

## I. SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT STUDIED.

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Potential customers from other tourism areas.</li> <li>➤ Positive and potential characteristics like proximity, treatment, quality and trust.</li> <li>➤ Active local groups are prepared for changing and modernizing.</li> <li>➤ High supply of initiatives providing training courses for entrepreneurs in order to improve their professional skills</li> <li>➤ Tourism sector complementary to the retail activity</li> <li>➤ Proximity</li> <li>➤ Wide area for new enterprises' growth</li> <li>➤ Old-fashioned business model</li> <li>➤ Local and sustainable economy</li> <li>➤ Level of people's incomes above average</li> <li>➤ Awareness on the part of the Regional Administration.</li> <li>➤ Family business</li> <li>➤ Involvement and dedication from the local community (Sweden)</li> <li>➤ Strong mobilization of the citizens in collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Agreed commercial urban planning actions.</li> <li>➤ Consolidation and growth of touristic sector.</li> <li>➤ Increase in specialized services by retailers' Associations.</li> <li>➤ ITCs digital opportunities.</li> <li>➤ Use of commercial locomotives that diversify the offer.</li> <li>➤ Development of the concept of 'Open Shopping Center' and Rural Multiservice.</li> <li>➤ Increase of population (immigrants...)</li> <li>➤ Local Retail Plans as a boost of rural depopulated areas.</li> <li>➤ Favourable taxation rate to entrepreneurs established in depopulated rural areas.</li> <li>➤ Awareness campaigns on the opportunities offered by the local retail sector</li> <li>➤ Introduction of more proactive policies for retail sector</li> <li>➤ Creation of new innovation services (ICT tools, etc.)</li> <li>➤ Private and public support to active initiatives in depopulated rural areas.</li> <li>➤ Generational replacement</li> <li>➤ New services to increase profitability</li> <li>➤ New grants</li> <li>➤ Natural resources: berries, fishing</li> <li>➤ Optic fibre (quick Internet)</li> <li>➤ Considerable capacity for growth in retail and wholesale sector and expansion of retail mix offering</li> </ul>

<p>with the social agents to raise awareness on the demographic and economic situation of the region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Innovatively renewed forest industry sector</li> <li>➤ Leisure time residence</li> <li>➤ Strong agricultural economy and agro-food business sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Significant opportunities to develop and grow agro-food sector, with emphasis on artisan produce</li> <li>➤ Town team partnership and collaboration</li> <li>➤ Support creative professionals and industries to utilise latest technology that can support and grow rural retail</li> <li>➤ Improve quality and security of jobs in rural retail to attract workers to the sector</li> </ul>
<b>WEAKNESSES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Low level of professionalization of the sector</li> <li>➤ Offer concentrated on groceries, especially non-perishable goods.</li> <li>➤ Retail sector is not recognised as an active enterprise.</li> <li>➤ Qualified labour limited</li> <li>➤ Lack of leisure and outdoor recreational facilities and public open space</li> <li>➤ Lack of self-criticism of retailers</li> <li>➤ Lack of economic feasibility for certain retail offers.</li> <li>➤ Barriers to the development of electronic commerce.</li> <li>➤ Impact of political decision making (Finland)</li> <li>➤ Lower than average number of adults in the labour force</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Deficiencies in transport infrastructures</li> <li>➤ Urban planning is not adapted to the real needs of retail</li> <li>➤ Reduction of working population</li> <li>➤ Clear ageing population</li> <li>➤ Demographic dispersion of the territory</li> <li>➤ Depopulation of the territory</li> <li>➤ Low purchasing power</li> <li>➤ Lack of young population</li> <li>➤ Digital competition (online shopping)</li> <li>➤ Bigger cities around with other leisure's attractives</li> <li>➤ Lack of investment</li> <li>➤ Structural change: number of farms decreasing and no replacing business branches</li> <li>➤ Reduction in rate of self-employment within retail sector, impacting upon range and number of rural businesses</li> </ul>