

# BLEKINGE, SWEDEN

In this success story, we share the experience of the Blekinge region in Sweden which has, through the Mission, developed new ways to raise awareness of climate risks and to ensure climate adaptation is a priority for policymakers.

## EU MISSION IMPACT

As a Charter Signatory, Blekinge is now part of a wide community of regions and local authorities that share similar climate challenges and learn from their respective experiences.

The EU Mission has enabled the region to accelerate its adaptation efforts by learning first-hand how similar regions are tackling the same climate risks. Signing the Mission Charter has meant stability in the region's adaptation efforts.

Governments and policies may change, but adaptation is now cemented into the region's political landscape as it has committed to strive towards climate resilience by 2030.

## REGIONAL PROFILE

Situated on the south-east coast of Sweden, the small county of Blekinge is brimming with nature – from its coastal shores to its dense forests and bodies of freshwater. The region is made up of an archipelago of over 1,000 islands and five municipalities with a strong naval heritage. Its tourism sector and smart tech industry are flourishing.

## CLIMATE CHALLENGES

Like many EU regions, Blekinge faces several different climate risks. Its geography primarily exposes the region to water-related challenges such as flooding, rising sea levels, droughts, and freshwater supply shortages. According to the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency report, two municipalities in Blekinge are categorized as 'high risk' and extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

*We have learned so much from the region twinning as part of the RESIST project and the wider EU Mission. Without this knowledge sharing and community, Blekinge risked having climate resilience remain low on policymakers' priorities. We hope that as our adaptation efforts accelerate, we too can be a leader in this topic and inspire other regions to strive towards climate resilience.*

**ERIKA AUGUSTINSSON**  
Innovation Manager

## SOLUTIONS

Blekinge became a Charter Signatory for the EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change in September 2022, committing to climate resilience by 2030. As part of its Mission-related activities, Blekinge hosted the Second Forum of the Mission in June 2023.

When codeveloping Blekinge's strategy for innovations and Smart Specialisation, it became clear there was a lack of adherence to sustainability and climate adaptation. On the other hand, a Mission-oriented strategy puts climate adaptation and resilience at the heart of decision-making. Blekinge chose to combine these two policies, implementing the EU Mission as one of the target areas in the Smart Specialisation Strategy.

Blekinge is now developing new ways of working to raise awareness of climate risks and ensure climate adaptation is a priority for policymakers. For example, it is using digital twinning to visualise different scenarios caused by climate change to support decision-making when designing adaptation plans. This in turn drives change on a policy level.

As part of its climate adaptation efforts, Blekinge joined the Mission Project RESIST, which is twinning regions that have strong climate adaptation knowledge with those less experienced. Paired with Central Denmark, Blekinge will implement innovative solutions to support local authorities and policymakers in raising awareness of climate risks among citizens. The activities developed within the project will also identify driving mechanisms for accelerating decision-making and increase the innovation work on climate change adaptation.

## OUTPUTS

Blekinge is using lessons learned from RESIST to raise awareness of climate risks to policymakers across multiple governance levels by:

- Using data collection for the development of decision-making tools and to encourage increased policy coherence as part of RESIST.
- Developing a close partnership with Blekinge Institute of Technology to encourage more PhD students to participate in climate adaptation research and bridge the gap between academic research and on-the-ground action.
- Producing a Missions Playbook with other regions that are implementing Mission-approached innovations. It is focused on adapting the goals of the Mission to a regional level and is a space for projects to learn from one another.



Image: Panel discussion from the Second Mission Forum hosted by Blekinge

## LESSONS LEARNED

National support was not as strong as originally thought, so awareness and engagement campaigns with key policymakers were essential to ensure adaptation was considered an urgent issue.

The Mission has been vital in building networks not only within Sweden but across the EU.

Partnering with regions facing similar climate risks but are more experienced in developing adaptation solutions is essential.

