



# Observatory PASCAL

*Place Management, Social Capital and Learning Regions*

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*PURE Regional Briefing Paper (RBP)*

*VARMALND, SWEDEN*

*Part 1*

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

**There are three regional public organisations in Värmland:**

- **The County Administrative Board is a government authority and serves as a link for the government, parliament and central authorities to the region and its municipalities.**
- **The County Council of Värmland has an assembly with elected politicians from Värmland with a mandate to ensure access to healthcare.**
- **The regional federation, Region Värmland consists of 16 municipalities and the County Council of Värmland. It is governed by 49 elected members.**

Since year 2007 Värmland as a whole is part of the Objective 2 program with funding from The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and The European Social Fund (ESF). Värmland is also active in the trans-national and interregional ERDF programmes covering the territory of the County of Värmland; the Interreg IIIA Sweden – Norway, Interreg IIIB North Sea Region, Interreg IIIB Baltic Sea Region and Interreg IIIC.

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

- **All streams of importance lead to Lake Vänern.**
- **There are cultivated flat lands around Lake Vänern.**
- **The province is rich in small lakes, ponds and streams.**
- **There are several mountain plateaus in the western part of Värmland, which is in the Scandinavian mountain range. The highest elevations are found in the northern parts, with plateaus of 500-700 meters.**
- **The eastern part of Värmland is counted into the Bergslagen, the Central Swedish Mining District. Its terrain is rather hilly. This part of Värmland is rich in minerals, most notably iron ore.**
- **The demographic situation varies within the region. In some municipalities the share of people older than the age of 65 is over 25 % (the average in Värmland is 19 %).**
- **Värmland covers 19 400 km<sup>2</sup>.**
- **Population density is 14 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>.**
- **Without immigration the population would decrease more rapidly.**

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

- **Regionfakta:** <http://www.regionfakta.com/GemensamDynamiskPresentation.aspx?id=14118>
- **Wikipedia:** <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Varmland>
- **Sweden in the creative age:**  
[http://www.hgu.gu.se/Files/kulturgeografi/CRA/OccPaper2007\\_2.pdf](http://www.hgu.gu.se/Files/kulturgeografi/CRA/OccPaper2007_2.pdf)

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4. Summarise any existing efforts to monitor and benchmark progress against purposes and targets. Please comment on any interest in and pressure for the measurement of quality and outcomes, including value for money auditing, that you are aware of in the region. [It is hoped that the project will assist an understanding of what kinds of indicators and quantitative measures of regional development and the contribution of HEIs to this work and are useful.]

In the regional growth program 18 indicators on regional development were selected year 2004 and a target was set for each of them until year 2007.

The Research Centre for Regional Development (Cerut) at Karlstad University is monitoring the regional development in different aspects. The centre has produced a number of narrative and analyzing reports e.g. on events, entrepreneurship organizations, tourism, the regional growth program, investments in broad band infrastructure, understanding of regional action and the European Union and development of clusters.

Assessment of eight cluster initiatives in Northern Central Sweden.

[http://www.regionvarmland.se/filer/pdf/SLIM\\_A4.pdf](http://www.regionvarmland.se/filer/pdf/SLIM_A4.pdf)

Measurement of the impact of Karlstad University on society is of big interest since it could be an instrument for allocation of research funding from the central state in the future.

Next step for the assessment of cluster initiative is to further develop research on cluster development and cluster management at Karlstad University.

5. List the main existing forms of collaboration between HEIs and the region. You may need to consider the region as a single administrative entity, but also note and include more localized and specialized significant HEI partnerships with other stakeholders - public, private, and NGO or third sector.
- Three different types of industrial clusters. The Paper Province with The Packaging Arena, Compare (ICT) and The Cluster of Steel and Engineering. Within the clusters you will find three kinds of actors, companies, municipalities and the University of Karlstad.
  - Inova is an incubator owned by The Region of Värmland, The University of Karlstad and companies.
  - There are a number of research centers at the university. One and each of them are governed by a board. In most of the boards there are members recruited from The Region of Värmland, companies or municipalities.
  - The Rectors executive group focuses every second week on cooperation matters. At these meetings is one of the participants is from Region Värmland.
  - Research agreement between Region Värmland and Karlstad University (4 different fields of common interest; discussions on adding a few more are going on).
  - Research funding by Region Värmland and the Objective 2 Program.
6. If there are any examples of good practice in HEI-regional engagement that you think of special interest, perhaps for inclusion later in a PURE Good Practice Manual, please make a note of them to call to the attention of the CDG.
- The Service Research Center (CTF), co-operation with The Packaging Arena and Steel & Engineering.
  - Other research centres that can serve as good practice: CERUT, RUC, SAMOT, Hälsoforum.
  - The Cey Actors Program, financed by Vinnova.
  - The open incubator Inova.

## *Part 2*

### 1. *What are?*

#### 1.1 *The main problems and challenges?*

- **The competition with urban areas as Stockholm and Oslo**
- **The competition concerning people/population/talents, work places, ideas, investments, research funding and so forth with urban areas such as Stockholm and Oslo.**
- **National Political Agenda of Concentration of Research Funding**
- **The national politics concerning higher education and research striving to focus on the old and bigger universities. Especially the concentration of research funding.**
- **The concentration of education for teachers to a few HEIs in Sweden.**
- **Demographic change and new social needs**
- **Retiring population and sustainability of business.**
- **Sustainability of population – low birth rate, younger people moving to urban areas, few immigrants and as a consequence a slowly decreasing population.**

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

##### **The regional leadership:**

**The needs to further strengthen the regional leadership and the regional partnership in order to make decisions necessary to secure the region's future development.**

- **How (the organization) Region Värmland has developed since the OECD-study.**
- **The newly adopted Regional Development Program, the new vision for the region and how it is carried through.**
- **The regional partnership, how it is organized or not.**
- **Multi-level governance structure and development of regional leadership. The connections to the national level.**
- **The orientation of Region Värmland towards Västra Götalandsregionen.**

##### **Development of research at the University of Karlstad:**

- **Strategic development of the university in a national, European and global context.**
- **Development of research areas with connection to the industrial clusters (the "research matrix" from the OECD-report in relation to the aspirations today)**
- **Prioritizations of research areas and groups of researchers at the university vs a wide spectrum of research areas and the freedom of science.**
- **Competitiveness on research funding and talents.**
- **Innovation and spin offs from the university**

##### **Education and life long learning:**

- **The flexibility and responsiveness of the systems for education and lifelong learning.**
- **The level of education in general and especially in the industry; e.g engineering companies.**
- **Disparities in educational attainment.**
- **Competence building of regional labour force, collaboration with employers.**
- **Demographic changes and needs for knowledge transfer.**
- **Learning, interactive learning in networks in the industry and knowledge spill over.**

## Development of the clusters:

- Development of innovation platforms and business orchestration.
- Strengthening ties between regional clusters and research centres.
- Strengthening ties between regional clusters and teaching programmes.
- Development of cluster management.
- Fostering innovation, entrepreneurship and spin offs.
- Supporting new intersections between the clusters.
- Internationalization of the clusters.
- Learning, interactive learning in networks in the industry and knowledge spill over.

## Entrepreneurship:

- Support entrepreneurship in the large areas of the region where it is failing.
- Integrate entrepreneurship in the education system.
- Foster corporate spin-off.
- Entrepreneurship in knowledge intensive environments e.g. at the university, within the industrial clusters leading companies and at the hospitals.
- Entrepreneurship among women and immigrants.
- Demographic changes and business sustainability.

**See also the 15 strategies in The Regional Development Program!**

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

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

**The financial and economic crisis has influenced the region in general with redundant of labour force and as a consequence lower tax incomes and rising social allowances for the municipalities. Especial in Arvika the Wheel loader plant and the foundry are decreasing the number of employees substantially. At the same time there is growth e.g. in retail trade at the Norwegian boarder, the tourism industry and some energy related branches.**

**The climate change will increase the probability for flooding of streams and lakes. Especially the towns and industries around Lake Vänern are exposed. The climate is expected to be warmer, more humid and with longer summers and as a consequence better suited for farming and forestry. More frequent and stronger storms can be a set back.**

**The industry can make a contribution to the solution by producing equipment and services for renewable energy and energy saving.**

*What has really altered (or is changing) in your policy planning since one year ago?*

**The training of the labour force to match the needs on the labour market.**

2. *What are the main changes that are looked for in taking part in PURE?*

2.1 *For the region as a whole, and for particular communities and interests within it?*

- **The development of the regional leadership in a triple helix perspective.**



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- **The development of the regional innovation system (where Karlstad University is a strategic asset) and the interaction with national and European innovation politics.**

2.2 *Within and on the part of higher education institutions i.e. sought by the HEIs themselves, and looked for by other stakeholders from HEIs?*

- **Further develop the contacts between SME's and HEI's in areas like students' internship, x-job opportunities etc.**
- **To find new ways of monitoring the relations between the society and HEI's.**
- **To take part of experiences concerning cooperation between working life and HEI's.**

2.3 *In terms of how regional and local government are managed?*

- **The needs to further strengthen the regional leadership and the regional partnership in order to make decisions necessary to secure the region's future development.**
- **The mandate of the regional governance in relation to the national level in areas as cluster development, entrepreneurship, innovation, education and lifelong learning, labour-market and infrastructure.**
- **The role of people who are local and regional politicians at the same time.**
- **The interplay concerning spatial planning between the local and regional level.**

2.4 *In terms of the role and policies of central government?*

- **Development of new national innovation and cluster policies and politics.**

3. *What key issues do you wish to discuss with the CDG when it visits your region?*

## **Development of:**

- **the regional leadership**
- **the industrial clusters**
- **entrepreneurship**
- **research at the university with relevance to the region**
- **education and lifelong learning**
- **national innovation and cluster policies and politics.**