



Priority 3 and the NPA area analysis

Irene McMaster

**‘Shape the future NPA’
consultation workshop**

25 February 2021



NORTHERN PERIPHERY AND ARCTIC PROGRAMME AREA

Extreme peripherality from major economic centres and sparse populations are defining characteristics that present a strong rationale for cooperation across the territory





Economy and Innovation

- GDP generally above EU average, but peripheral regions lagging behind national averages.
- Long standing economic patterns - reliance on primary industries
- Increased economic diversification and opportunities in growth sectors.
- Economic shocks (e.g. Covid and Brexit) likely to bring long-term economic impacts, challenging recovery for peripheral regions, need for building capacity for adaptation and resilience.
- Dominance of SMEs and micro businesses but also often resource-based multinational firm activity.
- Focus on building critical mass and capacity for resilience.



Green and environment

- Diverse, unique environments and abundant environmental and natural resources
- Environmental challenges linked to the exploitation of natural resources, environmental protection and climate change.
- Challenges have driven innovation, capacity and leadership in 'Green technologies'.
- Networks for environmental monitoring and strategic analysis well developed.
- The region already has substantial renewable energy generation and expertise in the sector.



Connectivity and Networks

- Geographical and climatic conditions of the NPA present challenges for both transport and digital connectivity
- Economic development in peripheral regions, which are distanced from major markets, is strongly correlated with good transport infrastructure.
- Digitalisation has enormous potential to overcome some of the specific challenges facing NPA areas.



Communities and People

- Sparse population is a defining characteristic of the NPA area.
- A wide variety of cultures, with their own distinctive cultural identity and a range of minority languages.
- Ageing populations and the outmigration of young adults (particularly women) are longstanding development concerns.
- Impacts of migration on access to key skills and competencies
- Regional well-being figures - NPA regions rate highly
- The tertiary educational attainment generally high in the NPA countries
- Employment, rates are generally high, but these have fallen as a result of the Covid crisis.



Focus on cooperation... ISO1 A Better Cooperation Governance

- Programme has a valuable role in supporting community engagement, voice and capacities (stands out by providing regional/local perspectives to Arctic development policy).
 - Build on experience of the existing Arctic cooperation, but in a way that is mindful of the involvement of the wider Arctic and northern peripheral areas.
 - Opportunities for **synergies and links** with other programmes/strategies
 - Bringing in local and regional perspectives
 - Scope to develop collaborative efforts and extend to beneficiary organisations
 - The Programme has a valuable 'bridge link' across the high north across from Western/Atlantic into Russia
 - The programme has unparalleled expertise in working with a range of EU and non-EU Member States as partners in cooperation
- a) enhance institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders to implement macro-regional strategies and sea-basin strategies

Thank you for your attention

irene.mcmaster@strath.ac.uk

