

Sweden's regions set their sights on **the future**

What will the world look like in 2050? We can be certain that things will be different. But how and in what way? And what impact will these changes have on us – at national and regional level?

Using this question as their starting point Reglab's members have resolved to initiate a joint foresight process to take place in 2017 and 2018. Which of the many different trends and tendencies that we can identify today might possibly affect us tomorrow?

The experiences of recent years have made us aware of how often the course of reality can confound our forecasts and predictions, compelling us to react by quickly adapting our organisations. Clearly, there is a need for some kind of organisational readiness for change.

To be able to plan for the future, we need new visions, new thoughts. That's why we will be taking a closer look at what is happening in terms of technology, politics, economics and lifestyle trends, so that we can gain valuable insights into the reality that awaits us in the years ahead.

Region 2050 will not make forecasts. It will not predict *what will happen* but will instead explore the unknown: *What could happen?* By looking even further into the future and adopting a broader perspective than we normally do when making our plans, we aim to improve the overall level of quality in regional dialogue about the future.

Region 2050 is a major initiative – 24 organisations and several hundred individuals will be taking part. As the ambition is to involve as many participants as possible, we will be working in parallel in a number of different groups:

- **The Foresight Process Group.** 100 people who convene in workshops once per term.
- **Managerial seminars.** The strategic applications of the foresight process will be discussed in regular seminars for those in managerial positions.

- **Political seminars.** We will arrange seminars with regional politicians.

- **Open arrangements.** For example, the Reglab Annual Conference.

- **Work within each organisation.** Participants will also carry out their own assignments in their respective organisations, to link the foresight process to their own regional strategies.

Region 2050 will:

- Improve preparedness for future changes.
- Discuss regional consequences and alternative courses of action.
- Improve competence in strategy management and foresight work.

The process in the *Region 2050* initiative can be described as a joint journey into the future – and back again to the respective region. Some of the work will take place together in the larger group, some will be done “at home” within the region. Our starting point will be a broad social perspective – national and international – but this will then be narrowed down to our ultimate destination, which is Sweden and the everyday reality of each region. External environment scanning and scenarios in 2017, will be followed in 2018 by discussions that focus more closely on regional practices. The process and results could very well be part of an international learning and impact process. As an example the experiences, both in terms of method and content, is applicable and important for future processes in the context of EU.

Workshop 1: The world around us

The first workshop concentrates on helping participants to recognise key trends and the

driving forces behind the changes that are taking place in the world around us. We link dominant trends to regional phenomena.

Workshop 2: Scenarios

We investigate possible futures and use backcasting methodologies to examine how different regional development areas might be affected by possible outcomes, both in the near future and over a more extended timescale.

Workshop 3: Regionalisation

We work with scenarios and discuss the impact that alternative futures might have on the Swedish regions, local municipalities, the state and the EU.

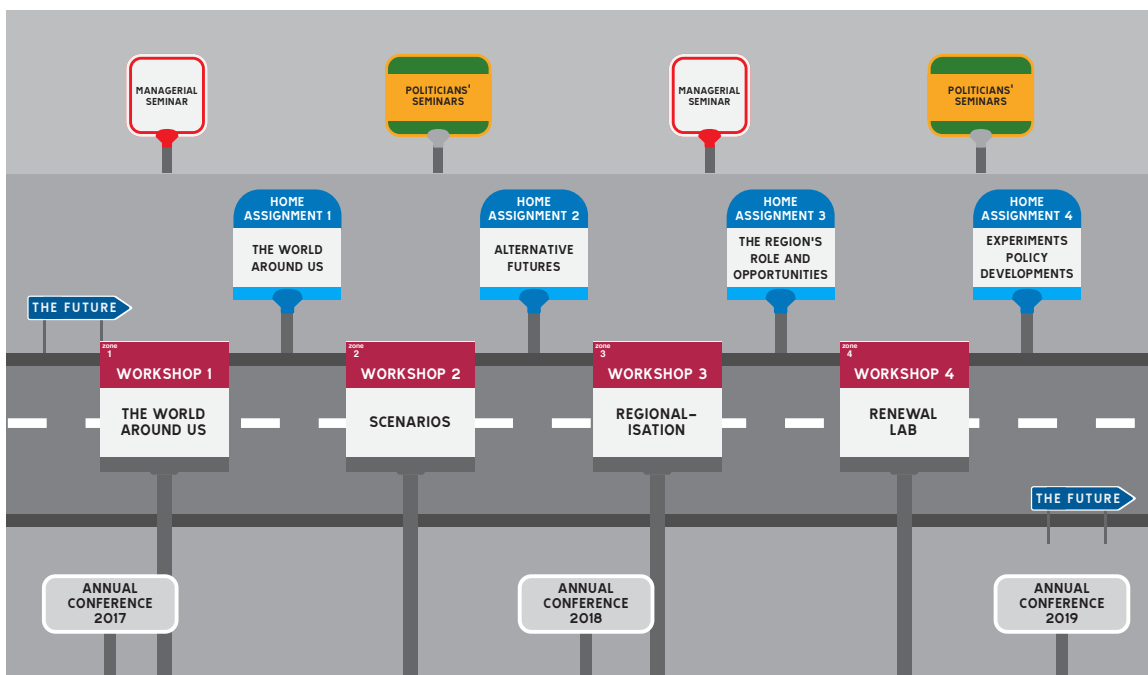
Workshop 4: The Renewal Lab

We discuss the future role of the region, experiment with new methods and create the basis for improved preparedness.

Would you like to learn more about Region 2050?

If you are interested in following the foresight process, take a look at www.reglab.se/region2050.

Alternatively, get in touch with Reglab by e-mailing Reglab Director *Eva Moe* at eva.moe@skl.se or *Magnus Jörgel*, senior strategist at Region Skåne, at magnus.jorgel@skane.se.



Region 2050 – stage by stage

The members of Reglab are:

Region Blekinge, Region Dalarna, Region Gävleborg, Region Gotland, Region Halland, Region Jämtland Härjedalen, Region Jönköping County, Region Kronoberg, Region Norrbotten, Region Örebro County, Region Östergötland, Region Skåne, Region Värmland, Region Västerbotten, Region Västernorrland, Region Västmanland, Regional Council in Kalmar County, Regional Council in Sörmland, Region Uppsala, Stockholm County Council and Greater Stockholm, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth, Region Västra Götaland, and Vinnova, the Swedish governmental agency for innovation.

REGION 2050

A journey to the future – and back again.