



# Reglab

- **A laboratory for regional capacity building**



# Reglab: We meet – we learn – we do

- ▶ Member owned organization
- ▶ Focus: Regional development
- ▶ Learning, Analysis, Benchmarking

**The needs of our members sets the agenda!**



## Reglab offers

- ✓ Joint learning projects
- ✓ Seminar series
- ✓ Workshops
- ✓ Analysis, facts and figures
- ✓ Development of technocratic tools
- ✓ Conferences
- ✓ Networks



## Low cost – high yield

- Each member pays according to size, but still has 1 vote
- Most activities are covered by fees – ensures participation and that we deliver in line with what members' need
- Annual turnover around 400 000 USD
- Reaches several hundred individuals per year, in all corners of Sweden



# Principles of learning

- Sharing – good and bad experiences
- Horizontal learning – a lot of what we need is already in the room
- No posing, no lobbying
- Communities of practice – building up trust, good networks and spreading knowledge
- Co-production



# Regional policy has changed

- Traditionally, infrastructure – railroads, roads, harbours, airports (1960's)
- Industrial policy – starting, moving, keeping heavy industry (1970's)
- Government re-location schemes – setting up (or moving) national agencies to regions
- Shift of agricultural subsidies and immigration laws (1980's)
- Compensation for closed army bases (1990's)
- Innovation and smart specialisation (00')



# Sweden – a state in transition





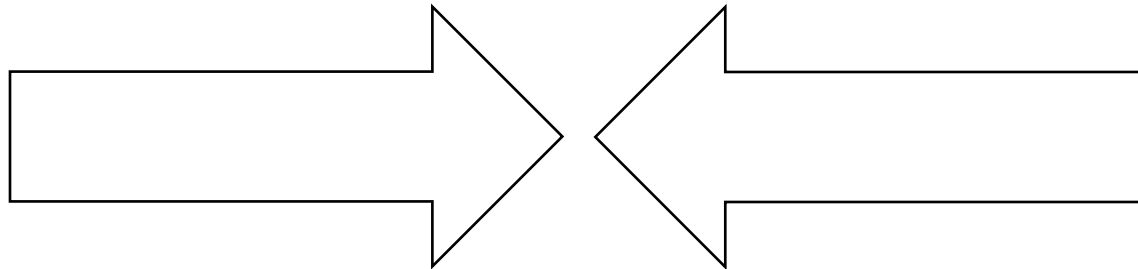
# Regional structure is changing

- 3 + 1 levels of Government:
  - Historically very centralized state, dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century
  - 21 County Councils (elected) - with taxation rights, but mostly dealing with health care
  - 290 Municipalities (elected) - taxation and far reaching sovereignty
  - 21 Counties – representatives of the national government, Governor is appointed
- Regional development a national government issue
- Regional federations, Counties, Regions and County Councils are members of Reglab





# Why this mess?



- EU Membership 1995 (Europe of regions)
- Health care too expensive with aging population
- Industry has changed – innovation needs size

- Long tradition of centralised state
- Strong opposition within the Conservative party
- County Councils and all Municipalities have to vote



## Sharing a Nordic model

- Consultants in Sweden saw an opportunity to strengthen learning in this mess (Dahmén)
- Consultants in Denmark took the initiative (Reglab DK)
- Large border regions in Sweden took over the idea (Reglab Sweden)
- Cluster-organizations brought it to Norway
- Local authorities association in Finland



# Regions in Scandinavia

- Denmark – 98 municipalities, 5 counties (270 and 13, until 2007)
- Finland – 320 municipalities, 7 counties (2015) and (2010)
- Norway – 428 municipalities, 19 counties  
(All have around 5 million inhabitants)
- Sweden – 290 municipalities, 21 counties  
(10 million inhabitants)



# Thank you!

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