

Region Västerbotten Action Plan 2018-2020

Towards an Innovation Loop express for regional development

OPEN SOCIAL INNOVATION POLICIES DRIVEN BY CO-CREATIVE REGIONAL INNOVATION ECO-SYSTEMS



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Executive Summary

This document illustrates the action plan developed by Region Västerbotten during the Interreg Europe project OSIRIS. The action plan aims at improving the Policy Instrument (PI) “*Regional Structural Funds Programme for investments in growth and jobs*” (Övre Norrland 2014-2020) by: (1) **supporting new projects** which strengthen the regional innovation system with Open Social Innovation policies; and (2) **strengthening the participatory governance** of the PI with co-creation approaches. Both aims are supported by the (3) **enhancement** of a co-creation model of Region Västerbotten, the **Innovation Loop**.

The action plan last 4 semester, from October 2018 till September 2020 and include 3 main actions and 11 sub-actions, driving regional growth and job creation.

1. OSIRIS in a nutshell

Funded under the 1st call of Interreg Europe, under the axis Research & Innovation, OSIRIS stands for Open Social Innovation policies driven by co-creative Regional Innovation eco-systems.

The project aims at improving the design, delivery and implementation of Open and Social Innovation (OSI) policies for regional development. The improvement relies on co-creation approach and tools under a quintuple-helix model (i.e. involving policy makers, researchers, business, citizens and the civil society) in a set of interregional exchange activities for improving regional and local government development and innovation capabilities.

Seven European territories (six regions in SE, FI, NL, GR, IT, SK, and one municipality in PT) collaborate for improving their Policy Instruments through action plans.

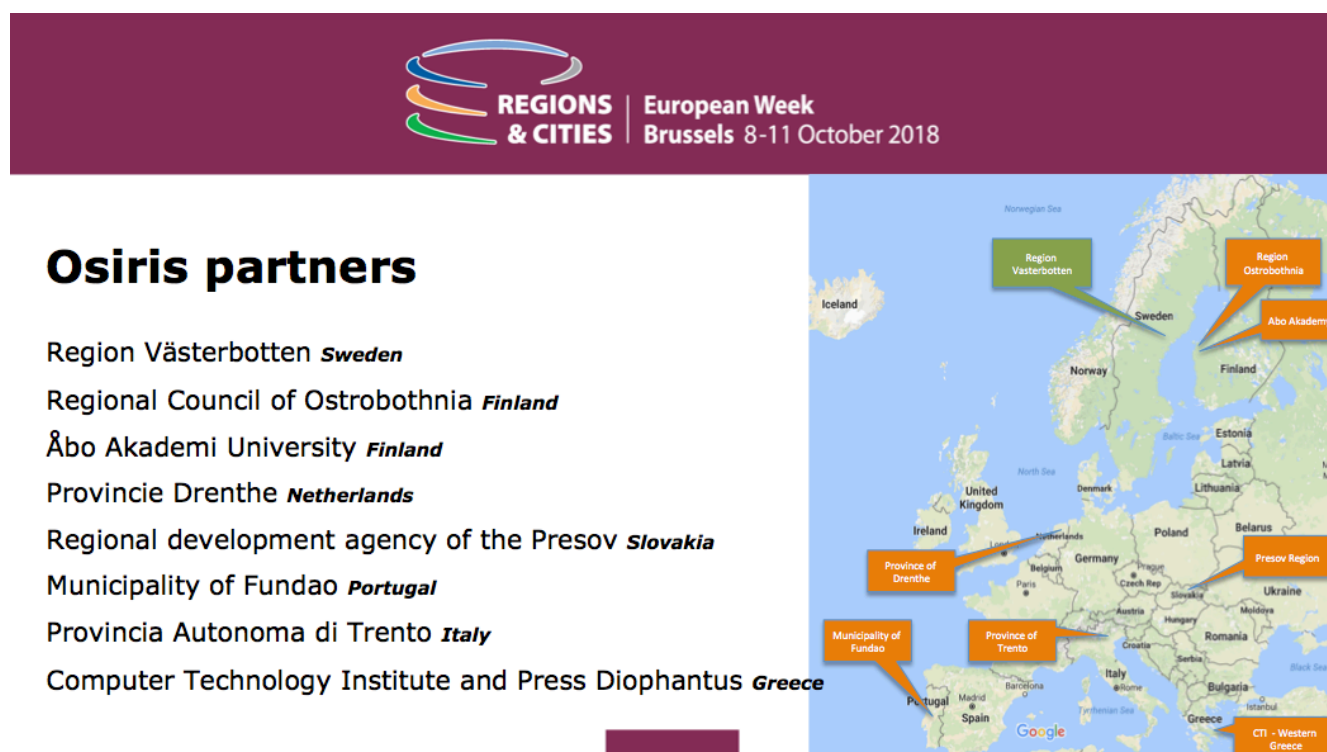


Figure 1 - Map of OSIRIS Consortium presented at the EWRC conference

2. Policy Context

2.1 Territorial context of Region Västerbotten

Västerbotten region spans 55,432 km², making it the second biggest region in Sweden after Norrbotten. The largest cities are Umeå (about 85,000 inhabitants and about 126,000 in the whole municipality) and Skellefteå (about 36,000 inhabitants and about 73,000 in the municipality).

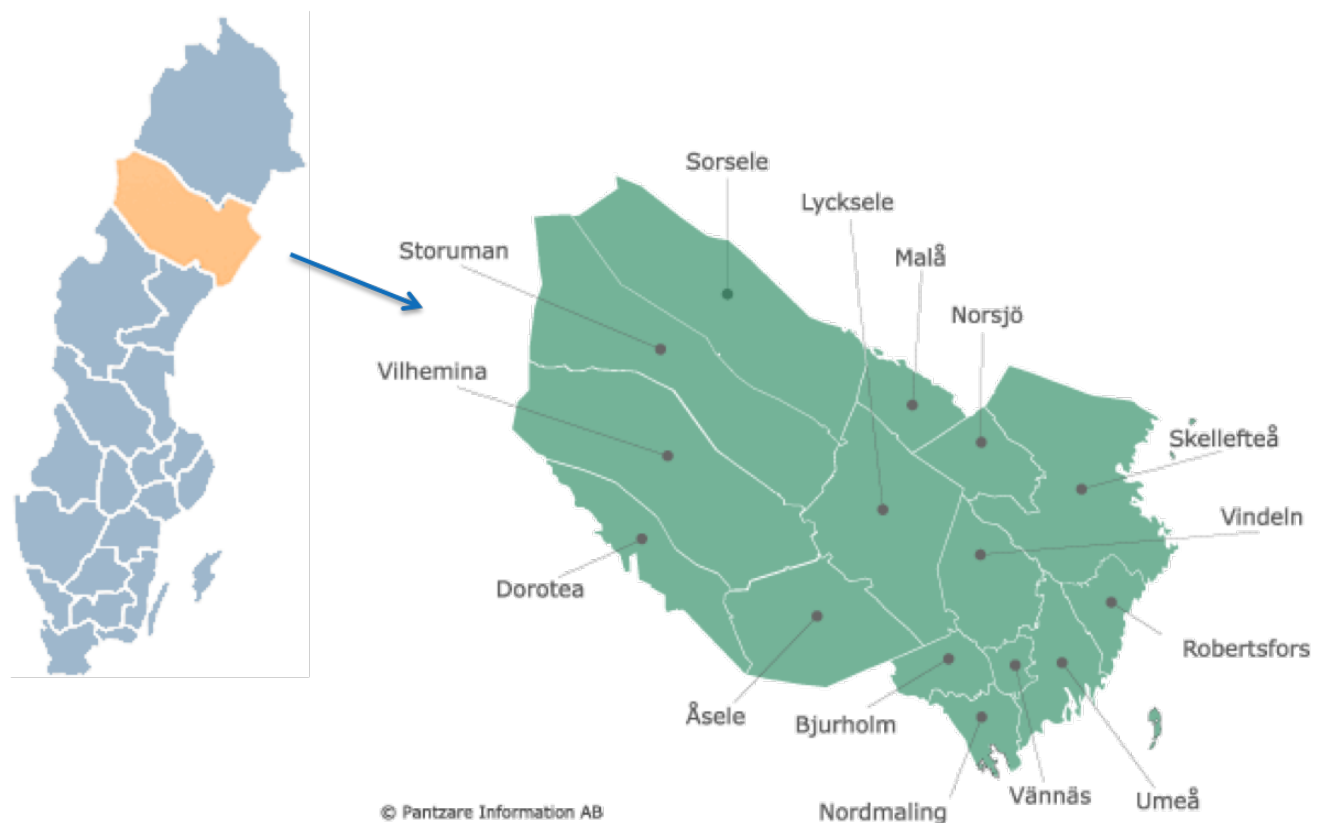


Figure 2 - Map of Region Västerbotten

The region's **sparse population** presents a challenge. It is difficult to engage local actors in innovative environments and networks, there is considerable intraregional variation in the volume and quality of key network infrastructure, and changing demographics are putting pressure on the functioning of the welfare state especially in sparsely populated inland areas. Bigger urban centres along the coastline already have good logistical services by roads, railway, ports and airports. Västerbotten also has a high level of knowledge and skills, with three universities, many innovative businesses, clusters and networks. Coupled with the advantage of some of the most advanced digital and broadband connectivity in all of Europe, this represents a strong competitive advantage when facing competition from growing knowledge economies elsewhere. Västerbotten's challenging context nevertheless enables opportunities for innovation

in sustainable social development, testing activities, service solutions, and technical solutions for infrastructure and communications networks over long distances.

Västerbotten's knowledge-intensive environment has already given rise to several extensive initiatives of interregional and transnational collaboration. Västerbotten is involved in the preliminary steps to develop an Arctic Investment Platform and engages actively within the Baltic Sea Region in the initiative to promote an interregional S3 ecosystem. Key industry sectors in Västerbotten include high-tech processing industries, forestry, energy and cleantech, life science, ICT, and service industries.

Västerbotten has a good innovation capability and has been highlighted as a leading innovative region in European comparisons. Also in Reg Lab's Innovation Index, Västerbotten shows a prominent position in terms of renewability. The OECD's recent report "Territorial Review - Northern Sparsely Populated Areas" states that the challenge in the future of Västerbotten's part is to speed up the further processing of products through new SMEs, while recognizing that there are large intra-regional differences between large-scale and smaller municipalities, between city and rural areas, coast and inland.

The **opportunities** to take part in the systems and environments that promote innovation are **limited in sparsely populated areas** and in smaller municipalities. This points out that efforts should be directed towards developing **methods and tools to strengthen innovation** power throughout the county by taking care of creativity and creative power of actors who are not usually found in already established innovation systems.

2.2. Role of the Innovation Loop for regional growth and development

In the direction of strengthening regional innovation, since 2014 Region Västerbotten has been organising and running a co-creation event, the "Innovation Loop" (<http://innovationloop.eu>). This consists of a cyclical well-structured co-creation process whose mission is to allow the co-generation of innovative ideas and prototyping these into innovative solutions (products, services, processes) towards regional innovation ecosystems.

- It has a cyclical approach where every cycle has an overall actual theme (e.g. Talent for Growth, Culture –Driven Growth, Border – Crossing Meetings, etc.).
- It follows three phases: 1. Co-identify problems and ideas to solve them; 2. Co-generate solutions; 3. Implement solutions
- It is based on four types of meetings: Information meetings; Idea workshops; Prototyping workshops; Implementation Workshops.

Targets:

- Partners:
 - Academic and Research Institutes (public and private)
 - Companies (of any size and any sector)
 - Governments (regional but also local and national level)
 - Media
- Participants (in the Quintuple Helix):

- Citizens
- Representatives of partners

Methods and tools:

- Co-creation methods from Design Thinking / Service Design
- Co-creation web-tools and platforms

Resources needed

The Innovation Loop engages: up to 1.500 people a year; circa 35 public sector organizations and circa 35 companies. A yearly budget of 1 million euro is usually invested in the whole annual cyclical initiative by getting financial support from different regional projects and stakeholders.

Evidence of success

The Innovation Loop produced up to 37 new products, services or processes in different stages of implementation. In Västerbotten the Innovation Loop is contributing to strengthen regional innovation leadership, to achieve more efficient use of the Structural Funds as well as to increase synergy between the EU, national, regional and local development strategies, bringing:

- different themes focused on social issues driven by individual and organizational needs;
- a broad representation of participants from different knowledge perspectives, ages and professional background.

In the context of the Brussels-based European Week of Regions and Cities (EWRC), on the 11th of October, more than 70 people from all over Europe joined a Participatory Session with the aim of co-generating new ideas for digital transformation in the public sector by using the Innovation Loop.

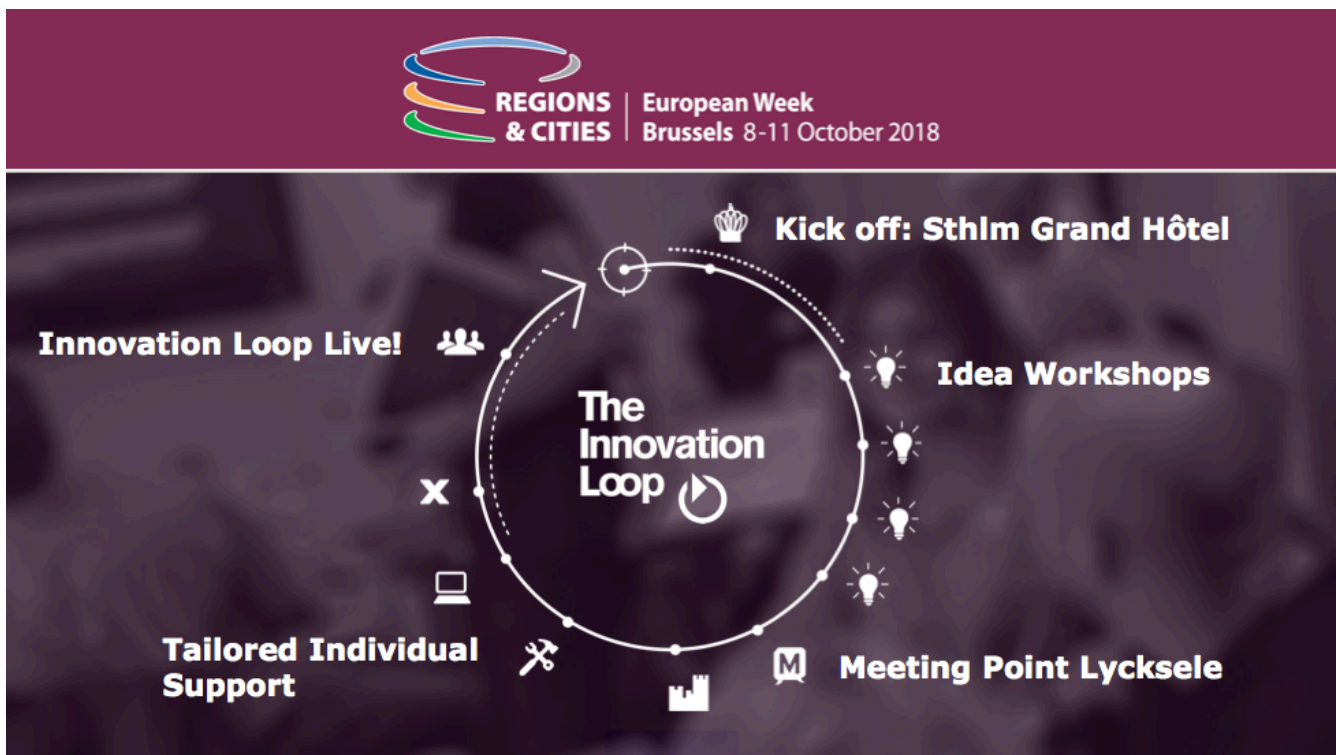


Figure 3 - The Innovation Loop as presented at EWRC

From a policymaker perspective, the Innovation Loop provides a framework to communicate with stakeholders about actions and implementation progress in the region. But first and foremost, it trigger a **participatory process** that involves policymakers, academics, businesses and above all citizens interested in the Swedish public sector for innovation and regional development.

During the OSIRIS interregional exchange of experience activities, the Innovation Loop has been used in several co-creation events in all seven regional and local territories, focusing on introducing Open Social Innovation approach and tools for strengthening regional development and innovation strategies and improving policy instruments.

The Innovation Loop has been considered as relevant Good Practice (GP) included in the Interreg Europe database of good practices. The modular structure of the Innovation Loop makes it flexible, and accessible to other regions.

Region of Ostrobothnia, partner of OSIRIS, has included in their action plan a pilot action to import the Innovation Loop in Ostrobothnia and customise it to the peculiarities of the Finnish region. Other OSIRIS partners are also including in their action plans activities affected by the learning achieved with the adoption of the Innovation Loop during the project activities. Still,

independent experts recently mentioned it as a relevant GP for co-creation and innovation also the Policy Learning Platform¹.

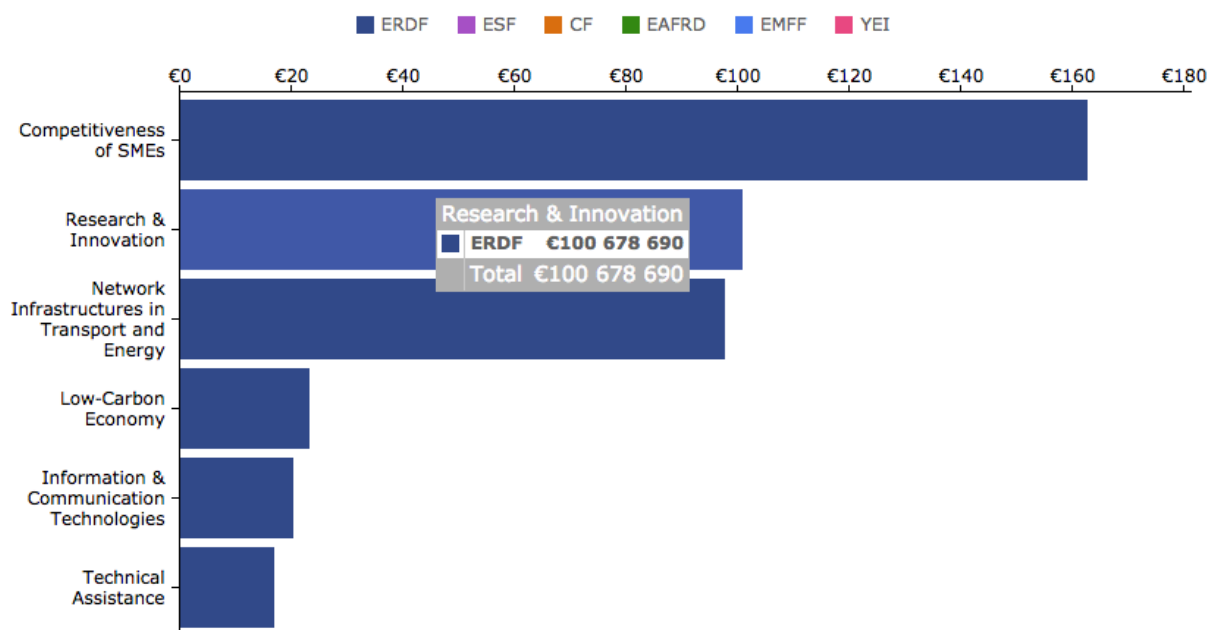
2.3 Policy Instrument objective and priority

The Policy Instrument of Region Västerbotten that will be modified through the action plan is the “Regional Structural Funds Programme for investments in growth and jobs Övre Norrland 2014-2020”. The total programme budget for 2014-2020 is of €421 646 628.

The **selected thematic objective** of the PI addressed by the region is **T01: “Strengthening research, technological development and innovation”** whose ERDF budget for the whole period is of 100 678 690€.

Total Budget by Theme (daily update): Upper Norrland - ERDF, EUR million

Explore and Share this Data



Refresh Date: 18/12/2018

Figure 4 - Upper Noorland - ERDF – Source: Open Data Portal

More in particular, the **selected investment priority** of the PI addressed in the Action Plan is **1b: Promoting business investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between enterprises, research and development centres and the higher education sector**, in particular promoting

¹ A review of the Innovation Loop as a tool for participatory governance conducted with experts of the Interreg Policy Learning Platform is available at the link below:

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/news/4223/innovation-loop-good-practice-engages-project-partners-and-stakeholders-in-co-creation-for-regional-innovation/>

investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications and open innovation through smart specialisation. More in detail the following specific objectives are interested by this action plan:

- Specific Objective 01 — **Increasing research and innovation collaboration** between academia, trade and industry, authorities and civil society;
- Specific objective 02 — **Increasing innovation activity** in enterprises and strengthening the development of and access to innovation-supporting systems and environments

Innovations are promoted by **collaboration** between universities, research institutes, trade / industry, and governmental authorities with the goal of putting more products and services on the market more quickly. As a result of collaboration, the region's research, education and innovations can develop and become more attractive and relevant to trade and industry, researchers and society. This action plan aims at **strengthening collaboration** through the adoption of the Innovation Loop for regional development and innovation.

2.4 Other regional strategies to be considered

The Programme for Upper Norrland embraces two regions: Västerbotten and Norrbotten. The action plan looks at the PI in a broader policy context with other regional development strategies (RDS), regional innovation strategies (RIS), as shown in the diagram below:

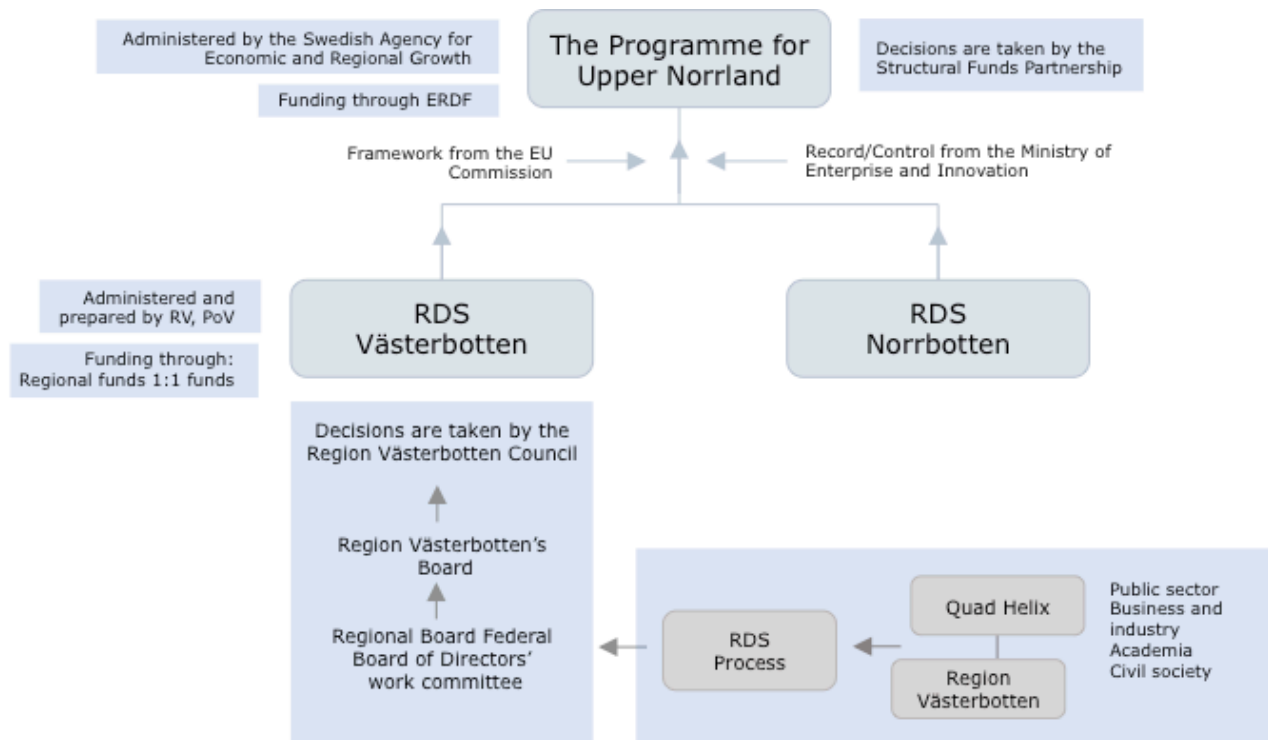


Figure 5 - Policy Instrument in the broader policy context

The regional development strategies (RDSs) and regional innovation strategies (RISs) emphasise the importance of strengthening innovative environments, promoting collaboration within and between the innovation systems for the region's innovativeness and, in that way, attaining sustainable regional growth. Investments in research, technological development and innovation are to be prioritised for the regional focal areas, with the aim of strengthening the international competitiveness of Upper Norrland.

Such development can be facilitated by **knowledge bridges and close cooperation** established between enterprises and academia in the region and supported by OSI policies and co-creation methods as foreseen in this action plan delivered by Region Västerbotten in phase two of the OSIRIS project.

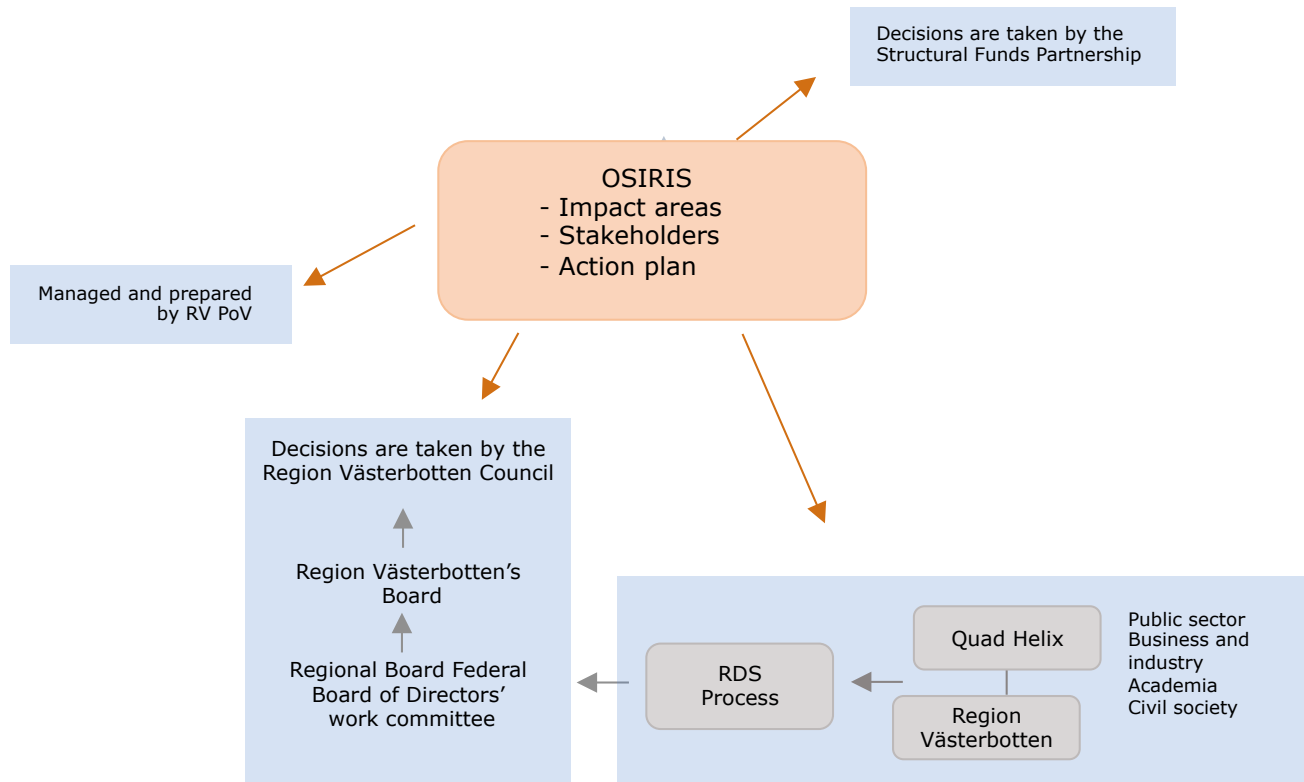


Figure 6 - Role of OSIRIS action plan in the policy context

Additionally, with the OSIRIS action plan, Region Västerbotten is trying to create synergies with the forthcoming **regional development strategy for Västerbotten 2020-2026 (RUS)** under development. The RUS highlights the different focus areas for smart specialisation: sustainable energy and environmental technology; digital service sectors for smart regions, such as e-health and telemedicine solutions; life science; innovations in healthcare; experience-based and creative industries; testing activities; and technology and service development for industry. Prioritised actions for innovation include: the development of a collaborative regional innovation support system and meeting places for innovation; an increased cooperation between business and academia; reaching out to women as the sectors currently accounting for much of the region's innovative activities are male-dominated.

2.5 Rationale and aims of the intended policy changes

Regional Västerbotten is responsible for implementing the Structural Funds program in Västerbotten. The governance structure allows Region Västerbotten to select projects to be financed through the "Regional Structural Funds Programme for investments in growth and jobs Övre Norrland 2014-2020". Furthermore, the Region has a key role in planning and monitoring the regional smart specialization strategy (S3) and the other RDS, RIS and RUS above mentioned.

In line with the selected investment priority 1B, this action plan aims to influence the two following objectives in the policy instrument:

More in detail, the action plan will pursue two types of changes for improving the PI, as follows:

1. Type 1 [Action 3]: it aims to improve the **capacity of the PI of supporting/prioritising new projects** that strengthen the regional innovation system with the use of open social innovation policies and tools. As a more accurate self-defined indicator for this aim, we consider the strengthening of existing projects (up to n. 5) and the creation of new projects (up to n. 2);
2. Type 2 [Action 4]: it aims to improve the **participatory governance** of PI by facilitating more and easier engagements of citizens and all actors of the quintuple-helix into co-creation processes, towards a model of open collaborative governance.

These two types of changes require transversal actions [Action 1 and 2] that **strengthen the adoption of the Innovation Loop** good practice which:

- better involves the “quintuple-helix” to influence policy making and the structural funds;
- improves the capacity of project implementers to develop solutions (new products/services) by applying a data-driven logic and a citizens-centred approach;
- enhances the strategic planning capability of Region Västerbotten to select and prioritize projects, to identify new investment priorities and objectives in the PI for the next program period supporting new projects.

In this way, this action plan will demonstrate the added value of adopting the Innovation Loop for better generating open social innovation in regional development.

3. Methodology for designing the action plan

The action plan of Region Västerbotten is the result of five semesters of interrelated activities that can be grouped as follows:

1. Interregional exchange of experience events
2. Local Stakeholder Group Meetings (LSGM)

3.1 Learning from the interregional exchange process

The action plan of Region Västerbotten gained of the learning generated with the interregional exchange activities undertaken by OSIRIS partners: starting with the co-creation events, the study visits and the staff exchange, throughout all five semesters, key knowledge on open and

social innovation has been developed and absorbed by policy makers, civil servants and local stakeholders of Region Västerbotten.

In particular:

From the Region of Ostrobothnia (PP2), the action plan has benefited of the knowledge of using open and social innovation for strengthening smart and renewable energy solutions (www.rakennerahastot.fi) including energy efficient housing solution. This is one of the various needs that the people of the two Nordic regions, separated by the Baltic Sea, have quite a lot in common, both regions particularly advanced in the exploitation of smart energy. The pilot undertaken by Region Ostrobothnia aimed at customising the Innovation Loop will further expand such a knowledge that will help policy making to implement open smart energy in Region Västerbotten. From this interregional learning experience the main derived action of Action Plan is *A3 - Stimulating synergies between projects through the Innovation Loop Express* and the sub-actions:

- *3.1 Organize eye-opening and educational events;*
- *3.2 Open social participation in ongoing projects to create synergies.*

From the Autonomous Province of Trento (PP3), the action plan has benefited of the knowledge of using open data to drive innovation and territorial growth, and chiefly the role that open data lab can have for regional innovation. The Innovation Loop has learned a lot from techniques used by PP3 to gather open data from the European Data Portal (EDP) and to release open data and to bring their adoption during co-creation events. Moreover, the action plan will consider how innovative tools such as “hackabots” (i.e. hackatons + chatbots) can be included into co-creation sessions. From this interregional learning experience the main derived action of Action Plan is *A1 - Implement the strategy to strengthen the Innovation Loop for regional development* through OSI policies and the sub-actions:

- *1.3 Analysis of Open Social Innovation tools and success cases.*

From the Municipality of Fundao (PP7), the action plan has benefited of the knowledge of the Portuguese initiative (Academia deCodigo) for teaching children computational programming. Moreover, Region Västerbotten benefited of the experience made by the municipality to attract companies and trigger social innovation initiatives. The Innovation Loop will also look at children in the near future as a key target to gather the needs of the population for co-designing new policies in the education, social inclusion and welfare. And still Region Västerbotten will look how municipalities can further stimulate social innovation initiatives and attract new projects for territorial development. From this interregional learning experience the main derived action of Action Plan are:

A1 - Implement the strategy to strengthen the Innovation Loop for regional development through OSI policies and the sub-action:

- *1.3 Analysis of Open Social Innovation tools and success cases.*

A2 - Strengthening the participatory governance of the PI through the Innovation Loop and the sub-actions:

- *2.1 Identify key factors to implement the Innovation Loop as a tool for planning and governing policy instruments;*
- *2.2 Matching needs with opportunities from ongoing calls on the PI and on H2020.*

Such knowledge has been framed and distilled into strategic input for developing the action plan, considering the Innovation Loop as a central meta-actor of such a process.

During phase 1 in the OSIRIS project the Innovation Loop has been used as good practice for interregional co-creative workshops in all other five regions (Ostrobothnia, Trento, Drenthe, Western Greece, Presov) and municipality (Fundao). The interregional workshops have positively stimulated the co-generation of ideas for the design of the action plans for OSIRIS partners and provided key feedback for improving the Innovation Loop itself as a tool for participatory governance.

3.2 Strategic advice and policy recommendation from the Local Stakeholder Group meetings

Crucial outcomes emerged from the local Stakeholder Group meetings organized during the OSIRIS project in Västerbotten from the first till the fifth semester and in particular:

| Sem | Date | Place | Partic. |
|-----|----------|-----------------------|---------|
| 1 | 17/03/16 | in Umeå | 45 |
| 1 | 24/05/16 | in Lycksele | 12 |
| 1 | 01/06/16 | in Lycksele | 30 |
| 2 | 08/12/17 | in Umeå | 15 |
| 3 | 07/04/18 | In Umeå and via skype | 18 |
| 3 | 31/05/18 | in Lycksele | 22 |
| 4 | 30/11/17 | In Umeå | 30 |
| 5 | 30/05/18 | in Lycksele | 31 |

Figure 7 - List of local stakeholder group meetings

All outcomes converged towards the need to strengthening the Innovation Loop for which a SWOT analysis as been undertaken, showing the following results:

| STRENGTHENS | WEAKNESSES |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owned by the Region with support of the Managing Authority. Good brand identity built since 2013. Well-established co-creation and citizens-driven innovation concept in North Sweden. Four years of learning by doing Budget availability to organise it and to reinforce brand awareness (i.e. 1 million Euro per year). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More updated website content and social media communication. Competitors offer a broad range of tools and services for co-creation. Co-creation approach, methods and tools need to evolve. Better use of open data and tools. Weakly includes social innovation cases. Lack of partners and participant engagement. Need KPI to track the process. Lack of resources to develop new digital |

| | tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulties to further develop it in rural areas without a digital tool |
|---|---|
| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central for contributing to Västerbotten ongoing PI, new PI, RDS, RUS and Digital Agenda. Synergies with the pilot made by OSIRIS PP2 to customize the Innovation Loop in Ostrobothnia. EU funding calls (e.g. H2020) leveraging the uptake of co-creation. Open social innovation EU and regional initiatives rely on co-creation and quintuple-helix engagement. Digital transformation benefiting from co-creation approach. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of declining interest due to the expansion of the Region Changing the organizational process inside the region towards open collaborative governance Rising concerns on data privacy and security. Intellectual Property Right (IPR) generated during co-creation still necessitate of clear IPR management rules at any level. Hybrid business model engaging governments, business and citizens to co-design and co-deliver services still unproven. |

Figure 8 - SWOT analysis of the Innovation Loop

In particular, looking at the opportunity of the Innovation Loop to positively improve the ongoing PI and the new PI from 2020 onward, the following strategic advice were produced:

Consolidating the uptake of the Innovation Loop for regional development enable better collaboration between research and established business resources, and together with other operators in the innovation system, making the regional Structural Funds programme capable to strengthen region's innovative environments through co-design and co-delivering innovative solutions (i.e. processes, products and services). In fact, the adoption of co-creation workshops of the Innovation Loop can better catalyse young, adults, women and people in Västerbotten and migrated in Västerbotten.

Another positive effect of improving the adoption of the Innovation Loop as method for open and social innovation systems, is that more operators/stakeholders with different resources can be included and contribute to fostering intersections of ideas from different sectors in the region and from other regions and nations. This can **positively influence Upper Norrland open social innovation approach** with new collaboration and cross-sectors projects linking research and industry.

Still, the adoption of the Innovation Loop at the **"intersections"** between different research areas and industrial sectors (e.g. Artificial Intelligence, Health, Energy and Public Governance) can stimulate new innovations. The cyclical approach of the Innovation Loop should improve the co-creation tools for engaging meetings within and between sectors and different types of enterprises, organisations and areas of expertise, leveraging open data, open knowledge. The

capability of the Innovation Loop to look at “intersections” can also contribute to gender equality and social inclusion. With the Innovation Loop the PI can better prioritize innovative projects that contribute to intersections within and between focal areas.

4. Details of the actions envisaged

In order to strengthen the Innovation Loop for regional innovation, the action plan consists of **three main interrelated actions** and related sub-actions, as shown in the Timeline here below included.

| | | PHASE 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | 1 semester | | | | | | 2 semester | | | | | | 3 semester | | | | | | 4 semester | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Ott-2018 Mar-2019 | | | | | | Apr-2019 Sept 2019 | | | | | | Ott-2019 Mar-2020 | | | | | | Apr-2020 Sept 2020 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | oct | nov | dec | jan | feb | mar | apr | may | jun | jul | aug | sep | oct | nov | dec | jan | feb | mar | apr | may | jun | jul | aug | sep | oct | nov | dec | jan | feb | mar | apr | may | jun | jul | aug | sep | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A | Actction/Sub-actions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A1 | Implement the strategy to strengthen the Innovation Loop for regional development through OSI policies | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1,1 | Incentives and competitor analysis to evolve the co-creation approach | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1,2 | User needs analysis to improve the participatory process with digital tools | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1,3 | Analysis of Open Social Innovation tools and success cases | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1,4 | Develop a Stakeholder-Relationship-Management plan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1,5 | Develop plan for motivating participants from quadruple-helix | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1,6 | Identify tools to assess viability of solutions co-generated | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1,7 | Define and apply procedures and indicators to monitor the success of the Innovation Loop for | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A2 | Strengthening the participatory governance of the PI through the Innovation Loop | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2,1 | Identify key factors to implement the Innovation Loop as a tool for planning and governing policy | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2,2 | Matching needs with opportunities from ongoing calls on the PI and on H2020 | | | | | | w | | | w | w | | | | | w | | | | | | | | | | | w | | | w | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A3 | Stimulating synergies between projects through the Innovation Loop Express | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3,1 | Organize eye-opening and educational events | | | | | | | | | e | | | | e | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | e | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3,2 | Open social participation in ongoing projects to create synergies | | | | | | | | | e | | | | e | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | e | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Figure 9 - Timeline of the Action Plan

All actions are interrelated.

Legend:

w = workshops

e = event

Action 1: Implement a strategy to strengthen the Innovation Loop for regional development

Background:

The co-creation approach is constantly **evolving**. Organizations, often through industry-science-governance-collaboration, are investing in developing methods, platforms and tools for offering services supporting user-driven-innovation also in the public sector. Still, regional stakeholders up so far engaged in the workshops are interested to receive new added value from the activities performed during the workshops in terms of knowledge and solutions co-generated.

This creates the need to update and evolve the Innovation Loop co-creation approach looking at competitors and the evidences emerged from the SWOT analysis conducted during the OSIRIS project.

Description of the action:

This, this action will define a strategy on what is needed (e.g. methods, tools, human capital and financial resources) to strengthen the Innovation Loop as a tool for improving the capability of the PI to support and prioritize innovative projects and for improving the participatory governance. The strategy will reenergize the core organization team of staff and external experts of Region Västerbotten and amplify the potential impact of the Innovation Loop for regional innovation. It will handle the weakness points highlighted in the SWOT analysis by allowing an evolution of the concept itself of the Innovation Loop that will result as more engaging for partners and participants at the workshops.

Moreover, the strategy will benefit from the **interactions with the pilot** made with the OSIRIS partner, Regional Council of Ostrobothnia aimed at customising the Innovation Loop in the Finnish region.

The strategy will be based on a desk and filed analysis and activities that will assess and improve the whole Innovation Loop process: goals, format of the co-creation workshops, themes, planning of events, actors engaged (partners, participants), OSI methods, tools for follow-up activities, tools for monitoring results.

Actors involved and role:

- Tillväxtverket: Managing Authority, input to strengthen the Upper Norrland PI
- Västerbotten County Council: input on the strategy to improve the Innovation Loop role in the PI
- Företagarna: key stakeholder, policy maker for SME's conditions for growth, input from the organisations' perspective on the PI
- Wallrup communication AB: expert in process management for policy development and implementation, input on implement the strategy
- Coompanion Nord, economic association, input on the strategy for the social innovation, sustainable growth aspects.
- Vesterbotten Chamber of Commerce: input on the industry/business implication of the strategy

Costs:

- Staff costs: person-month effort provided by Region Västerbotten within the budget of 1 person-month in 2,5 semesters (i.e. 7.000 EUR). The costs will be funded through programs from the following organizations: Umeå University, ERP support, Västerbotten chamber of Commerce and Företagarna North Sweden.

Improvement of the PI:

- Awareness on the role of the PI for regional innovation and its capability on exploiting co-creation approach based on open and social innovation will be increased.

Action 1 consists of seven sub-actions defined as follows:

A.1.1 - Incentives and competitor analysis to evolve the co-creation approach

This sub-action will identify incentives to better engage into co-creation workshops academics and technician experts on open innovation, open data, open services, to co-generate ideas towards digital transformation of the public services and open collaborative governance.

Incentives to better engage academics and experts interested to collaborate at different levels in the evolution of the Innovation Loop will be defined.

New collaboration will be investigated with academics and business to collaborate in both EU (e.g. H2020) but also regional calls where co-creation activities will be undertaken.

This sub-action aims at evolving the co-creation approach for innovation. An analysis will be conducted on competitors looking at examples from literature and market (e.g. from Design Thinking). Competitors will be invited at some events of the action plan [e.g. A 4,1 other to be specified] for inspirational talks and for active participation to identify potential synergies and partnership in new projects.

Outcomes:

- **Incentive plan for including more academics and experts into workshops**
- **Competitor Analysis**

A 1.2 – User needs analysis to improve the participatory process with digital tools

This sub-action will identify users' needs for advancing the co-creation process through the Innovation Loop, including the technology tools that are needed to better engage participants.

Still, this sub-action will identify cases from Design Thinking to improve the co-creation process in order to: i) facilitate team with different roles/responsibilities in the public sector to effectively collaborate, ii) better visualise the information discussed and knowledge generated; iii) better store and reuse ideas and information previously co-generated in other workshops.

Outcomes:

- **User Needs analysis**
- **Report on Design Thinking case analysis**

A 1.3 – Analysis of Open Social Innovation tools and success cases

This sub-action will improve the understanding of how open and social innovation methods and tools can be exploited, by investigating success stories & examples on the adoption of OSI with co/creation approach.

Outcomes:

- **Report on Open Social innovation tools and success cases**

A 1.4 – Develop a Stakeholders-Relationship-Management plan

This sub-action will develop a strategic plan for engaging regional stakeholders since the beginning of the cycle throughout the whole cycle. To strengthen the relevance of ideas and solutions co-generated for stakeholders, a survey will be designed and delivered which will assess how to increase added value from the knowledge generated by the Innovation Loop.

Based on the survey, a proper Stakeholder-Relationship Management plan will be drafted to

better plan their engagement and support during all the phases of the Innovation Loop. For example, stakeholders will be invited in advance at early Idea workshop to co-identify challenges for the next workshops. A list of prioritized challenges will be the outcome of this idea workshop.

Outcomes:

- **Survey to assess benefits from regional stakeholders**
- **Stakeholders-Relationship Management plan**

A 1.5 – Develop a Plan for motivating participants from quintuple-helix

This sub-action will define a plan for better motivating participation of actors from the quintuple-helix and for making the Innovation Loop still closer to the citizens 'needs with regional initiative benefiting jobs and social community needs. The plan will review the participant's recruitment process that is currently heavily dependent on contribution from stakeholders. Ideas to improve recruitment of participants will be identified through surveys engaging participants to assess their interest.

Outcomes:

- **Survey to assess interest from participants**
- **Participants recruitment and engagement plan**

A 1.6 – Identify tools to assess viability of solutions co-generated

This sub-action will assess how to increase the participation of experts on sustainability, business model innovation, business incubators in the last stage of the Innovation Loop, i.e. at the solutions-implementation round of workshops. The sub-action will identify potential stakeholders at different levels interested to support the implementation of solutions. Exploit crowd-funding approaches and tools will also be investigated.

Outcomes:

- **Report on improving viability of co-generated solutions**

A 1.7 – Define and apply procedures and KPI to monitor the success of the Innovation Loop

This sub-action will create procedures and Key Performance Indicators to evaluate the success of each step of the Innovation Loop in the various context in which can be applied for regional innovation. Procedures will define the aspects and timing as well as the KPI, such as:

- No. of participants per type of event
- Feedback achieved via customer survey
- No. of ideas generated
- No. of ideas transformed into solutions
- No. of solutions implemented
- No of likes to presentations

Outcomes:

- **Report on procedures and KPI for monitoring the success of the Innovation Loop**

Action 2: Strengthening the participatory governance of the PI through the Innovation Loop

Background:

In spite of EU financial support and recommendations to implement co-creation in the public sector towards an open collaborative governance model which trigger for more adoption of co-creation approaches, there are still and organizational and cultural barriers that need to be considered for making the Innovation Loop an effective tool inside the regional organization for regional development and innovation. Different roles and expectations of the people inside the regional organization drive to different agenda. There is need to assess all this factors when introducing the Innovation Loop through a roadmap and to manage risks through a contingency plan. In addition effective communicate activities need to be developed for communicating the benefits to all different members inside the region and to all targets.

Moreover, a clear roadmap for its introduction with well planned events and expected results.

Description of the action:

The action aims at enhance the strategic planning capability of Region Västerbotten in engaging governing the Policy Instrument, from defining priorities and objectives to selecting and evaluating projects that address these priorities and objectives. Such an improvement will be particularly beneficial also for drafting next PI for the programming period 2020 onward. Moreover, the action aims improving the understanding by local communities and stakeholder on the existing PI specific objective and measures for submitting new proposal addressing the ongoing funding calls till the end of the programming period.

Actors involved and role:

- Tillväxtverket: Managing Authority, input to strengthen the Upper Norrland PI
- Lycksele Municipality: municipality's perspective input on the PI
- Skellefteå Municipality: municipality's perspective input on the PI. Expertise: open data management.
- Storuman Municipality: municipality's perspective input on the PI. Expertise: eHealth.
- Västerbotten County Council: input on the strategy to improve the Innovation Loop role in the PI
- Företagarna: key stakeholder, policy maker for SME's conditions for growth, input from the organisations's perspective on the PI
- Wallrup communication AB: expert in process management for policy development and implementation, input on implement the strategy
- Umeå University: Key stakeholder for education, research and Info exchange, input from the university's perspective on the PI
- Coompanion Nord, economic association, input on the strategy for the social innovation, sustainable growth aspects.
- Vesterbotten Chamber of Commerce: input on the industry/business implication of the strategy

Costs:

- Staff costs: person-month effort provided by Region Västerbotten within the budget of 1 person-month in 2 semesters (i.e. 6.000 EUR). The costs will be funded through programs from the following organizations: Umeå University, ERP support, Västerbotten chamber of Commerce and Företagarna North Sweden.
- The local stakeholder groups in the five municipalities will finance meetings costs.

Improvement of the PI:

- The capability of the PI to better identify, select and fund projects aiming at open social innovation will be improved.

Action 2 consists of two sub-actions defined as follows:

A 2.1 – Identify key factors to implement the Innovation Loop as a tool for planning and governing policy instruments

This sub-action identifies a roadmap for introducing the Innovation Loop as a tool for participatory governance inside Region Västerbotten. The sub-action define a risk and contingency plan to make the Innovation Loop an effective approach and tool for co-creating inside Region Västerbotten, across different departments.

Still the sub-action develops a communication plan to enhance the adoption of the Innovation Loop and communicate the benefits to all its targets.

Outcomes:

- **Roadmap and contingency plan**
- **Communication plan**

A 2.2 – Matching needs with opportunities from ongoing calls on the PI and on H2020

This sub-action will map and engage people from the quintuple-helix (business, academics, civil servants, citizens and civil society) from 5 municipalities (e.g. Stouremman, Lycksele, Almedolan, Umea, and Skelleftea) in 5 co-creation workshops (in February, May, June and November 2019 and in February 2020) to map local communities and stakeholders needs and co-identify relevant societal challenges to be addressed through new projects.

Outcomes:

- **Report on relevant challenges identified by local communities and stakeholders**

Costs:

- Staff costs: person-month effort provided by Region Västerbotten within the budget of Region Vasterbotten and through programs from the following organizations: Umeå University, ERP support, Västerbotten chamber of Commerce and Företagarna North Sweden.
- The local stakeholder groups in the five municipalities will finance meetings costs.

Action 3: Stimulating synergies between projects through the Innovation Loop Express

Background:

More capabilities need to be created inside Region Västerbotten to maximise synergies from cross-department collaboration in managing projects and initiatives for regional development. Moreover, more capabilities need to facilitate how to engage local communities and stakeholders into co-defining needs and thus evaluating new projects and/or the implementation of existing projects.

Inspiring events and workshops need to be developed for enhancing a cross-project and cross-departmental vision and understanding of new projects to be approved and/or ongoing projects to be implemented.

Description of the action:

As a matter of the above, the action will develop a proper “**Innovation Loop express**” model that will empower the capabilities of Region Västerbotten to support actions that enhance regional growth by improving research and development environments of applied research and by supporting co-creation approach for citizen-driven innovations, considering the digital transformation process that affects the public sector, encouraging the adoption of disruptive technologies (such as internet of things such as artificial intelligence, big data, 3D-modelling, augmented reality, virtual reality, etc.

The innovation Loop express will generate new capabilities for cooperating between departments of RVB overcoming the silos approach.

The action will stimulate the creation of new projects which strengthen the regional innovation system and increase the use of open innovation as a method.

Actors involved and role:

- Tillväxtverket: Managing Authority, input to strengthen the Upper Norrland PI
- Lycksele Municipality: municipality's perspective input on the PI
- Skellefteå Municipality: municipality's perspective input on the PI. Expertise: open data management.
- Storuman Municipality: municipality's perspective input on the PI. Expertise: eHealth.
- Västerbotten County Council: input on the strategy to improve the Innovation Loop role in the PI
- Företagarna: key stakeholder, policy maker for SME's conditions for growth, input from the organisations' perspective on the PI
- Wallrup communication AB: expert in process management for policy development and implementation, input on implement the strategy
- Umeå University: Key stakeholder for education, research and Info exchange, input from the university's perspective on the PI
- Coompanion Nord, economic association, input on the strategy for the social innovation, sustainable growth aspects.
- Vesterbotten Chamber of Commerce: input on the industry/business implication of the strategy

- Umeå Municipality^o: municipality's perspective input on the PI. Expertise: open data management.
- Umeå Energy – an energy and communications company that provides a sustainable grid for electricity and broadband
- Uminova Innovation – incubator
- IUC – an innovation network for small and middle sized enterprises
- Skellefteå Science City – stimulates startups and accelerate innovation in established companies
- Skellefteå Kraft – energy company
- Almi Businesspartner – owned by the Swedish state - provides financing and business development in Västerbotten

Costs:

- Staff costs: person-month effort provided by Region Västerbotten within the budget of 1 person-month in 2 semesters (i.e. 4.000 EUR). The costs will be funded through programs from the following organizations: Umeå University, ERP support, Västerbotten chamber of Commerce and Företagarna North Sweden.
- Costs for bringing one speaker at each workshop from Europe, for 5.000€.

Improvement of the PI:

- The capability of the PI to create synergies between priorities and measures supporting regional innovation through open social innovation will be improved.

Action 3 consists of two sub-actions defined as follows:

A 3.1 – Organize eye-opening and educational events

This sub-action will invite decision-makers to “eye-opening and educational seminars” on the Innovation Loop express methods to synergize between different ongoing projects on different subjects related to open collaborative governance and digital transformation.

Three educational events will be organised in May 2019, September 2019 and February 2020

Outcomes:

- **Report on educational events**

A 3.2 – Open social participation in ongoing projects to create synergies

This sub-action will invite local stakeholders to identify social challenges that prosper to be developed by using OSI methods in existing projects, discovering unknown implications/synergies by **bringing more bottom-up participation and citizens engagement:**

- Up to 3 co-creative workshops focusing on single project
- Up to 3 co-creative workshops focusing on cross-projects

Among the ongoing projects that will be investigated, the following can be mentioned:

- Arena Social Innovation: a project that illustrates and pays attention to the importance of social innovation with a focus on participation from the public sector engaging three municipalities, Region of Västerbotten and Umea University
- Project Ladds: a project backed by a broad consortium that establishes a lab that processes data that contributes to economic, social and ecological issues
- Project ICI (Increased Cooperation and Interaction): a project that strengthens and deepens the ability among regional stakeholders to interact. It's run by Region Västerbotten together with partners on different platforms like "Västerbotten in Almedalen" or "The outlook "- a yearly study trip together with key politicians and officials,
- Innovation Park North: a bottom up initiative together with four municipalities that focus the needs and benefits of digital transformation
- Digital Service Centers: a project that implements the idea of digital service centers in three municipalities and testing structures and methods for small municipalities to create digital participation and competence among the inhabitants

Outcomes:

- **Report on co-creative workshops focusing on single project**
- **Report on co-creative workshops focusing on cross-projects**

- End of the document -