

BUSINESS  
AND LIFE

# JÄMTLAND HÄRJEDALEN

MID SWEDEN

## Invest in tourism

Mountains of opportunities



## A new way of life

Big house and hens in the garden

Wind Power  
expansions

– An emerging market

They moved  
the factory

“It was easy”

Capital of  
winter sports

World leading research

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# WELCOME TO US



**County Governor Britt Bohlin, County Administrative Board of Jämtland County:**

It is easy to fall in love with Jämtland. One reason is the ever present nature with forests, lakes and mountains. Winters with lots of snow are another reason. A third reason, and perhaps the most important one, is the close links between the people living here. In Jämtland it does not take long to make lasting contacts and friendships.

The people in Jämtland and Härjedalen have for long had business dealings far across the borders of both the county and the country. These days, many of the companies in the county are active in the international markets.

There is a strong entrepreneurial spirit in Jämtland. Statistics show that there are a large number of business start-ups and that the proportion of small businesses is the second-highest in Sweden.

Excellent air and rail connections to Stockholm Arlanda make it easy to travel to the rest of the country and abroad. Traveling to Stockholm and back in a day is not a problem. And of course it is just as easy to travel in the other direction – to Östersund and Jämtland.

The magazine you are holding in your hands provides stories about life and business ideas in Jämtland. Allow you to be inspired and be assured of a warm welcome!

*The County Administrative Board is a government body tasked with looking after and developing the region.*



**Barry Smith, Plant Manager at Wipro**

Our operation in Östersund is old, and yet new. Old, because it was set up more than 50 years ago as a result of the wealth of invention and entrepreneurial spirit found in Jämtland. New, because our company has, since 2006, been part of Wipro, a large global group, with all the expectations and challenges this entails.

"What will happen now?" was a question many were asking at the time of the takeover. We got our answer straightaway. The group management recognised the potential here in Östersund and decided to invest heavily in developing the operation. They could see a favourable level of costs, a good recruitment base for the future and a skilled workforce. A company does not grow by itself. In order to succeed it needs people with drive and commitment, and we have that here.

To combine work with proximity to unspoilt nature and a high quality of life is one of the best things about the county of Jämtland. These excellent conditions have already resulted in many people and companies moving here, but there is always room for more.

We welcome you to Jämtland!

*Wipro is a company in Östersund which manufactures hydraulic cylinders. Since 2006 it has been part of large Indian group.*



**Sepideh Razavi, international master student**

People often ask me why I chose to come to Jämtland. For me, the answer is simple. After four years living in this county I feel more at home than in my birth country, Iran.

I came to Östersund to study an International Masters Programme in Sustainable Development at Mid Sweden University, but what I achieved was much more than just studying a subject. From the day I came here, it has been a continuous process of self-improvement for me.

Access to endless and various sources of information, a free educational system, unique public access to nature, freedom of speech and the feeling of respect regardless of cultural or religious background are just some of the benefits for everyone to enjoy here.

It is easy to feel welcome in Jämtland. Where else in the world do you find the professor waiting at the railway station, ready to order a taxi and guide the new students to their student accommodation?

This is Jämtland as I know it. I feel a great desire to do something for Jämtland in return.

*Mid Sweden University is Sweden's newest university with campuses in three locations and around 16,000 students.*



**Anna and Johan Olsson, Olympic cross-country skiing gold medalists:**

In Jämtland it is easy to love skiing. While our home town of Östersund is still a riot of autumn colours, you can see the first October snows gleaming white on the mountains just 100 km away. Soon winter will be here!

Although one of us is still travelling around the world all year long in order to train and compete in cross-country skiing, we also take every opportunity to ski back home. We put some food in the backpack, strap on the mountain toboggan and set off on our skis in the beautiful and accessible countryside.

The ski culture and the great winters here in Jämtland have had considerable influence on our successes as elite skiers. The very same conditions also create endless opportunities for entrepreneurs with a keen interest in skiing. We welcome you to our winter paradise.

*Anna won Olympic gold in the sprint relay in Turin in 2006. Johan won gold in the relay and two individual bronze medals at the Winter Olympics in Vancouver in 2010.*



# Östersund

## – a world class city

Winter sports and first-class artisan foods have helped put Östersund on the world map. Big events together with small town charm and the opportunity for leisure time pursuits in close proximity to the city have made the capital of Jämtland the obvious choice for many people.

Östersund is a small city, but well-known internationally in many different contexts. Assurance of snow and a world class ski stadium made it possible for Östersund to hold the Biathlon World Championships in 2008. Biathlon World Cup competitions are held here every year. The Mid Sweden University also has one of the best winter sports test laboratories in the world.

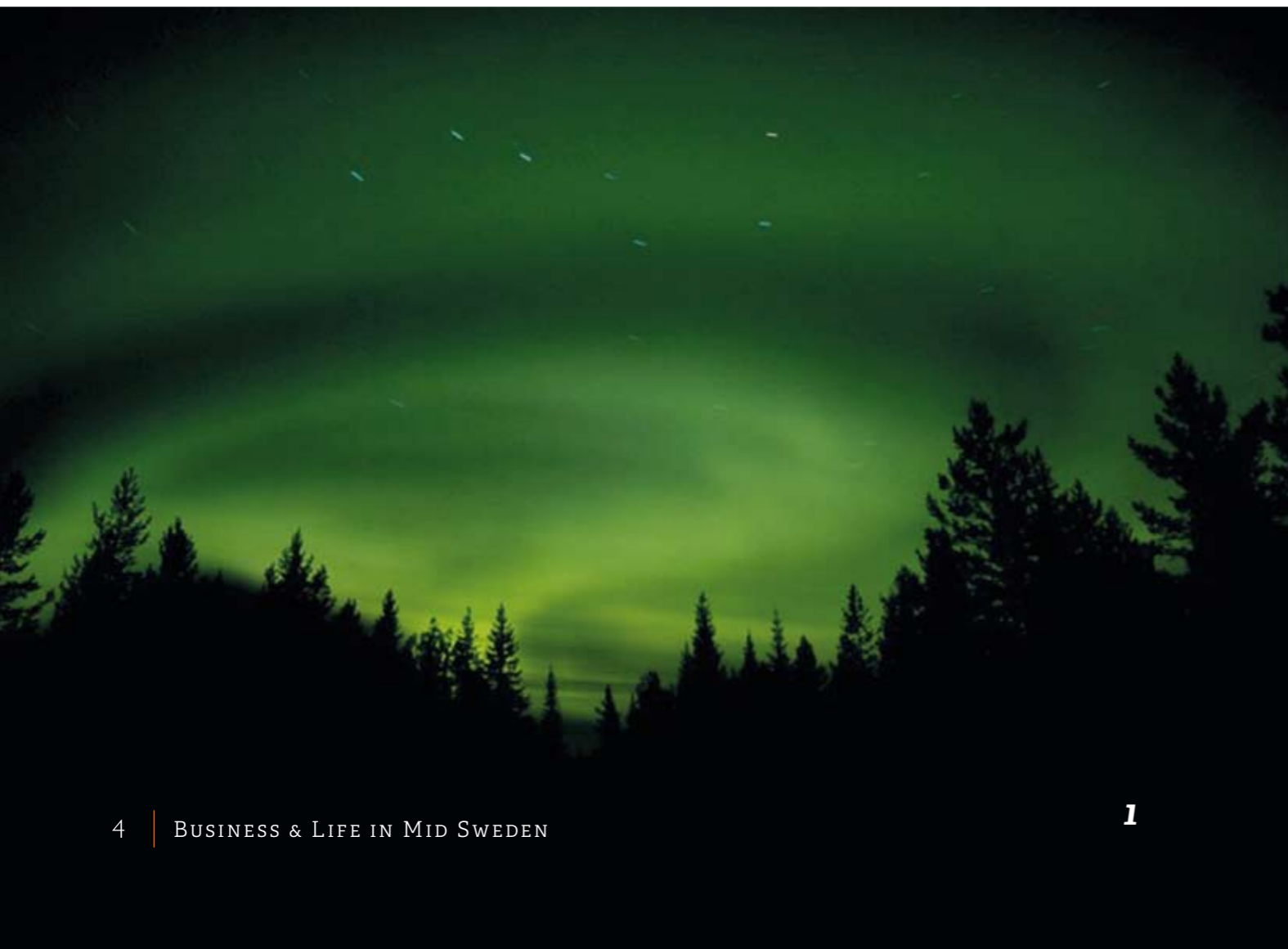
Even the local artisan foods are of world class standard. Confirmation of this comes from UNESCO, which has designated Östersund Creative City of Gastronomy. In the county of Jämtland the skilful food producers are surrounded by nature's larder. Un-polluted forests and lakes are a source of exceptional ingredients, which are processed at farms and sold via farm shops, restaurants and ordinary grocery stores.

#### Pictures from and around Östersund:

**1.** Northern Lights is an amazing phenomenon which sometimes can be seen in the winter nights. **2.** Skating on Lake Storsjön is for everybody to enjoy, including parents with a pram. **3.** Ski slopes in the middle of the city are a perfect alternative for urban people. The view shows the centre of Östersund. **4.** The famous Christmas Market at the Jamtli museum. Here you can buy traditional handcraft and local food – or just enjoy the scenario and the great Christmas spirit. **5.** The talent food producers in Jämtland are always close to nature's larder. So are the cows and goats. The cheeses from this region are famous for its taste and quality. **6.** In Jämtland there are several Sami villages. Traditional Sami handcraft and arts is beautiful. **7.** Snaps based on birch sap. There is also an exclusive sparkling wine of the same kind. Its Swedish name means just "sap". **8.** Storsjöyran, a great music festival with many world famous stars, is held in Östersund every summer. The square is crowded!

Östersund is a city of many events, not all of them sports-related. Every year the city holds the music festival Storsjöyran, which attracts some of the global stars of popular music. Another annual event is the Winter Festival, when the residents of Östersund brave snow and cold weather to enjoy light shows, fire shows, music and entertainment on the streets of the city.

Above all, though, Östersund is a winter city. Above the residential areas the lit-up ski slopes await night-time skiers, while down at Lake Storsjön there are miles and miles of ice skating tracks for wonderful skating in the spring-time sunshine. The ice skating tracks here are listed among the ten best natural ice skating tracks in the world, and they are guaranteed to be the only ones with a mountain view.



# SIDE BY SIDE

## towards a vibrant ski resort

Two enthusiastic business leaders share a common vision. Together they are investing millions of Swedish kronor in Vemdalen ski destination. The aim is to provide future visitors to the ski resort with an excellent range of restaurants, entertainment and shopping in a very pleasant environment.

Vemdalen is for the most part a winter destination and is situated on the border between Härjedalen and Berg municipalities in Jämtland County. It has grown over the years and today comprises three ski areas in close proximity to each other. One of them is Vemdalskalet. When the large company Skistar took over responsibility for the ski operations and booking system in 2000, it signalled the start of extensive investment and development in the resort.

In a short period of time new, modern ski lifts were built. The ski areas grew and the snow systems increased their capacity substantially. The changes boosted interest and the number of bed places in the area increased by 3,500. Today there are a total of 16,000 bed places for leisure use, 6,000 of which are in commercial accommodation. In the last ten years nearly SEK 1 billion has been invested in raising the profile of the destination.

Skistar and the family company Vemdalsfastigheter are the two largest investors in the Vemdalskalet ski area. Side by side they are working to realise a common vision: a pleasant and urban environment with services, restaurants and small cosy boutiques which are able to attract both tourists and local residents.

"Vemdalskalet is already a good product, owing to the cer-

tainty of snow, the versatile terrain and the proximity to the Swedish market, but from a future perspective this is not enough, just as it is not enough to offer a sandy beach in Turkey. People want to do many different things while on holiday," says Torgny Svensson, head of Skistar's operations in Vemdalen.

Vemdalsfastigheter, which primarily manages and leases business premises, has invested some SEK 550 million in the last ten years in renovating and building business premises, roads, parking spaces and service offices. Before Skistar entered the picture, Vemdalsfastigheter also managed the lifts and the ski operations.

"It is great to have a large player like Skistar to share the investment costs. Torgny and I are equally enthusiastic about developing this area. We are creating this together and are holding frequent discussions about who should be doing what. Neither we nor Skistar are building much housing. There are others who are happy to do that. Instead, we are responsible for creating a pleasant environment and reasons to travel here throughout the year," says Vemdalsfastigheter's MD Petter Holmberg.

Eight large buildings, in different shapes and sizes, are currently being built near the ski lifts. Together they will create the feel of an urban and compact ski resort. Those who think they have spotted



the Swiss hotel Regina amongst the new buildings are not dreaming. This is because the beautiful old ski hotel in the Alps has been used as the model for the new hotel Hovde in Vemdalskalet, all in an attempt to create the right atmosphere. The plan is for all ground floor premises in the buildings to be used for small-scale business activities. The first tenants are a guest service, a sports bar, a café and a gym. Top of the wish list are a hair salon, a bakery, a spa and an Italian restaurant.

In the same spirit, Petter Holmberg and Vemdalsfastigheter

have embarked on their own large, long-term project. The idea is to buy old mountain farm huts, lodges and barns, move them to Vemdalen and use them as tourist accommodation. The first house is already in place and has welcomed its first visitors. Petter is dreaming about recreating an old-fashioned village little by little.

"The houses will be constructed to a modern standard, but without any extra luxuries. The luxury is in the fabric of the building, in the atmosphere. This is something I really believe in," says Petter.



## FACTS TOURISM – A RAPIDLY GROWING INDUSTRY

The first visitors to Jämtland County were hunters who arrived 8,000 years ago. They were followed by pilgrims, travelling salesmen, scientists, health enthusiasts and upper class hunting visitors. The first commercial mountain tourists visited the county in the late 1800s. Over time they have grown in number.

Tourism is one of Sweden's fastest growing industries. In Jämtland County alone the tourist industry generated turnover of SEK 3.9 billion in 2011, which represents an increase of 67 per cent over ten years.

There is still considerable need for investment, for example in more accommodation, more adventure companies and more international cooperation partners.

### Tourism creates jobs

Tourism in Jämtland County currently

provides more than 5,000 full-time jobs. The number of people employed in the tourism sector has increased by 70 per cent over the last ten years.

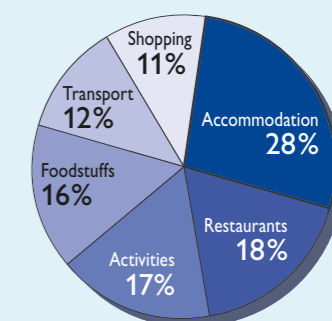
### Number of guest nights

Jämtland County records more than 8 million guest nights per year. Some 30 per cent are commercial, a proportion that is steadily increasing. The remaining guest nights comprise stays in private holiday homes, tents or with friends and relatives.

### Municipalities with the largest number of commercial guest nights:

Åre	40%
Östersund	23%
Härjedalen	22%
Other	15%

Pie chart showing the distribution of tourism spend:





# DREAM HOUSE leads to new way of life

The plan was to move to the Jämtland mountains and carry on doing their usual jobs from home. However, the house had other plans. Today Hilde and Ruben run a B&B in their large house, have their own boat moored by the jetty and a garden full of hens.

Hilde's and Ruben's dream house is located in a lush garden. The lawn runs all the way down to the lake, where a small boat is moored by the shore. The waves splash against the jetty, the yellowing reeds rustle in the autumn wind and the morning sun makes the rowanberry leaves glow like fire. The hens wander among the blackcurrant bushes in the garden pecking for food.

"Two of them have started laying eggs now," says Hilde proudly, showing two small eggs which are so fresh they still feel warm to touch.

Everyday life these days for Hilde Talstra and Ruben Heijloo is in sharp contrast to their former urban lifestyle in Amsterdam. Hilde was working as a journalist, while Ruben was involved with a film festival. Together they dreamed of wild nature, a large garden and changing seasons. Another country, another life. After a few holiday trips they decided on Sweden and Jämtland. Winter and snow was exactly what they were looking for, as well as a house in the mountains. Hilde and Ruben had already more or less decided which village they wanted to live in when Bräcke municipality persuaded them to come along for a look at the old vicarage in Revsund. That visit determined their future.

"We fell in love! And we could see endless possibilities. It was

the house that decided where we should live and that we should start a business running a B&B. This house was meant to have a lot of people living here," says Ruben.

"And authors who need peace and quiet to work," adds Hilde who has a keen interest in literature.

Hilde and Ruben had not been planning to start a business, but now they quickly changed their minds. Hilde set up a limited liability company for the B&B business, and Ruben started a sole trade company in media and marketing. With a quick Internet connection such a company would be no problem to run from home. Suddenly they had a lot of work to do.

Thanks to the Swedish Public Employment Service's Business Start-up grant of SEK 4,000 each per month they were able to survive the first six months while renovating the house and creating guest rooms. Despite barely having picked up a hammer before, they did everything themselves.

"We learnt by doing. I searched YouTube for help when we did not know how to do" smiles Ruben.

The result is extremely good. Guests enter a dream world full of light and space. The white staircase leads up to the guest floor,

where rooms are sparsely but tastefully decorated with antique furniture and beautiful fabrics. There is also a self-catering kitchen. Breakfast is served in a rustic dining hall with bare timber walls, an open fire and a view over the lake.

Hilde and Ruben have so far had more guests than they had expected. In their first season they have also had time to try new ideas such as a summertime café and sales of homemade ice cream. They market their services via their website and through the local residents who are happy to pass on the information to others.

How can two people achieve so much in such a short time? And how did they have the courage to give up their safe existence for something completely different? Ruben compares the upheaval in their lives to jumping into a deep swimming pool.

"There is no time to think or to worry, you just have to swim!"

He does think a lot about what his new life has given him, every time he looks out of the window, in fact.

"I see the lake, the scenery and the weather – a forever changing picture which I never tire of. My previous job was so abstract. It was computers, media ... Here I do the basic things. I build, I

cook food and provide heating. It's kind of back to basics. It feels good," says Ruben.

Since a while back, Hilde is working part-time with the project Midscand, where she is helping Dutch families to start a new life in Jämtland County. It provides a certain financial security. At the same time, she wants to be at home as much as possible and continue to develop her own business.

Small businesses in sparsely populated areas usually need to cooperate with other people in order to develop. You get nowhere by just sitting at home in your room.

"You have to be open and make contact with neighbours and villagers. Our experience is that you get a positive reception and people are happy to help if they can. There are only two of us, we can't do everything ourselves. For instance, we have contacts with other tourist companies which can help guide our guests with fishing and skiing," says Hilde.

A note on the front door of the house shows that cooperation may be even simpler than that. The text reads:

"If we're not around, please call us. (Someone can let you in.)"



## TIPS PREPARE FOR EMIGRATION Hilde's 4 best tips:

- ✓ **Learn Swedish.** Learn Swedish already before you move. This makes it easier for you when you are looking for a job, starting a company, building up contact networks and getting to know your new neighbours. There are both online language courses, with or without tutors, and offline courses in the form of language schools and private teachers. Choose the method that works best for you.
- ✓ **Visit the county.** Visit Jämtland County to get an idea of the region. Think of it as a study visit, not a holiday. Build up networks in advance and try to meet as many people as possible within your industry sector and in the residential area you are moving to. Don't be afraid to ask for information.
- ✓ **Get help with the immigration process.** Ask for help before you start dealing with Swedish bureaucracy. There are people and organisations, for instance Midscand, who are happy to help you navigate the various processes at the Swedish Tax Agency, the Swedish Migration Board and other Swedish authorities.
- ✓ **Draw up a budget sheet.** Look at your financial situation and work out how much starting capital you will need. It could take time to find a job, and it takes time before a new company starts turning a profit. Before that you will need to live of savings.

# Wind Power

## – an expansive industry of the future

Jämtland County is leading the way in wind power in Sweden. In the next few years at least SEK 10 billion will be invested in the construction of new power plants. The investments will bring vast business opportunities in their wake.

Green energy winds of change are blowing around the world, and are felt in Sweden too. With a large area, sparse population and good wind conditions, Jämtland County is one of the hottest areas in the country for the development of wind power. Having had good experiences from the first 100 wind power plants, the authorities have now given the green light for a further 600, and more are being considered.

Investment decisions have already been taken for more than 250 power plants. According to industry calculations, the projects in the pipeline will require investments of at least SEK 10 billion up until 2015.

Strömsund municipality is home to Sweden's largest wind power park with 48 wind power plants. This is also the location for Sweden's first and most developed training programme for installers and technicians specialising in wind power.

A simple way of accessing the collective knowledge in this area is via the Vindkraftcentrum wind power centre. Swedish and foreign companies looking to build wind power plants in Jämtland county can contact the centre and get help with various things - at the planning stage and during the construction phase.

"By using our business database we can help investors find the

competence they are looking for. We also help recruit labour," says Torbjörn Laxvik, project manager at Vindkraftcentrum.

The wind power construction projects will create large numbers of jobs. Wind measurement, projection and financial calculations. Forestry work, road construction and casting. There will be a need for welders, fitters and technicians, all of whom will need somewhere to eat and sleep. Based on practical experience from previous construction projects, it is estimated that around 1,500 full-time jobs will be created when the wind power plants that have been authorised so far are built.

Vindkraftcentrum's goal is that the wind power investments will as far as possible benefit the local population in the shape of jobs and business activities. Torbjörn Laxvik and his colleagues are helping local businesses to become aware of the business opportunities and to understand what they need to do in order to meet market demand once work on the wind power construction projects begins. They are also welcoming with open arms new companies, including foreign ones, which want to set up operations in Jämtland county.

"A manufacturing industry able to supply the wind power sector would be very desirable," says Torbjörn Laxvik. ■

### Invest in: ICT

#### A remarkable site for Data centers

**Low investment costs, cheaper running costs and a site that is ready and verified. For companies wishing to build data centers in Östersund, things couldn't be better.**

Data centers require space, energy and a cold climate for free cooling. This means certain geographical locations are better suited than others for siting data centers. Jämtland is one of these locations.

The short summers and cold winters facilitate the use of more cost-effective cooling systems. The proximity to a power source also makes it possible to cut the number of back-up generators and thus cut investment costs. Several of the power lines transporting power to southern Sweden run through the county. These cables have a combined capacity sufficient to meet the electricity needs of the whole of New York City. In Jämtland, the energy comes from hydro, bio and wind, making it 100 per cent environment friendly.

Ahead of the construction of a new mega data center, a large international social media company evaluated locations in a number of countries. The final choice was between two Swedish locations, Östersund and Luleå. The company opted for Luleå. In Östersund there is now a site that has been through the due diligence process and is available for the next investor. Everything is ready to go.

"There is no doubt that Östersund meets all the requirements for a data center of this size. Since potential investors are keen to cut the time spent on the decision-making process, Östersund is a very attractive proposition because all the permits are in place," said Tomas Sokolicki, Invest Sweden. ■

#### High performance Contact centers

**Contact centers in Jämtland County are known for getting good results. The local labour force and the general level of costs in the region are factors conferring great competitive advantages.**

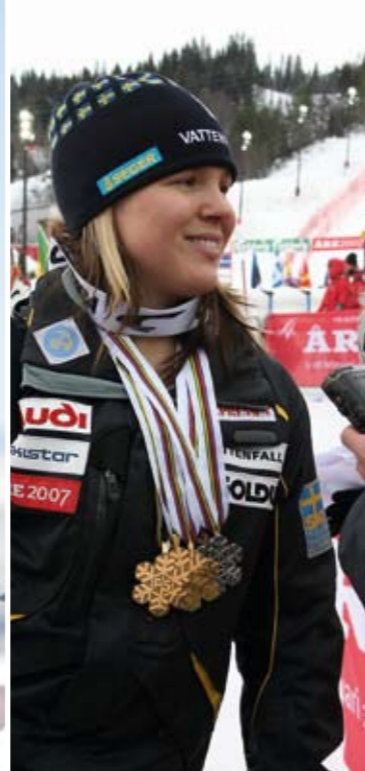
In Jämtland County there are more than 30 contact centers. This is no coincidence.

Compared with the metropolitan regions the costs for both premises and wages are somewhat lower in Jämtland County, which of course is of financial importance to companies. Fixed costs can never be avoided. Aside from this, the performance of a contact center largely depends on its staff.

In Jämtland County, staff turnover at contact centers is lower than in the large cities, which means that fewer resources have to be put aside for recruitment and training. That the local workforce is both loyal and competent comes as no surprise to H1 Communication in Östersund. The company started operations in Östersund in 2007 and today employs 245 people.

"Without competent staff we would never have managed to expand so rapidly. The distance to customers is not a problem. As we are 50 minutes away by air from Stockholm, we can quickly get to their offices. Östersund is the optimal location for us," says Mattias Lööv, MD of H1 Communication AB. ■





# Åre

It all began with a mountain and a railway connection. Today, Åre is ranked as one of the best ski resorts in the world. The expansion from a rural village to a world-class outdoor metropolis has been astonishing, and it is still going on.

When the railway arrived in the village in 1882 Åreskutan was transformed into Sweden's most easily accessible mountain. People came from near and far to breathe the mountain air, to hunt and to search for rare flowers. During the 1930s and 1940s skiing grew in popularity and the first lifts were built. Åre's facilities were of such a high standard that the Alpine World Ski Championships in 1954 were held here.

Over the years local businesses have shown singular energy and belief in the future. In 1976 the area invested in an aerial cable railway and in expanding ski slopes to keep up with international standards. Side by side with giant Skistar, which owns and runs ski resorts in Sweden and Norway, Åre's businesses are realising their visions through a pro-active destination management company. In 2007 Åre once again hosted the Alpine World Ski Championships.

Since Holiday Club, a Finnish hotel concept was built by the shore of Lake Åresjön, summertime tourists have increased rapidly. A large number of events during the bare ground season keep up the pace in the village. The events range from a mountain marathon to an autumn market. Today large numbers of visitors arrive all year round to go fishing, horse riding, canoeing, hiking and biking. Åre has become a real paradise for daredevil downhill

cyclists who thanks to the ski lifts are able to quickly reach the top of the mountain with their bikes.

"The mountain is a magnet which attracts people throughout the seasons to explore its secrets. After an active day outside you can then return to a spa, restaurants and a pulsating nightlife in Åre. Here you can have the best of two worlds," says Lars-Börje Eriksson, MD of the destination company and former elite Alpine skier.

Skiers and people interested in outdoor recreation like to settle down in Åre in order to be able to pursue their interests in their spare time. Their experiences and requirements give rise to ideas for new functional equipment, products which can easily be tested at the sharp end and can help spawn new businesses. There are few places in the world which have seen the creation of such a large cluster of outdoor businesses as the Åre area. Peak Performance, Trangia outdoor stoves and Hilleberg the Tentmaker are but a few of these companies.

The Swedish government believes Åre offers great export potential as a tourist destination. They are now investing millions of kronor in a project to further develop Åre as a sustainable destination. At the helm is Åre's creative business community, which has now set its course on new targets. ■





” This is what might happen when you take a summer job in Jämtland

# IVO IS BUILDING A FUTURE FOR HIMSELF IN THE JÄMTLAND FORESTS

It started as a holiday job. Today he runs a successful forestry business with 60 staff. “It is very easy to start a business in Sweden. And the people in Jämtland are wonderful,” says Ivo Krsek, who moved here from the Czech Republic.

Ivo Krsek was studying to become a journalist in his home town in the Czech Republic when he was persuaded by a friend to work in Sweden planting forest during the summer holiday. Without knowing what lay in store, Ivo left the big city and came along.

“We ended up in a little village with fourteen inhabitants. It was April, it was quiet, dark and cold, and I almost felt close to tears as I stood and looked out over the river. I was in complete shock,” says Ivo.

The first impression did not last long. Ragunda municipality turned out to comprise many considerably larger villages and districts. Ivo liked his work colleagues and the work was good, although a bit hard in the beginning. Ivo worked for the Swedish forestry company for three summers. Every season he got to know a few more Swedes. After the third season, Ivo remained in Jämtland for good and moved in with his Swedish girlfriend. Since then, a further twelve of Ivo’s compatriots have moved to Ragunda municipality.

“People here are so helpful and wonderful! It was easy to stay and make a future here. I am thinking of one man in particular here in Hammarstrand, a really dynamic person. When I was working in the forest he let me wash my clothes in his house, and his wife tried to teach me Swedish. They opened their arms to me,” says Ivo.

During the winter Ivo decided to set up his own forestry company. He began on a small scale, with 5-6 staff from his old work team. The business idea was to carry out the same kind of work as the work they had been doing for the Swedish forestry company, that is, planting and clearing, with an emphasis on quality. Ivo already had a little bit of experience of running a business, having run a music club in the Czech Republic while he was a student.

“It is easy to start a business in Sweden, there is much less bureaucracy than in the Czech Republic. I found lots of useful information in English, for instance on the Swedish Tax Agency website. I attended information meetings and a course on how to start your own business, and I had help with borrowing money,” says Ivo.

Ivo put together a smart presentation about his new company Alfa Skogsservice and contacted some 100 potential customers. The outcome was better than they had expected. People were aware of the Czech men and knew they did a good job. Today, three years on, Ivo employs 60 staff during the eight-month long season. The company’s turnover has increased by 50 per cent each year and now amounts to SEK 12 million.

“It is easy to do business in Sweden because the rules are clear and most people adhere to them. Swedish companies are also good at paying on time,” said Ivo.

As a businessman, Ivo is nowadays mostly working at his desk. He maintains contacts with customers, organises the work and arranges good accommodation for all work teams, which are spread

over a large geographical area. When he has time, he jumps in the car and drives out into the forests to check that the men are comfortable out there.

During the winter Ivo focuses on financial matters, paperwork and generating new work. His aim is to become the largest forestry company in northern Sweden. The fact is that he is already well on the way.

This is what might happen when you take a summer job in Jämtland.

## TIPS STARTING A BUSINESS

**Business and enterprise in Jämtland County** is probably differently organised to what you are used to. The county is sparsely populated, which requires a clear marketing plan. Local authorities and organisations can often offer support in the form of advice and sometimes financial solutions – but only if there is a business plan on paper. The regulations governing building permits and alcohol licences are clear and transparent. A licence to run a business is not generally required. Find out how it works!

The most common type of business in Sweden is a limited liability company (Aktiebolag). A quick and easy way of getting started is to buy a ready-made company. You can also set up your own company.

The two authorities that are always involved in setting up a new business are Bolagsverket (the Swedish Companies Registration Office) and Skatteverket (the Swedish Tax Agency). In order to set up a limited liability company initial capital of at least SEK

50,000 is required. Private firms do not require invested capital.

Ask for help with the setting-up process!

### Where to go for help?

Midscaand is the Investment Promotion Agency in Jämtland County responsible for guiding international companies and entrepreneurs through the setting-up process. Entrepreneurs are allocated a contact person to provide information, advice and a wide network of contacts on both a local and national level.

There are several organisations which can assist with the company start-up. The help is usually free of charge. The national organisation Invest Sweden has expert knowledge concerning taxes and other business-related queries in several industry sectors. At a local level there are business advisers and coaches for those who are drawing up a business plan for the first time.

Midscaand is on hand to guide you to the right organisation and person.





# “WE RECEIVED LOTS OF HELP”

The French company B2W created a Swedish company and moved all of its production to Jämtland. “This was without doubt the right decision. But without all the support we’ve received we would never have come this far,” says Francis Werling.

A factory in the small community of Pilgrimsta in Bräcke municipality is where the company makes its Poriginal boots, which are warm, light and waterproof boots that are particularly popular in countries with cold winters. The man in the manager’s seat is Frenchman Jean-Marc Nuée, who oversees the smooth running of day-to-day work, a role he has grown into over time. When he first arrived here in 2005 it was as an engineer with responsibility for the new machine the company had invested in.



B2W is owned by three Frenchmen. One of the owners, Francis Werling, tells us about the crucial decision the company had to make while still based in France.

“We were looking at making large investments in new technology and a new machine. The question was whether to invest in France or move production to Sweden, which was our biggest market. We already owned a distribution company there, and could see advantages in being closer to the market, so we decided to move to Sweden and set up a Swedish company.”

Once the decision had been made it was a rush to get production up and running. Apart from all the practical details there were also many laws and safety regulations to be aware of. Francis Werling found the environmental regulations to be the most difficult, since these were very different in Sweden compared with France. Luckily, they received excellent help.

“Everything was dealt with so efficiently. At every meeting all parties sat at the same table – the County Administrative Board, Bräcke municipality, Almi\* and the bank. It saved a lot of time and

energy and simplified the procedure. We were given lots of help with understanding all the rules and what we needed to do to get it right,” says Francis.

He is generous in his praise for all the help they received from the local authorities and Bräcke municipality. They found suitable premises, helped recruit the workforce and sent their own employees to install the required ventilation system. After a break of just under four months, production could start at the Swedish factory.

Francis Werling has never regretted moving production to Jämtland. Being closer to the market has brought nothing but benefits, and he does not think it is much different to run a company in Sweden than in France.

“If anything is different, it may be that things are more disciplined here. It is important to pay on time and to respect agreements. And of course the corporation tax in Sweden is lower, in fact the third lowest in the world, and that too is good,” says Francis.

\*Almi Företagspartner AB helps companies with financing and advice.

## FACTS: Compay B2W

Turnover:	SEK 30 million
Number of full-time employees:	17
Number of export countries:	16



# SKILLFUL DOCTORS WANTED

Working as a doctor in a sparsely populated county like Jämtland is a challenge that requires independence of thought and great responsibility. The reward is the constant presence of the wilderness just around the corner.

Jämtland County is as large as the Netherlands in terms of area, bigger, in fact. Roughly in the middle of it lies the city of Östersund. Nearly half of the county’s population, some 60,000 people, live here. The rest of the population lives in smaller communities and villages.

Östersund has the only hospital in Jämtland County. This is where all specialist care takes place, sometimes with the support of Norrland University Hospital in Umeå. Although some villages are located as far away as 300 kilometres from Östersund, people have access to doctors within reasonable distance. This is possible because of the 27 health centres strategically placed across the county. The health centres sometimes have to provide the same function as accident and emergency departments, which means there is a demand for both depth and breadth in the service.

With long distances to the hospital, the health centres require independent and responsible staff that is highly competent and able to take quick decisions on the best care for patients. To support them there is a well-functioning ambulance service and technical tools such as telemedicine and digital x-ray. Of course, there is also a helicopter on standby, ready to respond if there is a case of emergency.

Both at Östersund Hospital and at the health centres in the rest of the county there is a constant need for good doctors, specialist nurses and dentists able to fill positions left vacant when older staff retire. Working in a small hospital like Östersund is easy since everyone quickly gets to know one another personally.

Adam and Iza Chetnik are from Poland and both work as doctors at Sveg health centre in Härjedalen hospital. Adam’s desire to work in another country made him approach a recruitment firm in Poland to explore the opportunities for working abroad. One day he was offered the opportunity to work at a health centre in Jämtland. Adam travelled to Sweden for a job interview and liked what he saw. After seven months of full-time language studies in Poland, Adam moved to Sveg.

“I was welcomed with open arms and instantly felt at home. People here are genuine, they are open-minded and pleasant. Eve-

ryone knows everyone. The work is demanding but stimulating. I originally specialised in internal medicine and I am completing my training by working for periods at a time in different departments at Östersund Hospital. As a doctor in a sparsely populated area you have to be knowledgeable in many different areas, from psychiatry to surgery,” says Adam Chetnik.



After three months, Adam’s wife Iza and their ten-year-old daughter also moved to Sveg. As the icing on the cake, the health centre also wanted to employ Iza, who is also a trained specialist doctor.

Sveg is markedly different from their home town in Poland, but the family has had no trouble settling here. Iza and Adam like to walk in the forest and have taken up cross-country skiing in winter. Their daughter has learnt alpine skiing and thinks it is the best fun. They also appreciate nature.

“It is beautiful here, and we live right by the forest. We have seen moose several times, but no bear so far,” says Adam.

## FACTS: Public health care in Jämtland county

1 ambulance helicopter
1 ambulance bus
10 ambulance stations
1 hospital
27 health centres
815,000 patient visits a year
100 patients seen at the A&E department every day
370 patients per day admitted to hospital
2,600 hospital staff, of which 455 are doctors
20 public dental clinics
190 dental care staff



” Of course there is a lot to do, but it does not compare with the stress of living in Holland.

# MANAGER AFTER JUST ONE YEAR

After one year of working, Melanie Koren was promoted to a managerial post, thanks to intensive language studies and an ambitious personality. Now she only has time for horses in her free time and her plans for setting up a business will have to wait. Despite a demanding full-time position, her life is nevertheless a lot more peaceful than in stressful Holland.

The Koren family had always loved Sweden. They travelled to Sweden every holiday, be it summer or winter. They were particularly attracted to the northern parts with their wild nature and sparse population. Melanie knew already at an early age that she wanted to move to Sweden. In summer 2011, Melanie was ready to leave Holland and her parents, who by then had retired from work, decided to come along.

“I did not hesitate once; I love this part of Sweden. It is really because of the changing seasons. Here they have everything – warm summer days and winters with lots of snow. I like skiing and from our house it doesn't take very long to drive to some really good ski slopes,” says Melanie.

Using the Swedish website Hemnet, they found their dream

home – a large beautiful timber house with a view of the mountains – in Jämtland County. While they waited to move, for some seven years in fact, they used the new house as a holiday home.

Back home in Holland, Melanie trained as a specialist nurse and got a permanent job. How could she pluck up the courage to hand in her notice and move to another country? The most sensible option seemed to be to first get a job in Sweden and then resign from her secure nursing job. Melanie started to look for work in Sweden and acquired a self-study language course package from a Dutch university so that she could use CDs to teach herself Swedish in her spare time. But sometimes things don't work out the way you expect them to. Melanie realised that it would be difficult to find a job as long as she remained in Holland. In addition, she was struggling with her language studies.

The next time Melanie visited Sweden she went to the job centre in Östersund. She was treated well, got help with improving her Swedish CV and was given information on how medical care is organised in Sweden. After that it was just a case of getting started. She sent application letters to all workplaces looking for nurses, but without any results.

“I must have applied for at least a hundred jobs that year. I did not even get a reply to many of my applications. ‘You have to call them’, was the advice I was given by people who knew how it worked, but my Swedish was not good enough,” says Melanie.

In the end Melanie moved despite not having got a job. She packed her things, and together with her two Fjord horses she headed for Sweden. If it is one thing Melanie does not want to be without, it is her horses.

From now Melanie's Swedish quickly improved, and she could change tactics so that she would call and introduce herself first,



and then follow this up with an application letter. Two months later she was invited to her first job interview, and it was not long before she found work as an auxiliary nurse in a residential care home for older people. (In Sweden there are both nurses and auxiliary nurses. A Swedish nurse has greater responsibility and more authority than a nurse in Holland, which is why the training is different.)

“Working here is completely different, and much less hierarchical between the various occupational groups,” says Melanie.

Since Melanie initially was only employed on a temporary hourly-paid basis at the care home, her plan had been to also run

her own business, providing equine massage and riding lessons. But fate intervened, and just as Melanie was starting her horse business, she was offered the job of head of operations at her place of work. Naturally she accepted this, and with a full-time managerial position it is now impossible to find the time for anything other than caring for her own horses.

“Of course there is a lot to do, but it does not compare with the stress of living in Holland. I still have to drive 60 km to get to work, but it takes half the time because there is no traffic. I have peace and quiet and am much happier now,” says Melanie. ■



## TIPS HOW TO LOOK FOR A JOB IN SWEDEN Melanie's top 3 tips:

- ✓ **Write your application** in Swedish and speak Swedish in all dealings with potential employers. Meeting in person is preferred, as this also makes it easier for you to make yourself understood if your Swedish is not perfect.
- ✓ **Call the employer** and introduce yourself before you send in your application letter. Ask if you can meet at the office,

since this shows you're really keen. If you don't get a reply to your application, call again and ask how the recruitment is going.

- ✓ **Leave your CV** and a personal letter with all companies that could be suitable for you, even if they aren't currently advertising situations vacant.





# THE CAPITAL OF WINTER SPORTS

Elite skiers from all over the world come to Östersund because of the snow guarantee, the famous research centre and a ski facility that is constantly evolving. Swedish skier Anders Södergren has made a business out of the excellent training conditions in city.

Östersund is a real winter city. The combination of winters with lots of snow, perfect training conditions and a university has resulted in many of Sweden's elite skiers having made their way to Östersund. The university is also home to The Swedish Winter Sports Research Centre (SWSRC), one of the world's most respected test laboratories for physiological and medical research in the area of winter sports. Elite skiers from all over the world come here to test themselves. Through measurements researchers have discovered how changes in movement patterns affect both power and energy management and thus also the athlete's performance. The optimisation of body movements is said to be one of the secrets behind Swedish ski successes in recent years. At SWSRC there is also a weapons laboratory for advanced weapons testing for biathlon.

Östersund ski stadium is located close to the university. Since 1993 Östersund municipality has continuously invested large amounts in developing and improving the facility. Nothing less than international standard will do. Today the facility has world-class tracks and a very modern backstop. Östersund ski stadium was also the first ski stadium in the world to meet demands by TV companies for lighting conditions for evening broadcasts. Östersund regularly arranges Biathlon World Cup competitions. In 2008 the city also hosted the Biathlon World Championships.

Adjacent to the stadium there are miles and miles of ski tracks for competition and training. Since a couple of years ago, snow is guaranteed from November onwards; this is achieved by storing vast amounts of snow over the summer. There is also an eight kilometre long roller ski track for the bare ground training.

The Swedish elite skier and World Championships medalist Anders Södergren moved to Östersund fifteen years ago. He has never regretted the move.

"We have a fantastic ski facility very close to the centre of town. There is plenty of snow and lots of sparring partners, since so many elite skiers live in the area," says Anders.

Anders Södergren felt that more skiers should be able to take advantage of such favourable conditions. Together with two business partners he arranged for 20 apartments to be built right next to the ski track, an investment of SEK 18 million. National teams from both China and the USA now travel to Camp Södergren for training. The French long-distance cross-country ski team are regular guests, and there is a steady stream of biathletes from closest neighbour Norway. In the summertime, depending on space, the apartments are rented out to business travellers or tourists.

Anders Södergren is not surprised the investment has proved a success.

"As a skier I know that people prefer not to drive to and from training. The optimum solution when training is to live by the track. Here we have everything you need," says Anders. ■



## Fantastic nature

- The most accessible mountains in Sweden. It is possible to travel by car and train all the way up to the tree line, and in some cases up to the bare mountain.
- Lake Storsjön (The Great Lake) is the fifth-largest lake in Sweden. The lake is home to the Great Lake Monster, which is considered to be a cousin of Nessie in Loch Ness in Scotland. The Great Lake Monster has been sighted since 1635.
- The summer nights are light. In June the sun is visible for 20.5 hours a day. Conversely, in December it is very dark. The sun is visible above the horizon for just 4.5 hours a day.
- Apart from the seasons spring, summer, autumn and winter, here is also a fifth season: spring-winter. This season occurs in the months of March and April, and offers a rare combination of snow and warm sun.

- In Jämtland County there are more than 90 nature reserves and 1,940 km of marked hiking trails.
- The highest mountain is called Helags. The southernmost glacier in Sweden is found here.
- Sweden's five large predators – bear, wolverine, golden eagle, lynx and wolf – are all found in the county. Strömsund municipality has the highest density of bears in the world.
- Moose hunting is important to many residents. Every year 12,000 moose are shot and killed to maintain numbers at an appropriate level.
- Rock carvings, dwelling places and trapping pits from the Iron Age can be found out in the forests.



## Food region Jämtland

- Jämtland County has Sweden's most talented food artisans and masses of award-winning products, such as cheeses, bread and beer.
- Östersund is one of three cities in the world designated Creative city of Gastronomy in the UNESCO Creative cities network.
- In 2011 the Swedish government nominated Östersund as Sweden's first "capital" for small-scale food production.
- Jämtland County has a larger area of organic arable land as a proportion of total area than any other region in Europe.

## Republic of Jämtland

- Up until 1178 Jämtland County was an independent region. Since then the region has belonged to both Norway and Sweden, initially against the will of the people of Jämtland.
- Today, the Republic of Jämtland is mostly a humorous concept, but once a year it is taken very seriously.
- Every summer the large festival Storsjöyran takes place in Östersund, with performances by many global artists. However, at midnight Lady Gaga and Patti Smith have to make way for the President of Jämtland, who, as tradition has it, makes his annual speech in the market square. The people celebrate and fireworks light up the sky.
- The republic has its own flag, which is blue, green and white. The colours represent the sky, forests and snow-clad mountains. The language of the Republic is Jämtland dialect and the regional anthem, which is often sung at school end-of-term celebrations, is simply known as the Jämtland song. The President is the troubadour Ewert Ljusberg.





**Infrastructure**

• It is quick and easy to travel to and from Jämtland County. However it can take longer to travel within the county, since distances are long and cars are often the only form of transport available.

**Roads**

• The main roads E14 and E45 pass through the county and connect the region with the rest of Sweden and Norway. From Östersund it takes 6 hours to drive to Stockholm and 4 hours to drive to Trondheim in Norway.



**Air**

**Åre/Östersund Airport**

• There are scheduled flights to Stockholm Arlanda (172 destinations), Stockholm/Bromma and Umeå/Luleå. The flight between Östersund and Stockholm takes 1 hour.

• During peak season there are scheduled flights to Gothenburg and Helsinki. There are charter flights to Mallorca, Rhodes and Antalya.

**Sveg Airport**

• There are daily flights to Stockholm. Once a week there is a flight to Tallinn.

**Vaernes International Airport, Norway**

• The airport is 3 hours from Östersund by car and offers departures to 43 destinations.

**Rail**

• From Östersund there are several daily departures to Stockholm and other locations in Sweden. A train journey between Östersund and Stockholm takes around 5 hours. There are also daily regional services on the Sundsvall–Östersund–Trondheim route.

**Research and education**

• Mid Sweden University in Östersund is Sweden's newest university with 16 000 students, three campuses and several unique study programmes. It has two internationally successful research environments:

- The Swedish Winter Sports Research Centre (SWSRC)
- European Tourism Research institute (ETOUR)

Examples of other focus areas within the university are Forest as a resource and Industrial information technology and Digital services.



**Mid Sweden Science Park and Peak Innovation**

• Mid Sweden Science Park is the link between the research at Mid Sweden University and regional businesses. One project under this umbrella is Peak Innovation, which among other things is involved in ensuring that research results are transformed into commercial products and new businesses. Peak Innovation's vision is that by 2020 the region of Jämtland is a world leading environment for research and business development in tourism, sports and the outdoors.

**Industry and Enterprise**

• Mechanical engineering, forestry and tourism are the largest industries in Jämtland County. Engcon is a world-leading industrial company that exports tiltrotators and other mechanical equipment all over the world. The outdoor sector is another strong industry with internationally recognised brands such as Hilleberg and Peak Performance.

• Jämtland is one of the top three counties in Sweden in terms of proportion of entrepreneurs. A total of 14.1% of the economically active population is involved in running some form of business. In Åre municipality the figure is as high as 20.8%.

• In Jämtland County there are good opportunities for businesses to obtain financing via lenders and venture capital companies. Examples of such companies are Inlandsinnovation, Norrlandsfonden and Almi Invest. Investment grants are available in sectors prioritised by the region.



**Labour market**

**Sectors with labour shortages 2013**

Sector	Occupation
Computing	Software and systems developer IT Architect
Technology	Civil engineer Construction engineer Structural engineer
Medical care	Surgical nurse Doctor Psychiatric care nurse
Restaurant and service	Chef
Building and construction	Construction sheet metal worker Floor layer
Manufacturing	Lorry mechanic

**This is Jämtland County**

Land area:  
49,443 km<sup>2</sup>  
(cf. the Netherlands 41,526 km<sup>2</sup>)

Population: 126,000

**Municipalities:**

Berg, Bräcke, Härjedalen, Krokoms, Ragunda, Strömsund, Åre, Östersund

Jämtland is the 3:rd largest county in Sweden in terms of land area and it mostly comprises forests and mountains.

**Provinces:**

Jämtland and Härjedalen



# JÄMTLAND COUNTY IN 30 SECONDS

2,5 PEOPLE PER KM<sup>2</sup> | MOUNTAIN, FORESTS AND LAKES | WORLD CLASS SKIING |  
EVENT REGION | SWEDISH WINTER SPORT RESEARCH CENTRE | FIVE SEASONS |  
SUN VISIBLE 20,5 HOURS A DAY IN JUNE | TOURISM | FORESTRY AND MECHANICAL  
ENGINEERING | 1 H TO STOCKHOLM | SECOND HIGHEST PROPORTION OF  
SMALL BUSINESS IN SWEDEN | TALENTED FOOD ARTISANS | NICE AND FRIENDLY  
PEOPLE | LARGE INVESTMENTS IN TOURISM AND WIND POWER | HIGHEST  
DENSITY OF BEARS IN THE WORLD | NEED FOR GOOD DOCTORS, SPECIALIST  
NURSES AND DENTISTS | GOOD OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS | WORLD CUP  
IN ALPINE SKIING AND BIATHLON EVERY YEAR | JÄMTLAND REPUBLIC WITH ITS  
OWN PRESIDENT, ANTHEM AND FLAG...

# WELCOME



*Investing in your future*



## MUNICIPALITIES



BERG



BRÄCKE



HÄRJEDALEN



KROKOM



RAGUNDA



STRÖMSUND



ÅRE



ÖSTERSUND