

# RURALPLAN

- Innovative planning  
for rural areas

**ESPON**



Co-funded by  
the European Union  
Interreg

# Om RURALPLAN

In collaboration with Linköping University in Sweden and the Swiss Center for Mountain Regions, Inland Norway University will lead the research project RURALPLAN—Innovative planning in shrinking societies. The project is funded through the European network ESPON – European Territorial Observation Network.

RURALPLAN focuses on innovative planning in rural areas which are experiencing population decline and/or changing demographics. The goal of the project is to test methods for developing forward-looking strategies to address these changes.

A central activity in the RURALPLAN project is facilitating planning for the future by incorporating broad participation from shrinking communities themselves, while also grounding future plans in a realistic understanding of population trends in rural municipalities.

Planners in rural areas across Europe are expected to benefit from both the methodological experiences and the co-created results of the participatory activities in RURALPLAN.



Neue Regionalpolitik **npr**  
Nouvelle politique régionale **npr**  
Nuova politica regionale **npr**  
Nova politica regionalna **npr**



Schweizerische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Berggebiete  
Groupement suisse pour les régions de montagne  
Gruppo svizzero per le regioni di montagna  
Gruppa svizra per las regiuns da muntogna



**Innlandet**  
County Council



**Länsstyrelsen**  
**Dalarnas län**

**li.u** LINKÖPINGS  
UNIVERSITET



**EUROMONTANA**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,  
Education and Research EAER  
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO



**Inland Norway**  
**University of**  
**Applied Sciences**

# Innovative Planning Laboratory - RUPIL

Under the RURALPLAN project, we have developed a model, RUPIL (Rural Planning and Innovation Lab), for use in strategic planning and policymaking in rural areas. The model is based on well-proven methodologies, but we plan to use it in an innovative way by systematically integrating this methodology into a planning context.

RUPIL provides the framework for a systematic and creative innovation process, which consists of six phases: 1) thematic orientation, 2) problem exploration, 3) gathering insights, 4) developing ideas, testing and evaluating, 5) implementing, and 6) scaling and spreading.

As part of the RURALPLAN project, we will test RUPIL in a concrete planning context in selected areas of Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland.

We invite broad participation in this process: politicians and administrations from local and regional authorities, civil society, business, and others. Our primary ambition is to co-create methods, goals, and strategies for realistic societal development.

The innovation process will take place through three workshops running concurrently in each country:

- **Workshop 1:** A full day focusing on phases 1, 2, and 3 of the innovation process. The goal is to gain insight into the demographic changes and challenges characterizing the area of focus.
- **Workshop 2:** A half-day working on phase 4 of the innovation process, idea development.
- **Workshop 3:** A half-day focusing on phase 5 of the innovation process, implementation.

Phase 6 of the innovation process, scaling and spreading, will take place locally after the workshops.

Each gathering will accommodate 20-50 participants, and the composition of participants will be coordinated with the municipality or region.



## Timeline for RUPIL Implementation

February	March	April	May	June/July	August
<p><b>Preparation</b></p> <p><i>RUPIL planning in Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland</i></p>		<p><b>Implementation</b></p> <p><i>The three workshops will be conducted in Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland</i></p>			<p><b>Evaluation and Reporting</b></p> <p><i>A report will be prepared based on the conducted workshops</i></p>

**Would you like to learn more about the RURALPLAN project?**

Read more here: [inn.no/english/research/research-projects/ruralplan](http://inn.no/english/research/research-projects/ruralplan)

Contact project leader: [ulla.higdem@inn.no](mailto:ulla.higdem@inn.no)