



Demand-Responsive
Transport to ensure
accessibility, availability
and reliability of rural
public transport

PILOT IN VÄRMLAND

Region Värmland
(Sweden)

17/11/2020



EUROPEAN
REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
FUND

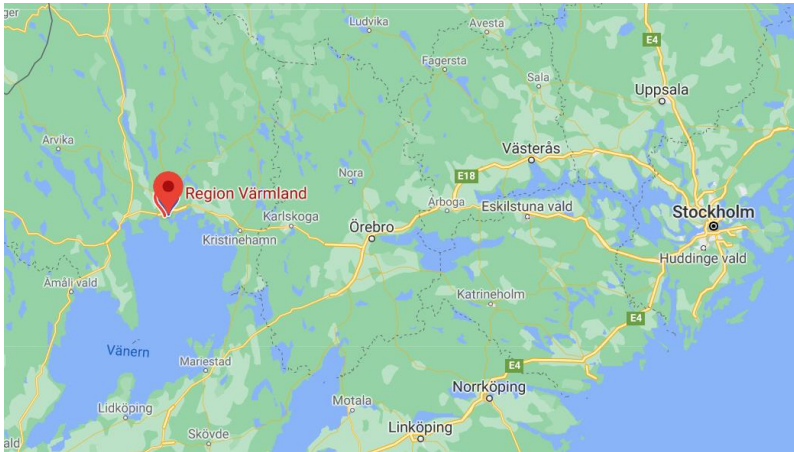
EUROPEAN UNION

Pilot in Värmland

Starting and ending date of pilot

Due to Covid-19, pilot has been postponed until further notice.

Location



About the pilot

The pilot will be carried out by [Region Värmland](#), a project partner of the RESPONSE project. The beneficiary area will also be the Värmland region in Sweden.

Region Värmland's (Sweden) demand-responsive transport (DRT) pilot investigates how seamless travel offers could be designed to encourage vulnerable traveller groups to use less cost-intensive Special Transport Services (STS).

In Sweden, STS is provided to individuals that have been approved of having a non-temporary disability and have mobility issues when travelling alone or on public transport. At the same time, Sweden also offers patients transport schemes where transport to and from the health care treatment is subsidized for all residents. This patient transport scheme can also be utilised by STS approved travellers. Today, all patient transport options can be booked only by phone. An operator receives the specifics of when and where the passenger needs to travel and makes a seat reservation on the agreed journey. Sometimes specially equipped vehicles are needed and sometimes the passengers use regular public transport. Therefore, some of the journeys are demand-responsive in their nature while others make use of conventional public transport

Pilot audience

Patients who need transport to and from the health care treatment.

Aim of the pilot

The pilot aims to investigate whether the availability of digital bookings in combination with new pricing strategy and better integrity encourage travellers of vulnerable groups to use more regular public transport, especially for medical-related trips. This will also mean cost savings for public transport authorities and hopefully reduced emissions by also introducing more people to opt for patient transports instead of private vehicles when going to their health care appointments.



Covid update

The pilot has been postponed until further notice. There is no fixed date when it could be possible to commence. The digital booking tool is tested and ready to go, however, as it is targeted at vulnerable groups often coinciding with risk groups there are some challenges regarding contradicting communication (new service vs recommendations to avoid public transport). However, a pre-pilot survey is done incorporating some Covid-19 aspects, which will give a good baseline for comparing the different pilots across the Response projects.

Lessons learned

So far, main lessons learned are related to the survey responses. The survey can be summarised as vulnerable groups have been travelling less because they have fewer activities to attend due to the pandemic and not so much fear of the virus. They are also quite reluctant in using digital tools for booking, mostly because it is new, and they feel unfamiliar with this. This will provide a real challenge when the pilot is finally launched and will require effective communications and support to encourage the vulnerable groups to use the service.

More information

<https://www.regionvarmland.se/om-regionen/Ovrigt/response/>