DISTINCT project summary

Provision of public services is a major challenge in NPA areas due to lack of critical mass and human resources in remote dispersed communities with low population densities and urgent need to address climate change.

This project explores the practical application of Disruptive Technologies in public service provision. This includes use of Virtual Reality (VR), Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Blockchain in health and social care, environmental management and training. Successful application can save costs, increase viability, improve use of scarce human resources, span distances and improve decision making. However, the small number and concentration of disruptive technology research and innovation centres, allied with low levels of awareness, present serious blocks to realising this improvement.

The approach of DISTINCT is to work on a transnational axis, producing discrete outputs to overcome these blocks and challenges, i.e.: Use technology foresight techniques and structured engagement with public sector and research/innovation workers to estimate demand and identify applications, models and solutions; Deploy demonstrators and develop disruptive technology rollout roadmaps to build awareness, confidence and implementation knowledge in distinct public sector areas (environment, health/social care and training); Document existing disruptive technology centres of capacity and best practice options to improve innovation and diffusion. This will drive achievement of the project's main result, i.e., "3 NPA regions with significantly enhanced capacity to deliver future-proof viable public services using disruptive technologies" and contribute to the NPA Programme result for Priority Axis 1- Innovation.

The project brings together 3 main partners (university/public sector) from Finland, Ireland, Sweden with associate partners from Iceland and Canada.