



INNOCAP - a story of digital innovation across Europe

INNOCAP began with a simple but ambitious idea: **public services can evolve faster and better when people are given the right tools, skills, and space to innovate together.** From the outset, the project followed an inclusive path, focusing first not on technology itself, but on people.

- **Laying the Foundations: Building Capacity Before Building Services**

The journey started with a comprehensive **capacity-building programme** designed for public sector organisations. The goal was to prepare them to design and implement innovative pilot services using disruptive digital technologies. Through a mix of online and in-person sessions, participants were invited to **experiment, learn, and co-create.**

Rather than imposing solutions, the programme encouraged exploration. Focused hands-on workshops allowed participants to test different technologies, challenge assumptions, and gradually converge on ideas that matched their local ambitions and needs. Over time, a diverse technological toolkit emerged, with a particular focus on **GIS, data integration, Internet of Things (IoT), and collaborative platforms,** complemented by **AI and virtual reality (VR)** components.

This process of collaboration and co-creation became the engine of the project—transforming abstract concepts into concrete pilot services.

- **From Ideas to Action: Four Pilot Services Take Shape**

1) Building a digital innovation platform – Sweden

In **Västernorrland, Sweden,** the capacity-building journey resulted in a **digital innovation platform** for Örnsköldsvik municipality. The platform was designed to empower municipal employees to develop, share, and grow ideas that address everyday work challenges, societal needs, and service efficiency.

At the heart of this platform is **AI,** supporting the entire innovation lifecycle—from idea generation and co-design through to case management and service delivery. Employees are supported by **innovation coaches** trained in service design, alongside **digital coaches** with expertise in VR and AI-enabled chatbots.

Accessible to **7,500 municipal employees,** the platform has already engaged **379 users,** with **91 employees actively developing new ideas.** Innovation is no longer an abstract concept—it is embedded directly into daily public service work.

2) Waste data hub - Iceland



In **South Iceland**, innovation focused on sustainability and decision-making. The result was the **Waste Data Hub**, a shared data platform for municipalities responsible for waste management.

The hub integrates data across all waste categories, tracking quantities and costs to give municipalities a clear picture of their performance. By aligning local data with **EU waste goals**, the platform supports evidence-based decisions on incentives, services, education, and levies. Just as importantly, municipalities can evaluate the real impact of those decisions over time.

During the pilot phase, **four municipalities** accessed and used the hub—laying the groundwork for smarter, data-driven waste policy, while highlighting the need for continued engagement to fully embed the service.

3) Social innovation led service for decision-making on digital and green transition - Finland

In **South Savo, Finland**, attention turned to the twin green and digital transitions. The pilot service focused on enabling **decision-makers** to clearly see what was happening, where it was happening, and how quickly change was unfolding.

Using **open-access geospatial data**, the service visualises green transition indicators on an interactive map. Complementing this spatial view is an **AI assistant** powered by a large language model, enabling users to explore data, ask questions, and interpret trends more effectively.

The result is a powerful decision-support tool that provides:

- A. Evidence-based insight for municipal leadership
- B. Strengthened regional capacity for green and digital transition
- C. Clear links between policy action and rural and regional development outcomes

The platform has already been adopted by **182 active users across 10 municipalities**, proving the value of combining spatial intelligence with AI-driven accessibility.

4) Climate change action monitoring – Ireland

In **Donegal, Ireland**, innovation took a very physical form. Here, the focus was on **climate resilience**, specifically monitoring the impact of climate events on river systems.

The pilot involved installing **IoT water-level sensors** across an upland catchment to monitor how rivers respond to weather-related rainfall. These sensors provide real-time data to **public sector staff**, creating a baseline understanding of current conditions.



More importantly, the service supports future action. As **nature-based solutions (NBS)** for runoff management are introduced under the Climate Action Plan, the same sensor network will allow authorities to **quantify the real impact** of those measures over time—turning environmental policy into measurable outcomes.

- **Lasting Impact and Looking Forward**

Together, these pilots demonstrate how **capacity building, collaboration, and targeted use of disruptive technologies** can reshape public service delivery. Three of the four services have already been adopted into ongoing public service provision, with the Waste Data Hub continuing to develop through further engagement.

Beyond the pilots themselves, the project's legacy extends further. An **exploitation plan** has been developed to ensure that the capacity-building programme—and the lessons learned—can be reused by other territories interested in implementing **technology-led, people-centred public services**.

What began as a shared learning journey has become a blueprint for innovation—one that places people, data, and collaboration at the heart of the digital transition.