METACITY

VIRTUAL SOLUTIONS FOR REAL PEOPLE

Action Plan 2026-2028

Härnösand's journey to improve the capacities to manage sustainable urban policies and the local skills in preparation for a better city with support of diving in to the metaverse, together with our Metacity partners.

Härnösands kommun

URBACT

Co-funded by the European Union
Interreg

The Metacity network

This integrated action plan is developed within the project Metacity – Virtual Solutions for Real People during 2024 and 2025.

Cities can learn a lot from each other's experiences, that is why URBACT funds and supports networks of cities and why Härnösand is excited to be a part of this. For Härnösand, on all levels in the municipality, it is important to be part of different networks, both to get inspiration, enhance insights and to get the chance to share our successful efforts, as a basis for increasing the rate of innovation in the local community.

By integrating AI and VR in the public sector, the municipality aims to not only modernize, streamline and increase transparency around its services and planning, but also strengthen its position as a leader in innovation and development. The nine project partners in Metacity aims to increase competitiveness of small and medium tech-aware cities, benefiting from the opportunity to enhance service efficiency and citizen satisfaction provided by the metaverse. By integrating metaverse technologies, cities can create immersive digital environments for education, healthcare, tourism and public services, enabling streamlined communication, remote access to services, and personalized experiences, levelling the playing field with larger cities.

Härnösand, as many smaller and medium sized cities in Sweden, face increasing pressure to maintain high-quality services despite an ageing population and a shrinking tax base. To meet these challenges, it's crucial to build organizational capacity in the digitalization and AI sector. By doing so, municipalities can streamline operations, improve service delivery, and make better use of limited resources.

For this to succeed, everyone in the organization must feel confident using new technologies and applications - even those outside their current expertise. Workflows and processes must be flexible and easy to adapt, with clear pathways for support when departments need help navigating change. Just as important is fostering a culture that encourages experimentation and learning. By creating an environment where testing new ideas and technologies is welcomed, a small municipality can stay agile, resilient, and responsive in a rapidly evolving world.

Through this action plan, the municipality of Härnösand confirms its commitment to promote an environment where creativity and innovation can flourish, which in turn will support the municipality's long-term growth and success.

This plan links explicitly and directly with the content of the Baseline Study in the project and provides the basis for all subsequent action planning.

HÄRNÖSAND
– compact, innovative, sustainable and future-oriented

Härnösand is a median/small city in the northern coast of Sweden with 25.000 inhabitants. Despite its small numbers of inhabitants, the city is the administrative capital and seat of the Västernorrland County that includes seven municipalities and hosts about 245.000 people.

With 18,000 residents within 15 minutes, Härnösand offers unique opportunities for trade, digital development, and innovation. The compact city structure enables fast testing, easy outreach, and strong collaboration with both academia and innovation hubs– ideal for startups and companies looking to grow in a real-world setting.

The county of Västernorrland has a strong position in the public sector's digitalization, both in the central government administration and in the municipal operations. Public administration is one of the sectors that employs most people in Västernorrland. The administrative and development activities of several large government agencies are located here. In 2024, there were 22 agencies established in Västernorrland, including the Swedish Agency for Digital Government (Digg) with national main responsibility for strengthening public sector's digitalization. Several government agencies are represented in Härnösand. The most important is the County Administrative Board which has its residence here and is led by the County Governor who also lives in the city.

Public services form a solid foundation for employment and collaboration, while forestry, green energy, IT, food tech and tourism drive innovation, growth and diversification. The region is investing in circular economy models, climate-smart production, and digital transformation – supported by partnerships with Mid Sweden University and national research institutes, for example RISE. The city also hosts a campus that offers the possibilities to study at all universities in Sweden.

Härnösand offers a unique blend of stability and innovation in its business landscape. With approx. 2 200 companies and, as the administrative centre of Västernorrland County, the city combines a strong public sector with dynamic private enterprise across key industries and within the renewable sector.

Härnösand's compact city structure makes cooperation easy, decisions fast, and testing new ideas efficient. With accessible support for entrepreneurs, available land and premises, and a growing startup scene, the city is well-positioned for businesses. Härnösand has a growing and specialized IT sector with expertise in software development, digital services, food tech, cybersecurity, and AI. The city is home to both established companies and emerging tech startups, often working closely with the public sector, education providers, and civil society.

Strong collaboration with Mid Sweden University, and Bron Innovation, provides access to research expertise, students, and advanced IT and digitalization programs. The academic presence contributes to a dynamic environment where theory meets practice – and where new solutions can be tested in real-world conditions.

Overarching strategies, plans and policies

European digital rights and principles – human-centred, safe and trustworthy

The EU places great importance on rights and principles that put the well-being of people at the centre. The European digital rights and principles serve as a reference point for everyone in the EU and as a guide for decision-makers and companies developing digital technology. The European digital rights can strengthen the way public sector develop digital services by ensuring that AI development is based on citizens' right to understand and influence. The European digital agenda for 2020-2030 prioritises establishing secure digital spaces, ensuring fair competition in digital markets and enhancing Europe's digital sovereignty, in line with the twin digital and green transitions. The main purpose of the AI Act is to establish harmonised rules for the provision of trustworthy AI systems and safe use systems within the EU.

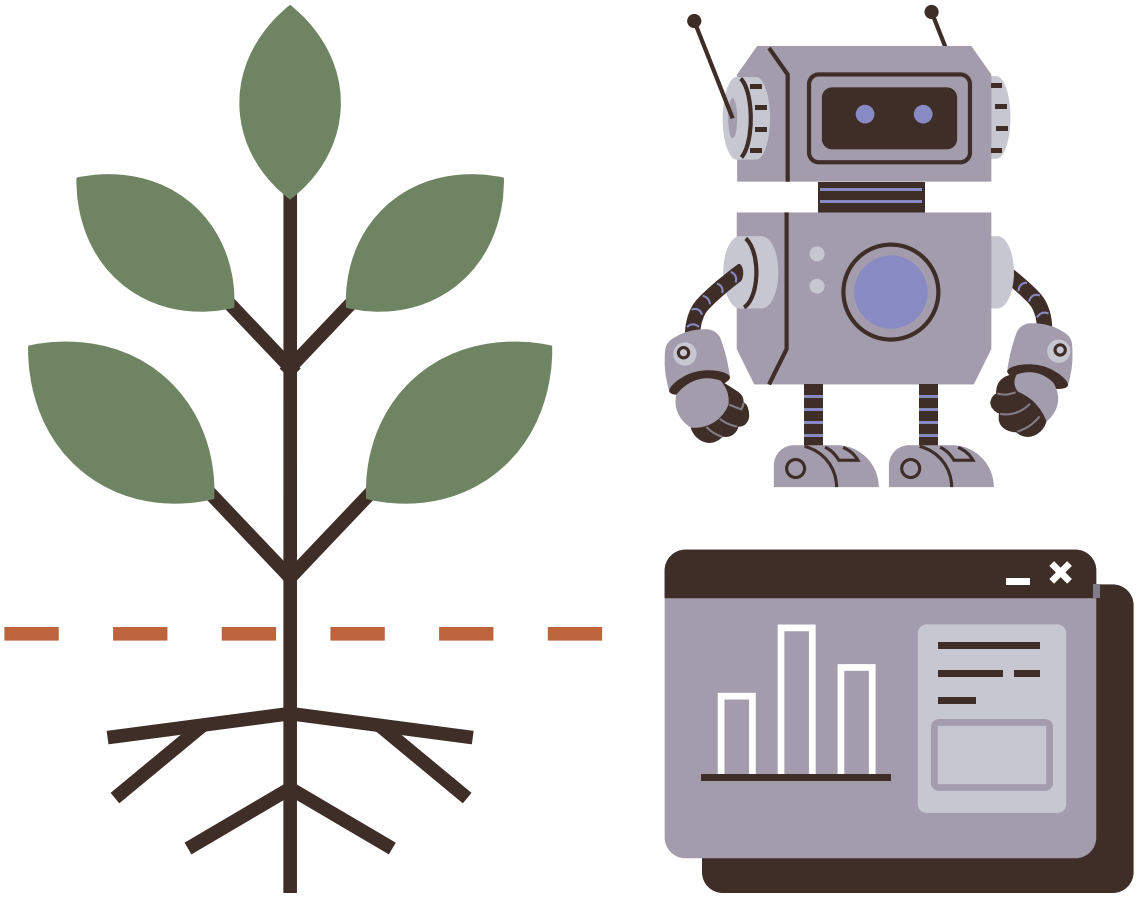
Right now, four large-scale pilots are being used to test the EU's digital identity wallets in a variety of real-life scenarios, relevant to the daily lives of Europeans, and will run until 2025. The results of the tests are being shared to further improve the security, interoperability and design of the identity wallet. An important common ground for many public services.

The Swedish Parliament digitalization policy goals (2025-2030), The Swedish Agency for Digital Government and the AI Commission's Roadmap for Sweden

The aim of the digitalization policy is for Sweden to be the best in the world in using the possibilities of digitalization. The government's goal for the digitalization of public administration is to simplify and contribute to reduced administration through user-friendly, secure, and trustworthy digital services that are optimized with the help of AI and data-driven development. For welfare, it is important that high-quality services provide more time and improved quality of life for the user, as well as reduce administration and improve the work environment for the staff. A new horizontal goal has been adopted which emphasizes that in Sweden, AI and emerging technologies should be used and developed to drive societal benefit, sustainable development, competitiveness, and innovation.

The Swedish Agency for Digital Government (Digg) is responsible for Ena, Sweden's digital infrastructure, which facilitates the digitization of public administration and simplifies everyday life for citizens and businesses. They work on the development and increased use of the common solutions and services that are part of this infrastructure, both nationally and internationally. They also work to ensure that digital public services are accessible to everyone.

For the public sector, it is proposed that authorities should work together with infrastructure and development, ensure access to data, and safeguard the individual citizen's trust and confidence. To meet the demand, an AI workshop will be established. In it, public actors individually and collectively, and in collaboration with the business community, can explore and develop new AI services and functions, as well as share and use quality-assured data, models, and components. Sundsvall municipality in Västernorrland, the Swedish Tax Agency and the Swedish Social Insurance Agency will coordinate the work when a government assignment concerning the national AI workshop if it becomes a reality. The AI Commission also proposes an investment in public libraries to promote the use of information technology for knowledge acquisition and learning and for the public to receive help in trying out and using AI tools free of charge.



The regional development strategy for Västernorrland

The regional development strategy (RUS) sets the direction for Västernorrland towards the year 2030. RUS is also linked to Västernorrland's Regional Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation, which should contribute to meeting challenges, seize opportunities and drive development based on Agenda 2030, digitalization and transition to sustainable development. The RUS vision, goals and priorities is a Västernorrland that has a power of action, power of life and power of nature. Together for the growth power of people and companies, in a healthy living environment for future generations. That is the vision for the regional development strategy. Each goal has a number of priority areas that we in the county must work on together to achieve the vision and for Västernorrland to be the place people choose to live and visit we need, for example:

- Growing region with attractive, viable cities and countryside
- More flexible forms of learning through new methods and working methods
- A functional and cohesive system for sustainable travel
- Increased perceived closeness to the outside world, regardless of whether it is physical or digital

Prerequisites for all of the above goals is that there is a well-functioning digital infrastructure such as broadband, digital mail, digital identity and 5G. It is about creating good conditions for the development and use of new technology such as data and artificial intelligence. Work to promote digital competence and digital leadership also belongs to the area.

The Growth strategy Mitt Härnösand 2040

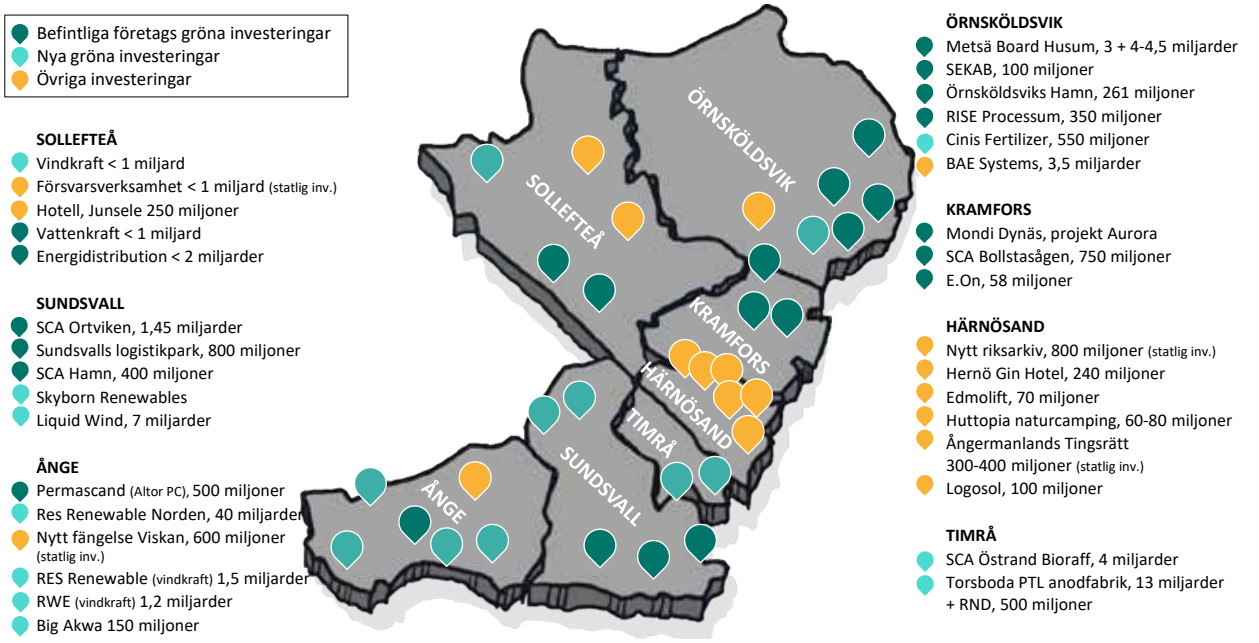
Härnösand's most important governing document is the Growth strategy *Mitt Härnösand 2040 – Together in one creative and enterprising living environment.*

In Härnösand, we are committed and enterprising - on our own or together in companies, organizations and networks. The environment in which you live and work must suit you and the life you want to live - you can find your place both in the city, by the sea and in the countryside.

- **Population target:** 30,000 inhabitants
- **Job opportunities target:** 11,500 jobs

The local ecosystem as a breeding ground for joint development

The new green industry is making strong progress in the northern part of Sweden, which means that our region is facing historic growth opportunities. With the rapid growth comes a great demand on the region's municipalities to quickly transform our communities to meet a long-awaited population increase.



The image shows the various investments that are underway or planned in the county of Västernorrland.

Sustainable social change [HSO]

Härnösand leads a major transformation project financed by the European Regional Fund. Sustainable social change [Hållbar samhällsomställning HSO] is our answer to the massive investments that are now underway or planned in northern Sweden. These investments are crucial to, for Sweden at a national level, to be able to reach the climate goals. The industrial and social transformation has a high speed, which significantly is challenging traditional structures and systems. It is therefore of the utmost importance to underline these issues, which is about resilience, to organizational and societal level. The support structure needs to be developed to meet the challenges of the green industrialization of Northern Sweden and Västernorrland brings.

The goal of the project is to develop support structures that are ready for tomorrow's sustainable Västernorrland. That in the end of the project has developed better conditions for companies to make use of the potential of the green transition by having further developed support structures at participating project parties. The project will mobilize, and form tailored to needs support structure for the companies where it is currently lacking and develop the existing one according to the new needs that arises as a result of social change.

In addition to the planned larger establishments, there are several new companies that are expanding. Herno Gin Hotell, a new camping site in a recreation area; and the new National archives and tax building, all these organisations, together with local larger companies such as Hemab, Agtira and Absolicon, will play a key role in the city's transformation.

The administration of Härnösand is quite advanced in terms of digital transformation in comparison with other European small and medium sized cities. The city, together with the six other municipalities in Västernorrland County cooperates on digitalization and have a common e-platform for hundreds of both internal and public services. There is also a first digital twin solution which is open to external users. With the support of the municipal company Technichus, that operates a Virtual Reality Lab, the city already uses VR facilities for training of staff in new public facilities and is now aiming to integrate the Virtual Reality into the digital twin concept for urban planning.

Cooperation with Mid Sweden University and Bron Innovation

There is a work on benefit realization going on in the municipality, described below, which is supported by the university with which the municipality has a close collaboration. The university is also a part of EU-funded project DIGIT [Hållbar Digital Transformation] together with several actors that supports the local business community. DIGIT's overall objective is that the companies can use the opportunities that AI, IoT and data-driven development bring to strengthen competitiveness and develop sustainable products, services and sustainable production.

Bron Innovation is Västernorrland's IT cluster and innovation hub for digitalization. Here, about 100 private and public actors collaborate to promote growth and regional development. Bron has been established to preserve and further strengthen the IT sector by increasing the region's attractiveness for new talent, investments, the establishment of new companies, and the expansion of existing businesses. Bron is part of GovTech4All, which is the first batch of a European incubator for GovTech, supported by the Digital Europe program. The initiative supports renewal in the public sector and promotes an innovative and growing business community.

Technichus and the VR-studio

Technichus science center in Härnösand is a partially municipally owned company where visitors can engage with natural science and technology through experience-based learning. The staff develops exhibitions that offer both challenges and create interest, as well as an increased understanding of how technology and natural sciences work. Adjacent to Technichus is the VR Studio. Here, there is expertise to offer powerful holistic experiences. By combining creativity with training and education, the staff, who have access to high-tech resources, create effective learning together with the client.

The regional Digitalization Council and the Municipal Digitization Group

There is a regional Digitalization Council that is formed by the digitalization managers from the seven municipalities in the region, Nordanstig municipality and the regional county council. They choose common focus areas by capturing needs, initiating, prioritizing, and supporting actions.

In the municipality there is a working group that gather the different departments that aims to capture the various needs related to change and wishes regarding digitalization. This group prioritizes the different projects.

To capture the needs of the various departments, there is a digital service - the idea box. It was established at the end of 2024 and will be important for Härnösand's future work. With the support of benefits realization calculations, prioritization and the project portfolio should be managed. The concept can provide support in the work of prioritizing and directing investments and ensuring that one succeeds in creating expected benefits. The concept involves a systematic approach where one specifies, quantifies and values the expected benefits for the stakeholders involved.

The public library and DigidelCenter

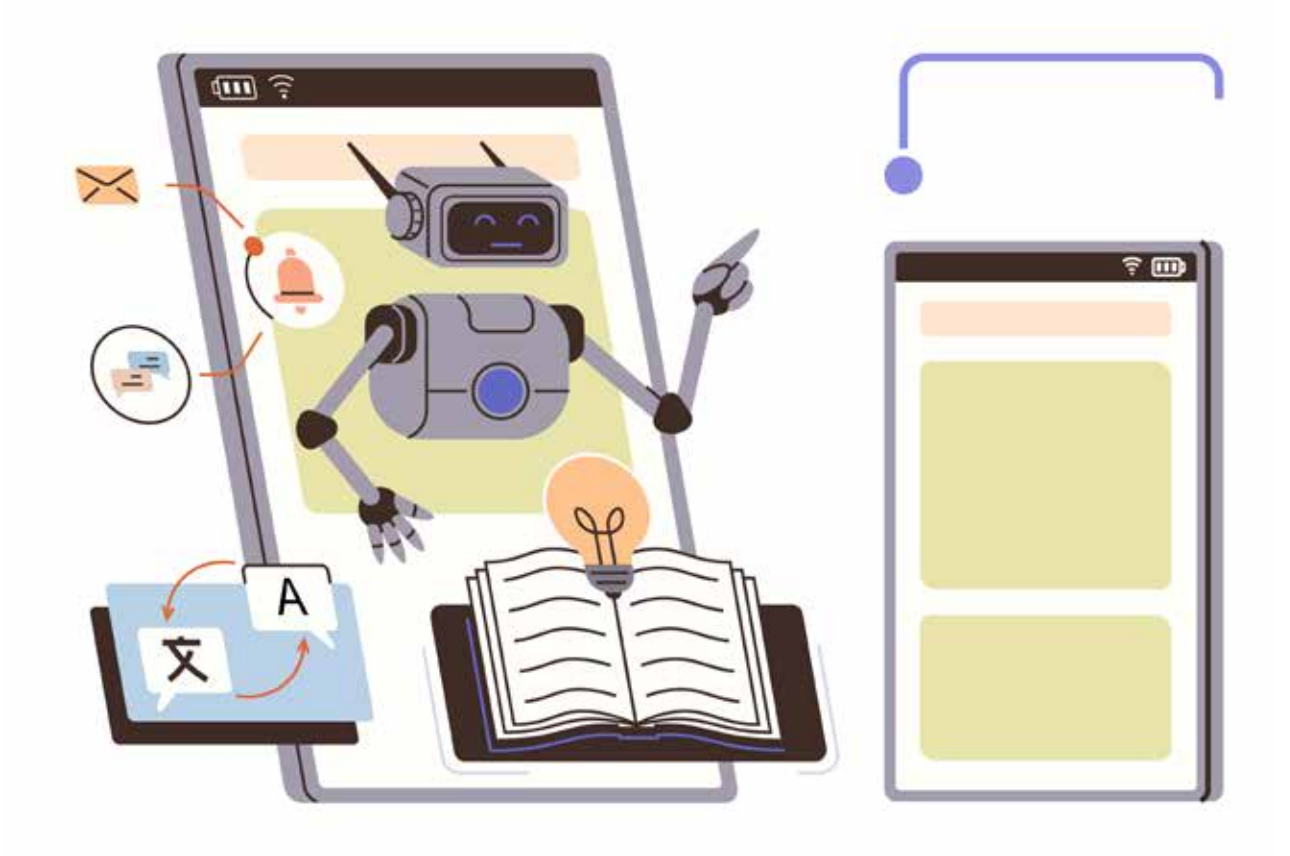
According to the Swedish Library Act, there should be public libraries in all municipalities. They should be open to everyone and adapted to the needs of users. Public libraries have the task of increasing knowledge about how information technology can be used, for example, for learning and information retrieval. Digidel is about collaboration and open knowledge sharing aimed at promoting digital participation. The word Digidel is a combination of the Swedish words for digital participation. The Digidel concept brings together actors from popular education, public libraries, civil society organizations, as well as authorities and technology companies in various initiatives to increase digital participation. At the Digidelcenter in Härnösand, users have access to digital technology including software, and staff who guide them on issues of media and information literacy.

Generative AI assistants – a small scale action

In the preparatory work for selecting the platform, meetings were arranged with both Sundsvall and Karlskoga municipalities to learn more about how they have used generative AI in their operations and to gain inspiration and knowledge for testing ourselves. A platform for generative AI was procured, Eneo.

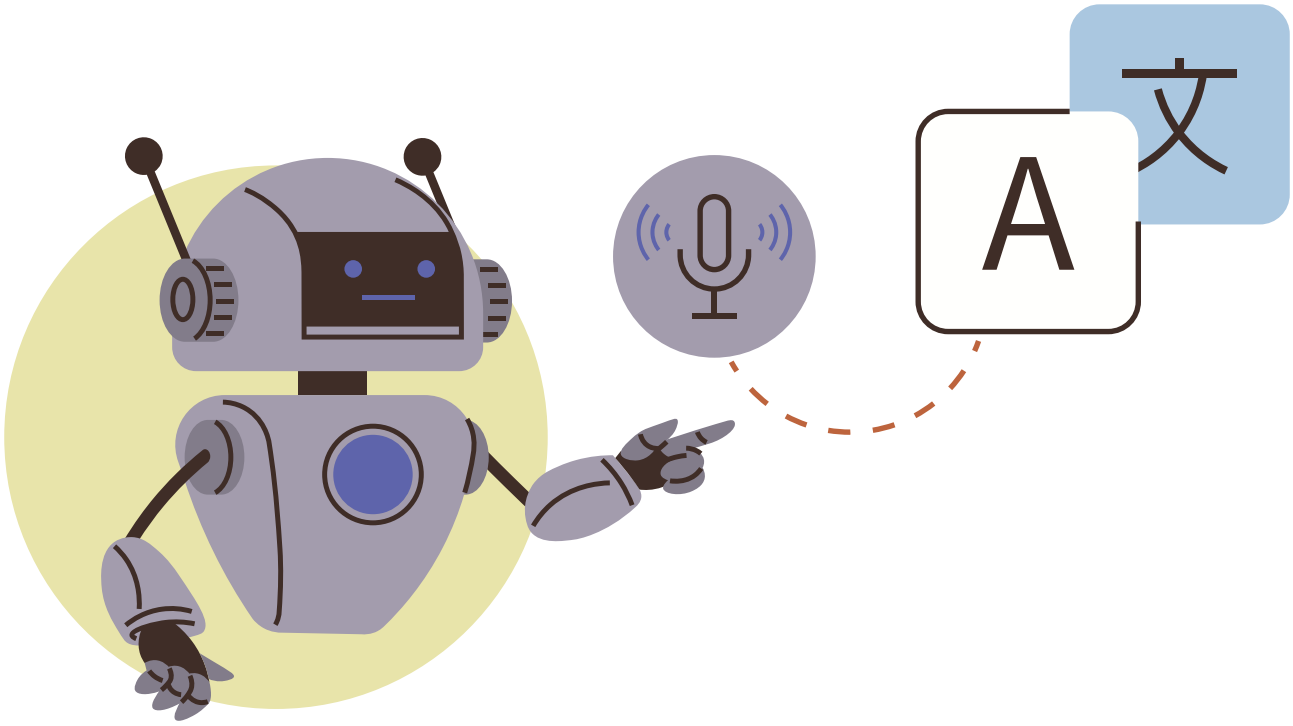
Eneo is an open AI platform for generative AI that is built for transparency, innovation, control, and collective development. An important advantage of the chosen platform is that it meets the security requirements of the public sector, but also that it is based on open source, and above all: there is a plan for regional collaboration and knowledge sharing among colleagues through the municipalities' regional cooperation, the Digitalization Council.

The participants were thereafter responsible for their assistants and developed them together with their departments. The testing period extended from November 2024 to the end of April 2025. The trial period was too short to successfully implement the assistants fully. They have been used to varying degrees, so the possible potentials have not been fully assessed. The tool was easy to get started with, and working with it has increased the knowledge of all participants about where the important operational data is stored and that it needs to be made more accessible in order to achieve the full capacity of generative AI. Here are some examples.



Bibliobot – assistant for questions about the library's catalogue and service

The library's users should quickly be able to get answers to questions about literature, guidance, and information about the library's services and activities. This would improve the quality of the service, especially when the library is unstaffed, known as open access. The assistant should gather and compile information from several different data sources, which facilitates for the inquirer and enables quick and more comprehensive answers.



Voice Power – assistant for receiving suggestions regarding urban development

"Voice Power" will be able to receive opinions and ideas from the residents of Härnösand. It should be able to communicate in writing and verbally, as well as understand and switch between different languages. The AI assistant is not primarily intended to answer questions, but rather to ask them. By interviewing citizens who provide their opinions, it will help them clarify themselves and develop their ideas. The platform makes it possible to analyze how the AI tool is used. This should be a good use case for this technology and to address the problem that it can be inaccessible and difficult to provide feedback to the municipality. In this way, we increase accessibility and can present an engaging service for the citizens. The opinions received through the assistant can be handled just as we already do when they come in.

Assistant that simplifies access to routines within welfare technology

In home care, every minute is valuable, and staff need to quickly and easily access current routines for welfare technology such as safety alarms, medication dispensers, medical cabinets, and keyless locks. To meet this need, an AI assistant has been developed, accessible directly on mobile phones. By searching for keywords, staff can quickly find the right routine or job description without having to search through binders or the intranet. For simpler questions, quick answers are also provided without having to open the entire routine. This saves time, reduces stress, and ensures that work is carried out according to updated routines. The assistant is available around the clock and contributes to a safer work environment as well as improved quality in care. In an increasingly digital everyday life, fast and easy access to the right information is crucial for providing good care. The service is intended to be used by specific groups within the home care operations.

Internal assistants

Several attempts were made to test assistants to more easily find work support and guidance internally. For example, for IT support, with the aim of investigating whether it could complement or strengthen existing support channels within the organization, that is, the target group being all employees. The testing was conducted solely internally and never made it into production. During the pilot phase, the team noticed that the assistant sometimes provided answers outside of its intended area and could also generate strange characters in its responses.

Illustration: Yutong Liu & Digit / https://betterimagesofai.org / https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

1 Digitalization and AI development that leaves no one behind

The public sector has to work purposefully to ensure that all people can achieve participation and equality in society, this principle must guide the design of future public services. This means, among other things, that digital systems and environments that affect people's lives must be understandable, usable, and auditable. Many user's experiences evaluations show that real impact through digitalization is achieved when people are put at the centre.

In the fall of 2025, the growth department will start a broad strategic foresight work together with The Swedish Agency for Digital Government (Digg). Foresight is about systematically exploring potential future scenarios and their consequences. Strategic foresight should involve exploring issues that also have practical significance for strategic work and are recurrent at the management level. Several officials have already taken courses to learn AI and this should be spread, mainly in the department. This is to retain the knowledge in the organization and not make it dependent on specific persons. The department will familiarize themselves with and follow Digg's guidelines for generative AI for public administration. The guidelines are dynamic and provide guidance on the use of generative AI.

Digitalization and AI development that leaves no one behind		
2025/2026	**2026/2027**	**2027/2028**
Strategic foresight work Guidelines for generative AI. Develop skills in how to use generative AI.	Regional cooperation around open source solutions for generative AI and the AI workshop. Test new solutions on a smaller scale to ensure they work for end users and contribute to desired outcomes.	Regional cooperation around open source solutions for generative AI and the AI workshop. Implement the new solutions and continued improvements and follow-ups.
Funding: DIGITAL EUROPE Work Programme 2025 – 2027 Artificial Intelligence activities for the implementation of the Apply AI Strategy Continuously invest in service design and education and training to ensure all employees understand both user needs and technology. Work iteratively and be open to adjusting the strategy based on insights and lessons learned.		

Digital resilience, continuity planning and preparedness

Härnösand municipality is part of Sweden's civil preparedness system. Civil preparedness is about the ability to prevent and manage peacetime crisis situations, threats of war, and ultimately war itself. This ability is created throughout society, among authorities, municipalities, regions, businesses, and volunteers. Everyone living in Sweden has a responsibility for preparedness. Härnösand municipality runs a large number of operations that people depend on; some activities are carried out independently, but also with the assistance of contractors and companies. Societally important operations that must function both in everyday life and during crises and disasters.

Generative AI can both enhance and threaten digital resilience. For safe digitization and robust civil preparedness, a better understanding of the risks and dilemmas associated with generative AI is needed. As part of preparedness, the municipality must be able to protect itself against harmful content, such as deepfakes and disinformation. Organizations need to maintain cybersecurity, for example through the identification of vulnerabilities and AI-generated malware, and the AI systems need to align with human values. Trust in public administration can be upheld by focusing on transparent and ethical AI use. Härnösand's experiences from the Resilient Communities Learning Platform [RESCOM] EU-financed project have shown how the municipal libraries have been able to function as a meeting place and as a community centre in times of crisis and war where common problems are addressed and solved with IT support, and a place where all necessary infrastructure is available.

The AI Commission proposes an investment in public libraries of app €10 million per year during the years 2025–2029. This strengthens their mission to promote the use of information technology for knowledge acquisition and learning. The investment aims for the public to receive help in trying out and using AI tools free of charge.

Digital resilience and strengthened media and information literacy		
2026	**2027**	**2028**
Develop methods for strengthened media and information literacy. Offer relevant AI tools free of charge.	Strengthen the ability to detect influence campaigns and develop methods for debunking them.	
Funding: The municipality intends to apply for national calls and state aid distributed through the AI Commission and the Swedish Arts Council. The funding will support continued development of the Digidel Center as the municipality's central hub for digital participation, particularly in relation to digitalization and artificial intelligence. The public library will be further developed as a testbed for new digital services, while Sambiblioteket will be strengthened as a meeting place and community centre, with a particular role in times of crisis.		

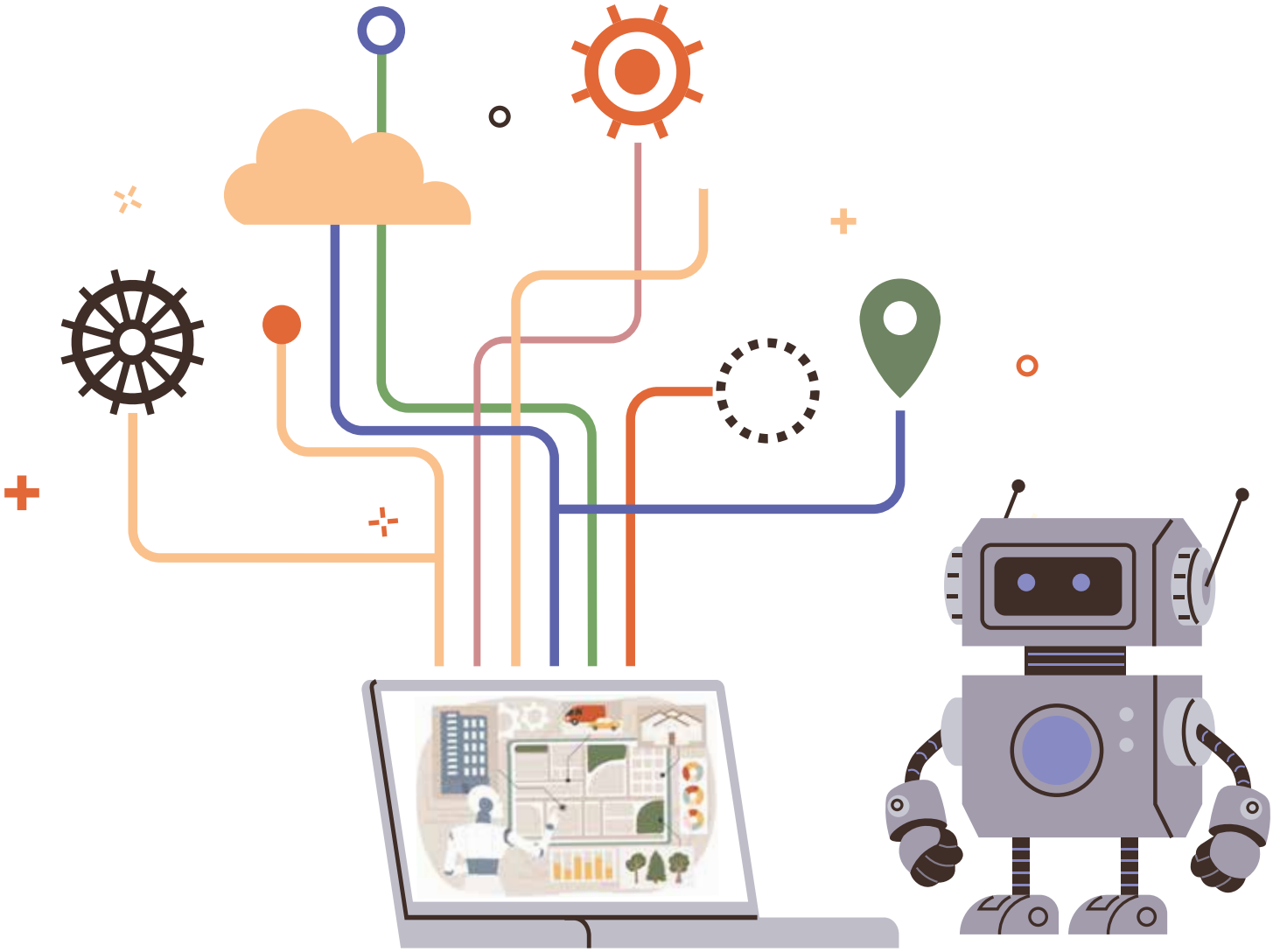
Illustration: Yutong Liu & Digit / https://betterimagesofai.org / https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

2 Innovation in urban planning

Within the framework of the Interreg AURORA programme, a feasibility study has been carried out together with network partner Åbo Akademi, and Nykarleby stad, in Finland, around the theme of Metacity, Innovation in Urban Planning.

Three main themes have been investigated: the possibilities of new technology in urban planning, the competence and readiness of the municipal organisation for innovation with co-creative elements, and effective ways of involving residents and other stakeholders in the planning process. This feasibility study has formed the basis for a planned larger project for implementation of them.

Together with Technichus and VR studio the city also has begun the creation of a new physical space about Härnösand's development in the most important public meeting place, Sambiblioteket, which includes the municipal library. Here you'll have the opportunity to have your say and influence how the municipality should become better. Technology provides the opportunity to illustrate plans and ongoing projects and convey long-term visions for development, such as overview plan, zoning plans and new establishments. Displays can show historical developments, such as population changes and historical maps. Screens can also guide to public art in the city, architecture or cultural environments in the countryside. The screens can be used by all administrations within the municipality to display relevant information and create participation for citizens. Here is where how Härnösand is growing is illustrated and talked about.



Arena for dialogue and visualization about the city		
2026	**2027**	**2028**
Collect new data using IoT solutions, aerial surveys, and resident data. Structure through system integration and data standardization. Make available and accessible with the support of generative AI, VR, and real-time visualization.	Improve the methods for citizen dialogue, with a particular focus on young people and young adults. • Systematic user surveys and updated plans • Place branding, attractiveness, and the importance of the location	Implement new working methods. Continue with, and follow up on, the quality-assured data collection.
Funding: The planned activities will be financed through a project application submitted to the Interreg Aurora programme. Implementation will be carried out in collaboration with Åbo Akademi University, the Municipality of Örnsköldsvik, and the Regional Council of Ostrobothnia. The project, titled Innovation in Urban Planning, is scheduled to run from 2026 to 2029. Härnösand Municipality expects to receive a decision regarding the application in January 2026.		

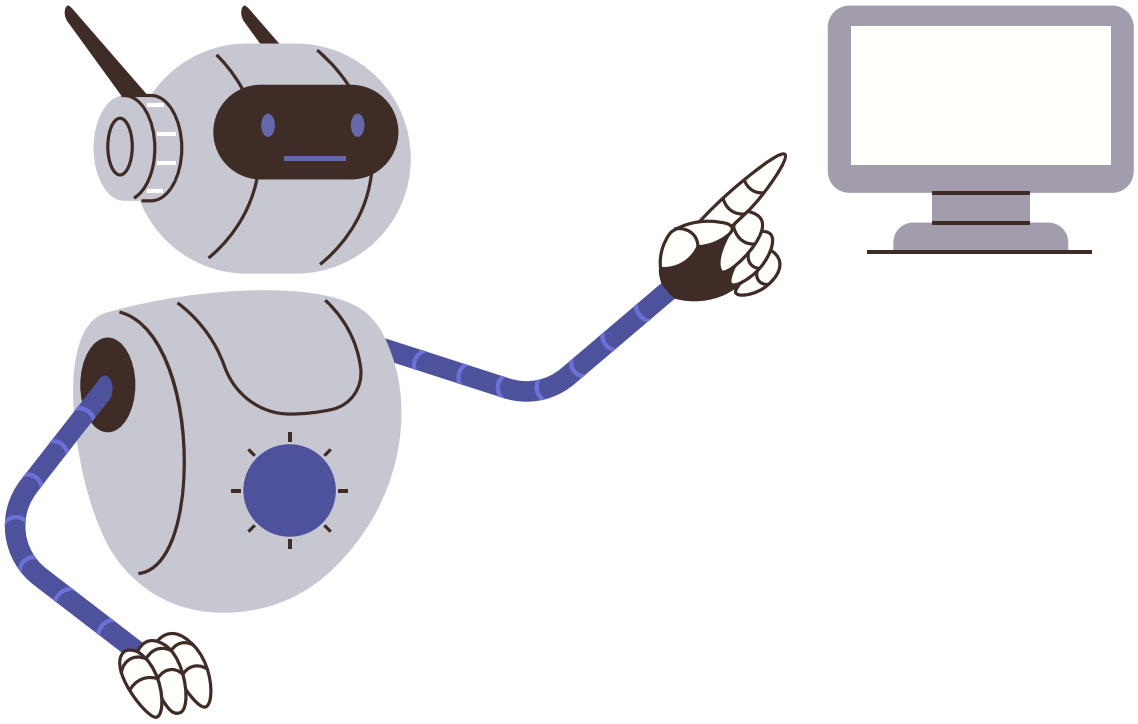
Illustration: Yutong Liu & Kingston School of Art / https://betterimagesofai.org / https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

3 Beyond the Screen: Where Exhibitions Get Immersive and Co-Creation Comes Alive

During the pandemic years, many cultural experiences were moved to digital forums, including the art hall offering digital vernissages and short films about art.

In Härnösand, a digital art walk was developed to make artworks accessible. These efforts were greatly appreciated by both individuals and the artist industry, which is why Härnösand wishes to continue building on the use of digital technologies. The Artists' National Organization designated Härnösand as Sweden's 6th best art municipality!

Digital technology enables both increased accessibility to art through, for example, virtual exhibitions and digital platforms, but it also functions as an artistic medium in its own right with the potential to create new, interactive, and location-independent experiences. By integrating technology into both distribution and artistic practice, the projects can reach a wider audience while exploring the expressions of the future.



The Qvist Collection can be made more accessible. The collection is a significant art and cultural historical collection in Härnösand. The collection includes over 500 objects, including artworks, furniture, silver, porcelain, and textiles from the 18th and 19th centuries. Among the artworks are pieces by internationally renowned artists such as Matisse, Picasso, and Chagall, as well as Swedish famous artists. The Qvistska collection is now a permanent part of Härnösand Art Hall and some objects from it are always on display.

The overarching goal for Härnösand, when the right conditions are met, is to create more cultural experiences and meetings remotely in real time. Through art, cultural heritage, and creative exchange, cross-border cooperation between different places and countries is promoted. With the help of digital solutions – such as livestreamed events, digital residencies, virtual exhibitions, and shared online platforms – meeting places are created where artists and audiences can meet, create, and collaborate, regardless of geographical distance.

Creative meeting places and an accessible cultural life		
2026	**2027**	**2028**
Digitize and present the The Qvist Collection Create digital twins of the art hall where visitors can wander around and take part in the art hall's exhibitions through VR/AR.	Create immersive rooms where visitors can step into paintings or sculptures, which means that the work becomes multi-dimensional. With Technichus and the VR studio.	Create new artworks together with the audience, controlling the content of the work, or participating in artistic processes remotely. Co-creation and changes of the relationship between artists and audience. With local artists, Technichus, and other relevant actors.
Funding: The activities may be financed through a variety of funding sources. Efforts to identify relevant collaboration partners will continue following the conclusion of the MetaCity project. Potential funding programmes to be explored include Interreg Aurora, Interreg Europe, and URBACT.		

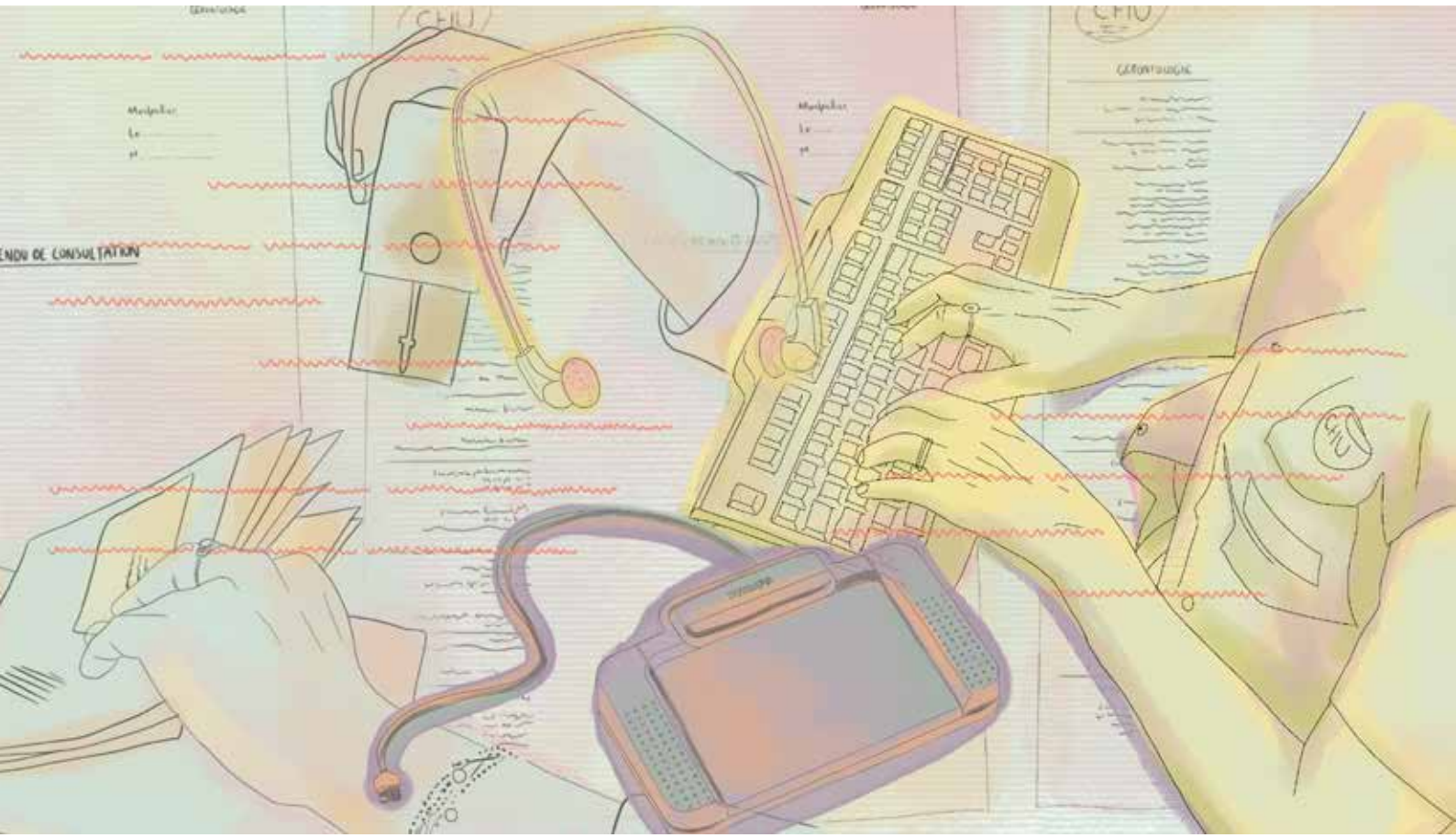
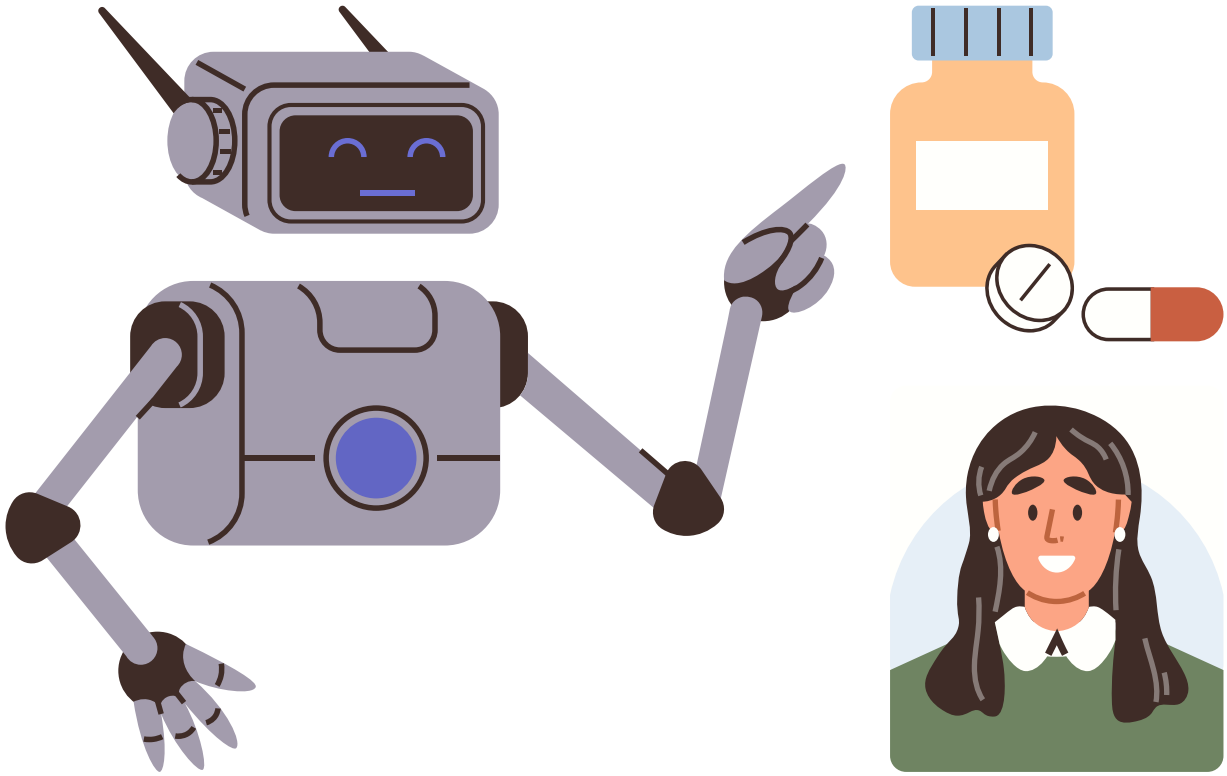


Illustration: Fanny Maurel & Digit / https://betterimagesofai.org / https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

4 Human-centred healthcare – preventive, accessible and including

A new social services law came into effect in 2025. It aims to make social services more preventive, accessible, and knowledge-based. Support should reach people before problems arise or escalate. Faster and simpler interventions without extensive investigations will be offered. Digitizing certain services can be preventive and simplify the processing.

The municipality's social services are involved in the Interreg Europe funded HUMAN project from 2025 to 2029. HUMAN empowers regions to adopt Healthcare 5.0 policies, harnessing technology towards inclusive, affordable, and human-centred healthcare. In short, "Healthcare 5.0" means that healthcare becomes more person-centred, inclusive and accessible.
In home care, every minute is valuable, and the staff needs to quickly and easily access current routines for welfare technology such as emergency alarms, medicine dispensers, medical cabinets, and keyless locks. To meet this need, an AI assistant has been tested. The assistant has to be available directly on mobile devices. By searching for keywords, the staff can quickly find the right routine or job description without having to search through binders or the Intranet. For simpler questions, quick answers are also provided without the need to open the entire routine.



The assistant can contribute to timesaving, reducing stress, and ensuring that the work is carried out according to updated routines. The assistant is available 24/7 and contributes to a safer working environment as well as improved quality of care. In an increasingly digital everyday life, quick and easy access to the right information is crucial for providing good care. The service is intended to be used by specific groups within home care operations.

Human-centred healthcare - preventive, accessible and including		
2026	**2027**	**2028**
Introduction of Secure Digital Communication, SDK, for Social Services. This lays the foundation for new working methods that improve the quality of collaboration with external parties.	Standardization in the most important systems to facilitate operations and development within the systems and to be able to apply AI solutions. Continue the development of the pilot and the use of generative AI.	Standardization in the most important systems to facilitate operations and development within the systems and to be able to apply AI solutions. Continue the development of the pilot and the use of generative AI.
Funding: Härnösand Municipality is currently participating in the Interreg Europe project HUMAN, which runs from 2025 to 2029. The project will contribute to the activities outlined in this action plan and support the continued development of policies related to welfare technology solutions.		

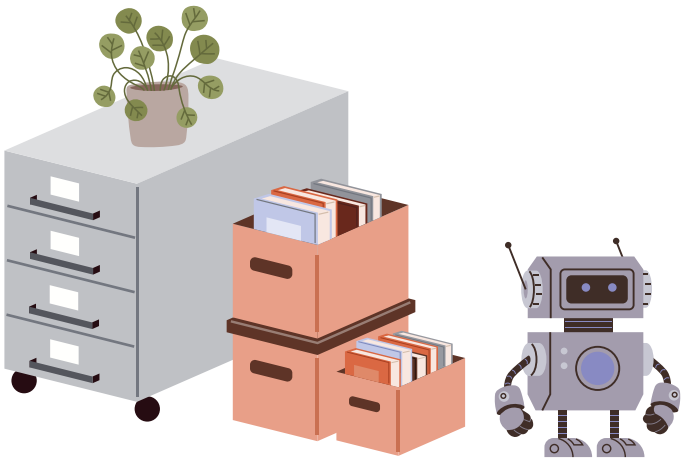
Illustration: Yutong Liu & Digit / https://betterimagesofai.org / https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

5 The Archive City Härnösand – Our Common Backbone and Memory

Härnösand has long been the archive capital of Norrland. A capital city that is now growing as the National Archives builds Northern Europe's largest archive here. The Regional Archives will move its existing operations in Härnösand there, and the Swedish Tax Agency will gather all its archives that are currently scattered throughout the country. The construction will be completed in the spring of 2025.

At the same time, Härnösand is just in the starting blocks to build a new archive center together with our neighbour municipalities. This centre, Nordarkiv, is a planned competence and knowledge center for information management in Norrland and a needs-driven platform for collaboration on skills supply and education. Nordarkiv can contribute to research and development, stimulate innovation and new business opportunities and offer modern and functional archive facilities, e-archive solutions and digitize analog materials through scanning and metadata creation.

Nordarkiv will contain archives for municipalities, municipal companies, and other public organisations and associations. Sollefteå, Kramfors and Timrå municipalities have already signed letters of intent that they want to be a part of this new archive. Härnösand municipality will be the owner and host of Nordarkiv, which will contain both physical archives and e-archives.



The development and use of artificial intelligence (AI) represent a paradigm shift for the archive sector as well, as AI enables the availability of information in a completely new way. This enables the reuse and analysis of data, which in turn contributes to knowledge building and innovation. We would like to continue working on developing Nordarkiv in collaboration with other European clusters for archives and continue to explore the track of how AI can develop the area. Based on our region's conditions, we see great opportunities to continue to work towards developing the area of gov tech, especially the archive, which is in line with Västernorrland's regional Innovation strategy for smart specialization.

An increased digitization of existing analogue material in our municipal archives would lay the groundwork for more available and efficient information management. There is a great chance that more residents from our neighbouring municipalities will turn to the consolidated archive in Härnösand, therefore the most requested materials need to be made available to them in an easy way.

First, one must begin by digitizing the archived documents. This needs to be done in a structured way, within selected areas of high user interest. Data can be used much more, and active data sharing is a prerequisite for the digital public administration to function in a cohesive manner. The archives can then be connected to the municipality's e-services, which create public documents that may need to be registered and recorded. In order for the information generated from an e-service to be managed electronically throughout the process, a connection to a case management system must be ensured. A prerequisite is that it should also be possible to preserve and dispose of electronic documents according to the existing requirements in the archive. Only then could, for example, generative AI be used to improve services to residents. Such a development could increase the ability to easily search through multiple sources and provide clear text and spoken answers to user inquiries.

Generative AI can be used to improve metadata and enable better search functionality, especially for photo archives, as the Norwegian National Archives has demonstrated. Or like the Swedish National Archives, which has made over a million handwritten documents more accessible by converting them into searchable text using artificial intelligence. Virtual reality VR can also be used to bring the historical environments in Västernorrland to life. By using the regional archival material available in the form of photographs and stories, in combination with the strength of generative AI, it would be possible to visualize how neighbourhoods in Västernorrland looked in the past. These could be used in resident dialogues in connection with discussions about the city's future development.

Effective and accessible archives for public scrutiny, municipal administration, or future research

2026	2027	2028
Recruit more trained archivists in our county when these large investments, outlined above, are made in Västernorrland. Offer more advanced trainee positions in collaboration with other municipal actors and the Mid Sweden University.	Conduct a pre-study together with the co-operating municipalities, National Archives, Mid Sweden University and other relevant actors. The purpose of the pre-study is to investigate further what material in the joint municipal archive needs to be digitized and how it can be done so that it meets the standards that enable the reuse of the data.	Apply and test generative AI to improve archive services to residents to increase the ability to easily search through multiple sources to get automated clear text and spoken answers to user inquiries. Apply and test generative AI to archive materials to bring the historical environments in Västernorrland to life.

Funding : As part of this action, potential funding for the preparatory study planned for 2027 will be further explored. Collaboration with prospective partners will be deepened, and suitable funding opportunities will be identified. There is potential for both regional funding and programmes aimed at supporting SMEs, including the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Interreg.

Illustration: Yutong Liu & Digit / https://betterimagesofai.org / https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

6 Cross-border XR for manufacturing SME's

Xxxx

Xxxxx

Effective and accessible archives for public scrutiny, municipal administration, or future research		
2026	**2027**	**2028**
Recruit more trained archivists in our county when these large investments, outlined above, are made in Västernorrland. Offer more advanced trainee positions in collaboration with other municipal actors and the Mid Sweden University.	Conduct a pre-study together with the co-operating municipalities, National Archives, Mid Sweden University and other relevant actors. The purpose of the pre-study is to investigate further what material in the joint municipal archive needs to be digitized and how it can be done so that it meets the standards that enable the reuse of the data.	Apply and test generative AI to improve archive services to residents to increase the ability to easily search through multiple sources to get automated clear text and spoken answers to user inquiries. Apply and test generative AI to archive materials to bring the historical environments in Västernorrland to life.

Building an EU Bridge

In order for a relatively small municipality to develop there is a need for cooperation and increased funding. Therefore, we have a clear focus on strengthen our capacity for this. An important step is to develop Härnösand Municipality's work with project cooperations. One of the core activities is to enhance the networking and the skills for applying for and administering external funding, especially EU funds.

The already initiated project for this will map existing networks within our eligible EU programmes and identify relevant new international partners, while also disseminating information about funding opportunities assistant internally and externally. This project also works to develop working methods and processes for applications and to improve the internal transfer of competence in the in-house project administration. The goal is to participate in relevant network meetings and international projects by 2025.

Urbact local core group members – ULG

To date, the working group has had eight meetings during the project time.

Daniel Sundqvist
Business Developer IT,
Härnösand municipality

Daniel is a specialist in digitalization and work municipality-wide, supporting the administrations in their strategic work.

David Gisselman
Development Lead and Business Developer,
Technichus Science Center

As a Cognitive Scientist, he leads design and business development at VR Studion, focusing on innovation and user-centered processes.

Erika Vesterholm
Web Strategist, project communicator,
Härnösand municipality

Erika has many years of experience in web development and she is the central figure for the municipality's digital presence online.

Eva Nordin Silén
Head of Unit, Härnösand municipality

Eva is Head of Internal Support, a department for development and administrative support. She has extensive experience in developing the digital transformation of social services.

Jennie Olofsson
Library Strategist, coordinator of the project, Härnösand municipality

Jennie is a is a driven change leader, a cultural scientist and information specialist with extensive experience as a library and project developer.

Jens Danielsson
Head of Development,
Örnsköldsvik's municipality

Jens has extensive experience in change management and leading the entire municipality's digital transformation.

Mats Gradin
Business Developer – IT,
Härnösand municipality

Mats is a business developer in IT, an expert in immersive technologies and design processes.

Patrik Pettersson
Business Developer, coordinator of ULG,
Härnösand municipality

Patrik is a driven change leader and an expert in Geographic Information Systems and develops the municipality's digital twin.

Theo Andersson
Trend Analyst, The Swedish Agency for Digital Government

Theo has a master's degree in International Relations and has previously worked at the Chamber of Commerce in Cyprus. Today, he contributes with strategic foresight for digitalization at an international level.

Local working group for the small scale action

- **Camilla Rönnberg Karlsson**, procurement, Härnösand municipality
- **Christer Mohlin**, business developer school, Härnösand municipality,
- **Daniel Sundqvist**, business developer IT, Härnösand municipality
- **Erika Vesterholm**, web strategist, Härnösand municipality
- **Henrik Bjerneld**, Härnösand municipality
- **Jan Al Deri**, business developer IT, Härnösand municipality
- **Jennie Olofsson**, library strategist, Härnösand municipality
- **Johannes Halén**, procurement, Härnösand municipality
- **Len Stenqvist**, IT, Härnösand municipality
- **Mats Gradin**, business developer – IT, Härnösand municipality
- **Mikael Bergström**, Örnsköldsvik's municipality
- **Patrik Pettersson**, business developer, Härnösand municipality
- **Sandra Danielsson**, business developer, Härnösand municipality
- **Stefan Berggren**, business developer IT, Härnösand municipality
- **Åsa Kareståhl**, Örnsköldsvik's municipality

Härnösands kommun

URBACT

Co-funded by the European Union

Interreg