

# Lapland – Arctic node of transport and logistics in Europe

## Summary

Accessibility, including good transport connections, is a prerequisite for the favourable development of businesses, people and services. Promoting accessibility requires systems thinking and development. One of the most important tasks of the Lapland accessibility coordination project is to describe the underlying system around accessibility and to increase understanding thereof.

In order to appreciate the significance of transport infrastructure investments for Lapland's accessibility, one must examine the underlying system and answer the following questions:

- What system-level problem will be solved with this investment?
- What opportunities does this investment entail for businesses, residents and tourists?
- What will be achieved with this investment in the large scale?

Transport infrastructure in general is a platform that enables a variety of service and business models and their development. Digitalization is an important perspective to keep in mind in building future service models. Opening data interfaces, utilizing and sharing them in different value chains opens unprecedented opportunities for the development of the transport system.

However, both aspects are necessary: the development of both physical and digital infrastructure and systems. If this is done paired with systems thinking and development, the outcome may be truly significant.

On the EU level, the development of multimodal transport solutions is emphasized as the solution to the biggest problems in transport: congestion, emissions and safety. The same thinking can be applied to Lapland, even though the infrastructure is not very congested except for some individual sections. With all modes of transport available, efficient and sustainable transport chains can be built, utilizing the best features of every transport mode. Cost and energy efficiency go hand in hand in this development.

Furthermore, true customer orientation in developing transport chains, building services based on individual needs, the customer-driven development, will bring us to the core of future competitive factors in terms of accessibility.

Do we want to continue on the current path, reacting to needs as they arise, or do we want to raise the standards? We need to have a common intent and message to promote. This requires us to compile our infrastructure needs into a big package to support system-level development.

In the EU, the TEN-T transport network and investments therein are regarded as investments in growth and economic structures. They may be seen as catalysts of development and the backbone of the evolution of economic structures.

At the same time, there is an emphasis in the EU on connecting to different markets in all directions and linking peripheral regions to the core EU market.

There is great interest in the potential of the Arctic region, and tapping into this potential requires improved accessibility. The Lapland accessibility coordination project outlines these system-level development needs and opportunities from different perspectives.

Consider it done!

The Lapland accessibility coordination project is a project carried out by the Regional Council of Lapland with ERDF funding from 1 March 2015 to 30 September 2018. The starting point of the project is a cross-border review of the accessibility of the entire Barents region, promoting an open Arctic market and competitive, evolving economy. The Arctic region will be a vibrant, developing, intelligent and ecological operating environment for businesses and residents in the region. Lapland is located at the centre of the world, accessible from different regions and markets.

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