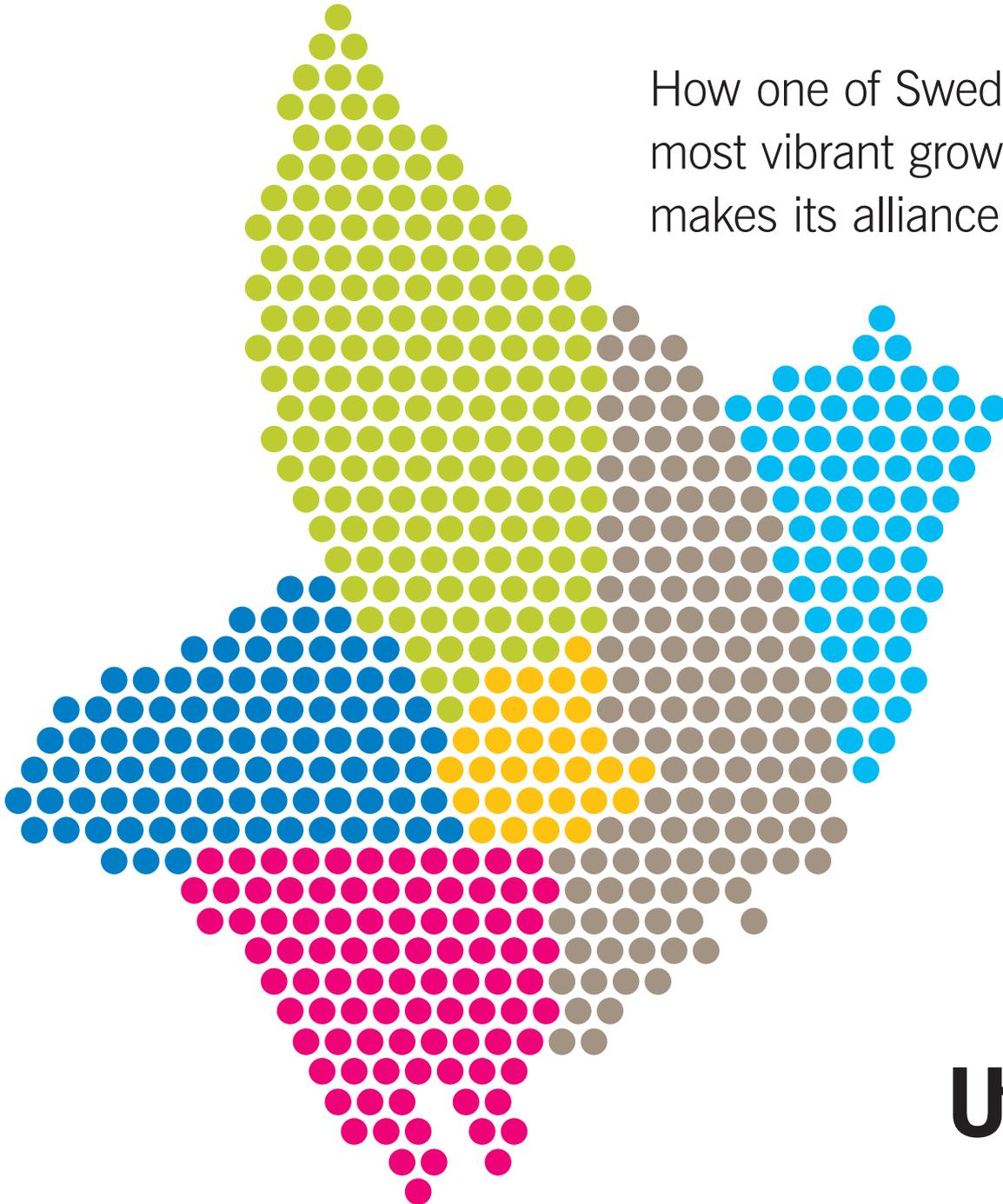
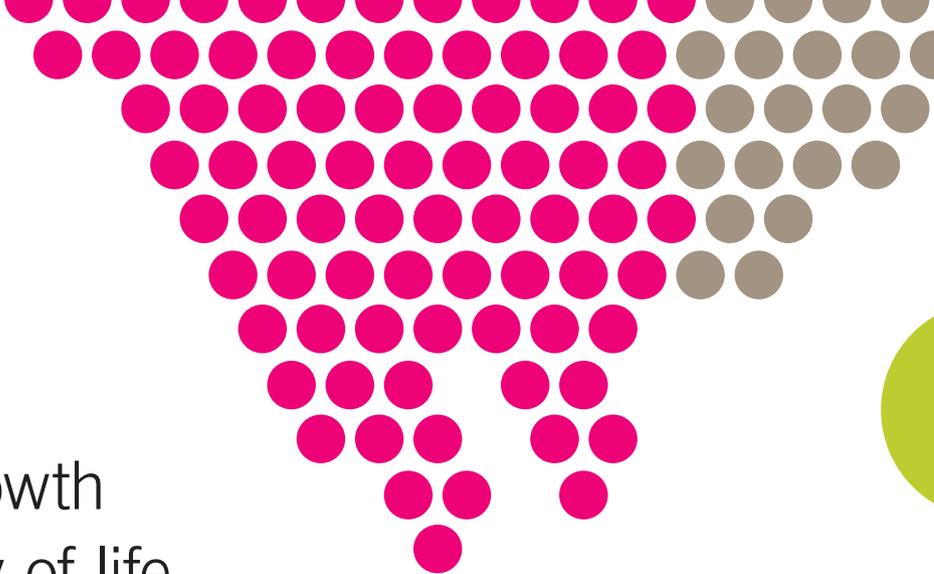


How one of Sweden's
most vibrant growth regions
makes its alliance work



THE
Umeå
REGION



An alliance for growth and a high quality of life

The Umeå Region is not only a geographical region, it is also an alliance that consists of the municipalities of Umeå, Bjurholm, Nordmaling, Robertsfors, Vindeln and Vännäs. The region, which has 142,000 inhabitants and 16,000 business enterprises, is one of Sweden's most vibrant growth regions.

These municipalities have a natural cohesion and take joint action to promote not only a high quality of life and community services but also a flourishing industrial sector and economic growth.

This co-operation has helped to improve the efficiency of municipal activities and to enable more effective use to be made of common resources in administration, tourism, education and business services.

The alliance also strengthens

capacity by enabling the municipalities, by acting jointly, to offer services and facilities at lower cost.

The Umeå Region is one of Sweden's most vibrant growth regions. It is home to two universities, a dynamic business sector, and rich and varied cultural activities. The alliance and the exchange of ideas among its member municipalities give the inhabitants and local enterprises excellent opportunities to develop.

“The municipalities
can provide service
at lower cost.”



Bjurholm

A stable network in alliance

The stable network, the shared vision and the close and well-established alliance make Umeå Region unique. Since the municipalities help each other, Umeå Region is also experiencing strong growth, for example via the formation of new enterprises.

The alliance is characterised by mutual confidence and an open dialogue that has eliminated boundaries and pooled resources. The regular exchange of experiences and expertise between local politicians and municipal officers generates added value for all concerned.

The Umeå Region is a functional region since many of its inhabitants find it quite natural to travel between municipalities to study, work or live. Every day 5,000 people commute within the region because it is such a pleasant place to live.

INTRODUCTION OF REFUGEES

One of the goals of the Umeå Region is to take joint action to improve the efficiency of local government administration. One

area in which these six municipalities are taking joint measures is the introduction of refugees. This is being improved by the development of new types of regional co-operation that make the process more effective and make resources go further.

DEVELOPING TOURISM

There are two more main goals: to develop the Umeå Region and to ensure that the network enjoys democratic backing. The joint action being taken by the Umeå Region includes developing tourism, providing readier access to library services, and overcoming possible shortages of labour and skills in the six municipalities.

That's how one of Sweden's most vibrant growth regions makes its alliance work.

Robertsfors

“One goal is to improve the efficiency of local government administration.”

Vännäs

Umeå

Nordmaling

Vindeln

Example of successful co-operation in the Umeå Region:

UN award to libraries

The Umeå Region's joint initiatives are spreading ripples across the world. One example is the Bibliotek 2007 project that received the prestigious United Nations Public Service Award in 2008 for "best innovation in the public sector".

The Umeå Region's libraries received this award for the strategic and long-term development project known as Bibliotek 2007. The object of the project was to make it easier for everyone to use the libraries' services under the same conditions.

This produced several practical benefits for municipal residents. For example there is now a common library card, a common website at minabibliotek.se, and the AudiIndex audio-library service.

UNIQUE AIDS FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

The Umea Region was nominated by the UN as the winner for its library project in the "improving the delivery of services" category thanks very much to two technical innovations: AudiIndex and minabibliotek.se.

AudiIndex, or the audio-library, is a unique facility that makes use of advanced speech synthesis to enable people with visual impairments and those with impaired reading ability to browse among audio-books and the libraries' other services.

Visitors can have titles and information about books read out to them via a headset by indicating a book with a pointing device.

VIRTUAL FORUM

Minabibliotek.se is a virtual forum where visitors can access their own pages to borrow or reserve books, or to extend their loans. Visitors can also rank and score the library's books, films and other media using keywords, discuss them with other borrowers in an open forum, and contact library personnel.

STIMULATE GROWTH

Bibliotek 2007 is a first-class example of how the alliance is stimulating growth. Culture and education are important means of competition that enable people and enterprises to remain in, move into and expand in the Umeå Region. Thanks to an efficiently functioning library service that makes use of the latest technology there are more opportunities for people to receive education and training in their own home towns.



The Umeå Region ●

THE
Umeå
REGION

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