

Funding priorities in cohesion policy 2021-2027

The main challenges for sustainable development in Västra Götaland point to the importance of education, collaboration, cohesion and innovation systems. Considering the policy objectives for EU cohesion policy in the next programming period, EU funds can help to deliver on a number of these.

A smarter Europe

Region Västra Götaland has the ambition to become a leading knowledge and industrial region where the total regional research and innovation investments should count for a minimum of 5% of Gross Regional Product. To reach this target the regional eco-innovation system needs to be strengthened. More efforts are needed to boost the growth and competitiveness of small and medium enterprises and to enhance uptake of advanced technologies in key areas such as digitalisation, automation, electrification, sustainable production and consumption.

A greener, low-carbon Europe

Västra Götaland has one of the most ambitious regional climate targets globally. By 2030 the region shall no longer be dependent on fossil energy. The transition of Västra Götaland into a climate-smart region is one of the most challenging processes in the region. It requires new collaborative approaches to make the region a hothouse for innovative products and societal solutions of the future. Biodiversity, sustainable agri-food production and consumption and the electrification of transport and industrial processes are challenges that need to be addressed in the coming years to succeed.

A more connected Europe

Interconnectivity, particularly in railway infrastructure, remains underdeveloped and hampers cohesion across and within the region. Investments in infrastructure and digital solutions are needed to increase the capacity and to meet the high mobility demand. A high priority for the region is to ensure conditions for sustainable travel and freight transport.

A more social Europe

While Västra Götaland registers generally high levels of educational attainments, there is an increasing skill shortage in some sectors. The lack of engineers and education professionals in some parts of the region co-exists with skills gaps in areas such as health care, elderly care, transport and construction. Moreover, foreign-born workers face a combination of economic and social obstacles to access employment and educational opportunities. If left unaddressed, current and projected skill mismatches may slow down productivity growth on regional and national

level as well as increasing inequalities in the society. More could be done to consolidate existing labour market integration services and better match skills and jobs.

Europe closer to citizens

Investing in young people and enable them to realise their full potential is a critical issue for a sustainable society in the long term. Tackling the steady rise in the number of school dropouts and improving educational attainment is a key priority for the region.