



Society and Landscape Research School  
Department of Urban and Rural Development  
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

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*We hereby welcome you to the course:*

# A short introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

with a focus on making choropleth maps

3 CREDITS ▪ 26 APR–21 MAY 2021

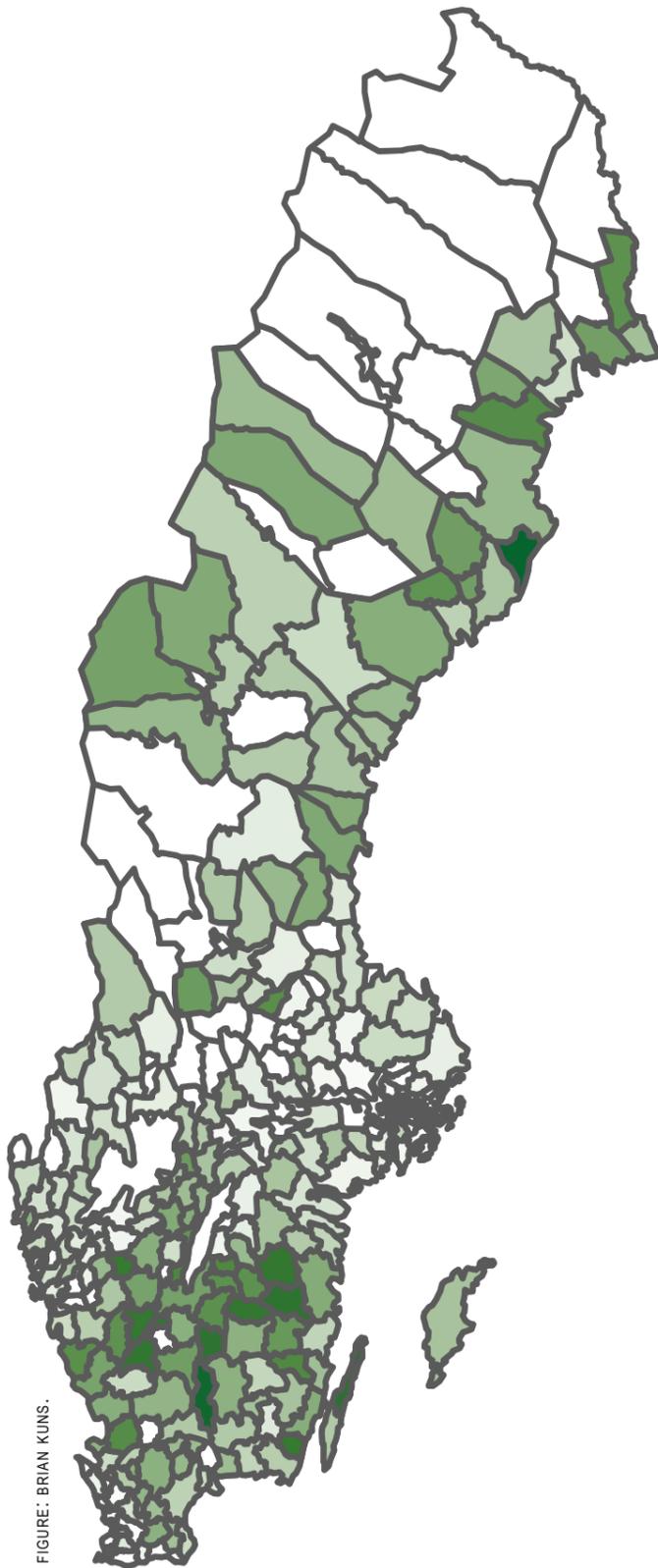


FIGURE: BRIAN KUNS.

**THE MAIN FOCUS** of this course is choropleth maps, which are popular thematic maps where statistical information that is tied to administrative and/or territorial units is represented through different shading, color combinations or symbols—useful for visualizing the geographic spread and variability of a particular, often, socio-economic, phenomenon. The course will also give you a basic understanding of different kinds and uses of geographic information and cartographic principles, including a critical perspective on how maps intersect with power interests.

**YOU WILL LEARN** how to produce choropleth maps, taking into account various potential sources of error and controlling for potential misrepresentation of the underlying geographic information. You will be able to interpret and critically analyze choropleth maps, and explain if/when a choropleth map is appropriate given the data and the issue being explored.

**THE COURSE WILL INCLUDE EXERCISES**, where the creation of choropleth maps will be explained and you will then receive an assignment to make your own choropleth map(s). These maps will be presented, discussed and assessed in a seminar format at the end of the second week of the course. The current plan is for all instruction in this course to occur online via Zoom.

**THIS COURSE WILL ALSO INCLUDE LECTURES** introducing basic concepts in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) (raster and vector data, map projections), the basic principles of cartography, questions on data management (including ethical questions related to data).

**THE PRIMARY SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS** used in this course will be QGIS, which is free and open source, and Microsoft Excel. QGIS works on all computer platforms (Microsoft, Apple and Linux), with the possible exception of literally the very latest Apple computers that were released in December 2020.

## COURSE RESPONSIBLE

[Brian Kuns](#), Assoc. Senior Lecturer, Division of Rural Development, Dept. of Urban and Rural Development

## YOU SIGN UP FOR THE COURSE

At the latest on the **1<sup>st</sup> of April**, to [brian.kuns@slu.se](mailto:brian.kuns@slu.se)  
The course will be held on-line in 2021.