



A Summary of

ÖSTERGÖTLAND REGION 2020

Regional development plan for the Region of Östergötland

The mission of Östsam Regional Development Council is to work for the development of the Östergötland Region. The Regional Development Council has been formed from the thirteen municipalities and the County Council of Östergötland, and its work is led by a political assembly in which these parties are represented.

Östsam Regional Development Council has formulated a Regional Development Plan. This describes the ambitions of the region, using as a basis national strategic goals for regional development.

Why we have a Regional Development Plan

For us, regional development means exploiting the potential of Östergötland. Many different parties participate in this work. It is essential to achieve consensus between the parties and create a shared vision of the way in which the region should develop – a beacon for all the work that is carried out in different contexts.

From our own perspective in Östergötland, the purpose of regional development work is primarily to create a regional policy and to describe our common vision of the future.

Our visions

Östergötland in 2020 is a dynamic region offering an excellent quality of life. Growth based on sustainable production and consumption provides the prerequisites for development that gives residents security and service through, for example, effective healthcare and medical facilities, care for the elderly, education at all levels and efficient communications. There are also excellent opportunities for per-

sonal development, with a rich cultural life and varied natural surroundings that provide residents with all sorts of stimulating experiences.

Östergötland in 2020 is one of Sweden's leading growth regions, with an economy that performs strongly in both national and international competition. The appeal of the region attracts many people to live and work here, and also to establish and run a wide variety of businesses.

Östergötland in 2020 functions as a coherent urban region with plenty of opportunities for people to choose housing to suit their individual preferences. There is a diversified labour market with ample options for choice. Linköping/Norrköping is a metropolitan alternative, characterised by strong development that is driven by growth in the knowledge and service sectors.

Östergötland in 2020 is a region in balance. Heartland and hinterland complement one another to create a single unit that functions efficiently, with the various constituents providing support for their mutual development. Growth in the nucleus of the region creates the optimum conditions for development in the surrounding areas.

Östergötland in 2020 is a region in which rural areas are developing positively. Good roads and public transport enable residents to choose where they wish to live and work. And the rural economy is supported by modern communications and information management technology.

Östergötland in 2020 is also part of a greater regional context in which communications have been developed to permit residents increasingly to seek study opportunities and work in adjacent regions. As part of the same trend, increasing numbers of people from neighbouring regions turn to Östergötland. These cross-boundary exchanges stimulate development and growth both in Östergötland and among its neighbours.

Östergötland in 2020 is an internationally oriented knowledge region with highly developed collaborative frameworks for utilising the opportunities of internationalisation and managing its threats – a region that works to develop its knowledge of, and its contacts with, the world beyond.

Östergötland in 2020 is a region characterised by equality, narrowing social divides and the recognition of ethnic and cultural diversity as a resource.

The situation in Östergötland today

Population and urban/population centres

Östergötland has 416,000 inhabitants, which makes it the fourth largest county in Sweden. There is a marked concentration of residents in the central areas and a low population density in the northern and southern areas. The major towns have grown continuously over the past 30 years, while the population in smaller centres beyond the immediate vicinity of the towns has fallen.

The age structure of Östergötland accords by and large with that of the nation as a whole, with an ageing population posing a demographic problem. The average age is gradually rising, which results in a greater burden of support on those in work.

Fourth metropolitan area

Norrköping and Linköping, with their surrounding smaller towns and villages, are in the process of developing into one coherent, integrated urban region – Sweden's fourth metropolitan area. This offers a diversified labour market, a good range of entertainment and culture, and excellent opportunities for education – without the drawbacks that afflict other metropolitan areas, such as overcrowding, long

journey times and serious environmental problems. The structure in Östergötland – with major towns, smaller towns close to major towns, and countryside close to small towns, all within a relatively compact area – provides numerous opportunities for choosing residential environments within reasonable commuting distances from many workplaces.

Labour market and economy

The labour market benefits from the different structures of the local economies of Linköping and Norrköping. This means that the two complement each other well and also contributes to the large number of different lines of business represented in Östergötland.

One challenge is to improve competitiveness and the level of processing in certain areas of industry. We also need to stimulate entrepreneurship and new businesses, not least within the service sector.

Östergötland possesses extensive and advanced technical know-how in several industries, such as aviation and energy technology. There are also large numbers of R&D-intensive and innovative companies that are spin-offs from the University of Linköping. And, in addition, there is a large knowledge base, access to a well-educated workforce, and strong existing and evolving environments for knowledge-based companies.

Before long, a labour shortage precipitated by large numbers of retirements may present

a challenge to trade and industry. Today's high average age among entrepreneurs and executives will oblige us to solve all sorts of questions raised by generation change.

Infrastructure and communications

The Östergötland region has a well diversified basic infrastructure with regard to roads, rail links, airports, ports and the IT network. The physical configuration of the region and its relatively compact area facilitate transport solutions. However, the road network does have some deficiencies, primarily in east-west links across the county. Similarly, better road and rail links are needed to the Port of Norrköping.

Public transport is well developed, and commuter trains in particular are an important asset to the region. However, problems of capacity on roads and rail are growing – not least for rail traffic on the southern mainline – and this is handicapping the future development of commuter rail traffic.

Culture

The region's cultural infrastructure is well developed, with established institutions, experienced cultural workers, excellent cultural facilities and interesting historical sites. In the long-term the institutions stand for confidence and continuity at the same time as they help ensure that cultural production follows in the

footsteps of tradition. There is a marked interest in the region for developing cultural life outside the institutions.

Collaboration between the university and cultural institutions/independent artists may provide new opportunities for development. Within the sphere of culture it is important to work at developing networks and creating close collaboration between institutions, independent artists and entrepreneurs. By referring to the creative industries, we adopt a perspective that implies that we regard culture as an “industry”. This enables us to identify its particular needs and establish a platform for the development of cultural life. The creative sector includes, for example, the media, tourism, design and advertising.

Education

By virtue of the fact that the University of Linköping has campuses both in Linköping and Norrköping, access to higher education is very good in our region.

The university is strong both from the point of view of teaching and within many areas of research, and contributes to the labour market potential of a young, well-educated workforce in Östergötland.

Overall, however, the educational level in Östergötland is lower than in other Swedish

regions that are successful within knowledge-intensive areas of business. Generally speaking, educational levels in companies need to be raised, and there is a need, too, for closer collaboration between small and medium-sized enterprises and universities/colleges.

Vocational training has been developed at various levels, but it still requires additional resources to meet future needs for qualified labour in the region.

Development strategies

STRATEGY 1: Boost Östergötland's appeal, competitiveness and position

For Östergötland, relative proximity to Stockholm provides a particularly good basis on which to build. In many respects we can be regarded as an integral part of, and an important point of equilibrium in, a Greater Stockholm region. A rail link such as the planned high-speed railway provides new and improved opportunities for an integration of this kind.

It is important for us to be able to offer a well-educated labour force, good communica-

tions, a vibrant cultural life and a good environment. By developing the region within these sectors we can boost our competitiveness – both nationally and internationally.

STRATEGY 2: Develop Östergötland into a polycentric urban region

Östergötland can be developed into a coherent urban region of considerable strength. With Linköping and Norrköping as the nucleus, ours is a region which, in terms of population and job opportunities, is the fourth largest in Sweden.

An efficient public transport system is the single most important factor for connecting the different communities to form one urban region: in this way, the overall extent of the area in which residents may choose live and work is expanded. This enables people who, for example, do a particular job in one of the larger urban centres to choose to live in Linköping or Norrköping, in a small town with a mediaeval heritage, in a rural village, or in the countryside close to a village.

Integrating the various parts of Östergötland to form a single functional region not only expands the options for where to work and live; it also provides companies with greater opportunities for recruiting staff with the qualifications they need.

STRATEGY 3:

Developing Östergötland into a region with a balance between heartland and hinterland

The population centres – in particular those in the rural municipalities – are of great significance as focal points. One strategy for creating balance in the region is to support these centres so that they can continue to be important for the region's rural areas. Efficient communication solutions are crucial to maintain a reasonable balance between the nucleus of the region and areas that are geographically more peripheral.

While commuting to work in a larger town will remain the main alternative for most out-of-town residents, it is also important to develop and support rural businesses in order to be able to offer more job opportunities locally.

STRATEGY 4:

Improve the innovative climate for business in Östergötland and strengthen the region's appeal as a place to establish and develop companies

Willingness to start and develop companies is influenced by society's attitudes to education, entrepreneurship and enterprise. In this respect, it is vital that Östergötland adopts a positive outlook at all levels. School, for example, plays a significant role in communicating knowledge and values.

Environments that inspire innovative entrepreneurship should be encouraged and expanded, and the support structures assisting entrepreneurs who require advice, finance and other help should be developed further. One high priority is to nurture such excellent quality in our development environments that they continue to interest and attract investors.

Healthcare and medical technology are key areas within Östergötland's innovative environment – and an expanding market. Collaboration between practitioners and researchers in this sector has given the region a head start in its experience of developing knowledge-based companies, not least in the form of the many companies that have been hived off from the University of Linköping. Other strong areas with good opportunities for development include energy technology, environmental engineering and media technology.

STRATEGY 5:

Support opportunities for high quality of life and personal development among residents

A job that provides satisfaction and enables you to develop as an individual is of fundamental significance for the quality of life. The region's ability to offer a varied choice of work therefore means a great deal for the quality of life of its residents.

The values of health and security cannot be overstated: these are fundamental to everyone.

A commitment to health and security should be a distinguishing feature of Östergötland. Equality of opportunity is another central issue. Men and women must be able to develop personally on equal terms and enjoy the same opportunities to study and participate in working life.

Access to development opportunities, in the form of education or enriching cultural experiences, is another important element of what the region must be able to offer in order to create the right conditions for a good quality of life.

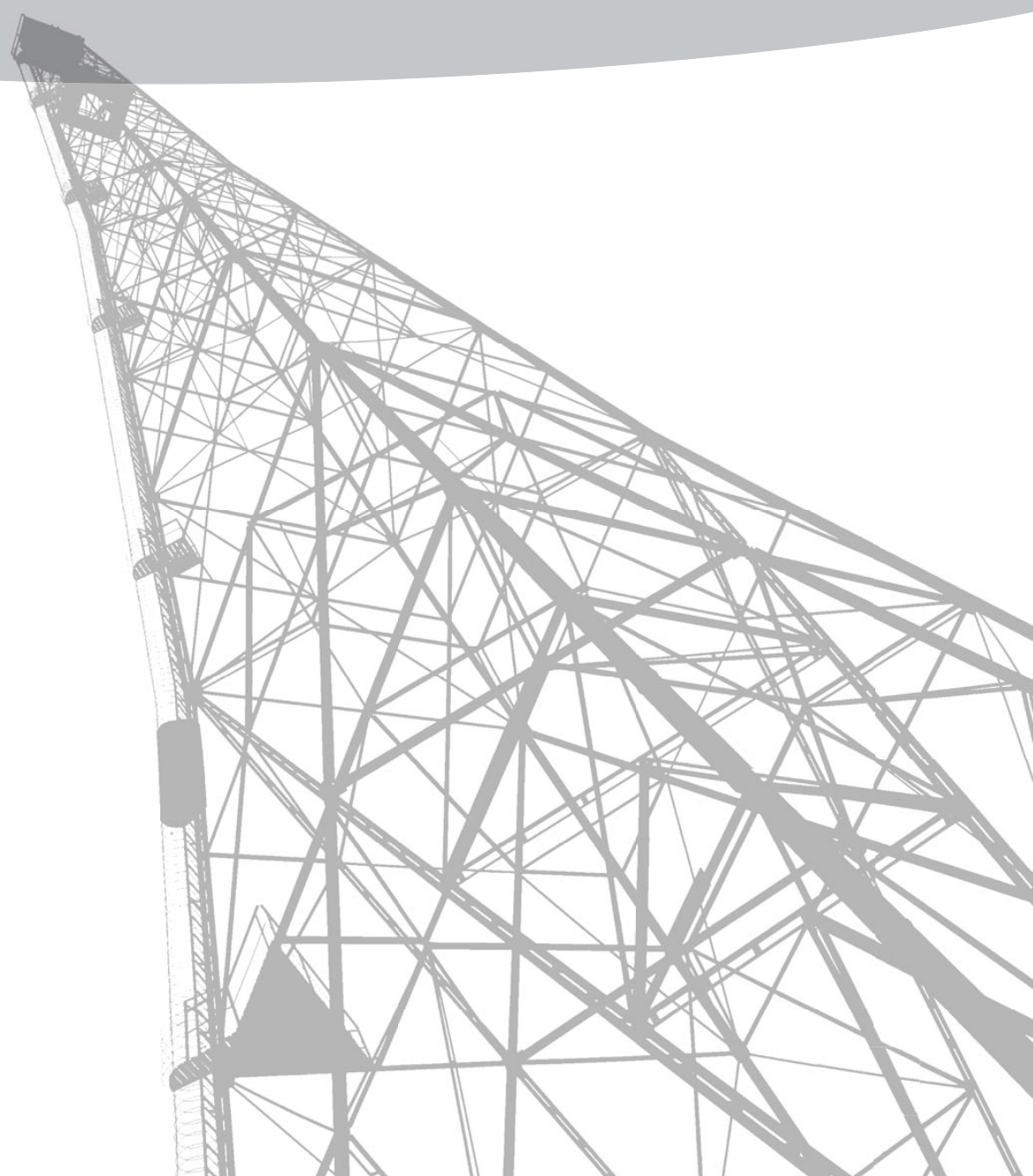
Working actively to support those who find themselves outside the labour market is of great importance. Reducing the sensation of being an outsider by offering education, rehabilitation and adapting today's workplaces is a major challenge for the future.

STRATEGY 6:

Developing and opening forms of political life at regional level

Developments today are moving towards giving the regions the power to decide in an increasing number of spheres of responsibility. This means, for example, that democracy is reaching deeper, that citizens are getting better services for the taxes they pay, and that the region can develop in such a way that welfare, in its widest sense, can be safeguarded in the long-term.

“Regional policy” may be described as a series of policies aimed at stimulating growth and development in a particular region, at the same



time as a balance is retained between the various regions, and the goals of national policy in various different areas are achieved.

The region has many people with the skills needed to work with regional development. It is important to create forms of collaboration that give these people an opportunity to make their voices heard and to contribute through their knowledge and their commitment.

Priority areas

In a shorter time-frame than that proposed for the development strategies, we have chosen to prioritise six different areas. For each of these we have formulated special programmes, which provide more specific details of intended developments over a period of six to seven years.

Four of these relate to clearly defined sectors:

- Infrastructure and communications
- Lifelong learning
- Culture
- Development of trade and industry

Two involve cross-sector collaboration:

- The development of Östergötland's rural areas
- The development of a metropolitan alternative in Östergötland

The Regional Development Plan for Östergötland consists in its entirety of:

- 1) Joint planning prerequisites – facts and statistics about Östergötland.
- 2) *Östergötland Region in 2020* (full version: in Swedish only).
- 3) A modified (Swedish) version of *Östergötland Region in 2020* (60 pages).
- 4) An abridged (Swedish) version of *Östergötland Region in 2020* (30 pages).

The folder you are reading is also available in Swedish.

Planning prerequisites and the full Swedish text of *Östergötland Region in 2020* can be downloaded from the Regional Development Council homepage. Other material can be requested from the Östsam Regional Development Council (see the contact details below).

