

Produced by Regionkansliets informationsavdelning and SCP Reklambyrå, Printed by CELLA Grafiska AB, 2009.



– VÄSTRA GÖTALAND –
A SCANDINAVIAN GROWTH REGION



Västra Götalandsregionen, SE-462 80 Vänersborg, Sweden. Tel: +46 521 27 57 00. post@vgregion.se www.vgregion.se



A GOOD LIFE BEGINS WHERE PEOPLE COME TOGETHER.

Västra Götaland is a meeting place that dates back thousands of years. Throughout history entrepreneurs have gathered here to carry on trade with the whole world, establish major international companies and create new ideas for the future. For centuries people of different nationalities have migrated to the area and contributed to the breadth of today's trade and industry.

In Västra Götaland development and prosperity go hand in hand with the ability to accomplish change together with others. Region Västra Götaland is the democratically elected organisation charged with promoting growth and sustainable development and offering the region's inhabitants good healthcare. In cooperation with the municipalities, trade and industry, the education sector, authorities and organisations, Region Västra Götaland supports and drives development for a good life in Västra Götaland.

Welcome to a Scandinavian growth region.

CONTENTS

Visiting and living in Västra Götaland	6
A world of diversity and opportunities	8
Town and city life in Västra Götaland	10
The rolling sea and the mighty forest	14
Challenging activities	16
Children's favourites	17
Echoes of history	18
Cultural meeting places	20
Creating growth and sustainable development	24
New energy	26
An innovative automotive industry	30
Cutting-edge information technology	32
Gateway to the world	34
Maritime strength	35
Food with diversity and quality	36
Innovation and tradition in design, fashion and textiles	38
The Swedish furniture centre	40
Culture and experiences breed new industries	42
Health and medicine for life	44
Learning for life in Västra Götaland	46
Cross-border education	48
Medical training and research	51
Education in art, design and culture	52
Region Västra Götaland's assignment	54

A COMMON VISION – A GOOD LIFE

The Västra Götaland Vision "A good life" is the result of close cooperation between Region Västra Götaland, the municipalities, and many public and private players and organisations. The joint effort of realising the vision is intended to lead to an attractive, competitive Västra Götaland and a good life for its citizens – that is to say opportunities for a stimulating job and good education, good health, a clean environment, community, participation and a rich cultural life. The good life is based on long-term sustainability where development does not take place at the expense of future generations' needs.

www.vgregion.se



WITH AN OPEN MIND.

VISITING AND LIVING IN VÄSTRA GÖTALAND.

Västra Götaland offers diversity and varying experiences. From salt-splashed Skagerrak in the rocky west, along Lake Vänern to mysterious Lake Vättern in the densely forested east. From the big city pulse of Göteborg to the calmer tempo of the small timbered town of Hjo. From the Bronze age rock carvings at Tanum to graffiti art at Röda Sten. From working life in an international environment in a city to life at a small dairy in the countryside.

In a nutshell, Västra Götaland is where the contrasts that give life colour and zest come together.





The Hammarkullen carnival in Göteborg attracts 50,000 visitors a year.



20% of Sweden's horses can be found in Västra Götaland – more than in any other region.

A WORLD OF DIVERSITY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Västra Götaland is a Sweden in miniature, with large cities, rural areas, small communities and medium-sized towns. There is the sea, lakes, rolling hills, deep forests, open plains – all the different types of natural environment in Sweden except mountains. The countryside in Västra Götaland is very important for its citizens' recreation and visitors' experiences. It invites adventures in the wild, sailing and fishing and offers a great many exciting culinary experiences.



The Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra – the National Orchestra of Sweden – is one of Sweden's major orchestras and tours all over the world.



The best things in life can't be bought for money – the right of common access, unique to Sweden, entitles everyone to visit the countryside freely on nature's terms.

Its diversity is also reflected in the 1.6 million people who live here. 17% of Sweden's population live in Västra Götaland and approximately 130 nationalities are represented. Trade and industry in Västra Götaland is very varied and internationally oriented with a focus on research and development. Most people work in the service sector and more than one in four people in trade and industry are employees of foreign-owned companies.



Göteborg, Sweden's second-largest city, offers a relaxed international atmosphere.

TOWN AND CITY LIFE IN VÄSTRA GÖTALAND

A journey through Västra Götaland often begins in Göteborg, Sweden's gateway to the world. A big city by the sea, renowned for its events and with an international buzz and lots of hospitality. Proximity defines the city's interaction with its residents and guests. Most things are within walking distance – the major hotels, the Svenska Mässan exhibition and congress centre and Liseberg, Scandinavia's largest amusement park. Göteborg is a green city and people interested in gardening often visit the Botanical Garden, one of the biggest of its kind in Europe, with guided tours and exhibitions the year round. The Garden Society



The world's biggest football tournament, Gothia Cup, held in Göteborg, brings together tens of thousands of young footballers from some 60 countries.



Sjömagasinet is one of the restaurants awarded a star in Guide Rouge.

park, with its Rose Garden and Palm House, is located right in the city centre.

The city's restaurants are among Sweden's elite and fish and seafood are popular local specialties. Nightlife is relaxed and if you like shopping Göteborg is an Aladdin's cave of shops, department stores and shopping malls.

EVENTS AT SVENSKA MÄSSAN

EuroHorse	87,513
Gothenburg Boat Show	85,279
Göteborg Book Fair	78,216
"På två hjul" (Bike show)	63,879
TUR (Travel and Tourism Fair)	44,392

Number of visitors in 2008



Café life in the timbered town of Alingsås.

Borås has a strong tradition in textiles and design and tomorrow's fashion designers are trained here. Shopping is a matter of course in a commercial centre like Borås and the city also attracts many families for a day out at Borås Zoo – a savannah in the heart of the “city of textiles”. Mölndal is part of the metropolitan area around Göteborg with exciting historical environments like Kvarnbyn and Gunnebo House and Gardens. The industrial city of Trollhättan's outstanding features are its location on the Göta Älv river and its falls and locks. There are many more small and medium-sized towns to discover, each with its own character and specialities.

LARGEST MUNICIPALITIES

1. Göteborg 500,197
2. Borås 101,487
3. Mölndal 59,812
4. Trollhättan 54,487
5. Uddevalla 51,186

Number of inhabitants in December 2008



The old town hall in Lidköping was originally a nobleman's hunting lodge.



Strömstad is Västra Götaland's northernmost town, with the Koster islands spread out to the west.



Jim Dine's "Walking to Borås" is one of the exhibits at the new sculpture park in Borås.



On the edge of Lake Vänern lies Vänersborg, the seat of the Regional Council.



Stroll among the wooden houses from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries that line Hjo's cobbled streets.



Bobusläns museum is located in the port area of Uddevalla and reflects life and nature in Bohuslän.



There are 29,611 islands in Västra Götaland, of which 153 are inhabited. Åstol in Bohuslän is one of them.

THE ROLLING SEA AND THE MIGHTY FOREST

To the people of Bohuslän, it's the only place on earth. This is Sweden's best-loved tourist destination and place names like Smögen, Fjällbacka and the Koster islands awaken dreams of sun, summer and leisure. Dalsland is often called Europe's closest wilderness, awe-inspiring and untouched, within reach of Europe's major cities. A retreat for stressed big city dwellers and that many people call "the world's best kept secret". Further inland, Västra Götaland shows a different face with open plains that give way to plateaus with rare vegetation, for example flowering Kinnekulle ridge on the eastern shore of lake Vänern, Sweden's largest lake. If you would like a close encounter with the "King of the Forest" you can book a guided elk safari on the twin hills Halleberg and Hunneberg just outside Vänersborg.



NATIONAL PARKS

Tresticklan in Dals-Ed
Djurö in Mariestad
Tiveden in Karlsborg
The Koster Sea – Sweden's first marine national park.

A certain sign of spring: the cranes' mating dance at Lake Hornborga.



Canoeing in Dalsland, the province with the most waterways and lakes in Sweden.



CHALLENGING ACTIVITIES

The sea, the lakes and the archipelago all the way up to the Norwegian border offer fantastic bathing and great opportunities for sailing enthusiasts. Dalsland with its wilderness offers a variety of adventure activities for canoeists, anglers and climbers. Västra Götaland has more golf courses than anywhere else in Sweden and some are open all year round. Hikers can have their fill of beautiful trails, while cyclists can enjoy a family excursion or a demanding marathon.



Havets Hus in Lysekil.



Skara Sommarland.



Universeum in Göteborg.



Nordens Ark in Bohuslän.

CHILDREN'S FAVOURITES

Liseberg – Scandinavia's largest amusement park

Universeum in Göteborg – outer space, rain forests and the oceans

Skara Sommarland – Sweden's biggest waterpark

Borås Djurpark – with over 500 animals

Navet in Borås – nature and science experience centre

Balthazar in Skövde – workshop for the senses

Nordens Ark in Bohuslän – sanctuary for endangered animals

Innovatum i Trollhättan – nature and science experience centre

Havets Hus in Lysekil – sea aquarium with fish and animals from the North Sea

Molekylverkstan in Stenungsund – science discovery centre

ECHOES OF HISTORY

History is constantly present in Västra Götaland. There are many ancient monuments from the Stone Age and later times; around Falköping alone there are 270 passage graves. Among the most famous sights are the unique Bronze Age rock carvings at Tanum's world heritage site, where Vitlycke museum is also located. The areas around Skara and Kinnekulle are the backdrop for the fictional crusader Arn in Jan Guillou's medieval trilogy. Varnhem Monastery Church, built in 1150 for monks of the Cistercian order is a given destination for tourists.

The church contains royal tombs from the 13th century and Birger Jarl, the founder of Stockholm, is also buried here. In Skara there is a cathedral, the Museum of Västergötland with Bronze Age and medieval artefacts, and the Fornbyn open-air museum. Just outside Borås lies the renaissance manor Torpa Stenhus that dates back to the 1400s.



Varnhem Monastery Church from the 12th century plays an important role in the history of Sweden and the church.



St. Sigfrid's Spring, close to Husaby church, was an important place of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages.



Not far from Lidköping on the shores of Lake Vänern lies 700-year old Läckö Castle. Visitors can enjoy both music and theatre performances during the summer. Newly laid out every year, Little Castle Garden is an experience in itself.



Bronze Age graffiti at Tanum – inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List since 1994.



A sculpture at Pilane on the island of Tjörn – a contemporary art experience in an ancient landscape.



The Way Out West music festival in Slottsskogen in Göteborg.

CULTURAL MEETING PLACES

Cultural life in Västra Götaland is rich and varied. The region is home to major institutions with an international reputation like the Göteborg Opera and the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, alongside a cross-art-form free cultural life. Västra Götaland has the largest regional cultural budget in Sweden and focuses purposefully on culture for children and young people.

The many festivals cover most kinds of cultural expression and culminate in the summer when festivals are held almost everywhere in Västra Götaland.



Göteborg Dance & Theatre Festival.



The Nordic Watercolour Museum in Skärhamn.

EVENTS & FESTIVALS

- Ceramics festival, Lidköping
- Chamber music festival, Stenungsund
- Evert Taube Music Festival (Ängön)
- Gothenburg Jazz Festival
- Göteborg Culture Festival
- Göteborg Dance & Theatre Festival
- Göteborg International Biennial for Contemporary Art
- Göteborg International Film Festival
- Hjo Arts and Crafts Fair
- Kalv Festival
- Krokstrand Festival – Man must dance
- Skövde Matfestival Culinary Fair
- Summer theatre, Forsvik
- Way Out West Music Festival
- Åmål Blues Fest

PERFORMING ARTS

Borås City Theatre
 Folkteatern (Göteborg
 People's Theatre)
 The Göteborg Opera
 (and Skövde Stage)
 Gothenburg Concert Hall
 Göteborg City Theatre
 (and Backa Theatre)
 Regionteater Väst
 Vara Concert Hall

ART AND DESIGN

Alingsås Art Gallery
 Borås Art Museum
 Bohuslän Art Museum
 Dalsland Art Museum
 Göteborg Museum of Art
 Hasselblad Center
 The Nordic Watercolour
 Museum
 Röda Sten
 Röhsska Museum
 Skövde Art Museum



International stars meet their fans at Ullevi in Göteborg.

The museums are a source of knowledge and learning. There are several hundred museums in Västra Götaland; among the major ones can be mentioned the Museum of World Culture in Göteborg and the Textiles Museum in Borås. Smaller museums, many with their origins in active rural community movements, show aspects of working life or other phenomena in

a particular area. Västra Götaland's arenas – Ullevi, Gamla Ullevi, and Scandinavium in Göteborg, and Borås Arena – attract hundreds of thousands of visitors to everything from major musical events to Swedish and international elite sport.

PULLING TOGETHER FOR THE GOOD LIFE.

CREATING GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
IN VÄSTRA GÖTALAND.

Growth is not self-generating. It is realised through long-term collaborative efforts characterised by entrepreneurship and a will to change. Västra Götaland has always been noted for openness and international contacts – from the 18th century East Indiamen to the trading houses, from its shipyards to its automotive industry, from textile industry to design and fashion. Its trade and industry are today among the leaders in Europe when it comes to investment in research and development. New knowledge-intensive companies in environmental engineering, biomedicine and IT and a culture and experience industry are developing in interaction with strong company clusters. Västra Götaland is one of the twenty fastest growing European growth regions and the most important growth generator is still the cross-border collaboration between trade and industry, academia and other civil society actors. Here, growth and sustainable development go hand in hand.





Systems for extracting energy from ocean waves are being developed outside Lysekil and there are plans to build a wave energy park.

NEW ENERGY

One of Västra Götaland's environmental goals is to be practically independent of fossil energy by 2030. This is a great challenge but at the same time a business opportunity for both small and large entrepreneurs. Västra Götaland is home to most of Sweden's engineering, environmental and consumer research, successful companies in the energy and climate fields, industrial expertise and – not least – skilled, environment-conscious people.



Wind power generation in Västra Götaland can increase 25-fold by 2020 – from today's 0.2 TWh to 5 TWh

RESEARCH INSTITUTES

- SP Sveriges Tekniska Forskningsinstitut
SP Technical Research Institute of Sweden
- SIK Institutet för Livsmedel och Bioteknik AB
SIK – the Swedish Institute for Food and Biotechnology
- Imego AB – The Institute of Micro and Nanotechnology
- Swerea IVF
- IVL Svenska Miljöinstitutet AB
IVL Swedish Environmental Research Institute

Numerous companies in the west of Sweden are major suppliers to the wind power industry, among them SKF, the world leader in bearings for wind power plants. Solid bio-fuels such as wood, chips and pellets made from the forestry industry's waste products are another growth area in renewable energy. It is also another way of taking advantage of Västra Götaland's large supply of natural resources. Universities and other institutions of higher education are conducting research related to energy engineering and many companies specialise in burners, boilers and other energy equipment.



Västra Götaland has Sweden's best infrastructure for biogas with almost 45 filling stations and 10,000 gas-powered vehicles.

Västra Götaland is well advanced in the biogas field, an almost climate neutral high-grade fuel that is extracted from biological refuse and waste. Biogas Väst is a collaborative project to promote biogas as vehicle fuel. Some 30 actors in the whole biogas chain in Västra Götaland – fuel producers, municipalities, vehicle manufacturers and distributors – all collaborate to promote the biogas market. It is a cross-border partnership between private and public actors, an approach that has inspired more biogas partnerships around the world.

Hydrogen and fuel cells are another area of development. ETC Battery and FuelCells Sweden, based in Ale and jointly owned by industry, institutions of higher education and

municipalities, is an energy engineering centre for the development of batteries and fuel cells. Region Västra Götaland has initiated Hydrogen Sweden, a nationwide network to promote hydrogen as an energy carrier, together with stakeholders from industry, institutions of higher education and the public sector.

Energy efficient building, including passive houses – both new houses and renovations – is another of western Sweden's environmental specialities and an important instrument for reducing impact on the climate. In order to increase exports of environmental and energy engineering, a number of regional actors have joined together in the Ecoex growth project that provides environmental companies with advisory services and markets the environmental expertise that exists in the west of Sweden.

PASSIVE HOUSES – ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDING

Passive houses are especially well-insulated houses that efficiently recover the heat from exhaust air. They are heated using people's body heat and waste heat given off by lights and household appliances. The Malmborg family's house in Lidköping, built in 2006, is Sweden's first detached passive house. The Passive House Centre in Alingsås is a regional resource for anyone who wants to build energy-efficiently.





Volvo V50 DRIVE



Volvo FE hybrid refuse truck



Saab BioPower 9-3X

FOUR MAJOR VEHICLE MANUFACTURERS:

AB Volvo

– trucks, buses, construction equipment, marine engines and aircraft engine components.

Volvo Personvagnar AB

– passenger cars

Saab Automobile AB

– passenger cars

Pininfarina Sverige AB

– niche vehicles

AN INNOVATIVE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

The automotive industry is one of the largest and most important industries in Västra Götaland. The Göteborg-Trollhättan-Uddevalla triangle contains four of Sweden's five vehicle manufacturers, constituting a concentration of knowledge, research resources and production expertise. Hundreds of suppliers whose operations are closely linked to the vehicle manufacturers are based in Västra Götaland. They include Autoliv in Vårgårda, a leader and pioneer in vehicle safety, that develops seat belts, airbags and whiplash protection systems. Most of the world's vehicle manufacturers are among Autoliv's customers.



Tomorrow's production engineering under development at Innovatum Science Park.

In Västra Götaland there are also numerous national research and development centres linked to the automotive industry that bring together actors from the industry itself, higher education and the rest of society. These centres conduct extensive research in safety, environment, intelligent transport systems, alternative fuels and hybrid vehicles.

Innovatum Science Park in Trollhättan has Sweden's most modern production engineering centre, built up by University West, Saab Automobile, Volvo Aero and Region Västra Götaland to develop smart, efficient production methods aimed at achieving the highest quality and competitiveness.

RESEARCH COLLABORATION PROJECTS

SAFER – vehicle and traffic safety in real traffic environments

Swedish Hybrid Vehicle Centre (SHC) – hybrid technology, electrical drives and energy storage

Test Site Sweden – demonstration and testing arena for safety, the environment, and ITS

Production Technology Centre in Trollhättan – production engineering, audiovisual technology and energy and environmental engineering.



Lindholmen Science Park in Göteborg is a centre for knowledge and entrepreneurship in mobile communication, ITS and modern media industry.

CUTTING-EDGE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information Technology is a strong industry in the west of Sweden, comprising some 4,700 companies. Lindholmen Science Park in Göteborg is one of Europe's largest IT centres. Here, universities and institutions of higher education cooperate with companies like Sigma, Semcon and Ericsson and 150 other small and medium-size cutting-edge enterprises. Västra Götaland is also home to companies with competence in microwave and aerial technology. For example, 40% of the world's microwave links are manufactured within a radius of 300 km. Ericsson develops radio links and radio base stations for mobile communication and Saab Microwave Systems is a leader in radar technology. Telematics, technology that integrates telecommunication and IT with traditional products



RUAG Aerospace Sweden in Göteborg develops products for the space industry with a focus on computer systems, aerals and microwave technology.

COLLABORATIVE IT PROJECTS

Telematics Valley

– an umbrella organisation for telematics companies

Center of Visualization

Göteborg – stimulates growth in the field of digital visualization

Chalmers Antenna Systems

(CHASE) – research in advanced wireless communication

like vehicles and buildings, is another strong sector. Some 60 companies develop telematics systems for the automotive industry – systems that account for an increasing proportion of the vehicle's value and content.

IT is also entertainment and in Västra Götaland there are many companies that develop games. Mindark in Göteborg has developed Entropia Universe – the world's first virtual universe with its own currency and its own system for financial transactions. The Gothia Science Park incubator at the University of Skövde gives game development companies the opportunity to grow.



65% of Sweden's container traffic passes through the Port of Göteborg.

GATEWAY TO THE WORLD

The Göteborg area has an ideal logistic location with 70% of Scandinavia's industry and population within 500 km. The Port of Göteborg is the largest port in Scandinavia and handles a very large proportion of Sweden's imports and exports. More than half of all freight to and from the Port of Göteborg is transported by rail. It is also Sweden's only port with direct transoceanic traffic. Another important part of the infrastructure is Göteborg Landvetter Airport, a hub for air freight outside Europe.

Chalmers University of Technology and the School of Business, Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg ensure that the Göteborg area is also at the forefront in research and education.

MARITIME STRENGTH

Shipping is part of the history of the west coast of Sweden and Göteborg is home to several maritime enterprises. One of the biggest is the Stena group.

There is a strong boat-building tradition, particularly on Orust, with numerous yards that build yachts and motor boats. Volvo Penta is a world-leader in inboard engines and complete drive systems for all types of craft from leisure boats to commercial vessels and industrial engines. In order to develop the maritime industry and conduct research for environmentally sustainable shipping, industry and academia have set up several collaborative projects. Examples include Lighthouse at Chalmers University of Technology in Göteborg and the Swedish Marine Technology Forum in Uddevalla. Clean Shipping Project is another collaborative project that aims to stimulate shipping companies and transport purchasers to introduce more new environmental technology in their vessels.



Hallberg-Rassy on Orust uses old boatbuilding techniques to produce exclusive long-distance yachts.



A food experience of the highest quality awaits diners at the approximately 30 restaurants certified in the Taste of West Sweden programme.



Sweden's first commercial oyster farm is located on the island of South Koster and has been built up in cooperation with marine biologists and French oyster farmers.

FOOD WITH DIVERSITY AND QUALITY

Food production is one of Västra Götaland's major industries with well-known names like Abba Seafood, Brämhufts, Göteborgs Kex, Santa Maria and Dafgård. Interest in locally produced and ecological food is growing – one fifth of Västra Götaland's agricultural land is farmed ecologically. At the same time, visitors have discovered local delicacies from the sea, forest, field and lake. West coast seafood is among the best in the world and numerous well-known cheeses are also made a little further inland.

The restaurant sector is important for growth and quality of life. The West Sweden Tourist Board operates a development and quality programme for restaurant owners and producers of raw ingredients called a Taste of West Sweden. The intention is to further develop the well-reputed cuisine of west Sweden and enrich visitors with exceptional food experiences. Another important area of development is innovative food with unique characteristics – functional foods. The Food and Health Concept Centre (FHCC) builds bridges between researchers and food producers to promote product development and the commercialisation of research findings. Chalmers University of Technology has a Food Science division that conducts research into how health promoting food can be extracted from herring and other marine produce.



Lokalproducerat i Väst is an umbrella organisation for 200 small-scale food producers.

VÄSTRA GÖTALAND ACCOUNTS FOR

- 25% of Sweden's food production
- 50% of Sweden's fishing industry
- 75% of Sweden's fish preparation industry



Sea mussels improve the marine environment and are the foundation for new food products from the west of Sweden such as mussel sausages and mussel pâté.



Kasthall has been designing and manufacturing woven and hand-tufted carpets since 1889.

INNOVATION AND TRADITION IN DESIGN, FASHION AND TEXTILES

The area around Borås is Scandinavia's textile and mail order centre. Västra Götaland is home to some of Sweden's strongest brands and several innovative producers of ecological fashion. The Swedish School of Textiles in Borås conducts extensive research in textile technology. Smart textiles, that is textiles with technology built-in, is an area where Västra Götaland is a world-leader. They are a completely new kind of textiles that are revolutionising the textile industry and creating enormous business opportunities in such areas as medical engineering, interior decoration, vehicles and buildings. Smart Textile Prototype Labs in Borås is a full-scale laboratory that brings together researchers in areas as diverse as design, textile engineering, interaction design and nanofibre engineering.



DEM Collective in Göteborg designs and produces ecological and fairtrade-labelled fashion.



8848 Altitude designs and manufactures ski wear for the Scandinavian climate.

SOME WELL-KNOWN BRANDS

Clothing: Abecita, Atlas Design, Bergman, Cavaliere, DEM Collective, Eton, Gina Tricot, Johan Skoglund, Kapp-Ahl, Lindex, Miss Mary, MQ, Nudie Jeans, Oscar Jacobsson, Prêt, Resteröds Trikså, Salming Underwear, Swegmark, Swesco.

Work and functional clothing: 8848 Altitude, Björnkläder, Craft, Cross Sportswear, Didrikson, Fristads, Grundéns, Tenson, Tierra.

Textiles: Almedahls, Borås Wäfveri, Ljungbergs textilttryck, Kasthall, Ludvig Svensson, Sanden, Svensson Markspelle.

Wallpaper: Eco-Boråstapeter, Sandbergs.



Internationally acclaimed Cloud is a portable room for rest, meetings and concentration – designed by Monica Förster and made by the OFFECCT furniture company in Tibro.

THE SWEDISH FURNITURE CENTRE

The manufacture of furniture and kitchens is another speciality of the west of Sweden. Tibro in Västra Götaland is one of Sweden's furniture centres and nowhere else in Scandinavia can so many furniture companies be found in the same place. Tibro has developed into a competence centre in wood technology. There are several successful producers in the area, ranging from makers of office furniture and kitchens to small, inventive design and handicraft companies.



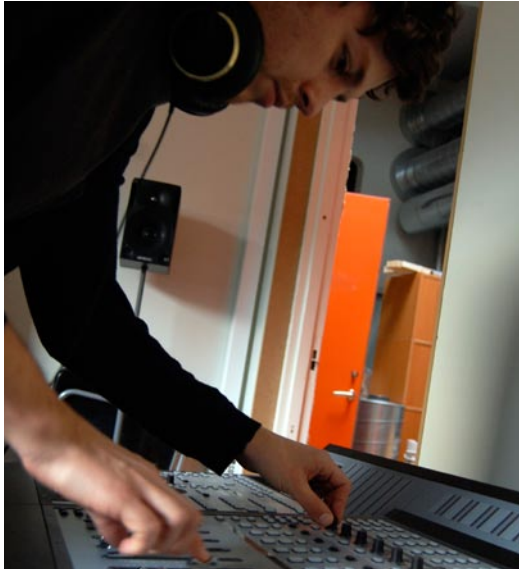
The Gustavian Room is an association of manufacturers of period furniture where they cooperate on product development.



There are several major kitchen manufacturers in Västra Götaland, including Kvänum, Marbodal and Tibrokök.



Olby Design in Skövde is one of many small furniture producers that combine traditional craftsmanship with modern design.



TEN MAJOR JOINT FILM PRODUCTIONS FROM FILM I VÄST

The Arn series of films,
directed by Peter Flinth
Dancer in the dark,
directed by Lars von Trier
Involuntary, directed by Ruben Östlund
Dogville, directed by Lars von Trier
Fucking Åmål,
directed by Lukas Moodysson
Kopps, directed by Josef Fares
Dalecarlians, directed by Maria Blom
The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo,
directed by Niels Arden Oplev
Patrik, Age 1.5, directed by Ella Lemhagen
Together, directed by Lukas Moodysson

Quantastical Productions is one of about 70 companies at Brew House in Göteborg.

CULTURE AND EXPERIENCES BREED NEW INDUSTRIES

Culture is of great importance as a growth factor. A rich cultural life boosts creativity and results in new companies and business opportunities. One example is Film i Väst in Trollhättan that has co-produced over 200 films. The company forms the hub of a creative cluster for film and media, with numerous new companies in the fields of film production, animation and post-production. Västra Götaland's place on the international film map is further reinforced by the annual Göteborg International Film Festival that attracts 31,000 visitors.



The tourist portal www.vastsverige.com, where you can book your accommodation, makes it easier for visitors to Västra Götaland. Tourist destinations and companies can market themselves with small means – from the Slow-food certified “tree hotel” Andrum near Falköping to tourist magnets like Liseberg.

To strengthen the establishment of new companies in the culture and experience industry in Västra Götaland, the Brew House creative centre has been set up in Göteborg focusing on music, film and media production.

Over 50,000 people are in some way involved in the culture and experience industry in Västra Götaland, one of the fastest growing sectors. Västra Götaland is also Scandinavia's leading tourist region. Most foreign visitors come from Norway, Germany, Denmark or Great Britain. Liseberg amusement park in Göteborg is Sweden's most popular tourist destination, attracting approximately 3 million visitors a year.



AstraZeneca in Mölndal created Losec and its successor Nexium for gastric and stomach ailments.

HEALTH AND MEDICINE FOR LIFE

The bioscience and medical industry is one of the fastest growing industries in Västra Götaland, comprising some 300 companies of which half pursue their own product development.

Clinical research at Sahlgrenska University Hospital is conducted in close collaboration with the Sahlgrenska Academy at the University of Gothenburg. They are leaders in cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and obesity, and biomaterial and cell therapy, among much else. Stem cell research is another area of strength that in the future will make it possible to cure serious diseases that at present are incurable.

In order to create prerequisites for innovations and long-term growth there are numerous well-established collaborative ventures involving actors from trade and industry, the universities, the municipalities and Region Västra Götaland – among others the Biomedical Development in Western Sweden programme that commercialises research successes in

WORLD LEADERS IN LIFE SCIENCE

AstraZeneca, Astra Tech,
Nobel Biocare,
Mölnlycke Health Care.

biomaterial and cell therapy. Another collaborative project with a focus on biomedical development is MedCoast Scandinavia that also includes actors from the Oslo area.

At Sahlgrenska Science Park – a growth environment for research-based business concepts – there is an incubator that is intended to contribute to medical innovations and the creation of new companies.

Medical Technology is another expanding field of development. Together with Chalmers University of Technology, the University of Gothenburg and the University of Borås, Region Västra Götaland has established the MedTech West research centre. The centre's task is to strengthen innovations in medical technology and contribute to the creation of new high-tech companies.



TOMORROW BEGINS TODAY.

LEARNING FOR LIFE IN VÄSTRA GÖTALAND.

Curiosity and the joy of discovery create the prerequisites for a good life.

In Västra Götaland collaboration between academia and the rest of society is well-established. Talents grow and for anyone who wants to advance themselves there are good opportunities to realise their life ambitions. Higher education offers almost everything imaginable – from engineering, IT, the environment and medicine to design, arts and crafts, and agriculture.

An international stamp is a distinct feature and research is conducted on a broad front, often in close collaboration with trade and industry. Students and researchers from around the world come here to develop in the scientific and research fields that distinguish Västra Götaland.





CROSS-BORDER EDUCATION

Education and competence development are prerequisites for growth. In Västra Götaland more than one in five inhabitants have at least three years' tertiary education and participation in study circles is among the highest in the country. In addition to six universities/university colleges, there are 19 folk high schools and over 200 advanced vocational training courses. There are also several international schools at both compulsory school and upper secondary school level.

The University of Gothenburg is one of the largest in northern Europe. Education and research are carried on in some 60 departments in most academic fields, from medicine and biotechnology to marine biology and public opinion trends. Interdisciplinary collaboration is well-developed. The University interacts with Chalmers University of Technology,

Sahlgrenska University Hospital and other institutions of higher education and universities – regionally, nationally and internationally.

The School of Business, Economics and Law at the University of Gothenburg is ranked first by the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise when it comes to interaction with trade and industry. In addition to basic courses in economics and law the school offers international programmes, among other things in environmental management, logistics and tourism, and special programmes for growth companies and entrepreneurship.

Chalmers offers courses and conducts research in engineering, the natural sciences, and architecture – with the ambition of contributing to sustainable development in Sweden and around the world. Some of the university's focus areas are IT, environmental science and nanotechnology.

The University of Gothenburg and Chalmers also have shared research and education units at Lindholmen Science Park, directly linked to a company cluster focusing on IT. This joint organisation, the IT University of Göteborg, educates tomorrow's talents in system development, IT management and interaction design.

The University of Borås offers courses and conducts research in Library and Information Science and Textile Technology that are the best in Sweden. Students can also study and research in business administration and informatics, chemical and energy engineering, education and health sciences.

UNIVERSITIES AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

There are over 90,000 students at the universities and other institutions of higher education in Västra Götaland.	University of Gothenburg	50,000
	Chalmers University of Technology	12,000
	University of Borås	11,800
	University West	10,000
	University of Skövde	8,000
	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences	360

In addition to teacher training and courses in economics, the University of Skövde offers opportunities to study topical areas such as, for example, computer game development, foreign aid and molecular biology. Three research centres conduct research in IT, system biology and virtual systems.

The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Skara specialises in animal husbandry and collaborates closely with industry. The university also has courses and research in food production and agriculture.

Trollhättan is home to University West with courses and research in economics, media, the humanities, IT, engineering and nursing. The university is steadily building up interdisciplinary research environments, for example in industrial processes.

INCUBATORS

In Västra Götaland there are eight incubators that give students, researchers and companies the opportunity to develop their ideas by providing offices, competence, capital and contacts.

Brewhouse Innovation, Göteborg – the experience industry

Chalmers Innovation, Göteborg – technological companies

Espira, Borås – kunskapsföretag, knowledge companies, offshoots

Framtidens Företag, Göteborg – service companies

Gothia Science Park, Skövde – knowledge company, computer game companies

GU Holding, Göteborg – research-based companies

from the University of Gothenburg

Innovatum, Trollhättan – service companies

Sahlgrenska Science Park, Göteborg – Life Science



Approximately 1,700 heart operations are carried out at Sahlgrenska University Hospital in Göteborg every year. New methods mean that transplants can now be avoided in some cases.

MEDICAL TRAINING AND RESEARCH

Sahlgrenska University Hospital, SU, is one of the largest hospitals in Europe and is at the very forefront in Sweden as regards research in immunobiology and vaccinations. SU is also responsible for doctors' and nurses' clinical training and collaborates closely with the Sahlgrenska Academy at the University of Gothenburg. The Sahlgrenska Academy is also a hub for education, research and development in health care, medical treatment and dental care. The Academy's research in pharmacology, obesity, children's health, odontology and cardiovascular diseases engages groups of researchers around the world. Skaraborg Hospital, Southern Älvsborg Hospital and the NU Hospital Group also have extensive education, research and development, in collaboration with the Sahlgrenska Academy and the universities in Borås, Trollhättan and Skövde.



Students at the Academy of Music and Drama at the University of Gothenburg perform the opera Don Giovanni at the Artisten theatre.

EDUCATION IN ART, DESIGN AND CULTURE

A broad range of higher education courses exist for people who want to develop as artists, entertainers, designers or craftsmen. The Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Arts at the University of Gothenburg is the largest in Scandinavia, with a broad spectrum of disciplines such as design, photography, film directing, design and crafts, literary composition, music, musicals, opera and drama. It is also Sweden's only school of research with an artistic foundation. The Valand School of Fine Arts is one of Sweden's oldest. Many of tomorrow's designers, craftspeople and art teachers are educated at HDK – the School of Design and Crafts at the University of Gothenburg – that combines practical artistic creation with research in design.

Kulturverkstan in Göteborg educates project managers specialising in culture. Stenebyskolan in Dals Långed in Dalsland offers vocational courses in wood, textile and leather crafts and fine carpentry and furniture restoration. Higher education courses in traditional methods for builders and gardeners are offered at the Da Capo Vocational College of Crafts in Mariestad. The Swedish School of Textiles in Borås educates fashion and textile designers, textile economists and textile engineers. The school conducts advanced research, among other things in smart textiles. Borås is also home to the Nordic Design School, which offers Sweden's only one-year vocational courses in fashion, shoe design and sports clothing.



School of Design and Crafts at the University of Gothenburg is the leading school in Scandinavia for design and jewellery, ceramic and textile art. The picture shows "Bottle up!", created by design student Kristin Bille.



CULTURE FOR LIFE

A broad and varied range of cultural activities is an important factor for creativity and growth. Almost 100,000 children and young people in Västra Götaland attend the municipalities' and educational associations' culture and music schools.

Picture from the Music School of Vänersborg.



REGION VÄSTRA GÖTALAND'S ASSIGNMENT - A GOOD LIFE FOR ITS CITIZENS

Region Västra Götaland's assignment is to contribute to a flourishing Västra Götaland which is a good place to live and work. It must be a good place for future generations to grow up in.

It is tasked with providing the prerequisites for successful trade and industry, a good environment, jobs, research, education, good communications, good public health, a rich cultural life and offer good healthcare and dental care. All together, these provide possibilities for growth and sustainable development in Västra Götaland.

In collaboration with the 49 municipalities, trade and industry, authorities, organisations and academia, Region Västra Götaland drives development with Västra Götaland's best interests as its objective.

Some 45,000 of our approximately 50,000 employees work in healthcare at hospitals, healthcare centres and dental care centres all over Västra Götaland. This makes Region Västra Götaland one of the biggest employers in Sweden. Region Västra Götaland owns and operates a number of cultural institutions, for example the Göteborg Opera, the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra and Film i Väst. In addition to its work at home, Region Västra Götaland follows the work done within in the EU and watches Västra Götaland's interests in the increasingly important European regional cooperation.

REGION VÄSTRA GÖTALAND – A DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED ORGANISATION

Was formed on 1 January 1999.

Is governed by democratically elected politicians.

149 democratically elected members on the Regional Council who are elected on election day every four years.

The Regional Executive Board and Regional Management are based in Vänersborg.

Operating budget of approx. 40 billion SEK.

Regional taxes are the major source of income.

PHOTO LIST

Cover: Etsabild AB/Johan Villner, pixgallery.com, Anders Helgesson/pixgallery.com, Dan Holmqvist Page 2: Johnér Bildbyrå AB/Göran Assner, pixgallery.com, Scanpix Page 7: Getty Images/Ulf Nordh Page 8: Ingmar Jernberg/pixgallery.com, Bengt-Göran Filipsson Page 9: Stefan Berg, Håkan Berg/pixgallery.com Page 10: Göran Assner Page 11: Daniel Stiller, Göran Assner Page 12: Arne Eklund/pixgallery.com Page 13: Håkan Berg/pixgallery.com, pixgallery.com, Sergio Joselovsky, Ronnie Åkerstedt, Jesper Anhede, Bo Niklasson Page 14: BjörnEdlund/pixgallery.com Page 15: Naturbild AB/Christer Fredriksson. Göran Assner Page 16: Anders Helgesson/pixgallery.com, Fredrik Wennergren, Göran Assner, Göran Assner, Shutterstock Page 17: Havets Hus, Skara Sommarland/Lennart Sjöberg, Universeum/Lennart Sjöberg, Nordens Ark Page 18: Johan Främst/Kamerareportage, Ulf Sjöstedt/pixgallery.com Page 19: Eva Bäcklund,Vitlycke Page 20: Peter Lennby, Göran Assner Page 21: Jean-Pierre Estourne, Stefan Isaksson /pixgallery.com Pages 22-23: Göran Assner Page 25: pixgallery.com, Getty Images Page 26: Getty Images Page 27: Arne Eklund/pixgallery.com Page 28: Sergio Joselovsky Page 29: Stefan Ideberg Page 31: Icoon Page 32: Göran Assner Page 33: RUAG Aerospace Sweden/European Space Agency Page 34: Dan Holmqvist Page 35: Magnus Rassy Page 36: Lisa Nestorsson, Lisa Nestorsson/pixgallery.com Page 37: Mia Jonsson, Sigge Persson/pixgallery.com Page 38: Kasthall Page 39: Emilia Bergmark-Jiménez, Martin Söderqvist Page 40: OFFECT Studio Page 41: James Minard, Kvänum, Olby Design Page 42: Emily Johansson Page 43: Erik Ottoson, Anders Andarve/pixgallery.com Pages 44-45: AstraZeneca Page 47: Getty Images, Johnér Bildbyrå AB Page 48: Göran Assner Page 51: Björn Larsson Rosvall Page 52: Peter Lloyd Page 53: Kristina Bille, Olle Gustafsson Page 54: Etsabild AB/Johan Villner

The fact boxes contain examples and do not represent exhaustive listings.