



ETELÄ-
KARJALAN
LIITTO

SMART SPECIALIZATION IN SOUTH KARELIA INNOVATION STRATEGY 2018-2021

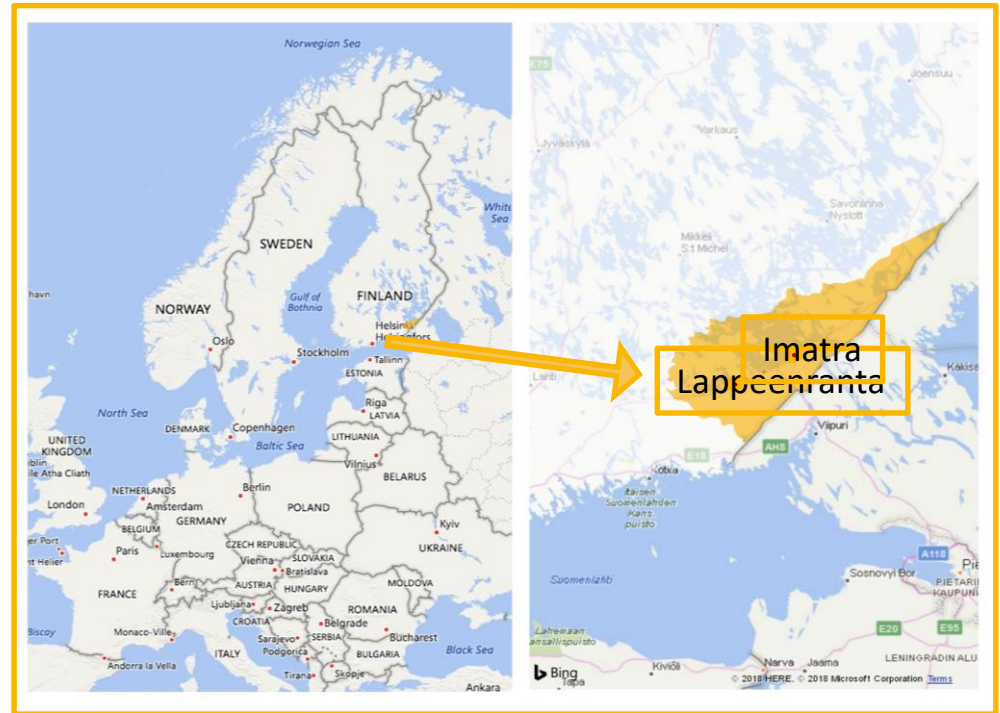
ENGLISH SUMMARY

SMART SPECIALIZATION

- ✓ Smart Specialization is a place-based regional development approach adopted for 2014-2020 by the European Commission as a tool for cohesion policy. The approach will be applied also to the 2021+ period
- ✓ The key idea is to add value to the strengths and resources of a region by investing in locally selected priorities at the intersection of technology, industry, and societal needs.
- ✓ The strategy provides a framework for the coordination and follow-up of regional innovation activities in close cooperation with stakeholders. It is monitored and evaluated throughout the strategy period and used as a reference in distributing public resources within the region.
- ✓ The research and innovation strategy for smart specialisation (RIS3) outlines the focus areas and tools applied in South Karelia 2018-2021
- ✓ The RIS3 process is managed by the Regional Council of South Karelia

REGION SOUTH KARELIA

- ✓ South Karelia (Etelä-Karjala) is located in Southeastern Finland by the EU-Russia border. The largest municipalities are cities of Lappeenranta and Imatra. Helsinki and St Petersburg are both within a reach of 2 hours by train.
- ✓ The region has about 130 000 inhabitants and a level of GDP of 36,500 euros per capita (2015).
- ✓ South Karelia is a NUTS3 level region in EU statistics and one the 18 counties to be established in the ongoing regional government, health and social services reform in Finland.



ECONOMIC & RDI LANDSCAPE

- ✓ The region has major industrial presence, with forest industry as the traditional backbone. Large international forest industry companies UPM, Stora Enso and Metsa Group all have substantial activities within the region, their activities ranging from forest ownership to the production of advanced biofuels. There are also major industrial activities related to steel production, chemicals, stone and minerals, and technology solutions for process industries.
- ✓ A key player in the innovation ecosystem and an important development partner for the industry is the Lappeenranta University of Technology, LUT, that strongly supports business life, and strategically aims at solving the world's most pressing problems with a strong emphasis on sustainability – both in technological and business terms. Saimaa University of Applied Sciences is located on the same campus and is fully owned by the LUT.

ECONOMIC & RDI LANDSCAPE

- ✓ The county is a forerunner in arranging of the health and social services through Eksote in particular in providing services for the elderly living in their homes in cities and rural areas.
- ✓ The proximity of the EU-Russian border is vital to industry and commerce in the region. Trade and services, in particular, have developed significantly thanks to Russian tourism.
- ✓ The importance of tourism has greatly increased in the 21st century throughout the Saimaa region. Lake Saimaa and the many other lakes in the region are popular leisure time locations in South Karelia. The county includes nearly 8,000 kilometres of shoreline by the lakes.

MISSION & VISION

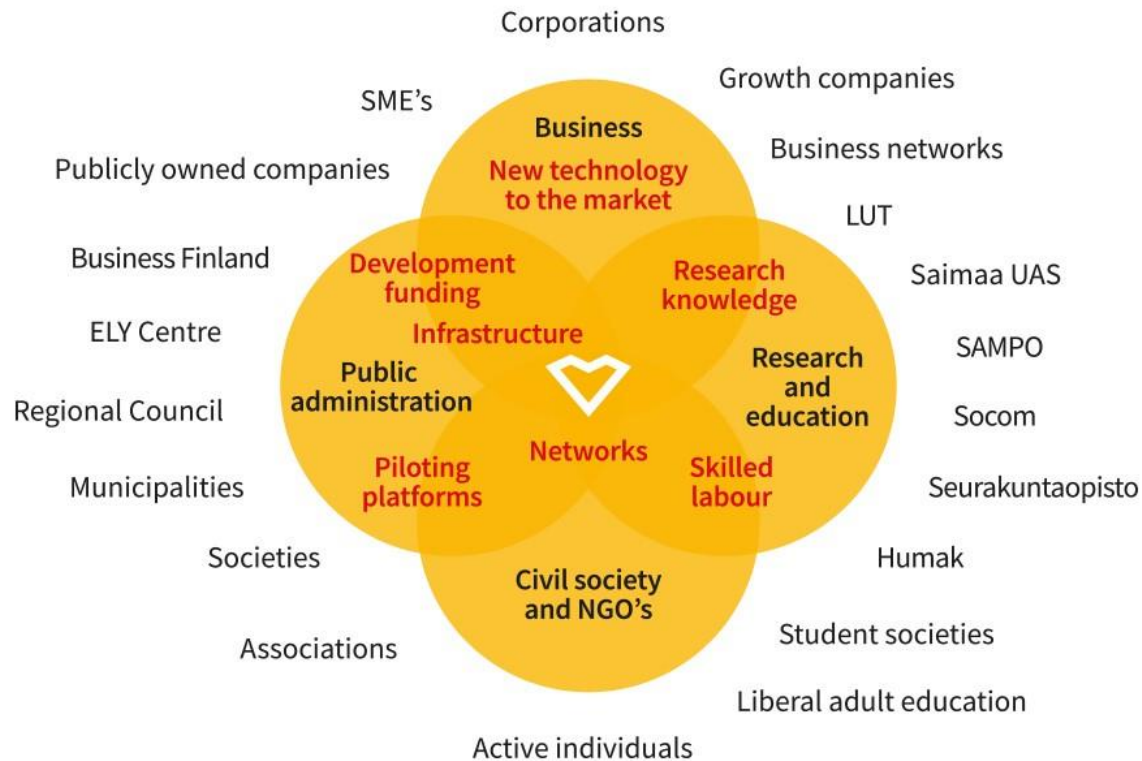
/ MISSION

Innovation activities in South Karelia are grounded in a strong higher education campus, creative cooperation of a mix of actors, brave experimentation and growth-seeking business based on this approach

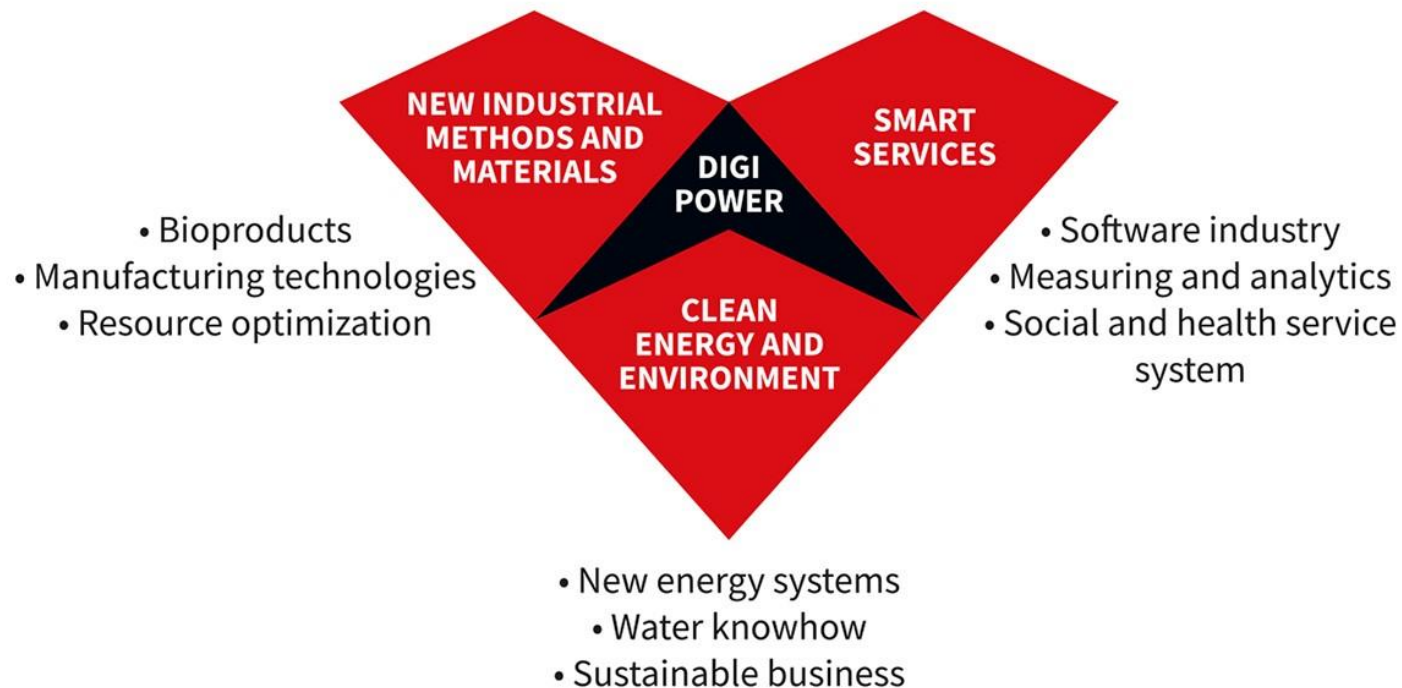
/ VISION

eKarelia 2030 is a solution-oriented, experimenting and learning forerunner region in applying new technology

REGIONAL INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM



PRIORITIES - DIGIPOWER AT HEART



CLEAN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Our goal in South Karelia is to

- ✓ Test and pilot world-class cleantech solutions at the LUT University campus. We aim to make the Campus Piloting Platform better internationally known in order to attract new pilots and technical visits
- ✓ Further develop the wide-scale adaptation of low emission technologies within the public sector
- ✓ Commercialize knowhow related to energy and environment, including knowhow concerning responsible business

NEW INDUSTRIAL METHODS AND MATERIALS

Our goal in South Karelia is to

- ✓ Support the utilization of local raw materials and high know-how as a base for material efficient and low emission new industrial innovations
- ✓ Create new business from adding value to process side streams. This aim is supported by the South Karelia Roadmap for Circular economy and multi-stakeholder development projects (e.g. Urban Infra Revolution, UIR 2018-2020)
- ✓ Actively take advantage of and produce solutions for industrial ICT (simulation, machine vision, remote control, virtual technologies, machine learning, block chain technology) in business and the renewal of industries

SMART SERVICES

Our goal in South Karelia is to

- ✓ Utilize digital technologies, software competence, and creative know-how in providing smart and customer driven services
- ✓ Actively provide open data from the public sector and look for public-private partnerships in the development of public services. This may also create ground for new business.
- ✓ Developing a forerunner position in the development of public social and health care service models. As an emphasis, efficient resource allocation in service chains and home-based services.

WE AIM AT

Developing
the regional
innovation
environment
2018-2021 by

OBJECTIVE 1

Creating new experimenting environments

OBJECTIVE 2

Advancing knowledge-based entrepreneurship

OBJECTIVE 3

South Karelia recognized as a technology region

CREATING NEW EXPERIMENTING ENVIRONMENTS

We aim at

- ✓ Supporting business driven ecosystem development within the selected key areas and offering piloting opportunities for technology companies operating in the region
- ✓ Utilizing innovative public procurement as an enabler for experimenting environments and supporting procurement competence enhancement in public organizations
- ✓ Recognizing, together with the regional stakeholders, meaningful networking opportunities that support the achievement of goals of the innovation strategy
- ✓ Promoting regional/municipal infrastructure as platforms for product and service development as well as research and education activities

ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE-BASED ENTREPRENEURSHIP

We aim at

- ✓ Strengthening the SME's of the region in order to diversify the economic base and resilience of the regional economy
- ✓ Investing in the ability to create innovations based on the strong research and development competence within South Karelia
- ✓ Enabling entrepreneurial skills and a smooth support service path from an idea to growing business along with fostering a regional can-do attitude
- ✓ Supporting platforms for collaboration between ideas, entrepreneurs and investors

SOUTH KARELIA RECOGNIZED AS A TECHNOLOGY REGION

We aim at

- ✓ Profiling South Karelia as a research, development and innovation (RDI) hub for globally competitive decentralized and efficient new energy systems and solutions
- ✓ Strengthening the interaction of international students and the businesses in the region, in order to enable a wider use of the international capabilities and potential by the local industries
- ✓ Promoting the technology hub of South Karelia in order to improve the attractiveness of the county as a location for businesses, professionals and students.

NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- ✓ The region aims to be recognized as a top location of technology developers and adaptors. A spearhead is the development of a clean energy system and the commercialization of scientific knowledge related to this business area.
- ✓ In terms of methods and facilities, we aim at open innovation environments and competence based innovation communities.
- ✓ The technology region of South Karelia is a forerunner in crosscutting science, technology and digital education. This is evolving in pioneering partnerships between different types of stakeholders.
- ✓ Key areas for international cooperation include: EU/Europe, Asia and Russia

TOOLS

- ✓ Innovation strategy is used in setting priorities for allocation of regional resources
 - ✓ EU regional funding
 - ✓ Finnish national funds for e.g. regional innovation and experimentation
 - ✓ Other available resources
- ✓ Support for project development and network building
- ✓ Support for stakeholder's competitive EU funding applications (many instruments)
- ✓ Annual innovation strategy seminar in South Karelia
- ✓ EU networks (e.g. S3 Platform) and events

INDICATORS

- ✓ Larger number of filed patent applications
- ✓ More competitive public finance (Business Finland) received in the region
- ✓ Greater share of company contribution is total R&D expenditure
- ✓ Higher share of population with a higher education degree in the region
- ✓ An increased number of new experimenting environments
- ✓ Development of growth-oriented companies in the region

INTERESTED TO KNOW MORE?

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