

Komet Information 2021:01, 2021-01-13

Annual Report 2020 – English summary

The annual report describes the work of The Committee for Technological Innovation and Ethics (Komet) in 2020 and plans for 2021.

Komet is tasked with creating good conditions for Swedish innovation and competitiveness, while also helping to ensure that development and dissemination of new technology is safe and sustainable from a long-term societal perspective.

Summary of 2020

- Komet's approach is to listen to developers of new technologies and address regulatory barriers that they experience. Komet has established working methods that build on experience and knowledge from a range of target groups. To understand, to test and to transform (in Swedish *förstå – försöka – förändra*) starts by listening to a wide variety of actors, narratives and possible solutions.
- Komet has submitted several policy-development proposals to the Swedish Government and published reports to raise awareness and enhance knowledge. This year's proposals and reports build on surveys, benchmarking and analyses carried out in 2019-2020.
- The pandemic has affected Komet's work and seminars and conferences could not be arranged as planned. Komet has instead focused on other communication activities, including compiling tech and policy news and producing a series of technology fact sheets with Swedish policy aspects.

"We all need to be brave, curious and collaborative," says Jon Simonsson, Chair of Komet.

"We must dare to test new things and rethink our future, both within Sweden and in close cooperation with other countries."

Conclusions from activities during 2020

- New products and services are required for the transition to a sustainable society. Also, new working methods and amended regulations must be introduced. The world needs more sustainable solutions and there is limited time for implementation. Therefore, we must all adopt approaches that accelerate learning and promote knowledge transfer between public and private actors.
- The Swedish approach to regulation and policy-development was formulated at a time when technological development was not as rapid and transnational as it is today. The approach must now be adapted to become more agile and incremental.

- To take advantage of the potential of technological development, the business sector and the public sector both need to utilise systematic experiments in a more strategic and purposeful way. Komet considers experiments necessary for developing and using new solutions responsibly, and a means of renewing technology and regulatory frameworks.
- Some regulations inhibit technological development. It is therefore important to consider the experiences of both tech developers and the authorities granting permits or conducting supervision. Their knowledge also enables more efficient development of regulatory frameworks.
- To ensure responsible development of new technologies, it is necessary to consider conflicting goals and potential effects. Komet is developing a self-evaluation tool to help tech developers and innovators reflect and act based on ethical values and sustainability considerations.
- Komet has submitted a report with proposals on precision medicine to the Swedish government. One proposal is a legislative amendment permitting the processing of personal data in sample size calculations prior to clinical research. Komet has also identified the need of a detailed analysis of regulatory frameworks for health data processing.

Focus areas in 2021

Komet is tasked with addressing the challenges of technological development and creating conditions to accelerate the use of new technologies. In 2021, Komet will focus on cross-sectoral and policy-developing initiatives in which new technology can contribute to structural changes in digital transformation, climate change and health.

A major project of 2021 addresses the challenges involved with procedures for development and amendment of

regulatory frameworks. The project includes knowledge-building and analysis of problems, obstacles and opportunities. A central aspect is to propose new or modified working methods and adequate measures to ensure responsible use and employment of new technologies.

In 2021, Komet will also encourage dialogue on responsible technological development to address the associated challenges and stimulate accelerated use of new technologies.

Three focus areas

- *Ethical and sustainable technical development*
- *Regulatory development*
- *Experiences of incremental and experimental working methods*

Reference

Komet årsrapport 2020:31. The full report (in Swedish) is available online:

[www.kometinfo.se/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Komet-arsrapport-2020 .pdf](http://www.kometinfo.se/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Komet-arsrapport-2020.pdf)