of housing, transportation opportunities (both for people and goods), technology, proper and/or higher education, as well as lack of access to health services. Furthermore, geographic isolation is an important factor affecting the different possibilities of a rural place.

When it comes to restructuring and mining, as was outlined already in chapter 2, an important part of the discussion often circulates around the mining sector's contribution to local labor markets. This is important since labor and in- and outflow of people are two central aspects to both (rural) restructuring and, as we have seen, the mining debate. Indirectly, this also touches upon the restructuring features of economic restructuring, capital, and services restructuring. In unpacking the mining investment—employment argument, it is important to note that the mining industry too has been 'affected' by the mechanization and professionalization processes outlined above. Not only has the mining industry seen a decrease in labor force demand due to increased capital-

intensity, but it also faces increased technological standards and requires technological competence that may not exist in the proximity of the mining sites. In the worst-case scenario of increased professionalization and mechanization, (at least in relation to the mining investment—employment argumentation), so called *fly-in fly-out* might occur. In simple terms, this means that persons with the needed competence are found outside of the mining sites, and do not settle down there (Moritz et al. 2017). This problematizes the argument of mines as automatic generators of employment opportunities.

While it has been confirmed that there *are* statistically significant positive effects of increased mining employment opportunities on the private services sector in a mining municipality, meaning that more jobs in the mining sector generate more jobs also in businesses such as for example transportation services, hotels, and retail, it is important to note that the tourism sector, which as shown in chapters 2.3 and 2.4 may be of great importance to Swedish municipalities, is *not* included in these findings. Furthermore, although the mining industry saw an increase in employment between the years of 2003 and 2013, many of the jobs were not necessarily located in the mining sites (Moritz et al. 2017; Müller 2015). Not only does this have economic effects in that tax money to the municipality in question may be missed out on. It is also an example of the relationship between *restructuring* and *barriers/challenges to development* (in this case in terms of funding) as outlined earlier in this chapter.

As mentioned, ongoing technological advances need to be considered when linking mining investments to themes of rural restructuring.

> In the long run, technological progress will continue to reduce the number of workers required to operate a mine, and this suggests over time diminishing spillover effects on the local economies. Communities and regions that depend on mining need to identify and implement strategies to face these challenges. These may comprise efforts at achieving economic diversification … (Moritz et al. 2017 p.63)

It is important to note that restructuring and other barriers or challenges to rural development are not forces that works irrespective of human influence, nor are they confined to specific local places. Instead, they can be seen as "overarching process[es] which [generate] local outcomes" and can therefore be further explained as "the combination of the larger forces of globalization,

technological development and social modernization, and their socioeconomic outcomes for rural areas, such as urbanization and rural decline" (Hedlund and Lundholm 2015). Hence, changing ideas of what the role of the state should be (nationally as well as locally), the market's altered role within the society, global trends and events, and national prioritizations on urban versus rural areas as well as a consolidation of the urban norm (both on an individual level and a national growth level) all affect rural areas' possibilities to develop. Central to how these patterns of development alter are of course also national and international policies. Therefore, a continued discussion on governance impacts on restructuring and barriers to development will be found in chapter 3.1.3. In the cases of Karlsborg and Jokkmokk, the relationship between restructuring and barriers to development on one hand, and governance on the other is shown in part in the municipality's location within the web of Swedish governance and decision making, and in part in the fact that mines and mining in Sweden are part of a global mineral market, where fluctuating mineral prices affect the profitability of mining activities.

3.1.2 Role of place or community

Society, community, and politics are all interconnected, and the links between them are important also for rural development (Ryser and Halseth 2010). Why do people choose to move to and live in rural places and communities? How do place-specific features affect rural areas? Examining the role of place or community in rural development is important as it highlights other aspects of rurality than those found in for example the discussion in the previous chapter on restructuring and barriers to development. Here, the place or community *in itself* offers explanations to why rural places are included in or excluded from rural development processes.

First of all, rural areas often offer different living conditions and life-style opportunities than urban areas. On an individual or family level, this may include cheaper housing in rural than in urban areas, living a healthier life, and having a greater closeness to nature than in urban areas (cf. Nakagawa 2018). On another level, the role of place for rural development may have to do with richness in (or lack of) natural resources, such as closeness to water (for example streams and rivers) and vast forests (Ryser and Halseth 2010). The concept of *natural capital* has established itself in the research on both economic development and environmental issues. Natural capital includes forests, minerals, water, biodiversity, and even clean air, and the concept "reflects a

recognition that environmental systems play a fundamental role in determining a country's economic output and social well-being – providing resources and services, and absorbing emissions and wastes" (European Environment Agency 2016). The success in natural capital use from both an economic and environmental aspect relies on how they are being managed:

> The natural capital that our society is based on provides uncountable services that we benefit from every single day. Some of these are direct and easily recognisable, some are indirect, and we only notice them when they are absent. Investment in natural capital could not only provide direct benefits to business and society but also huge advantages to the environment. These can go hand in hand, and everyone can win. (Natural Capital Forum 2017)

Natural capital can be used to generate economic development, not only for entire nations but also for local places. Historically, many rural places have been relying on their natural capital (such as for example forest, or mineral assets) to build economic wealth (Ryser and Halseth 2010). However, from an economic development point of view, just because a rural place is rich in natural capital does not mean that the rural place in focus actually gets to *take part of* the revenues from its natural resources (cf. Müller 2015, pp.165-170). This can have two meanings. First, as outlined in the previous chapter, ownership of a mine can lead to revenues being withdrawn from another country, and if for example a head office is located in a city outside of the municipalities, many surrounding businesses will not benefit the municipality itself. An important example of how rural places get to take part in their natural resource use and following revenues is the importance of the forestry and mining industries in the modernization of Sweden and the construction of the Swedish welfare system as we know it today, where revenues were 'extracted' from the northern regions and brought to a national level. Although policies were put in place to re-inject revenues into the northern regions through incorporating them into the welfare system, the overall process shaped the image of northern Sweden as a natural resource based economy which still persists today (Westin and Eriksson 2016). Second, as has been seen historically, the so called 'resource curse' which links over-reliance on one abundant natural resource (for example oil or rare earth minerals) and armed conflict/exclusion of populations in taking part of economic gains from natural resources, has generated important lessons learned about the need to diversify economies to avoid conflict (Moss 2011).

Rural areas may also offer different possibilities for tourism and tourism related entrepreneurship. Apart from buildings and other manmade cultural sites, the ability of a community (or in the case of this thesis; a municipality) to attract tourists depends also on its natural resources. On the relationship between nature and tourism, Kareiva (2011) concludes that

> In general, the value of a tourism site will increase as the quantity or quality of environmental attributes at the site increases. For example, the value of a site visit for a bird watcher increases in the abundance and diversity of species, for an angler with cleaner water and fish stocking, and for a beachgoer with improved water quality. (ibid., p.190)

It seems thus that well-managed natural resources that are 'prepared' for touristic activities will have positive effects on the number of tourists visiting a rural place. Tourism might also in itself have effects on how inhabitants view their community as well as their possibilities to stay in a rural area and not migrate to larger cities. On a study of young inhabitants in the small town of Sälen in central-west Sweden (close to the Norwegian border), Möller (2016) examines how tourism affects how young people in Sälen perceive their opportunities to stay in Sälen, alternatively return to Sälen after having lived elsewhere for some time. In Sälen, tourism is a source for employment, contributes to services, and provide possibilities to meet new people that might not otherwise have crossed one's path. Möller concludes that

> A societal structure seems to exist in which many jobs and much education are available in urban but not rural areas, contributing to rural out-migration. Tourism suppresses but cannot fully eliminate the societal structure that results in rural youth out-migration. This study clearly demonstrates that tourism has increased the opportunities and contributed significantly to making Sälen more attractive among young adults. (ibid., p.44)

Another aspect of rural development related to the role of place has to do with closeness to urban or semi-urban areas. Infrastructure, which was mentioned in the previous chapter, is not only an important aspect of rural development in itself, but when coupled with shorter distances to other towns or cities, they may function as a means for people to live in rural areas and commute to urban or semi-urban areas (Ryser and Halseth 2010).

Apart from more tangible aspects of the role of place or community (such as nature and tourism), another important part of the role of place or community in rural development is whether citizens

are and/or feel included in what is happening (related to development) in rural places: "…social cohesion and social capital are well documented as tools to build and mobilize resources and assets for rural economic development" (ibid., p.517). Social inclusion is about citizens having access to their rights, to employment and health and education services, being integrated within a society, and being able to participate in decision-making processes and structures (Ryser and Halseth 2010; Shortall 2004).

Social inclusion is central in the emerging research theme *place-based development*. Place-based *rural* development builds on the premise that

> … creating local development strategies that capitalize on local uniqueness will enable territories to develop products and services matched to local assets, which can create a niche market in the increasingly globalised markets of modern times (Salvia and Quaranta 2017, p.3).

One of the ingredients in success of such strategies is social inclusion, in that citizens need to be informed about and interested in their rights and opportunities within their communities, as well as have access to the right channels through which participation in shaping their own development can take place.

In the cases of Karlsborg and Jokkmokk, long-running divisions between the Sami population and the Swedish non-Sami majority might suggest that Jokkmokk is less socially inclusive than Karlsborg. Furthermore, social inclusion can also refer to inclusion in what could be perceived as 'mainstream Sweden'. Karlsborg, situated in southern-central Sweden and located closer than Jokkmokk to the three big Swedish cities of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö is likely more included in 'mainstream Sweden' than Jokkmokk. What is interesting here is not whether or not this is true but rather how this affects the frames that emerge from the data. Perceptions of inclusion (both within the municipalities and within Sweden) are likely to affect how frames are constructed, and are therefore important to take into consideration in the role of place or community for the two cases.

3.1.3 Governance

Governance is a multi-faceted concept, which Rod Hague and Martin Harrop (2010) explain as

> [fitting] between politics and government; it is less than the former but, in a way, more than the latter [and] refers to regular procedures for resolving political issues [as well as] denotes the activity of making collective decisions (ibid., p.6).

Furthermore, governance is not only carried out by governments; non-public as well as private actors also participate in the intricate web of what makes up governance. Governance indicates a shift in who makes decisions on various political issues; rather than it being only about how a government rules it also involves local actors, international agreements, and business (Elliott 2012). In this thesis, governance as decision making focuses on politically elected municipal representatives as well as the civil servants that carry out municipal decisions.

In order to better understand governance as an overarching research theme, two important aspects of it need to be clarified: policy and power. A policy can be explained as something "broader … than a decision. At a minimum, a policy covers a bundle of decisions. More generally, it reflects an overall intention to make future decisions in accordance with an overall objective" (Hague and Harrop 2010, p.367). A policy can thus be seen as a 'statement of intention' on a certain issue and as an indication for the way forward. It can address both intended changes as well as a maintenance of the status quo (Beland Lindahl 2008, pp.108-109).

Power, in turn, can be summarized as when people try to influence others in both economic and non-economic ways. Power also has to do with social inclusion an/or exclusion, either of groups or individuals as the latter two indirectly increase influence of some and decrease influence of others. Furthermore, power is not static, but can be obtained through possessing respect, influence and competence. It is important to note that this respect need not necessarily be 'true'; power can also be obtained through *perceived* respect, influence and/or competence (Ryser and Halseth 2010). Hague and Harrop (2010) state that

> If we view politics as the pursuit of shared goals, we will see [power] as a resource of the political community as a whole. But if we interpret politics as an arena un which competing groups pursue their own particular objectives, we are more likely to measure power by the group's ability to overcome opposition. (ibid., p.11)

Thus, power can be seen as both positive and negative, depending on how one views what politics is and should be.

In investigating both rural development and mining processes, examining governance is important since it functions as "key mechanisms and structures through which responses to rural economic development pressures occur" (Ryser and Halseth 2010, p.517). Seen to the definition of governance presented above, including that of policy and power, it becomes clear that rural development initiatives are located within a web of decision making, political visions, and relationships of influence between groups and actors in a rural setting.

To concretize what has been outlined above, policy and power becomes important in the case of rural development and mining investments, as these mining investments and processes are under heavy influence of both policy/-ies and power. Furthermore, it is important to note that policy and power are at play on different governance levels and all set the framework within which the municipalities can or cannot act *vis-à-vis* the mining investment process.

Mineral extraction in Sweden is not only guided by Swedish policy and legislation (for example the Swedish mineral policy and the Swedish Environmental Code), but also by European Union (EU) policy and legislation. Furthermore, in a more globalized world, what happens in Sweden is intricately linked to, among other trends, global politics and changing mineral prices. Pettersson and Knobblock (2010) exemplify this in that

> The mining sector … has undergone substantial changes over the past decades. Increasing globalization, neoliberal tendencies, innovation and technological development have led to industrial restructuring in several ways, with major implications for firms, places and regions related to mining activities (ibid., p.65)

Mines and mineral investments are no longer isolated cases supplying a region or in the wider setting, a whole nation. Mines and mining investments in specific locations are part of a global market, navigated by supply-and-demand (affecting prices) and changes in global political trends. An example of this can be seen in the increasing demand of minerals linked to new technology. Mining companies have started to look in 'new places' for minerals essential to the production of smartphones and computers as well as 'green technology' such as electric cars and wind- and solar

power. Increased awareness of the often-problematic aspects of extracting what it sometimes labelled 'conflict minerals' in the global south have led to regulations to minimize the risks of human rights violations as a result of conflict in the locations of extractions (cf. European Commission 2017).

In relation to governance and in particular to power and policy, a central concept in this thesis is the municipal *standpoint*. A standpoint is here defined as a position taken for or against a specific problem or situation. This means that a standpoint is an official reaction to a problem or situation, as a way to clearly state one's position towards it. It links to the concept of frames presented in chapter 3.2 below, in that it is understood as the result of the framing process that is triggered by a problem or situation that demands action.

The two cases of Karlsborg and Jokkmokk municipalities are both situated within the Swedish governance web. They are also part of a global world where market forces and supra-national bodies affect what happens within the municipalities themselves. Focusing on power and policy in relation to decision making allows for examining environmental policy, the relationship between power and policy making, as well as uncover power imbalances within the municipalities. What decisions the municipalities make are related to the political composition of the *kommunfullmäktige*. Understanding who do or do not have power within the *kommunfullmäktige* is therefore key to understanding the standpoint being made.

3.2 Framing rural development

The two cases in focus of this thesis represent two contrasting standpoints on mining investments. In extension, they can even be seen as expressions on whether mining investment are part of rural development or not. Added to the three themes presented in the chapters 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and 3.1.3, the concept of frames is introduced in order to better understand the different perspectives that municipalities display on controversial resource projects like mining.

The rationale behind examining municipal standpoints as connected to frames and framing is a conscious decision on how to understand how decisions are being made. Rather than viewing decision making as building on strictly rational and informed choices, with a logic that "decision-

makers first identify empirically the existence of a problem, then formulate the goals and objectives that would lead to an optimal solution" (Fischer 2003, p.4), this thesis affirms a more complex view that emerged in the late 1900s. Through this view, building on social constructionist assumptions, politics and society are seen as intertwined: an arena where "social meanings [are] produced and reproduced through discursive practices [and] politics and public policy are understood to take shape through socially interpreted understandings" (ibid., p.13). In other words, political decisions and formulations of policies build not on objective facts about the world, but rather on how decision maker interpret and speak about the world, and the understandings that are created through these interpretations and argumentations.

Following this, frames are results of a 'socially interpreted understanding' (in the words of Fischer) of a problem or a situation. They are ways for different actors to organize information relating to the problem or situation, and they "determine what the actors will consider the 'facts' to be and how these lead to normative prescriptions for action" (ibid., p.144). Frames are thus results of actors' social interpretation of 'facts', and guide how the actors react and chose the way forward to tackle the problem or situation at hand.

As a concrete example and related to natural resource use, Karin Beland Lindahl (2008), on forestry controversies in Jokkmokk municipality, explains frames and the analysis of frames in relation to her research project in the following way:

> …different actors tend to have quite diverging understandings of places, their natural resources and the policy problems at stake. … Frame analysis is typically a way to investigate the organization of experience, i.e. multiple understandings [of different situations and phenomena], as well as the action biases they give rise to. (ibid., p.68)

Frames and frame analysis build, as shown in the quote above from Beland Lindahl, on the idea that when faced with a complex problem that needs to be solved or a decision that needs to be taken, *people build their decision and way forward on previous experience*. Continuing on the discussion of 'socially interpreted understandings', frames can be explained as ways for people to organize previous experience into a comprehensive understanding of a problem or a situation, and the frames also bias for action in the sense that they become rationales for solutions to the problem or situation (ibid.).

Important to emphasize is that although frames are constructed by people as reactions to a problem or a situation and as a way to motivate how to react to it, the ways that previous experience is organized to form a certain frame is situated within a bigger context of politics, economy, and history. This has been called a 'nested context' (cf. Fischer 2003 p.146). The implications of this for this thesis are that although the participants' understandings of rural development and mining build on their own organization of previous experience, it should also be influenced by their 'location' in place and history.

3.3 Analytical framework

To conclude this third chapter, the three research themes presented in chapters 3.1.1 (*changing circumstances of rural development*), 3.1.2 (*role of place or community*), and 3.1.3 (*governance*) are combined with the concept of frames. Together, an analytical framework is formed that guides the data analysis and discussion on results in chapters 5 and 6.

As a summary of what has been outlined in chapters 3.1.1—3.1.3 Ryser and Halseth (2010) present the following overview of the longstanding research themes on rural development:

Changing circumstances of rural economies	**Role of place or community**	**Governance**	**Emergent issues**
Restructuring	Community economic development	Policy	Critique of economic diversification
Economic restructuring	Assets	Government withdrawal	Genuine transition
Capital	Natural capital	New role of local government/policy	Limitations
Services restructuring	Peri-urban	Problems with local planning	Shifting approaches to rural development
Labor restructuring	Planning	Conflicting policies	Regional development
Population restructuring	Building capacity	Limitations of government policies	Cluster development
Barriers/challenges to development	Limited capacity	Environmental policies	Comparative vs. competitive
Funding	Human capital	Policies and power	Knowledge economy
Isolation	Social learning	Formulation of policies	Creative economy
Conflict	Mechanisms	Innovative policies	Social economy
	Social inclusion	Regional development policies	Ascendancy of place
	Social exclusion	Governance power	Place-based development
	Social capital	Those who do not have power	Select topics
		Those who do have power	Agroforestry
		Barriers to change in power relations	Carbon sequestration
			Agrotourism
			Tourism
			Other innovations

Table 1: Longstanding research themes (Ryser and Halseth, 2010, p.512). Rights reserved to reproduce table from Rightslink, see Appendix 3

Emergent issues are, although in the table above positioned on the same "level" as the three other themes, not a coherent research theme in itself. Rather, it includes indications on up-and-coming research themes on rural development that can be placed within the other three themes.

In this thesis, the analytical framework consists of a marrying of the three research themes seen in Table 1 with the concept of frames. On the basis of the definition of frames as presented earlier in this chapter, the "sub-themes" of the three research themes (e.g. *restructuring*, *mechanisms*, or *governance power*) are viewed here as arguments or rationales to which actors can organize their experiences into frames. Analyzing municipal standpoints on mining through the lens of the three research themes and the concept of frames thus means, for this thesis, to delve into actors' personal rural development related experiences, map out how these experiences are organized by the actors into rural development frames, and finally, to discuss how these relate to municipal standpoints on mining. When coupled with the concept of frames, the above discussion can be summarized as the following analytical framework[5]:

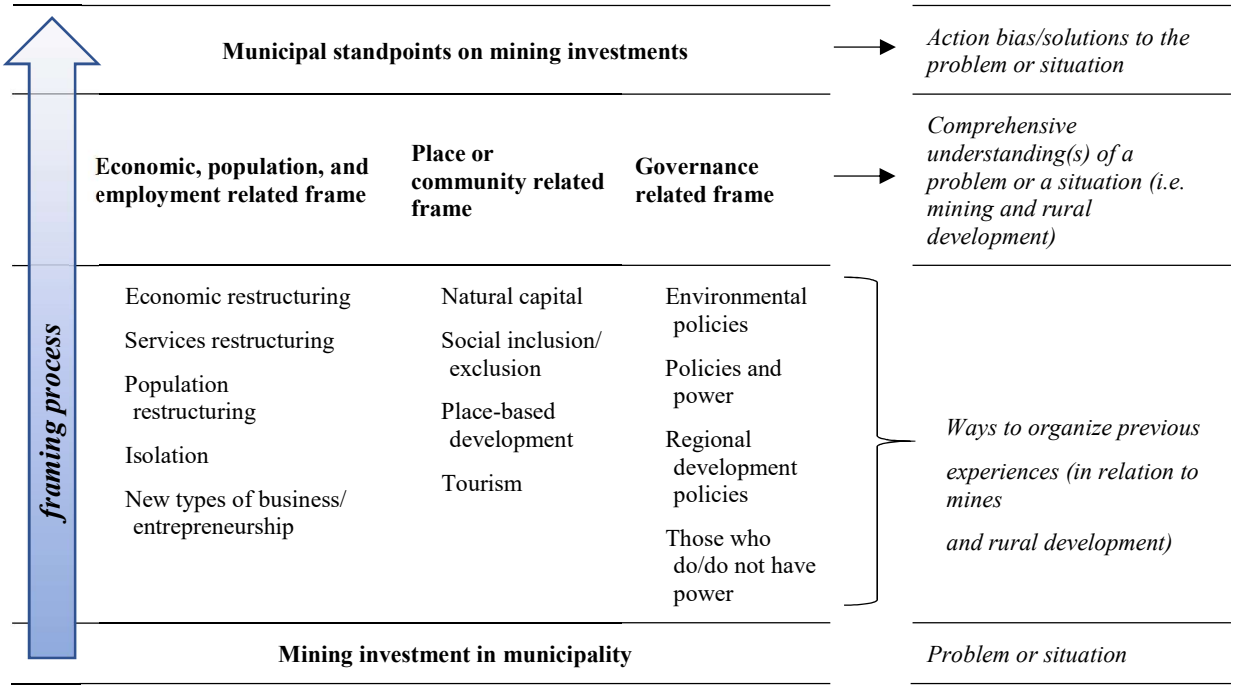

Table 2: Analytical framework on municipal standpoints on mining investments

[5] As evident, the heading "emerging issues" has been removed. As mentioned earlier, this heading does not necessarily constitute its own research theme but rather groups emergent issues that, when relevant, in the Analytical framework in Table 2 fall under the other three research themes.

The three research themes can be seen as three ways to frame rural development: is it about different forms of restructuring and other barriers or challenges to economic development; is it about the role of a specific place or community for development; or is it a matter of policy, governance and power? The same questions can be asked about mining: is it a factor for different forms of restructuring (e.g. employment or population) and a source to or mitigating factor for funding, isolation and conflict; does it affect (either positively or negatively) the place or community in its vicinity; and how is it connected to policy, governance and power?

Through combining the three research themes and their "sub-themes" with the concept of frames, and in turn through applying the theoretically grounded analytical framework presented above to the data, it becomes possible to analyze the two cases and attempt to answer the research question(s) of this thesis. Chapters 3.1.1, 3.1.2, and 3.1.3 have presented the three research themes as related to the features of the two cases of Karlsborg and Jokkmokk. Narrowing down the sub-themes in Figure 2 and thus focusing on aspects of rural development relevant to the two cases allows for comparing the two cases in line with the methodology outlined in the following chapter.

4 Research design and methods

4.1 Research design

The research design used for this thesis is the *comparative case study* design. A *single* case study is a research project which "is concerned with the complexity and particular nature of the case in question" (Bryman 2016, p.60). In a case study, what is aimed for is to examine, analyze and draw conclusions about a phenomenon, a location, a community, an organization, an event—anything that "is an object of interest in its own rights", with the ultimate objective to "reveal the unique features of the case" (ibid., p.61).

A *comparative* case study is a research design in which two cases are examined using the same research methods for both cases. The rationale for conducting comparative studies is that they allow us to "understand social phenomena better when they are compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases" (ibid., p.65). In this thesis, the type of comparison that is carried out is based on "select[ing] cases on the basis of *similarity* rather than difference" (ibid., p.68). It is thus the *differences* that are found between the cases that are assumed to be the factors that that are of importance for the difference in outcome. Examining two 'meaningfully contrasting cases' means to select two cases with many similarities (that can be eliminated as explanatory for the outcome) and uncover and analyze a few key differences as underlying the different outcomes. The aim of using this type of comparative case selection, where two cases that to a large extent match are examined side-by-side, is thus "to uncover the factors that may be responsible for differences that are observed" (ibid., p.68). Going back to the research aim of this thesis—*to explore and understand contrasting standpoints on mining investments by Swedish municipalities in relation to framings of rural development and mining*—Karlsborg and Jokkmokk (two cases that share many features) are therefore examined side-by-side in order to uncover factors that explain why the outcomes (i.e. the different standpoints on mining investments) differ.

To summarize, in order to examine the phenomenon of interest (i.e. municipal standpoints on mining investments), isolation of key differences between the cases through side-by-side comparison is coupled with an understanding of the phenomenon as dependent not on explicit events that have taken place earlier in time but rather on contextual and social factors. This allows for understanding why the phenomenon of interest differs between the two cases.

4.2 Data collection and sampling

Primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews with purposefully selected respondents from the two municipalities. Complementary data was collected from official municipal documents and statements, and newspaper articles (see chapter 4.2.2). A time delimitation has been made: data that is analyzed (i.e. from interviews and key documents) is data collected no later than end of March 2018. In ever evolving cases, setting a time limit for data collection is important to ensure credibility of the analysis, as it gives the reader a clear view of what events have been taken into account and what events have not. Setting the "closing date" for the time delimitation to March 2018 was a strategic decision as it was during that month that interviews were carried out. In refraining from using data newer than from March 2018, the aim is to maximize the likelihood that the opinions presented in the interviews correspond with the complementary data.

4.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

With the research aim of this study in mind, capturing the participants' understandings of mining and rural development requires the right initial questions, as well as appropriate follow up questions to explore certain answers that are given during the interview. The semi-structured interview makes it possible to have prepared questions about important information, but also to not be limited to those prepared questions when conducting the interview. Other possible data collection methods were eliminated after thoughtful consideration. For example, focus groups were ruled out particularly based on research ethical considerations regarding the dynamics within the Jokkmokk case. During the background mapping of the case, it became evident that there were tensions within the municipal board, where the Green Party had expressed that they felt left out from certain decision-making processes (Sameradion & SVT Sápmi 2018). Semi-structured interviews thus offered a data collection setting where (hopefully) each participant would feel most free to speak out on for example internal municipal democracy.

For the interviews, an interview guide was developed based on the framework presented in Kallio et al. (Kallio et al. 2016). As the interviews were conducted in Swedish, the interview guides were

also written in Swedish. A summary of the interview guide in English can be found in Appendix 2.

After having chosen semi-structured interviews as the most appropriate primary data collection method, case background mapping and a literature review was conducted in order to gain a good understanding of the topic. The result laid as a foundation for the formulation of the preliminary interview guide. Seven main discussion points were identified based on the background mapping, the literature review, as well as the three research themes outlined in chapter 3. Each discussion point was provided with several follow-up questions. These discussion points and follow-up questions were the same for all six participants (but, since the interviews were semi-structured, several other individual follow-up questions also arose during the interviews). An active decision was made that the first half of the interview was concerned more with the participant's general understanding of rural development (as identified in the theoretical framework), and the second half linked the first half to the issue of mining and rural development as possible mining strategy.

4.2.2 Interview selection

In order to ensure comparability over the two cases, three persons from each municipality with similar positions/responsibilities (during the time of research for this thesis) were chosen:

JOKKMOKK	KARLSBORG
Chairperson of the municipal executive board [ordförande för kommunstyrelsen], representing the Social democrats	**Chairperson of the municipal executive board** [ordförande för kommunstyrelsen], representing the Social democrats
Member of the municipal executive board Representing the Green Party, which is in opposition	**Representative for the opposition** [oppositionsborgarråd], member of the municipal executive board. Representing the Centre Party (green liberal)
Head of growth [chef för tillväxtenheten] Not politically elected or affiliated	**Head of the Social structure board/function** [chef för samhällsbyggnadsnämnden], Not politically elected or affiliated

Table 3: Participants interviewed in the study

In order to facilitate the comparison, participants with similar positions/responsibilities from the two municipalities were chosen. Since the aim was to understand the *municipal* standpoint on

mining investments and rural development, the choice was made to only collect data from persons working within the municipal organizations, as they were assumed to have some sort of power or insight in rural development work in general, and the mining issue in particular, and thus can be seen as representing the municipality's/their political parties' view(s). In order to gain an understanding of aspects of governance also *within* the municipalities, it was important to capture voices not only from the ruling party but also from parties in opposition.

The two representatives from the non-political part of the municipalities (i.e. the Head of the Social structure board in Jokkmokk and the Head of growth in Karlsborg) were chosen because the municipalities are not only just a political organization but also employ many civil servants carrying out political decision. The two persons from the civil servant part of the municipality were chosen because they are in charge of functions/departments that relate closely to the mining issue and were seen as important to include to capture not only the political aspect of the municipalities.

4.2.3 Key documents

In addition to the interviews, a group of *key documents* have been identified. These documents facilitate *triangulation*, i.e. modes of cross-checking the data obtained from the interviews. This is to verify that the participants' main points expressed in the interviews represent not only that specific hour of the interview. The key documents are the following:

- Complemantary statement from Karlsborgs municipality to Bergsstaten ("Karlsborgs kommun kompletterar yttrande", Karlsborg kommun 2017)
- Statement from Norrbotten County Administrative Board, including annexes with statements from Jokkmokk municipality and Sametinget (Länsstyrelsen Norrbotten 2017)
- Radio interview with Henrik Blind regarding Jokkmokk municipality's statement sent to Norrbotten County Administrative Board (P4 Norrbotten 2017)
- Radio interview with Robert Bernhardsson on a mine in Jokkmokk ("Jokkmokks kommunalråd menar att fler jobb är viktigast" Sveriges Radio 2018)
- Local protests and municipal standpoint against a mine in Karlsborg ("Fullt hus för protest mot koboltgruva", Skaraborgsbygden 2018)

4.3 Data analysis

The data will be analyzed using content analysis as described in Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017) as well as through the analytical framework presented in chapter 3.3. Content analysis "is a reflective process" meaning that it is a "continuous process of coding and categorising [and] then returning to the raw data to reflect on your initial analysis" (ibid., p.95). It aims towards breaking down interview or other text data into codes and categories, with the overall aim "to systematically transform a large amount of text into a highly organised and concise summary of key results" (ibid., p.94). This makes it possible for the researcher to capture not only what has been said explicitly, but also what content or meanings that are underlying or not explicitly expressed by the respondent(s) (Bryman 2016).

According to Kohlbacher (2006), content analysis is a data analysis tool that helps the researcher to deal with the complexity of qualitative (and case study) research, stating that it

> … takes a holistic and comprehensive approach towards analyzing data material and thus achieves to (almost) completely grasp and cover the complexity of the social situations examined and social data material derived from them. At the same time, qualitative content uses a rule-based and methodologically controlled approach in order to deal with the complexity and gradually reduce it. The procedures of summary, explication and structuring step-by-step reduce complexity and filter out the main points of analysis in an iterative process. (Kohlbacher 2006)

Content analysis helps to "de-complexify" social phenomena, by breaking them down into smaller parts (codes) and re-assembling the data into categories and theme that enables an overview of the phenomenon of interest.

In this thesis, the semi structured interviews were fully transcribed. The transcriptions were coded based on the sub-themes in the analytical framework (see Figure 2). This was a vital step in the analytical process as it made it possible to 'strip' the transcriptions of words and sentences that did not answer to the research questions. By coding the transcriptions, it was possible to start understanding the data in relation to the aim of this thesis. The codes were applied to both single words as well as sections of text. What was important was to find the core messages of the participants' answers and find the linkages to the themes within the analytical framework.

After the coding process, the coded interview fragments were categorized in the sense that different fragments were grouped together to even more find and emphasize linkages. Here, it was also possible to start connecting fragments from different interviewees to each other, in order to find a more coherent red thread that may provide the answer to the research question.

The content analysis process can, in relation to the analytical framework applied in this thesis, be understood as a way to 'back trace' the municipalities' framing of the mining investment issue: starting with the problem/situation (i.e. the mining investment) and moving towards the ways to organize previous experiences (i.e. the sub-themes that form the coding basis), and finally finding the linkages (i.e. grouping the codes into categories) that motivate the interviewees' comprehensive understanding(s) of the problem/situation. Content analysis is thus used as the tool to conduct this 'back tracing' in a reliable and methodical way.

4.4 Ethical considerations

Mining investments are a delicate topic. Heavy local community protests are a part of both case contexts, and in the Jokkmokk case it was clear already before the interviews that the opinions on mining investments would be different among the interview participants. Silverman (2010) emphasizes that "the independence and impartiality of researchers must be clear, and any conflict of interest or partiality must be explicit" (ibid.). Thus, when contacting the participants, I made it clear that I would not take side on the question of a mine's "to be or not to be", but rather that I was interested in understanding the participants' perceptions, stressing that the aim of the thesis is not to simply prove one side or the other right or wrong.

Although ethical codes vary across universities, Silverman (ibid.) conclude that some ethical criteria are generally agreed upon. Within this master thesis, they have been addressed in the following way:

- <u>voluntary participation and the right to withdraw</u>
  The participants were contacted through their official municipal email addresses, and they were informed in the initial email about the research project and its purpose.

- assessment of potential benefits and risks to participants

  Benefits: personal standpoints could be clarified (beneficial for their position vis-à-vis the local community), as opposed to if only official statements or media articles would have been used in data collection

  Risks: that my research project might cause tensions within the communities. However, the two mining investment processes have been under media coverage, and the municipalities' standpoints have been made official earlier on in the process, thus not too much more sensitive information should emerge
- obtaining informed consent

  Interviewees were asked whether they approved of the interviews to be recorded (a positive answer from all six respondents), and at one or two occasions something was said with the comment that it should not be included in the final text, which has been respected. The participants were also asked whether or not they consented to being contacted by email later on during the thesis process if questions should emerge (six positive answers), and whether they wanted a copy of the final thesis (six positive answers)
- not doing harm

  Participants were informed that the recorded interview would be available only to me, and that the transcribed interview would be available in its entirety only to me and the thesis supervisor

Furthermore, it should be noted that all interviewees are public officials who are legally mandated to meet civilians and to demonstrate transparency of their actions. Thus, the interviewees are well aware of their public position and their rights and obligations as public officials. Seen from a research ethical perspective, interviewing such persons can be considered generally less sensitive. Lastly, it should be noted that all translations of the interviews, as presented in the thesis, has been made by the author. The interviewees have been given the opportunity to see the final citations before publishing.

5 Data and analysis

This chapter contains the data analysis and findings from the research. The analysis has been conducted based on the analytical framework presented in Chapter 3 and has been conducted through using the methodology of content analysis. The chapter is divided into four sub-chapters. Chapters 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 present data connected to the three different frames suggested in the analytical framework. These three chapters reflect sub-questions *a*, *b* and *c* to the overall research question. The chapters presents analyses on how the different interviewees *organize previous experience* in relation to mines and mining development, as a way to formulate comprehensive understandings of the problem/situation at hand, which is the possibility of a mining investment in their respective municipalities. In chapter 5.4, the analyses in chapters 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 are collected in order to answer the overall research question of this thesis: *How do different framings of rural development and mining shape contrasting municipal standpoints on mining investments?*

5.1 How do municipalities frame mining and rural development in terms of economy, population, and employment?

In the *yttrande* (official standpoint) to the Norrbotten County Administrative Board (CAB), Jokkmokk's municipal board makes an official standpoint which is clearly positive regarding a mining investment in the municipality. The municipal board, led by Robert Bernhardsson, emphasizes that Jokkmokk is facing demographic challenges and that

> A positive decision from the Norrbotten CAB in this case contributes to better possibilities for diversified businesses, infrastructural investments [in the railway] as well as in the road network … Jokkmokk municipality needs more employment opportunities and strong businesses. (Jokkmokk municipality in *Länsstyrelsen Norrbotten 2017, my translation*)

What is expressed here is the understanding that a mine would offer job opportunities as well as attract capital and people to Jokkmokk. In the interview conducted with Bernhardsson for this thesis, these arguments are mirrored. Bernhardsson argues that the current situation, with the municipality itself being the main employer, creates an imbalance between the public and private sector, and that there is a need for a bigger share of the citizens to work in the private sector and to enable possibilities for companies to invest. When asked about mining as part of rural development, Bernhardsson argues that

> … we need more people who want to invest in the municipality … That is what creates possibilities for more jobs and a belief in the future … What Jokkmokk needs is more citizens who live here and pay taxes and so on. [Positive effects of a mine for the municipality] is that the number of job opportunities increase. This means more tax payers. (Interview with Robert Bernhardsson 9 March 2018, *my translation*)

The way that the problem/situation (a mining investment) is approached by Bernhardsson and how previous experiences in relation to mines and rural development is organized, is clearly linked to aspects of population and labor restructuring, which in turn is being linked to funding. A mining investment in the municipality is seen as the way to create more employment opportunities for the municipality, which in turn will generate income. It is also presented as a way to diversify the current labor market, which will have effects on possibilities to expand.

This framing of the problem/situation is visible also in the viewpoint of Stefan Andersson (Jokkmokk civil servant). Andersson argues that mines can be a part of rural development, and that it is the employment opportunities that are the main positive effects, both in themselves but also because they generate other positive effects on the municipality:

> …like all other business establishments [they] usually generate jobs, they generate further investments that need suppliers. [These are] businesses that already exist in the neighborhoods. /…/ Of course we need more children in our pre-schools, we need more children, and if [a mine] would help then that would be really good for growth in Jokkmokk (Interview with Stefan Andersson March 8 2018, *my translation*)

Here, the problem/situation of a mining investment is being connected to the larger problem/situation of a declining population and less children born, which affects growth. In this view, a mine would generate side effects of in-migration of younger people who can contribute to the municipality in a variety of ways. What is emphasized is the organization of previous experience (of a declining population and a negative rural development trend) as related to aspects of employment and hopes for in-migration.

As has been outlined in the background chapter, the municipal board of Karlsborg is negative towards a mine in their municipality. Still, some references to labor and population restructuring are found also in the data from these interviews. First of all, in the late 1990s, major restructurings

of the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) regiment were made. An important part of the regiment was moved from the municipality, and the new department which was later located to Karlsborg had previously been located in Skövde. In the words of Peter Lindroth, the regiment restructuring meant a loss of 15% of the municipality's population, with a large share of that being from the fertile part of the population. This shows that the municipality has faced significant labor and population restructuring in the last decades. Still, the municipality has managed to recover well:

> … since the early 2000s the municipality has been doing better and better … and score well in many rankings when it comes to school grade results and care of older people … So that feels really good and that shows that you don't have to be that many [inhabitants] but that the municipality can do well anyway. Then of course we have the advantage of being *really close* to our neighboring municipalities, there are no difficulties here with long distances… (Interview with Peter Lindroth March 13 2018, *my translation*)

In light of the above, it is also interesting to examine Lindroth's thoughts on rural development and mining's possible role in/for rural development. Interestingly, Lindroth points at contributions of the mining industry to increased employment and development in the municipality, but at the same time dismisses it as a real possibility for Karlsborg specifically:

> [Rural development] is to create opportunities for people to live all over the municipality … we have been hit by this 'intra-communal urbanization'[6], which is a greater threat I think than the regular urbanization. Many have moved from the smaller villages to the town of Karlsborg. Cuts, or restructurings if you use fancy language, in education and the care of older people [have been necessary]. /…/ The [proposed] mining investment that is located here, and the way it is located … that is not a good example of rural development. Of course that has to be valued in relation to the creation of employment opportunities … but I think that this is tricky, from many angles but not least in relation to tourism, which is really important to us. (Interview with Peter Lindroth March 13 2018, *my translation*)

In comparing the Jokkmokk and Karlsborg cases in terms of how mining and rural development is framed in terms of economy, population and employment, it becomes evident that both municipalities have their struggles in terms of population and labor restructuring. Still, in

[6] Urbanization that takes places within the municipality's borders, i.e. people moving from rural areas or smaller villages to the main town or towns. Centralization of people to one or a few main towns or cities within the municipality's borders.

Karlsborg the understanding of the problem/situation (a mining investment) does not bias for action of taking a positive standpoint.

It seems that one key to this can be found in the aspects of isolation and in extension the need to rely on a mine for employment opportunities and the availability of other employment options. Lindroth's statements can be analyzed as containing a lack of the isolation aspect (part of the economic, population and employment related frame). Karlsborg enjoys a greater closeness to other municipalities (which, in this case have much larger towns than Karlsborg and thus offer a more diverse set of employment opportunities). In this line of thinking, *non*-isolation seems to be a factor that affects the framing of mining as *not* being part of rural development.

In summarizing the above, when mining and rural development is framed as a matter of economy, population and employment, what is emphasized is not only the direct the generation of employment opportunities from a mine, but also in terms of 'positive side effects' for the municipality in large. A mine is seen as a way to diversify a labor market that is reliant on one or two main employers. It is also seen as a way to attract new inhabitants, that bring with them families, which as an overall effect of increased population and tax-paying residents.

5.2 How do municipalities frame mining and rural development in terms of place or community?

The Green Party in Jokkmokk was the first of the political parties in Jokkmokk to officially make a negative statement on a mine in Kallak. Henrik Blind describes a meeting that was held between the political parties and the mining company, at which the Green Party asked the mining company how they saw mining not only in terms of environmental impact, but also in terms of social impact. According to Henrik, "they did not even understand the question itself". As was outlined in the background chapter, in line with the Swedish mineral law, any resource extraction company must conduct an environmental impact assessment (EIA) of the project in the initial stage of the process. What Henrik and the Green Party reacted to, was that the mining company did not seem to understand that a mine would also affect the people living and working in the area. When asked about who it is that would have to face the most negative effects of a mine, Henrik responds

> Well, it is the future generations. It's our kids and grandchildren … And I think that, from that point of view, it's really egoistic of our generation to take that opportunity away from them: to be able to work and live in this amazing municipality. To be able to just sit down at a marsh and look in any direction and know that wherever you look, the view that you see continues beyond that. … You feel like you're part of something bigger. And then we decide to take that opportunity away from them and instead they will have to stare into a pit of poison, a mining waste pit. To me that is nothing but irresponsible (Interview with Henrik Blind, 9th March 2018 *my translation*)

To Blind and the Green Party of Jokkmokk, a mine is something bigger than an investment at a certain point in time with the aim of extracting a resource in accordance with Swedish mineral law. A mine is a threat not only to Blind himself, but to future generations as well. It is a threat towards enjoying the nature of Jokkmokk, a place that has something unique to offer. The way that a comprehensive understanding of the problem/situation is created here is thus through an organization of previous experience that is closely linked to the natural capital of Jokkmokk and its importance for the community, as well as the exclusion of the Jokkmokk inhabitants in the mining company's attitude towards the community. It might also be seen as a reference towards the possibilities for place-based development in the references to the uniqueness of Jokkmokk.

According to Blind, rural development means each citizen's ability and right to develop as a person. It means having the *right* to access social and welfare services offered in Sweden, for example adequate schooling and access to care of old people (*äldrevård*). Rural development is to enjoy life in a rural area

> It's not only about examining some Excel sheet and being able to see increased revenues. It has to do with me having a value when I decide to live in [a rural area] such as Jokkmokk (Interview with Henrik Blind March 9 2018, *my translation*)

Blind's definition relates to human capital and social inclusion, but what is interesting is that, despite offering a definition of rural development that relates mostly to place and community aspects, he also refers to the right to access social and welfare services. It would seem that in this case, place is very much connected to changing circumstances of rural development in that service restructuring has a place dimension: social and welfare services are more difficultly accessed in rural places.

In relation to the framing of mining and rural development in relation to place or community which is presented above, it is interesting to add the view of Catarina Davidsson, part of the political opposition in Karlsborg and representative of the Centre party, which is historically rooted in the agricultural businesses and which today emphasizes a closeness to local places. Davidsson's understanding of rural development is straightforward: rural development is development that benefits rural areas. When bringing in the issue of mining and its possible role in rural development, Davidsson arguments, in relation to her definition of rural development, that

> … a mine by Unden, that would not benefit the communities, it does not benefit the environment. [A mine by Unden] would not be rural development. But if you open a mine in northern Sweden, then it is almost a requirement in order for people to have a job at all. [In that situation] I think that it is rural development … The mining industry in northern Sweden is almost a must. But down here we have other opportunities to develop other things, like tourism for example. So, I think it depends on where you place a mine (Interview with Catarina Davidsson March 12 2018, *my translation*)

When exemplifying further why a mine is not part of rural development in Karlsborg, Davidsson mentions the many negative effects on the environment. The water and location of the possible mine is central in this, both in terms of leisure time and the role of the place itself:

> …the environmental effects are a really important part of it because I mean, lake Vättern is a Natura 2000-area, and lake Unden is connected to Vättern. And we have people who take their [drinking] water from Unden, too. If something was to happen to it, many many people would be affected … And not only those that would be affected right now, but it is also future generations that would be affected … But there are other things that are also negative aspects of having a mine [by Unden]; you would simply destroy the nature there. And the people, they *have* chosen to live in that place for a reason (Interview with Catarina Davidsson March 12 2018, *my translation*)

The two interview quotes presented above provide an interesting but complex angle to the framing of mining of rural development in relation place or community. While Davidsson does connect the problem/situation to place or community-based themes, it seems that her way to organize previous experience of mining and rural development has a different origin. The remarks on the role of mining in Karlsborg versus northern Sweden emphasizes something which was brought up in chapter 2.5: the difference between Karlsborg and Jokkmokk municipalities in terms of historical relationship with the mining industry. When compared to the statements of Henrik Blind on the role of place and community for development in Jokkmokk, and the possibilities in more place-

based employment sectors such as tourism, Davidsson's statements seem to contain a contradiction in that mines cannot be part of rural development in Karlsborg because they have negative environmental effects, but they *can* (or almost should be) part or rural development in Jokkmokk (as part of northern Sweden), even though Blind disagrees and points at negative environmental effects there as well.

Finally, the importance of tourism for rural development is emphasized also by Håkan Karlsson, who says that

> Personally, I have a hard time seeing mining as part of rural development. Sure, it might lead to a number of jobs in Karlsborg, but that needs to be seen in relation to other values. All the nature values that we have here … tourism and related businesses, they are really important for Karlsborg. A mine is affecting the nature, road traffic in the area increases in areas that are perhaps very sensitive to pressure … that is what I fear with mining. I don't think that a mine is necessary to develop Karlsborg (Interview with Håkan Karlsson March 13 2018, *my translation*)

Although some deviances are shown compared in Davidssons arguments above (mines are not part of rural development in Karlsborg due to place or community related aspects, but are a natural part of rural development in northern Sweden), the analysis above suggests that when aspects of nature values and tourism as well as place-specific contextual aspects of the municipalities are emphasized, a negative position towards mining in one's municipality is the outcome.

5.3 How do municipalities frame mining and rural development in relation to and in terms of governance?

As was outlined in chapter 2, the role of the Swedish municipality is complex. While it is the municipality that is obliged to provide many welfare services to its inhabitants, it is more or less bypassed by other governmental bodies on other questions concerning its geographical area or inhabitants. As has been pointed out, mining investments are one such example. While lacking formal right to give input or approve/object a mining investment, *if* a mine is in fact decided to be located within its borders, the municipality will still need to take charge of many related activities. In light of this, it is crucial to bring into the analysis the municipalities' views of aspects of governance, both within the municipality but also in relation to regional and national bodies. The rationale behind bringing in governance aspects into the analysis can be summarized as the

following: seen to that the municipalities have no formal power over the process—why do they bother to take a clear (and often loud) standpoint for or against it?

In the interviews, the participants were asked about, among other things, their relationship with the CAB, how they perceived the relationship between the municipality (as political and civil servant body) and the inhabitants, how the inhabitants can affect politics, and how they feel about their lack of power in the mining investment process. Altogether, these questions aimed to capture different levels of governance, as well as aspects of power relations and possible policy conflicts.

In Karlsborg, an important event that links governance and the mining process was when the mining topic was raised during a *kommunfullmäktige* meeting early on in the process. Catarina Davidsson explains

> We have something called 'the people's question' … that's when the people [of Karlsborg municipality] can send in a question that will be discussed at the *kommunfullmäktige*, but it is very strict in terms of what you can ask … A question [about the proposed mining investment] was brought up during *kommunfullmäktige* and everyone except our chairperson just sat there [and did not understand anything]. None of us knew that this question had been submitted, and none of us knew that we had received a submission for comment [about the proposed mine] that we needed to answer. Not even I—the representative for the opposition—knew about it (Interview with Catarina Davidsson March 12 2018, *my translation*)

The quote from Davidsson above is interesting since it points at information access difficulties within the *kommunfullmäktige*. It seems that the only person who knew that a question about the mining process had been submitted by a Karlsborg citizen was the chairperson (Peter Lindroth). It seems that Davidsson had expected to be involved in what was going on in terms of her being the representative of the political opposition in Karlsborg, and that during the meeting, there was a clear demonstration of power differences within the *kommunfullmäktige*. The majority of the *kommunfullmäktige* representatives present at the meeting did not get to take part of the question and have the time to prepare an answer/position on it in advance.

A similar situation can be found in the Jokkmokk case. Henrik Blind who, similar to Catarina Davidsson, is also part of the political opposition, recalls a growing discontent from the Green Party in that they feel left out from different policy paper and *yttrande* drafting processes:

> …lastly, I have been very critical, for example there have been several *yttranden* submitted by Jokkmokk municipality [to other bodies] … that have been signed by the *kommunfullmäktige* chairperson in the name of Jokkmokk municipality [as a whole]. It has not been up for discussion at the *kommunfullmäktige* meetings. This means that the opinion of the opposition is not part of these *yttranden*. That means that the one receiving the *yttrande* only sees the municipality's logo and therefore thinks that this is the opinion of Jokkmokk municipality … What we in the opposition can do is to say that this is not OK, and then send a separate *yttrande* [that explains the deviating opinion]. We have done that on the issue of Kallak (Interview with Henrik Blind March 9 2018, *my translation*)

In order to better understand what Blind is referring to, it is interesting to compare his perception of the decision-making process with the official statement that he refers to (sent to the Norrbotten CAB from Jokkmokk municipality):

> Our wish is that Norrbotten CAB … more actively contributes to efforts that promote investments [in the municipality] … *It is important that Norrbotten CAB views this case as strategically important for a municipality that the government assesses is in need of specific efforts to ensure the social welfare.* (Jokkmokk's municipality in *Länsstyrelsen Norrbotten* 2017. *My translation*. Italic text in original source)

Similar to what Davidsson recalls from the Karlsborg decision making mechanism, what Blind's statement highlights, especially in light of the statement by Jokkmokk municipality to the Norrbotten CAB, is the relationship between those who do and do not have the power to affect the official municipal standpoint on the mining issue. Here in the Jokkmokk case, the power dimension is also linked to the conflicting policies of the Green Party and the Social Democrats respectively in relation to mining. This is included in the analytical framework: the policies and power sub-theme connected to the governance related frame. This is an important example of how governance plays into the creation of an action bias/creation of a solution to the problem/situation of a mining investment. If certain groups from the political decision-making machinery are left out from the process, the action bias (in this case the official municipal standpoint on a mining investment) may hide intra-municipal policy disagreements.

In light of the above, it is interesting to examine the participants' view on the relationship with their respective CABs as well as other governmental bodies that are involved in the mining processes. In the Jokkmokk case, Robert Bernhardsson clearly expresses tensions between Jokkmokk municipality and Norrbotten CAB when it comes to the question of a mine in Kallak. Bernhardsson argues that

> The CAB does not see the challenges that Jokkmokk municipality is facing when it comes to land use or job opportunities and so on. I have a lot of discussions with the CAB on this … My feeling is that the CAB is indifferent towards conversations about job opportunities and the importance of trying to find ways to get adults to move to Jokkmokk … The CAB's agenda regarding Jokkmokk is complex … they act quite harshly and don't listen. I feel that the CAB is running over Jokkmokk municipality … they are not listening to our arguments. (Interview with Robert Bernhardsson 9 March 2018, *my translation*)

Bernhardsson's statement as well as the official standpoint by the municipality quoted earlier not only points at different opinions between Bernhardsson and the municipal board and the CAB respectively, but also highlights differences in power regarding the mining process and development policies. Interestingly, it seems that Bernhardsson's perception of the CAB is related to how he frames mining and rural development (i.e. the economic, population and employment related frame).

Henrik Blind's and the Green Party's relationship with the Norrbotten CAB is different than that of the Social democrats, which is interesting in relation to the power and policies discussion above. Blind says that

> Here in Jokkmokk we've had many discussions on the role of the CAB, in relation to creation of nature reserves and protected forests, where the political leadership is very critical towards how the CAB has decided to protect certain areas … when it comes to the cases of Kallak and nature reserves [created by the CAB], we have two completely different views on the CAB (Interview with Henrik Blind March 9 2018, *my translation*)

According to Blind, the CAB's role of carrying out decisions, can, when *not* in line with political interests, create a sort of 'rebellious feeling' towards the CAB. He emphasizes the CAB as an

important body on a regional level as it has at least a normative role and often also a real influence on decision.

As was mentioned, an important reason to bringing governance into the analysis is to understand why the municipalities make an official standpoint regarding the proposed mining investments even though they have no formal power in the process. The above analyses of internal processes in the two municipalities' *kommunfullmäktige* and the relationship with the CABs in mind are one piece to this puzzle. The interviews show that the participants are overall aware about the municipalities' somewhat limited role in the mining process. Interestingly, opinions seem to part on whether their lack of influence/power is positive or not. Catarina Davidsson states that

> I think [the lack of power] is really bad. But I also think that it is the local property owners that should have a lot to say about it because it is really their lives that will be affected. But I still think that we as a municipality should have *something* to say about it, it's very frustrating when you can't present your opinions fully and when they are not taken into consideration (Interview with Catarina Davidsson March 12 2018, *my translation*)

Robert Bernhardsson, on the other hand, states that

> I think it would be unfortunate for Sweden if there were municipalities or others that had veto power in matters of investment or infrastructure … I don't think it would benefit growth in Sweden or local growth. But, I am aware that there are questions where I personally would have wished for municipal veto but… the perspective of the Social democrats in Jokkmokk is that veto power [of municipalities] would not benefit Sweden, instead it would obstruct infrastructural investments (Interview with Robert Bernhardsson March 9 2018, *my translation*)

Similarly, Henrik Blind is also cautious in terms of increased municipal decision-making power on the mining issue

> I think it is a pretty good approach that Sweden has decided to apply … I don't think that you should put the decision-making power on the municipal level, for example. I think that you should keep the structure of today, where you actually have governmental bodies that are experts [on their respective areas] and that process cases based on the existing laws and regulations (Interview with Henrik Blind March 9 2018, *my translation*)

While Davidsson argues for increased municipal influence/power in mining processes, both Bernhardsson and Blind are hesitant towards increasing the municipalities' say. This is an interesting and somewhat unexpected result from the interviews, as the latter two participants have expressed mainly diverging opinions on the mining process in Jokkmokk. Still, they refer to somewhat different reasons as to why they think that the municipality's role in the mining process should not be altered. According to Bernhardsson, increased municipal power would risk hindering investments and growth. Again, themes related to the economic, population and employment related frame are emphasized. Henrik Blind's statement is somewhat more difficult to analyze, however in relation to his overall standpoint on a mine as well as description of what makes rural development, it is possible to assume that his reference to expert government bodies relates to a worry that increased municipal power could lead to overriding of for example the CAB's positive role for increased nature protection. Davidsson's opinion on the municipalities' lack of power is interesting. One way to analyze this is through the lens of the unanimous standpoint against a mine by the political parties of Karlsborg. As there is consensus, if the municipalities had greater say in the process there might be less risk of one political party using that for their own interests.

It is evident that aspects of governance, and especially the relationship between policies and power both within the municipalities and in their links to other governmental bodies, is important in the analysis of how they frame the problem/situation of a possible mining investment in their respective municipalities. From the data and analysis, it is clear that the governance-related framing of mining and rural development has to a great extent to do with power, especially linked to how the municipal decision making functions and who gets to be part in shaping the official municipal narrative on mining in rural development. On national policies on mining, opinions part on whether municipalities should have a stronger say in mining processes, and there is no clear linkage between those different opinions and the contrasting standpoints. From the analysis, it becomes clear that while governance should not be seen as a mining and development frame in itself, it plays into the two other proposed frames and highlights aspects of the two.

5.4 How do different framings of mining and rural development shape contrasting municipal standpoints on mining?

Connecting back to the analytical framework provided in chapter 3, the previous three chapters have provided analyses of how action the municipal standpoints on mining investments can be understood as a result of a framing process that starts with a *problem or situation,* in this case a possible mining investment. Representatives from the municipalities respond to the problem or situation through organizing previous experience (in terms of economy, population, employment, place, community, and governance aspects) in relation to mines and rural development. This organization of previous experience result in the formulation of a comprehensive understanding of the problem or situation. In other words, previous experience in relation to mines and rural development creates a frame, which in turn biases for action in relation to the problem or situation. The action is the standpoint on mining investments.

The previous three chapters only analyze the three proposed frames separately. In order to get a deeper understanding of how different framings of mining and rural development shape contrasting standpoints on mining investments, this final analysis chapter will bring together findings from chapters 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 and attempt to answer to the overall research question. First of all, it seems that it is difficult to create a clear divide between the proposed frames. Although most participants do lean more towards one or the other, it is evident that the frames are not exclusive, and that sub-themes found in the analytical framework can have strong connections to sub-themes of one of the other proposed frames. For example, it seems that the importance of *isolation* for the economic, population and employment related frame also can be linked to the place or community related frame. Isolation can be a matter of actual distances to e.g. other urban centers, but it can also be linked to the self-image of rural places.

Furthermore, the analysis shows that the proposed governance related frame should be seen not as an exclusive frame in itself, but rather as a 'layer' two the other two frames. Aspects of governance do not seem to, in themselves, create a separate comprehensive understanding of the problem/situation, but rather emphasize or in other ways play into the organization of experience in relation to mining and rural development in general.

Through analyzing the data using the analytical framework proposed in chapter 3, it appears that the different sub-themes *do* result in different frames. The crucial part of this thesis lies in connecting the frames to the municipal standpoints. Can one frame or another be connected to either a positive or a negative standpoint on mining investments? The analyses carried out in chapter 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 show that some conclusions can be drawn. When previous experience on mining and rural development is organized as connected to place or community related sub-themes, it seems that it is likelier that a negative standpoint on mining investments in one's own municipality follows as a result. Similarly, references to economic, population and employment aspects of mining and rural development seem to be linked to a positive standpoint on mining investments.

However, when summarizing the analysis, it is clear that there is one main factor of uncertainty to the relationship between the different frames and a positive or negative standpoint: contextual factors. For example, the analytical framework does not sufficiently capture aspects of 'historical relatedness' to mining. While related to sub-themes both in the economic, population and employment related frame as well as the place or community related frame, the 'historical relatedness' of mining in Karlsborg and Jokkmokk respectively may play a greater role in the action biases than the analytical framework in this thesis allows for. In other words, the findings suggest that how the two cases are connected to mining historically (i.e. its role in development and in the self-image) seems to play a bigger role than the analytical framework of this thesis can explain.

Furthermore, the sample size of the interviewees might affect what conclusions can be drawn from the analysis. Although the participants in this study should still be considered key persons in the two municipalities, a greater interviewee sample should allow for finding clearer links between individual understandings and municipal outcomes within the framing process. Delving deeper into the different interviewees' own personal and political party links to mining (historically and contemporary) might also provide additional conclusions to be made. Due to the time delimitation of this thesis, this aspect of the interviewees was not taken into consideration.

Still, the analysis shows that there are clear advantages of applying a rural development-based framework when examining the contrasting municipal standpoints. Ideas about rural development, and especially about what rural development means in *one's own specific municipalit*y, appear to be connected to how the interviewees perceive the advantages or disadvantages of a mining investment. The following concluding chapter will summarize the findings from the data analysis, and based on this provide recommendations for ways forward in both policy and research on the understanding of the Swedish municipality's role in mining processes.

6 Conclusions

This final chapter concludes the findings in chapter 5, and presents recommendations for future research as well as policy making. To recapture, the aim of this thesis has been to *explore contrasting standpoints on mining investments by Swedish municipalities in relation to framings of rural development*.

Through combining longstanding research themes on rural development with the concept of frames, this thesis has presented an analytical framework that links a mining investment process to a municipal standpoint, through exploring how municipal representatives understand mining and rural development. The comparative element of the thesis has allowed for uncovering differing factors between the two cases that are indicated as underlying the different outcomes.

From the findings in chapter 5, this thesis stresses the advantages of analyzing Swedish municipalities' standpoints on mining investments with understandings of mining and rural development as foundation. How municipalities organize previous experience on mining and rural development *does* seem to be central in their formulation of a solution to the problem/situation of a possible mine. The results suggest that a place or community related framing of a possible mining investment is connected to a more negative stance towards mining. Enhancing tourism as important for rural development in Karlsborg and pointing at the vast natural resources in Jokkmokk as a source for leisure and as connected to a way of living rather than as capital for economic development are examples of this. Furthermore, the results suggest that an economic, population and employment related framing of a possible mining investment is connected to a more positive stance towards mining. Isolation and urbanization (an example of population restructuring) as related to economic restructuring are factors that seem to contribute to this frame.

Still, fragments of the economic, population and employment related frame can be found in the views of some of the Karlsborg participants' framing of the problem/situation, despite the fact that the municipal standpoint on mining in Karlsborg is negative. In other words, while results suggest that the two frames generally correlate with the contrasting outcomes, there is no clear dividing line between the two frames. This may be explained through what was concluded in chapter 5.4; the need to more clearly include contextual factors in the analysis.

Lastly, while it has been concluded that governance should not be seen as a mining and rural development frame in itself (as leading to either a positive or negative standpoint), it is an important component in understanding the role of the municipality, and the municipal representatives' perspectives on their ability to influence the mining investment process. As an example, the question on whether municipalities should have some kind of 'veto power' in the mining process is interesting since it does not seem to correlate strongly with either standpoint (positive or negative).

Overall, the results are intriguing and motivate further research on

a. the increasing number of cases of mining investments in southern Sweden, where the municipalities have been vocal in the processes, and where local community protests are part of the case contexts;
b. the relationship between understandings of rural development and processes of natural resource extraction;
c. the Swedish municipality's (formal and/or normative) role and power in such processes.

Conclusions drawn from this thesis suggest that there is a need for a bigger and broader interviewee sample. As these processes tend to be political, focusing solely on politically elected municipal representatives is a recommendation.

The implications for policy making and policy makers are clear: although the municipalities do not have formal power in mineral extraction processes in Sweden, they are the arena where such process take place, and are not indifferent towards the outcomes. Inclusion of a variety of municipal voices is important for creating a sense of ownership and participation and being able to address conflicts at an early stage.

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Appendix 1 – Interviews

Andersson, S., 2018. Interview with Stefan Andersson, Jokkmokk. Conducted at the municipal building in Jokkmokk on the 8th of March 2018.

Bernhardsson, R., 2018. Interview with Robert Bernhardsson, Jokkmokk. Conducted via Skype in Jokkmokk/Kvikkjokk on the 9th of March 2018.

Blind, H., 2018. Interview with Henrik Blind, Jokkmokk. Conducted at Ájtte – Svenskt fjäll- och samemuseum in Jokkmokk on the 9th of March 2018.

Davidsson, C., 2018. Interview with Catarina Davidsson, Karlsborg. Conducted at the municipal building in Karlsborg on the 12th of March 2018.

Karlsson, H., 2018. Interview with Håkan Karlsson, Karlsborg. Conducted at the municipal building in Karlsborg on the 13th of March 2018.

Lindroth, P., 2018. Interview with Peter Lindroth, Karlsborg. Conducted at the municipal building in Karlsborg on the 13th of March 2018.

Appendix 2 – English summary of interview guide

Participant's name Date and location
a. Asking about consent to record the interview b. Asking about consent to being contacted further for follow-up questions c. Asking if participant want to read the finished thesis
1. Introduction *Participant's role in the municipality, participant's background. Participant's description of their municipality.* 2. Restructuring *What do people work with in this municipality? Who are the main employers? What are the possibilities to "start your life" in your municipality? What's the access to school and education, and healthcare like here?* 3. Financial and infrastructural resources *What's the economy like in this municipality? What are the possibilities for people to start their own business? Is it possible to live here and commute for work elsewhere, and also the reverse situation? What are the train/bus connections like? Are the roads adequate?* 4. Social inclusion *What's the relationship between the municipality and the citizens like? What possibilities do the citizens have to influence the municipality's work? What about education, healthcare and elderly care – what's the access to that like?* 5. Governance and power *How would you say that the municipality "works" in relation to democracy and inclusion? What social groups are heard the most? Are there any groups in the society that rarely get to voice*

their opinion? Is there any person or group of people (outside of the municipality as organization) that can influence the municipality's work? What is the relationship between the municipality and the County Administrative Board?

6. Connecting the dots

a. What is rural development to you? What is your opinion on mines as being part of rural development? Can they be rural development (why/why not)? What would you say could be positive effects of a mine for your municipality? What would you say could be negative effects of a mine for your municipality? Who do you think would to the greatest extent be able to take part of possible positive effects of a mine?

b. There has been a lot of local engagement/mobilization regarding the mining process here. Would you say that there are some groups that have been more active than others in this process? What are your general thoughts on local engagement/mobilization on issues that the municipality works with (not specifically regarding mining)? How do you perceive that the municipality can affect the mining process, also in relation to other actors involved?

7. Summarizing/concluding

Is there anything you want to add to this, or anything you want to ask me?

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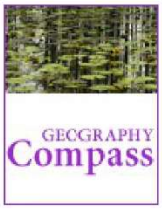

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