



# Regional Development Strategy for Västra Götaland 2021 – 2030



# Foreword

**THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY** for Västra Götaland sets out the direction for the work regional development during the period 2021–2030. The Strategy is focused on the need to address the serious challenges we are facing and in doing so make the transition to a more sustainable and competitive society. This requires innovative solutions, cross-sectoral approaches, and consistent integration of the three sustainability dimensions – economic, social, and environmental – into all development processes. The Strategy has been produced in compliance with the remit set out in the Regional Development Responsibilities Act (2010:630).

**THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS CHANGED** the world for everyone and created a future that is even more uncertain. The pandemic has also accelerated the changes that were already taking place, including the expansion of digital services, and altered the underlying assumptions and conditions for changes in the future. The transition we are facing requires robust structures and our approach must be sufficiently flexible to take account of unexpected situations, fluctuations, and crises.

**THE STRATEGY WAS FORMULATED** following extensive discussions throughout the county with municipal authorities, universities and colleges, industry, public authorities and agencies, associations, and other organisations. A common theme in all these discussions is the need for resolve, tenacity, and drive in the transition process, coupled with acknowledgement and respect for the multiplicity of interests and conditions that need to be taken into account. The challenges that arise are common to us all and can only be met by working in close partnership. We invite you to be part of a collective effort to bring about a sustainable Västra Götaland.

Vänersborg, February 2021

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# Making the transition together

Everyone who lives and works in Västra Götaland should have the opportunity to live a good life. The key to the long-term appeal and competitiveness of Västra Götaland is our common ability to be innovative and to make the transition to an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable society.

**THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY** sets out the direction for how the goals will be achieved. It presents aims and priorities in areas where the rate of transition needs to accelerate through to 2030. It focuses on areas that are developing through alliances forged between organisations and sectors, and through collaboration on the local, regional, national, and international level.

To make the transition to a sustainable Västra Götaland, we need to address a number of societal challenges in parallel. No organisation or authority can meet these challenges on their own, but by working in partnership we can contribute to creating a sustainable and competitive society.

## Parties responsible for implementing the Strategy

Those who have been involved in producing the Strategy and who will contribute to its implementation are industry and its organisations, the 49 municipalities within the county, the four local authority associations, academia and research institutes, civil society, Region Västra Götaland, the County Administrative Board, and other government bodies. We have different areas of responsibility, resources and knowledge, and the Strategy will act as a platform for dynamic and far-reaching collaboration and implementation.

## HOW THE STRATEGY IS INTERCONNECTED

### The Strategy has its starting point in Vision Västra Götaland – A Good Life

A good life presupposes sustainable development in three dimensions – economic, social, and environmental. These three dimensions are interlinked and interdependent.

The Regional Development Strategy is a key factor in the regional implementation of international and national development strategies. On a global level, there is Agenda 2030 with its 17 global sustainability goals. On the European level, there is the European growth strategy – the EU ‘green deal’ for a fair and prosperous transition to a sustainable economy, with a clear set of goals and measures for achieving climate-neutral by 2050. On the national level, there is the Strategy for Sustainable Regional Development.

The Strategy also links into the aims and aspirations outlined in three other regional target documents that have been adopted by the Regional Council – the Strategy for the Transformation of the Healthcare System in Region Västra Götaland, the Regional Transport Provision Programme, and the Västra Götaland Culture Strategy.

The Regional Development Strategy guides municipal authorities, local authority associations, industry, academia and research institutes, civil society, the County Administrative Board, and other government bodies in the shared task of promoting regional development. The Strategy and the Regional Council budget are the steering documents for Region Västra Götaland’s investments in regional development.

# How the Regional Development Strategy is structured

The Regional Development Strategy sets out the path that will be followed in the joint task of promoting development in Västra Götaland. The Strategy consists of an overriding goal, four long-term priorities, and four cross-sectoral focal areas.

**THE OVERRIDING GOAL OF THE STRATEGY** sets out the course of action through to 2030 and addresses the need for Västra Götaland to make the transition to a sustainable, competitive society. The aim specifies in concrete terms what this transition entails from an economic, environmental, and social perspective.

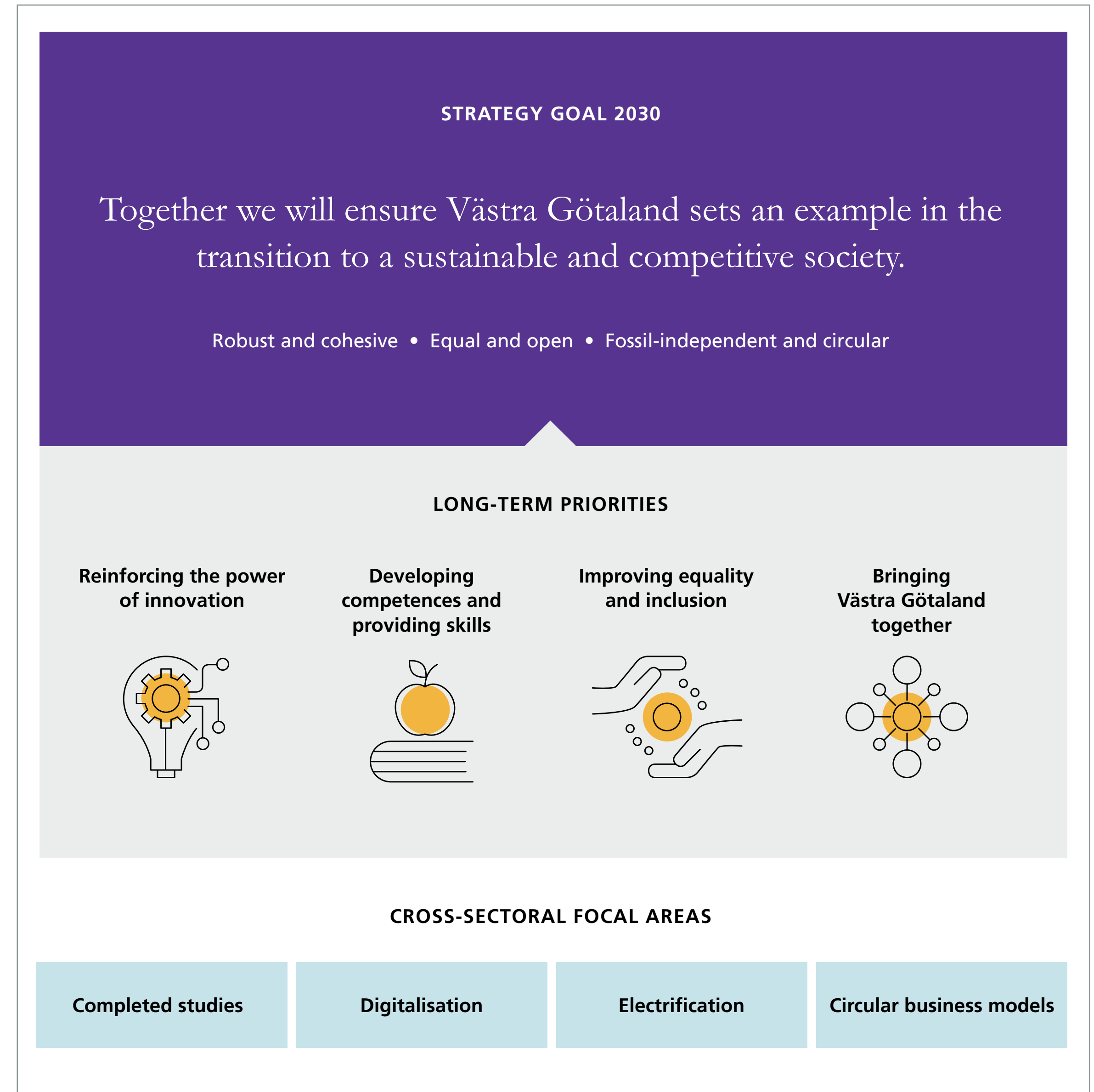
**THE LONG-TERM PRIORITIES** apply through to 2030 and present the four most important areas for joint initiatives, each of which has been designed to bring about a successful transition to a sustainable and competitive society.

**THE CROSS-SECTORAL FOCAL AREAS** remain in place for four years and are revised once during each term of office. The aim is to reinforce the work relating to the priorities through directed collaboration and use of resources.

**IMPLEMENTATION** takes place through dialogue and cooperation, using knowledge and learning as a point of departure. Four guiding principles challenge us and lead us through the process.



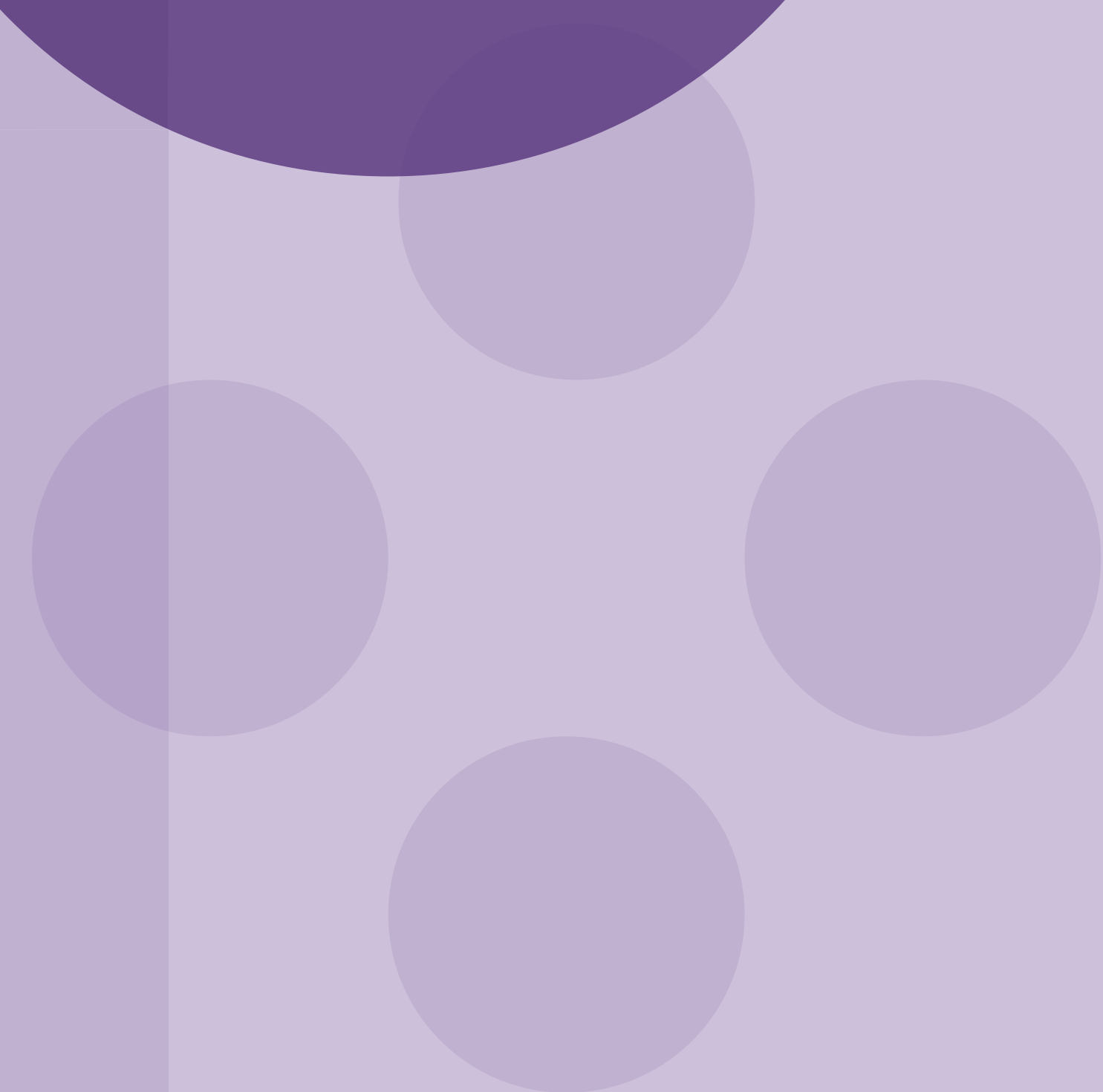
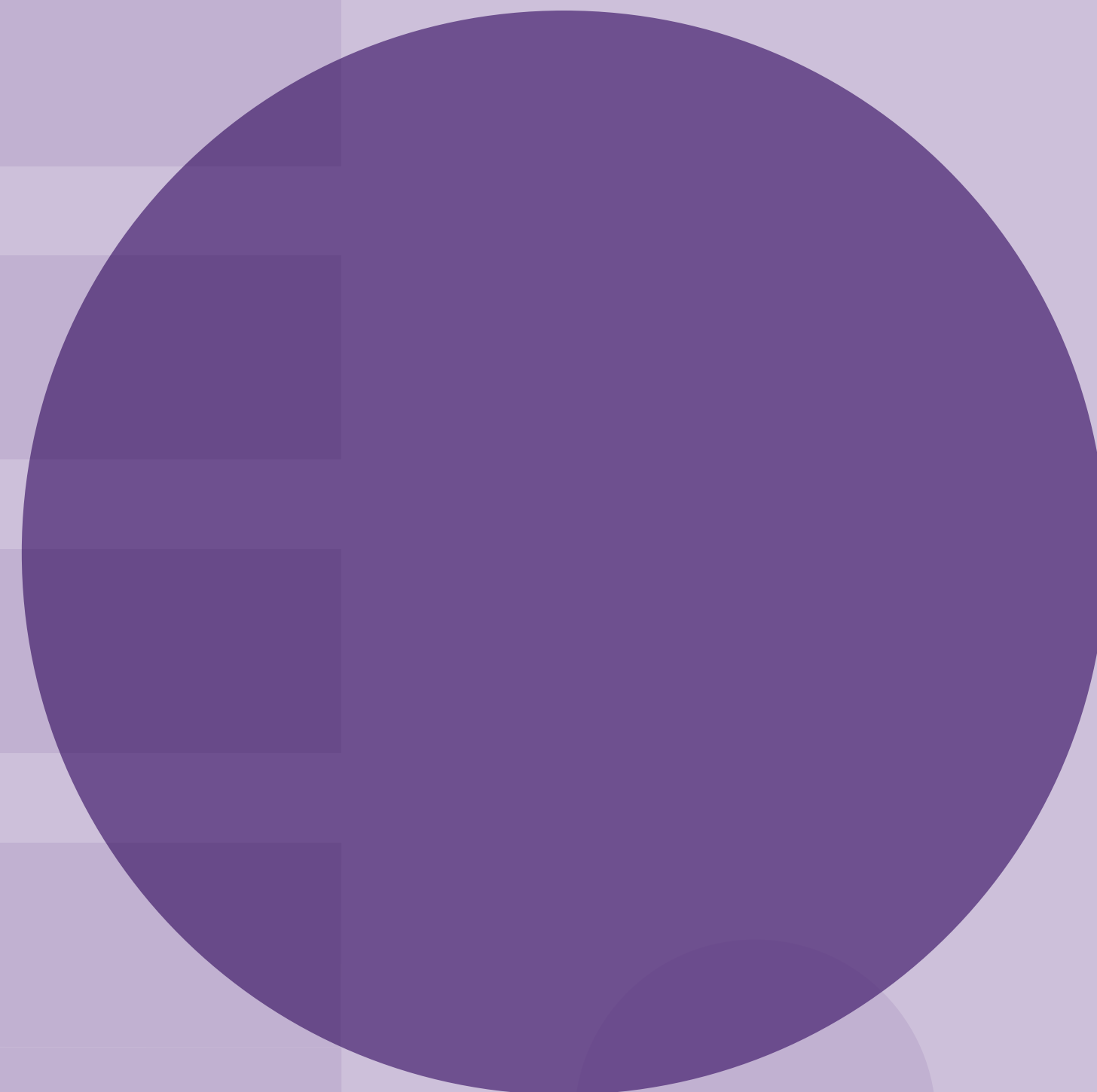
The diagram presents the various parts of the Regional Development Strategy and how they relate to each other. The Strategy has one goal, four long-term priorities, and four cross-sectoral focal areas.





# Strategy goal

– indicate the direction we will take through to 2030 and deal with the need for Västra Götaland to make the transition to a sustainable and competitive society. The goals specify in concrete terms what a transition of this nature entails from an economic, environmental, and social perspective.



# Strategy goal

The key to creating a Västra Götaland that is competitive and appealing in the long term is our joint ability to make an innovative transition within a range of areas. The goal presents the path Västra Götaland will take through to 2030:

**Together we will ensure Västra Götaland sets an example in the transition to a sustainable and competitive society.**

The goal concretises and balances what a transition of this nature entails from an economic, social, and environmental perspective. A Västra Götaland in transition is robust and cohesive, equal and open, fossil-independent and circular.

## Robust and cohesive

In a robust Västra Götaland, society can cope with both known and unforeseen challenges and transform them into possibilities. Industry in the region is highly competitive and has an internationally recognised capacity to remain at the forefront in technical development, continually meeting the need for new knowledge and skills, and dealing with economic changes. Academia contributes by providing unique research opportunities alongside skills provision and development. The region is well prepared to meet the impact of climate change and other game-changing events. A cohesive Västra Götaland is characterised by sustainable and improved accessibility and a welfare system founded on democratic principles, safeguarding the health and safety of the population. Access to leisure and recreation associations and cultural experiences further enhance their well-being.

The potential of each and every one of us is identified and fulfilled.

## Equal and open

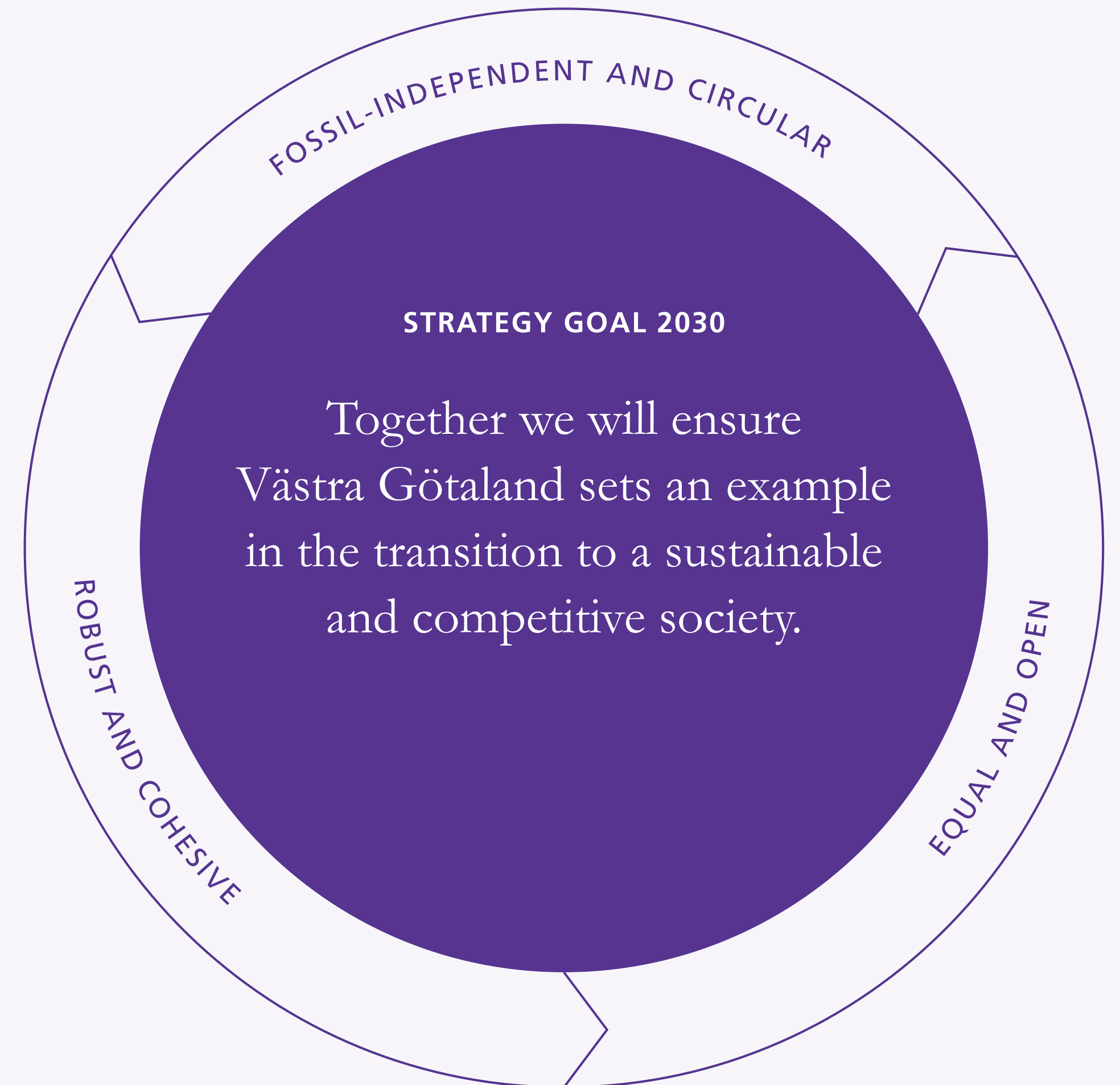
In a fair and impartial Västra Götaland, everyone is involved in the community on an equal and equitable basis. Society is inclusive and transparent, and people feel involved. The conditions and potential in different locations are utilised to the full, and there is interaction and exchange between those locations.

An open Västra Götaland is integrated with the world as a whole and has a rich exchange of ideas and information both nationally and internationally. Through good relationships and close cooperation with our neighbouring regions, we can contribute to sustainable development both locally and globally.

## Fossil-independent and circularity

In a fossil-independent, circular Västra Götaland the private and public sectors are the forerunners, inspiring and influencing climate and environmental work, both nationally and internationally. With reduced emissions from both production and consumption, we are accelerating the transition towards climate-neutrality. The use of raw materials is falling.

Fossil fuels and materials have been replaced with resource-efficient, biobased products and services, and biodiversity has been preserved. In a fossil-independent circular Västra Götaland the inhabitants can and want to make sustainable choices and contribute with creative solutions that limit the effects on both climate and the environment.





# A well-positioned Västra Götaland

Västra Götaland has 1.7 million inhabitants and is made up of 49 municipalities. The land area is extensive, and comprises rural areas, smaller and larger urban areas, and city areas. In Västra Götaland there are extensive natural resources in the form of water, forests, and agricultural land, creating the foundation for a competitive industrial base. This is coupled with nature in all its forms, a long coastline, and numerous rivers and lakes, making the various parts of the county attractive to visit, and an ideal place in which to live and work. In Västra Götaland there are also a number of unique cultural heritage sites, a vibrant cultural scene, and an active civil society. There is a diverse range of industries and enterprises that are of major significance not only to the development of Västra Götaland but also the country and the world.

**VÄSTRA GÖTALAND'S GEOGRAPHICAL** structure comprises four regional cores – Gothenburg, Borås, Skövde, and Trollhättan-Vänersborg-Uddevalla. All these areas are of significance in terms of location, size, and function, with the Gothenburg Region acting as the driving force for a large and varied hinterland. Gothenburg also has an important role to play as the core of the county's labour market, and a hub for research and innovation, logistics and transport, and international exchange.

**ALL TOWNS** and locations in Västra Götaland are linked to form a network of functions and with a digital and physical infrastructure within and beyond local and national borders. A regional totality is created through interaction between locations that are developing based on their unique conditions and potential.

**WEST SWEDEN IS ONE** of the regions in the world that is investing most in research and development in relation to its economic base, and industry accounts for a large proportion of this investment. Globally active companies, outstanding centres of learning, strong scientific environments, and well-developed structures for entrepreneurship and innovation make Västra Götaland a leading region for research and development. An open, dynamic cultural life acts as a beacon both nationally and internationally. Leading research, education and cultural settings highlight the region's attractiveness and promote its development.

**IN VÄSTRA GÖTALAND** there are many strong, unique industries and companies that are of major significance from an international perspective. Several industries, including the automotive industry, are undergoing a major transformation that requires both innovation and new areas of expertise. In a region such as Västra Götaland, which is open and exposed to global competition, industry is shaped at an early stage by fluctuations in the economy.

**AFTER MANY YEARS** of employment growth, the Covid-19 pandemic had a huge impact on many sectors. The tourism and hospitality sector and the retail sector, made up of numerous small and medium-sized enterprises, have been hit particularly hard. The whole of society has been affected in every way and with rising unemployment as a result. However, thanks to our joint regional development initiatives we still have a robust foundation that we can fall back on to meet and overcome crises.

## Cohesive and strategic regional development

Regional development in Västra Götaland is strategically long term and includes advances in culture, events and experiences, non-governmental organisations (NGO), skills provision, research and innovation, and the environment and climate. It also includes social and spatial planning of the infrastructure, broadband, public transport, public health, equality, antidiscrimination, and human rights initiatives.

**THERE IS A LONG** tradition in Västra Götaland of the public sector, industry, academia, and civil society working together, both within the region and with neighbouring regions, and as part of a range of international ventures. Established collaborative settings, stable structures, and a diverse population offer resources and conditions that make optimal use of the knowledge and commitment that is inherent within the region to create sustainable solutions. The regional development programme that characterises Västra Götaland is a source of strength that will ensure an innovative transition to a more sustainable and competitive society.



# Societal challenges as a driving force

Västra Götaland has a good starting point but at the same time we need to overcome a number of regional and global challenges. Large-scale social systems need to be realigned and fundamentally changed, not least to limit global warming. The complex nature of many of the challenges facing society means that innovative solutions need to be created jointly and on a cross-sectoral basis, making full use of the unique conditions and strengths. A development programme founded on societal challenges adds impetus to the transition to a sustainable and competitive society.

## The starting point for the Strategy can be found in the following societal challenges:

- The impact of emissions on our climate will be even more severe and biodiversity will be seriously threatened.
- Industry is highly dependent on international conditions and global competition is increasing. Advances within digitalisation, automation, and artificial intelligence bring about the need for new knowledge and expertise.
- There are significant skill shortages in certain areas in the private and public sector, while at the same time many people are unemployed.
- Local differences in the access to work and social services are increasing in the county.
- The socioeconomic divide and housing segregation are on the increase. Many people do not feel they are fully engaged in the community.
- Many children and young people are leaving secondary school and high school without pass grades in all subjects. A growing number of young people rather than older people are expressing their dissatisfaction with life, and far too many children and young people are suffering from mental ill-health.
- International crises are making companies and social organisations more vulnerable. This highlights the importance of an effective regional contingency plan.



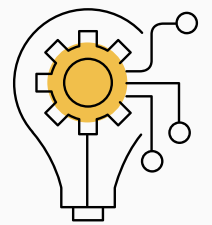
# Four long-term priorities

– Valid through to 2030, these are the four most important target areas for joint initiatives aimed at enabling the transition to a sustainable and competitive society.



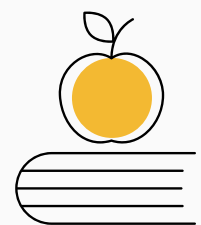
# The Strategy highlights four long-term priorities through to 2030

The priorities are the four most important areas in which we need to cooperate and develop joint initiatives to ensure Västra Götaland transitions into a sustainable and competitive society. These areas are interlinked and build on the coordinated and strategic regional development work taking place in Västra Götaland. At the same time, they are areas in which the rate of change needs to be accelerated or where the level of preparedness needs to be raised if we are to cope effectively with what will be a series of pioneering changes.



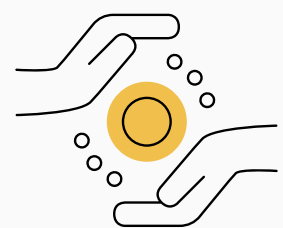
## Reinforce innovation

– for a competitive industrial sector that is consistently at the forefront



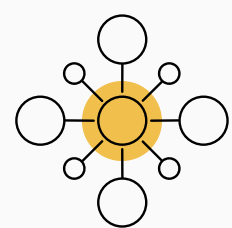
## Developing competences and providing skills

– for improved skills provision and lifelong learning



## Improve inclusion

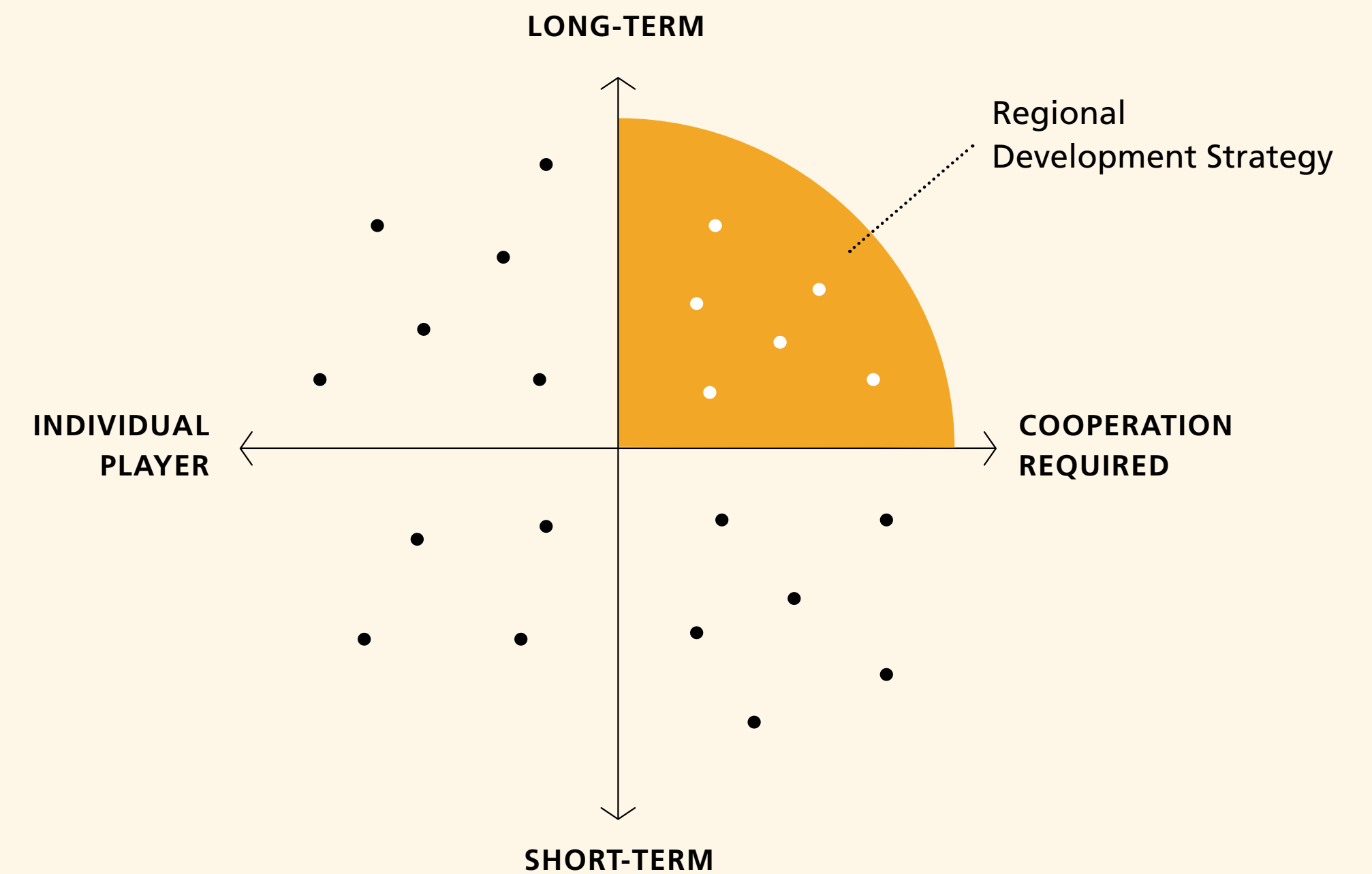
– for trust and cohesion

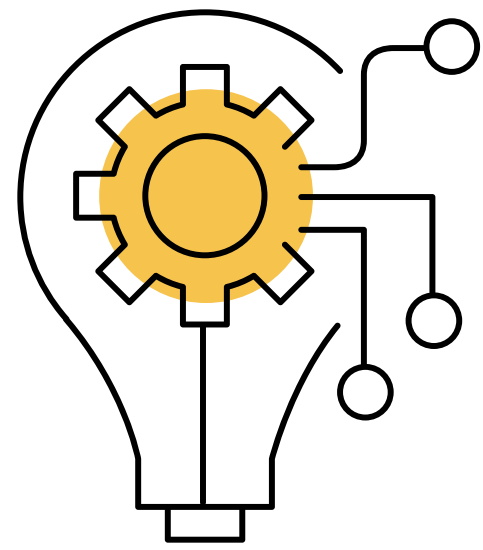


## Bring Västra Götaland together

– for improved and sustainable accessibility

The Strategy prioritises areas that are strategically important in the long-term development of Västra Götaland and where cooperation and joint initiatives are needed if we are to succeed in transitioning to an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable and competitive society.





## Reinforce innovation

– for a competitive industrial sector that is consistently at the forefront

Reinforcing innovation is fundamentally a question of making use of knowledge and developing ideas with the potential to accelerate the transition and create added value in both the private and public sector. It embodies initiatives designed to boost entrepreneurship and the creation of new business, stimulate innovation at small companies, promote investment in internationally strong clusters, and support advanced testing and demonstration platforms.

**IN A ROBUST**, fossil-independent Västra Götaland we are building on experience gained over a long period of time through close collaboration between a knowledge-intensive industrial sector, academia, research institutes, and the public sector. This heightens our appeal as an international partner and as a region that is ripe for investment and the establishment of new businesses. By making clearly directed investments in what is an innovative transition to sustainability, we are contributing to achieving the global sustainability goals while at the same time ensuring Västra Götaland acquires and retains a competitive edge.

**COOPERATION AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER** will be increasingly important when traditional industries link up in new ways. The rate of change will increase thanks to the innovative capability, versatility, and preparedness of small and medium-sized enterprises. This will bring new products and services to the market, which will prove invaluable in boosting employment in Västra Götaland. There is potential to increase the companies' profitability and create more jobs when innovative compatibility is reinforced, although in

this case investment is vital to promote internationalisation, skills development, and the advancement of knowledge in partnership with institutes and academia.

**THROUGH CONTINUED INVESTMENT** in research and innovation environments, small and medium-sized enterprises can meet and create added value together with academia, the public sector, and organisations. Access to networks is crucial, not only for companies to grow, but also to encourage them to remain in Västra Götaland.

**A DYNAMIC SYSTEM** on all levels is required, with everything from major knowledge and export-intensive companies, suppliers, and service providers, to a broad base of innovative small and medium-sized enterprises. Entrepreneurial elements within the school system and in higher education and research are crucial when consolidating long-term entrepreneurship and the capacity for renewal.

In Västra Götaland there are certain areas that are of particular importance to regional competitiveness and growth

potential, and the Strategy will reinforce the conditions for an innovative transition and sustainable development within the following areas:

- **Sustainable industry** includes production, new materials, resource-efficient process and product development, and industrial services such as digitalisation, energy supply, and circular business models.
- **Health and life science** include the development of drugs, medical technology, welfare technology, and innovations within healthcare, with a particular focus on precision health and utilisation of the potential deriving from digitalisation.
- **Food, biobased materials, and renewable energy** with a focus on production and processing in the marine, maritime, agricultural, and forest industries, and in the solar power and wind power sectors.
- **Future mobility** combines complementary strengths in the automotive, aeronautical, and space industries. This includes the transport of people and freight, as well as logistics, electrification, and improved access to new types of services.
- **The hospitality and tourism sector and the culture and creative industries** include events, films, gaming, and design. These areas are pivotal to promoting and preserving the region's appeal.

**TESTING AND DEMONSTRATION** of innovations in pilot schemes and testing and experimental environments is one way of handling different perspectives, degrees of complexity, and risks in a concerted effort to meet the need to scale up rapidly. It also reduces the time through to putting what has been tested into practice, and quickly creating a domestic market for globally emerging solutions.

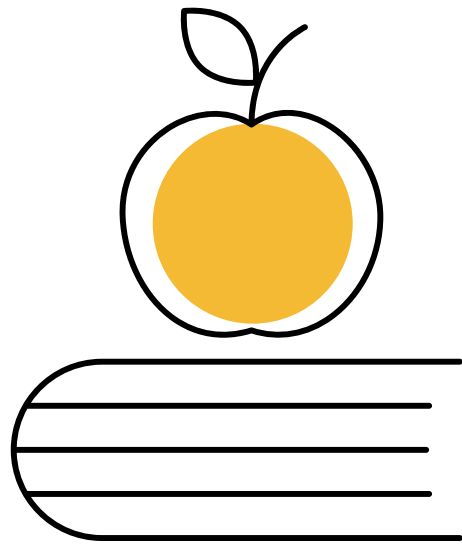
**NEW INNOVATIONS NEED TO** integrate technology and business models with ethics, laws, and rules. The public sector needs to demand and drive different renewal initiatives. In this

respect public-private partnerships are driving the transition by attracting expertise and funding for development and production. Participation in European collaborative ventures can be an effective means of highlighting local innovations internationally, raising awareness, and providing us with further inspiration and knowledge in our endeavours.

**INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT CAPABILITY** increase when diversity and equality are identified as competitive advantages. Social innovation is vital in the transition to a sustainable society. When the participation and creativity of the population are utilised, and in particular the creative capability of children and young people, the innovations, services, and companies of the future are developed. The private sector, public sector and voluntary sector need to contribute to new solutions, ensuring that people feel safe and well, and are actively involved in daily life.

### Examples of areas that are important in the long term to reinforce innovation

- Develop and utilise scalable ideas with the potential to increase the rate of transition through innovation environments that generate interaction between industry, academia, and the public sector.
- Promote entrepreneurship and the establishment of companies and enhance competitiveness and the capacity for change at small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Stimulate entrepreneurship and utilise the creativity and skills of children and young people.
- Increase international competitiveness through investment in key areas such as sustainable and fossil-independent industry, health and life science, sustainable mobility, food, biobased materials, and renewable energy, and also in the hospitality, tourism, cultural and creative industries.



## Developing competences and providing skills

– for enhanced skills provision and lifelong learning

Developing competences and providing skills is essentially about bringing to the fore the importance of access to knowledge and expertise if society is to develop. Education and work are the foundations if people and companies are to grow. The transition of society and rapidly changing markets also requires that we adapt our learning and actions in accordance with new knowledge and new conditions. When the need for new skills increases rapidly, lifelong learning becomes increasingly important.

**A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES** arise when meeting the needs of the labour market in the future. The demand for new skills and competences is changing as a result of digitalisation, automation, and an increasing sustainability focus. The capacity to see what type of skills and competences are needed in the future and to change in order to meet new undertakings as they arise are gaining in importance.

**WE NEED TO WORK** systematically with upskilling and re-skilling and lifelong learning based on the demands of the labour market. For Västra Götaland to become fossil-independent and circular, new areas of expertise are required alongside the need to make use of new research findings. Crises such as pandemics can also have a significant bearing on the labour market and could lead to the rapid reshaping of entire sectors.

**JOBS REQUIRING HIGHER EDUCATION** has for a long time been concentrated on urban regions whilst many key competences are needed in an increasingly globalised labour market.

To meet competition for skills and labour, the whole of Västra Götaland needs to become an attractive place to live and work. By expanding the labour market across regional and national borders, the potential to cope with the transition will increase. A positive outcome of the Covid-19 pandemic is that new opportunities to work and learn remotely have emerged and will probably become an accepted part of education and working life in the future.

**WHEN CERTAIN PROFESSIONS** change or disappear and others come into being, new ways of working with lifelong learning and education are needed. This could take the form of lifelong learning, upskilling and re-skilling, validation, and strategic skills provision. This requires a broad range of education at universities and colleges as well as vocational training and education programmes at folk high schools, study associations, and other organisations. The training programmes need to be made more attractive to more people. They also need to be adapted more quickly and new approaches need to be developed to meet the changes we are

facing. In this respect digitalisation has an important role to play in opening opportunities.

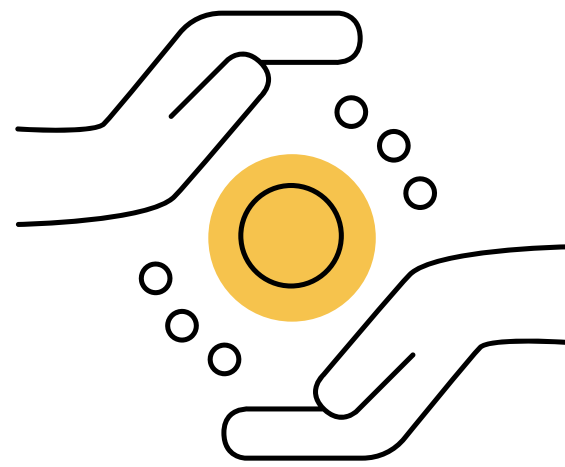
**MATCHING SUPPLY** and demand of expertise presupposes close collaboration between education providers, the Public Employment Service, employers, and industry representatives, and is facilitated by a broader labour market. It involves further education, in-service training, and opportunities for people whose educational background and expertise no longer meet the demands of the labour market. At the same time, it is important to develop validation of knowledge and expertise, particularly among new arrival immigrants, to make it easier for people to become established in the labour market. Working life in the public and private sector needs to improve in order to capitalise on the diverse range of skills and experience that are available. The labour market can be made more equal by focusing actively on reducing gender stereotyping in the choice of education and profession.

**DEVELOPMENT IN BOTH** the public and private sector presupposes a labour force with the requisite skills that are needed. If this is lacking, it could result in companies moving their operations out of the country and the public sector would ultimately be unable to maintain welfare and key societal functions. Individual companies and organisations need to

bring in new qualified employees and train existing employees. The demand for expertise within a number of the larger occupational groups will increase at a time when many people will retire and the number of people of working age declines.

### Examples of areas that are important in the long term to developing competences and providing skills

- Increase the potential for upskilling and re-skilling to meet shifts in technology and changing needs on the labour market.
- Combat skills mismatch in the labour market.
- Develop cooperation between education coordinators, the Public Employment Service, employers, and industry representatives.
- Capitalise on and develop the skills of the workforce and make it easier for more people to become established on the labour market.



## Improve social inclusion

– for reinforced trust and cohesion

Improving inclusion involves creating conditions for all individuals to play an active role in working life and society. It is also involves increasing people’s trust in each other, in society, and in democracy. Strengthening conditions and opportunities for children and young people is the foundation.

**EACH PERSON MUST** be able to use their full potential in an equal and cohesive Västra Götaland, with trust between people and society in general as the basis for a functioning democracy. Regional development must be guided in part by people’s conditions, rights, and needs, and in part by the potential for individuals to be actively involved in their community.

**TOGETHER WE NEED** to increase the potential for more people to work and provide for themselves. Initiatives are required to make this a reality, including education, language skills, and validation. Social networks and meeting places are essential for the quality of life and the potential for employment. Culture and associations are part of what holds the fabric of society together, creating communities that attract new people as well as new perspectives, a sense of belonging, and good health.

**THE SOCIOECONOMIC DIVIDE** must be narrowed. We need to ensure that no one feels excluded from society. It is impor-

tant to ensure everyone can be part of the digital development process, not least by enhancing the media and data maturity of the general population.

**THE CONDITIONS FOR PLAYING A PART** in society vary depending on where you live and your origin, education, age, gender, possible physical or mental impairments, and a host of other factors. Education and financial circumstances are key elements when it comes to people’s health and their potential to participate in working life. However, people born abroad need to follow a much longer path to enter the labour market than a person born in the country. The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have affected people in different ways depending on their socioeconomic conditions and where vulnerable groups are being hit the hardest.

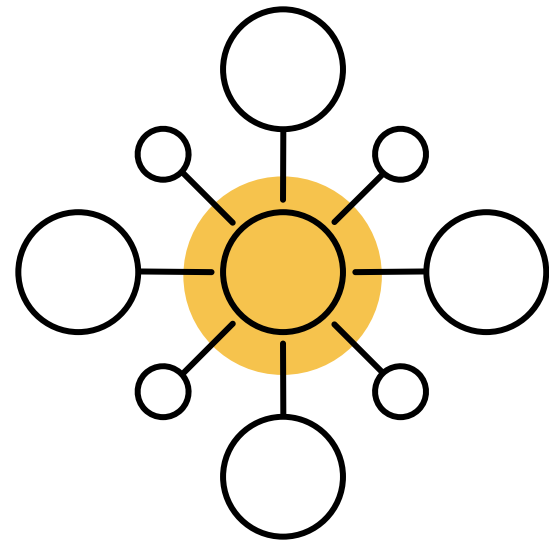
**GREATER POTENTIAL** for equal access to health and education for children and young people is crucial in a robust and open Västra Götaland. Early initiatives aimed at providing children and young people with the right conditions to suc-

cessfully complete their secondary school and high school education mean a great deal in terms of their well-being and their future health and employment. The autonomy of children and young people and their belief in the future are reinforced when they are given the opportunity to be actively involved in matters that affect them.

**HOUSING AND THE** public environment are of major significance to counteracting marginalisation and segregation. Access to housing is a welfare issue and housing segregation needs to be addressed. It is important to create attractive, stimulating living environments – both for those who live and work in the area and for visitors. There must be greater access to communications to meet the needs of the local population more consistently, and it is vital that steps are taken to mitigate the effects of climate change.

### Examples of areas that are important in the long term to improve social inclusion

- Providing more opportunities for education and self-support.
- Creating conditions for a greater sense of belonging and trust between people and throughout society.
- Reinforcing the potential for children and young people to have a good start in life.



## Bringing Västra Götaland together

– for improved, sustainable accessibility

Creating a cohesive Västra Götaland not only involves bringing different parts of the county closer, but also neighbouring regions, the rest of Sweden, and other countries. We want to enable people and companies to reach out to each other and have an exchange with the world that extends beyond the region. Social planning and regional spatial planning are key components in the solutions of the future. Coordinated planning of buildings and transport is necessary if the transport system is to be sustainable.

**AN OPEN, COHESIVE**, and fossil-independent Västra Götaland would create a transport-efficient society where transport requirements are incorporated into community planning. This presupposes that there are good opportunities to commute to workplaces and centres of learning, and that access to services and culture is expanded. Västra Götaland exists in a global world where interaction within the EU is vital if the climate challenge is to be overcome. The prerequisites for a strong region are enhanced by infrastructural development on the regional, national, and international level – particularly with regard to cooperation with our neighbouring regions and with Norway, Denmark, and Germany. The locational structure of Västra Götaland and the surrounding rural areas opens up geographical potential for development. Our geographical multicore structure, with Borås, Skövde, Trollhättan-Vänersborg-Uddevalla, and Gothenburg as hubs, is having a tangible impact on development throughout the whole county.

**THE RAIL SYSTEM CONTINUES** to be a fundamentally sustainable transport system for passengers and freight. But it also requires large-scale investment to increase the capacity of the rail network and to move freight transport from road to rail. It focuses on a common ability to secure new funding solutions and for the municipalities within the county and

Region Västra Götaland to continue to stand united when prioritising investment in the infrastructure.

**THE LARGEST PORT IN SCANDINAVIA** is in Gothenburg and shipping is crucial to Swedish exports and imports. Västra Götaland is also Sweden’s transport and logistics centre with several geographically diverse nodes where various modes of transport meet and interact. There is considerable potential for development, and for demonstrating and disseminating sustainable transport and logistics solutions.

**THE POSSIBILITY TO** travel sustainably depends on people’s access to different locations. Solutions must therefore be adapted to geographical differences and to varying needs within the population and between companies. In general, public transport must be a competitive option in relation to private car ownership and use, and in the case of daily travel over short distances, there is great potential for increased walking and cycling. Through guided investment and information campaigns, the modal share of sustainable freight transport and passenger transport can increase significantly. New types of shared mobility services that complement public transport, bicycling and walking are needed too, but are in early stages of development. Hence, further investments are needed to support their development and to promote new travel behaviours.

**REGIONAL SOCIETAL PLANNING** needs to be developed more and be coordinated if it is to be better positioned to handle long-term challenges within areas such as freight and passenger transport, settlement planning, energy provision, and climate adaptation. The location of industrial facilities, workplaces, homes, and services, backed by the emergence of digitalisation, can contribute to more equitable conditions for the local population and reduce climate impact.

**ON THE MORE** detailed planning level, challenges arise when attempting to find the right balance for sustainable land use. This increases the need for collaboration within the planning process. Effective collaboration between public agencies and authorities on the local, regional, and national level is crucial as responsibility is shared by all the parties concerned.

**MORE METHODS OUGHT** to be devised for locational development and the design of living environments. By doing so, we can achieve sustainable urban and rural development and make use of the specific conditions at different places in order to grow on the local level. This would involve the inhabitants, associations, organisations, companies, and the municipal authority, making it possible for them to work together to enable changes to be made. An ideal starting point would be the cultural heritage and history of the location, which to a large extent have already determined its character.

**PEOPLE’S LIVES AFFECT** and are affected by how the surroundings are planned and designed. In this context public interests should lead by example and encourage living environments that are inclusive and sustainable in the long term. Environments where people are happy and feel they are playing a part. It is a matter of involving the local population, urging them to take part in urban planning and infrastructure processes, and making their voices heard. Interaction makes it possible to identify synergies between areas and facilitate development within public and commercial service provision.

**DIGITALISATION CAN INCREASE** resource efficiency and lead to

the creation of smart technical solutions, services, and business models. Expansion of fixed and mobile broadband is of vital importance to the local population and companies throughout the whole of Västra Götaland if they are to contribute to and benefit from the services and contacts that are created. Fixed and mobile broadband networks are a prerequisite for service digitalisation, remote working, the development of industry, and reducing the need for transport.

### Examples of areas that are important in the long term to bring Västra Götaland together

- Promote interaction as part of the regional planning process.
- Develop the transport infrastructure and increase sustainable mobility.
- Continue the expansion of fixed and mobile broadband throughout the county.
- Improve the conditions for locational planning and development.
- Increase cooperation nationally and internationally

### Prioritised infrastructure

A prioritisation review of the transport infrastructure for Västra Götaland takes place every fourth year as part of a national plan for the transport system and is included in the Regional Plan for the Transport Infrastructure in Västra Götaland 2018–2029. Working in partnership with the local authority associations, Region Västra Götaland has produced a master plan for the transport infrastructure in Västra Götaland with the long-term ambition of developing the transport system. In addition, the parties have reached agreement on priorities and their implications for national investment in the document *Västsverige har växtvärk*.



# Four cross-sectoral focal areas

– valid for four years on each occasion and revised once during each term of office. The aim is to reinforce the work related to long-term priorities through directed use of resources and cooperation.



## The Strategy includes four cross-sectoral focal areas

The Strategy includes four cross-sectoral focal areas. The focal areas ought to be reviewed and revised, if necessary, once during each term of office. The following are the focal areas for the first four years:

- Completed studies
- Digitalisation
- Electrification
- Circular business models

The aim behind the focal areas is to reinforce the work that is being done within one or more of the four long-term priorities. A focal area is an area in which there is a greater focus on heightened collaboration and coordinated development within that area. Working together, we channel resources towards a predetermined goal in order to increase the momentum and intensity of the transition, which will continue once the focus on that specific area comes to an end.

FOCAL AREA

## Completed studies

**WE WANT TO PROVIDE** children and young people with the best conditions possible, ensuring they have a good start in life, good health, a first-rate education, and a firm belief in the future. The fact that more young people are leaving school with pass grades in all subjects is of significant long-term benefit for both the individual and society. But despite the efforts that are being made to create a system where more students leave school with a good, complete education, the results to date are inadequate. The different stakeholders, with different areas of responsibility, resources, and perspectives, need to cooperate in order to reduce young student's school failures.

**THE CONDITIONS FOR ENSURING STUDENTS** leave school with good grades are shaped by a whole series of factors, including the parents' level of education, income, and background. Efforts made within this focal area contribute to levelling out differences, adapting to the life situation of each child, and taking account of disparities between girls and boys.

**MEASURES ARE REQUIRED** to improve the mental health of children and young people, as it affects their potential for academic success. The focus is on the significance of the child's early years to their academic achievements, physical and mental health, and future role in working life. It is important to provide families with support at an early stage to promote language

development, reading, and the pleasure that can be derived from physical activity. By doing so, we create better conditions for the children.

**PAEDIATRIC HEALTHCARE, SCHOOL, STUDENT HEALTH,** social services, and the healthcare sector in general need to work together to provide good, equitable health conditions and for the cognitive development of our children. Leisure and recreation associations and cultural life increase the scope for children and young people to reinforce their talents and abilities, as well as their sense of curiosity, and their capacity to exercise control over their lives. It also helps them establish networks and social contexts.

**YOUNG ADULTS WHO** do not leave secondary school and high school with pass grades in every subject are given an extra chance to further their education through the folk high school system and adult education programmes.

**THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD** must make the transition from theory to practice. This includes systematically helping children to become involved in issues that affect and interest them, and to help them become aware of their rights. The best interests of the child must also be taken into account in all matters relating to their life and well-being, ensuring they have the opportunity to develop based on their true potential.

FOCAL AREA

## Digitalisation

**DIGITALISATION TRANSFORMATION** of the private, public, and voluntary sectors leads to the creation of new technical solutions, systems, and processes. Digitalisation contributes to increasing a company's competitiveness, improves the efficiency of the public sector, and creates solutions for bringing about a fossil-independent society.

**THERE IS CONSIDERABLE POTENTIAL** in the public sector to develop and improve service provision through digitalisation. This can be achieved through the use of digitalisation technology in welfare and healthcare, community building, and the education system. One effect of the Covid-19 pandemic is that digitalisation of services has increased, exemplified by the fact that digital meetings have become an accepted part of life.

**DIGITALISATION IS INCREASING THE POTENTIAL** for the population to gain access to information, to be engaged, and to exert an influence in the development of society. Contact between the local population and the authorities is becoming increasingly digitalised, which requires secure data processing and secure systems. An assessment of risks and ethical considerations needs to be made to take account of personal integrity and potential cyberattacks. At the same time, there is digital marginalisation, which must be broken down to ensure everyone has the same opportunities. The education system has an important role to play in this respect. Increased knowledge is also required, as well as information evaluation to reduce the risk of greater polarisa-

tion and being drawn into filter bubbles, putting them in a state of intellectual isolation.

**NEW TECHNOLOGY** offers considerable innovation potential, with artificial intelligence (AI) expected to increase significantly in importance. AI presupposes access to large amounts of high-quality data.

**ACCESS TO DIGITAL INFORMATION,** which can also be used freely will promote innovation and for more tailored solutions for the population as a whole. It is important to have an adequate level of digital literacy and the potential to develop, test and demonstrate new solutions before they are implemented in society. This requires the private and public sectors to pull in the same direction. Important areas include digital service development and manufacturing industry.

**DIGITALISATION, ROBOTISATION AND AI** will lead to major changes in working life. Research, education, in-service training, and the exchange of expertise must interact to meet these changes. Certain professions will be phased out whilst others will be added. Digitalisation increases the need for new knowledge and expertise in everything from technical infrastructure and programming to communication and work processes.

**A PREREQUISITE FOR DIGITALISATION** is that the expansion of fixed and mobile broadband networks and robust systems continues. We are moving rapidly towards a connected society in which 5G is essential.

FOCAL AREA  
**Electrification**

**ELECTRIFICATION OF INDUSTRY** and the transport sector is an important part of the task of mitigating our impact on climate. At the same time, it represents one of the greatest industrial transitions in our time. For the transition to succeed, access to appropriate expertise is required in new and existing areas and at all levels.

**ELECTRIFICATION IS ESSENTIALLY ABOUT** developing sustainable solutions within different areas of society. New technology needs internationally competitive environments and laboratories for research, testing and demonstration. Innovation procurement is vital to the development of products and services. In this respect, public-private partnerships and funding are key success factors, allowing the domestic market to function as a springboard for industry and increase exports to other countries.

**IN PHYSICAL PLANNING** on the municipal and regional level, needs and prerequisites for power production and distribution must be taken into account. Power generated from non-fossil sources is insufficient to meet future large-scale electrification requirements. We must plan where new domestic renewable power production facilities will be located and how storage – using hydrogen and batteries for example – can be optimised.

**THE DISTRIBUTION CAPABILITY OF THE ELECTRICITY GRID** needs to be expanded to meet the rise in local demand for power. Expansion of the vehicle charging infrastructure is crucial as the transport system becomes increasingly electrified. Society must plan for and assure a power generation system that meets needs and expectations regarding renewability and security of supply.

FOCAL AREA  
**Circular business models**

**AS WE MOVE** from a linear to a more circular economy, the potential is being created for industry that will be competitive in the long term and at the same time we will limit the impact on our environment and our climate. Products and services based on renewable energy and raw materials from ground, forest, and water sources are the key to breaking free from our dependence on oil and other fossil fuels. Metals and materials that cannot be replaced with biobased materials must be channelled back into the production system, allowing them to retain their economic value over time. This presupposes new business concepts that combine maximum customer benefit with minimum resource consumption.

**INNOVATIONS WITHIN CIRCULAR PRODUCT** and business development, in combination with products and services that help reduce material flows, form the basis for new business models. This generates profitability and long-term economic sustainability.

**THE BROAD-BASED INTRODUCTION** of circular business systems involves a fundamental and global transformation of the economy. Västra Götaland could be involved in taking the lead. There is excellent potential to develop and reinforce circular production and consumption throughout the whole of Västra Götaland

based on resource-efficient extraction and production methods that do not jeopardise biodiversity despite increased biomass extraction.

**INNOVATIONS NEED TO BE DEVELOPED**, tested, and scaled up. New business models with changed value cycles increase the need for interaction on both the company level and system level. If a number of players take the lead, opportunities can be opened up for other industries and sectors in society to follow suit and drive the process forward. User-driven business development, such as service design, can facilitate and stimulate sustainable consumption and a sustainable lifestyle. The public sector could be a vital forerunner by making demands in conjunction with procurement and creating settings in which new business models can be developed, tested, and demonstrated.

**THERE IS ALSO CONSIDERABLE** commitment in civil society, cultural life, and the education system to inspire and increase the ability of the local population to re-adjust to a sustainable lifestyle. This will contribute to new offers made by local industry and new business models being developed around renting, recycling, sharing, and repair, which will collectively contribute to vibrant and attractive locations.



# Implementation

– takes place through dialogue and cooperation, with the starting point in knowledge and learning. Four guiding principles direct the work.



# Implementation – through dialogue and collaboration

The Regional Development Strategy sets out the direction for the transition to a sustainable and competitive society. If this is to have the desired effect, companies, public authorities, and organisations need to join forces to follow a common path in pursuit of our ambitions. Whilst we all have different mandates and resources at our disposal, responsibility is shared. Together we can increase the rate of transition through forceful and effective dialogue and collaboration, tenacious commitment, and joint initiatives. We need to work and cooperate in new ways, broaden our perspective, be bold in our endeavours, test the unknown, and lead the way.

**THE STRATEGY IS COMPREHENSIVE** and long term. Our starting point are the challenges we are facing and we drive the development forward through the Strategy, its sub-strategies, action plans, and agreements, and in doing so facilitate active collaboration and cross-sectoral partnership.

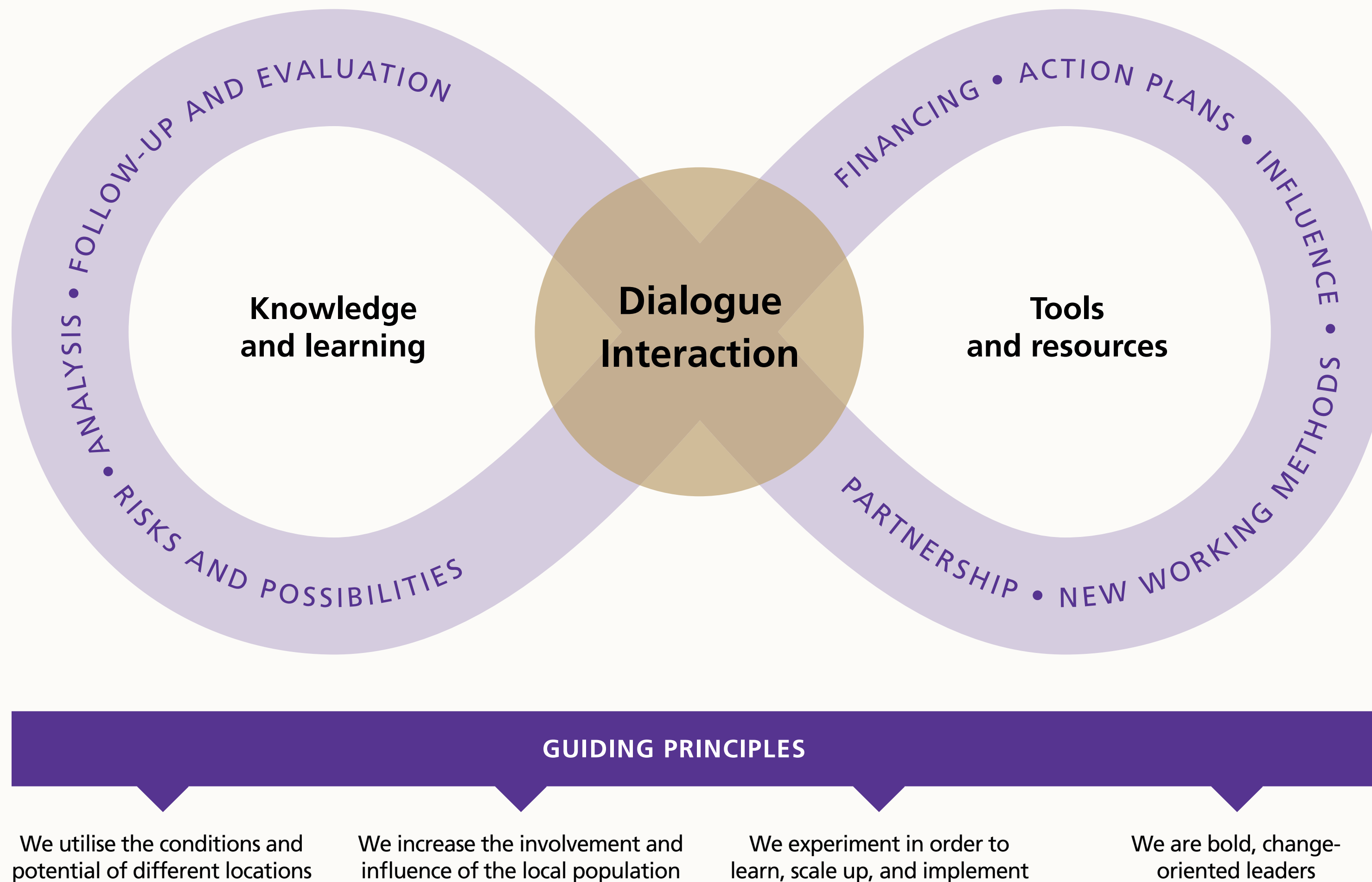
**WE NEED TO MAKE PROVISION FOR** the inclusion of financial and HR resources in our budgets and plans. Interaction is required that links up governance on the local, regional, national, and European level.

**THOSE CONTRIBUTING** to the Strategy include industry and its organisations, the 49 municipalities in the county, the four local authority associations, academia and

research institutes, civil society, Region Västra Götaland, the County Administrative Board, and other government bodies. We all have different areas of responsibility, resources and knowledge, and the Strategy forms the platform for collaboration and effective implementation.

**THE POTENTIAL FOR** moving forward together increases with the support of four guiding principles and with the starting point in knowledge and learning, focusing on the challenges we are facing, and determining how, by working together, we intend to succeed in meeting those challenges. It is through dialogue and collaboration that we can resolve potential conflicts that could arise along the way, such as when a positive outcome in one area results in a negative outcome in another.

↪ The illustration shows the implementation process in the form of the symbol for infinity. In the centre there is ongoing dialogue and interaction. Knowledge and learning interact with the initiatives that we take using the resources and tools at our disposal. The guiding principles at the base of the figure will guide us in the implementation process.



# Four guiding principles

The Strategy highlights four principles that will guide us in our dialogue and interaction as we implement the Strategy. The principles will help us to capitalise on the potential that exists throughout the whole of Västra Götaland by inspiring and challenging us to work and interact in new ways. They will contribute to broadening our perspective, increasing participation, encouraging us to take the lead, and having the resolve and tenacity to test the unknown. The guiding principles are also a means of integrating Agenda 2030 into the implementation process.

## We utilise the conditions and potential in different locations

Västra Götaland is a large county with considerable variation in potential and challenges linked to the conditions in different places. This variation must be utilised, which presupposes that we highlight the different needs for development. We need functional interaction across territorial and political dividing lines that is based on the key issues that need to be addressed. This could mean that we need to challenge traditional boundaries and administrative limitations. Through cooperation between locations with different strengths and functions, development can take place both locally and in Västra Götaland as a whole. Cultural life is a unifying force that helps break down barriers.

## We increase the involvement and influence of the local population

For the change process to be sustainable in the long term, the local population needs to have the opportunity to be involved, to exert an influence, and to develop their community. The right to participate applies equally to children and young people, who should have the opportunity to be involved in matters concerning them and to do so on their own terms. Inclusion will promote health and reinforce democracy. We must work together to ensure as many people as possible have the opportunity to play a part in the implementation of the Strategy and make their voices heard. Intercultural dialogue is a means of increasing grass roots participation and highlighting individual perspectives. Only then can the work we are doing contribute to the overall goal set out in Agenda 2030 of eliminating social marginalisation in all its forms.

## We experiment in order to learn, scale up, and implement

By experimenting and creating testing and demonstration platforms we facilitate learning and innovation for sustainable development. By employing new working approaches, methods, and forms of interaction we drive development in areas where the rate of change needs to accelerate. The need to reach good, rapid decisions under a cloud of growing uncertainty amplifies the importance of employing different methods to handle decision-making processes under controlled conditions. The risk of failure is all part of the learning process. At the same time, we need to utilise to the full what we know already works. It is only then that we can mobilise to bring about and disseminate sustainable solutions and scalable initiatives that contribute to increasing the rate of transition.

## We are bold, change-oriented leaders

Major changes require determination. If we are to increase the rate of transition, joint leadership is required as well as shared responsibility and strategic interaction. We need to be bold, creative, and change-oriented, and develop working methods that guide us when faced with difficult choices. We need to highlight, discuss, and handle synergies and goal conflicts. A common view, focus, and stamina are the key to achieving long-term results, although we also need to show trust in others and be trusted in return. We need to have the courage to question traditional ways of working, and we need to be prepared to deal with the unexpected.



## Knowledge and learning

**THE STRATEGY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED** based on current and updated knowledge and analysis of Västra Götaland's development and the strengths and challenges that emerge within the county in a constantly changing world. Knowledge, follow-up, and evaluation create a basis for joint learning and needs-motivated priorities in our work going forward.

**EXPERIENCE FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC** illustrates how quickly conditions can change and the importance of being prepared for all eventualities. Working together we are better equipped to deal with the regional consequences of major international crises, such as climate change, loss of biodiversity, energy and food supply, refugee emergencies, and pandemics. By incorporating an ongoing risk analysis and external environment analysis into implementation of the Strategy we strengthen our collective preparedness and capacity to act when faced with both known and unknown risks and opportunities. This helps us become bold, change-oriented leaders.

**WE MUST FOLLOW UP** and evaluate the joint initiatives that are being made in relation to the goals set out in the Strategy, the long-term priorities, and

the cross-sectoral focal areas. This centres on quantitative and qualitative results and effects, both in the short term and the long term. The goals set out in the Strategy will be measured using a number of general indicators related to the development of Västra Götaland within the three sustainability dimensions – economic, social, and environmental.

**THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES** are vital when making a qualitative assessment. The Strategy will be followed up annually and will be reviewed at least once during each each four-year political term of office. In conjunction with the review, an evaluation is planned that will form the basis for decisions and possible adjustments to the Strategy. Region Västra Götaland has overall responsibility for follow-up and evaluation, and each party involved is charged with the task of monitoring the outcome of their own initiatives and actions. Working effectively and systematically ensures strategic learning emerges from the follow-ups and evaluations.

**JOINT LEARNING REQUIRES** dialogue and a joint discussion of results and implementation. This helps us to utilise our common resources effectively and in the direction set out in the Strategy.



## Tools and resources

**WE ALL NEED** to feel responsible and contribute with expertise and resources to drive the transition in the direction set out in the Strategy. Implementation of the Strategy should ideally be integrated into our regular goals and steering documents, and strategic priorities should be reflected in the allocation of human and economic resources. We work together to facilitate an upturn in investment for Västra Götaland by attracting funding nationally and from the EU.

**WE NEED TO CONCRETISE** the content of the Strategy in a series of sub-strategies, action plans, and agreements that help us to focus collectively on prioritised investments. A common communication strategy supports us in the implementation process, and facilitates dialogue, joint action, and dissemination of knowledge.

**EXAMPLES OF TOOLS** to implement the strategy are new and existing forms of cooperation, agreements, and collaborative lobby activities on the national and international level. With a public procurement process focused on innovation and sustainability, it is possible to channel significant resources in the form of ideas, products, and services to support the transition.

### Interaction platforms for the transition

Existing dialogue and collaboration platforms are an important means of powering the development process between organisations and sectors as well as inter-

action on the local, regional, national, and international level. Region Västra Götaland is responsible for creating settings where different parties can conduct discussions that transcend organisational boundaries, and where we can share knowledge and experience and develop and concretise areas in which we need to work more closely with each other. The annual Future Västra Götaland conference is an excellent example.

**WE ALSO NEED** to create new forms of collaboration based on the based on the challenges and focal areas addressed by the Strategy. New digital and physical meeting points ought to be developed and interaction with other regions is vital. Collaboration across administrative boundaries needs to be developed in different parts of the county. This can take place between municipalities that share the same prerequisites, challenges, and conditions.

**COLLABORATION** between municipalities, local authority associations, and the region are crucial. This includes a joint annual round of political discussions on the regional and municipal level dealing with initiatives and investment, as well as follow-up, learning, and prioritisation as we move in the direction set out in the Strategy. Municipal and regional funding will be allocated for initiatives in the sub-regions through agreements reached between Region Västra Götaland, the local authority associations, and Business Region Gothenburg.

**REGION VÄSTRA GÖTALAND'S CONSULTATION** with civil society and idea-driven public partnerships contributes to the build-up of knowledge from different perspectives. Through an ongoing dialogue with industry and the potential to make joint decisions, investment and development initiatives can be directed to where they generate the greatest benefit.

**THE WORK TAKING PLACE** within the wide-reaching collaboration platform Climate 2030, with its based on the focal areas and working methods, will be geared up and contribute to the areas that have been prioritised in the Regional Development Strategy. This reinforces the power of implementation in the transition process. Region Västra Götaland's approved carbon budget for Västra Götaland for 2020-2040 is a further tool that can be employed to guide investment decisions. The carbon budget presents the emission framework – the framework for the volume of climate emissions permitted over a one-year period.

### Advocacy nationally and internationally

Västra Götaland works within a larger national, European, and global context where our development is dependent on decisions and processes that we neither own nor control. We need to move forward together on the national and international level to eliminate obstacles to the development of Västra Götaland and create conditions for working with prioritised issues relating to infrastructure and other areas.

It is when we highlight the same needs and act in unison that we have the greatest potential to bring about change. But this requires dialogue, trust, confidence, and interaction structures that facilitate mobilisation and allow us to come together around a common Western Sweden mission statement. Our advocacy aims to bring about a shift in prioritised issues and demands active involvement on a national and European level. This could include changes in policies

and interpretation of rules and legislative provisions, and the channelling of financial resources to Västra Götaland.

### Financing from national and European sources

The scope of measures and initiatives needs to match the challenges. It is therefore necessary to work together to increase the influx of funding into Västra Götaland from national and international sources. EU financial instruments include programmes based on the EU's growth strategy, the European Green Deal, which has been adapted directly to the conditions prevailing in western Sweden. These funds include the the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EARDF).

Cross-border and subject-specific collaboration could also be funded through Interreg, Horizon Europe, Life, and other funding bodies. These resources are key to facilitating the long-term priorities and focal areas set out in the Strategy.

### Strategy for smart specialisation

Identifying and prioritising areas that open up potential for enhancing international competitiveness and sustainable development, what is termed smart specialisation, have a central role to play in EU regional policy and as a basis for investment within the EU Regional Fund programme. Smart specialisation has become an increasingly important tool for accessing international partnerships and funding on the national and international level. The Region Västra Götaland Strategy for Smart Specialisation outlines specific knowledge-intensive areas in Västra Götaland with transformation capability, and where academic institutions and industry are highly competitive internationally and a high potential to grow beyond the borders of Sweden.

#### HOW THE STRATEGY IS INTERCONNECTED

### Interaction between Region Västra Götaland and the local authority associations

The Strategy, together with the Regional Council budget, governs regional development investment in Västra Götaland. Region Västra Götaland has the task of developing and deciding on the Strategy after consultations. The role of Region Västra Götaland is to lead the implementation process by coordinating initiatives and creating conditions to promote interaction. Region Västra Götaland is responsible for the ongoing evaluation of the Strategy, follow-up work, and facilitating learning among all the parties involved. Region Västra Götaland also contributes with its own tools and resources for initiatives within the Strategy's long-term priorities and focal areas, including project funding. Analyses and compilations linked to development in Västra Götaland are updated continuously by Region Västra Götaland.

The Sustainable Development Advisory Committee a politically appointed body set up by Region Västra Götaland and the local authority associations to address matters relating to sustainable development. Control and priorities within the Regional Development Strategy are prepared through consultation discussions that take place within the Sustainable Development Committee prior to a decision being made by the Regional Council.

Borås Region Sjuhärad's Municipal Association, Fyrbodal Municipal Association, Gothenburg Region's Municipal Association, Skaraborg's Municipal Association are responsible for interaction and joint development work by the municipalities on the sub-regional level. The four local authority associations work with the Strategy in collaboration with the municipalities, integrating it into the regular control and follow-up system.

# How the Strategy is interconnected

The Regional Development Strategy is a joint strategy for the regional development of the County of Västra Götaland. The strategy is based on the remit assigned to Region Västra Götaland by the government to formulate and adopt a regional development strategy for the county and to coordinate implementation and follow-up of the Strategy. The remit is included in the Regional Development Responsibilities Act (2010:630) and the Regional Growth Regulation (2017:583).

**THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY** guides municipal authorities, local authority associations, industry, academia and research institutes, civil society, and the County Administrative Board and other government bodies in the joint task of promoting regional development. The Strategy and the Regional Council budget govern investment in regional development in Region Västra Götaland.

**THE STRATEGY HAS ITS** starting point in Vision Västra Götaland – A Good Life, where the ‘good life’ stands for good health, work and education, security, a sense of belonging and involvement in society, a good environment where we safeguard renewable systems, meeting the needs of children and young people, sustainable growth, and a rich and varied cultural life. The good life presupposes sustainable development, where the economic, social, and environmental sustainability dimensions are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

**THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY** contributes to the regional implementation of international and national development strategies. On a global level, there is Agenda 2030 with its 17 global sustainability goals. On the European level, there is a cohesion policy and the EU growth strategy, The Green Deal, which sets out the direction for a fair and prosperous transition to a sustainable economy, with a clear set of goals and measures for achieving climate-neutrality by 2050. On the national level, there is the Strategy for Sustainable Regional Development.

**THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY** will be implemented in various ways, including initiatives within the collaborative platform Climate 2030, the Regional Transport Infrastructure Plan, the digital agenda Smart Region Västra Götaland, and the local and regional implementation of the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life (CEMR Declaration).



## REGIONAL TARGET DOCUMENTS

The Regional Development Strategy interacts with three other regional target documents that have been adopted by the Regional Council. Together they will contribute to meeting the aims set out in Vision Västra Götaland – A Good Life. These target documents are the Strategy for the Transformation of the Healthcare System in Region Västra Götaland, the Regional Transport Provision Programme, and the Cultural Strategy for Västra Götaland.



**THE CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR VÄSTRA GÖTALAND** and the Regional Cultural Plan 2020-2023 include a number of areas that create synergies for sustainable development, and which are based on cross-sectoral collaboration. These areas are the designed living environment, media and information literacy (MIL), public education, culture and health, sport, and location development, as well as the cultural and creative sectors, libraries, and the promotion of reading. A detailed description and the priorities within each area can be found in the Cultural Strategy.



**THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT PROVISION PROGRAMME** is the overall target document for the development of public transport. Public transport, housing construction, infrastructure development, and location of businesses and services come together to create a basis for a sustainable region where people are provided with the right conditions for them to live and develop. Public transport will be planned based on reducing the impact of transport on the environment and with due account taken of those who are dependent on an effective and efficient public transport system.



**THE STRATEGY FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM IN REGION VÄSTRA GÖTALAND** affects several areas that contribute to sustainable regional development based on cross-sectoral interaction. These areas include digitalisation, innovation, health and life science, skills provision, and preventive public health work.



# The Strategy's contribution to Agenda 2030

The Regional Development Strategy for Västra Götaland 2021–2030 is focused on the promotion of economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable development. The Strategy is highly aspirational when it comes to meeting Agenda 2030 and the UN's 17 global sustainability goals on the local and regional level.



**THE STRATEGY IS BUILT ON** adapted integration of Agenda 2030. This means that regional challenges and conditions determine the priorities and direction of the Strategy, which in turn determine which of the Agenda 2030 goals and objectives the Strategy will help realise, directly and indirectly, in the shorter and longer term.

**THROUGH INVESTMENT IN** the long-term priorities and focal areas, the Regional Development Strategy contributes to improved health and well-being, education and skills development, higher employment figures, and improved conditions for enterprise and entrepreneurship. The Strategy will reinforce the equal rights of everyone, improve inclusion,

and contribute to sustainable societal planning through the development of a physical and digital infrastructure and other related measures. It will also contribute to reduced climate impact and the transition to sustainable consumption and production through investment in sustainable industry, research, innovation, and renewable sources of energy that offer security of supply.

**WHEN THE STRATEGY IS IMPLEMENTED** it is important that we continue the dialogue and assessment of the Strategy's contribution to Agenda 2030. Economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable development indicators will be used to ensure effective control and follow-up. Agenda

2030 emphasises cooperation, engagement, transparency, and accountability as prerequisites for successful implementation and for meeting the overarching goal of eliminating marginalisation. In the same way, the Regional Development Strategy demands ongoing dialogue, engagement, and joint responsibility, where cross-sectoral interaction and partnership between the different bodies is a precondition.

**WE NEED TO DEVELOP** the means to highlight potential conflicts between goals. This would reduce the risk that one goal would be achieved at the expense of the other goals. The guiding principles act as tools for integrating Agenda

2030 into the implementation of the Strategy. This will take place in line with the overriding aim of increasing the involvement and influence of the local population in societal development, and capitalising on the conditions and opportunities presented at different locations to facilitate the transition to a sustainable society.

Together we will ensure Västra Götaland sets an example in the transition to a sustainable and competitive society.