



NORRBOTTEN
a rich county



*Norrbotten is Sweden's largest
and northernmost county.*

*The geographic position, natural
resources, cultural diversity and
sharp contrasts give the county its
own unique character.*



"Norrbotten is a rich county. It is rich in nature, natural resources, culture, experiences, well-run companies and competent people."

NORRBOTTEN IS ALSO RICH in contrasts. Contrasts of wilderness and high technology, the darkness of winter and the Midnight Sun, high fells and archipelago, rural communities and cities. Most visitors are amazed by the county's wealth and diversity.

Norrbotten also has a rich industrial and commercial sector. The primary industries – mining, steel, forestry and hydropower – are important for both the county and for Sweden. But the commercial and industrial sector is much broader. Exporting manufacturing industries, a growing service sector and successful small enterprises in many different areas are now ever more important components of Norrbotten's economy.

The county is alive with activity. There is vitality and a strong belief in the future. Throughout the county, investments are being made, construction projects are under way and value is being added. Norrbotten is one of Sweden's hottest regions and there is a sense of pride in what we are doing.

There is constant renewal. What were once disadvantages – sparsely populated areas, winter and a cold climate – have been turned to advantages and are presenting new opportunities. Icehotel in Jukkasjärvi is now Sweden's most famous tourist attraction. European automakers test their new vehicle models and components here in the county. Our geographic position is interesting for the space industry and space

research. The long distances have inspired the development of new, distance-spanning technologies with applications in, among other areas, education and health care.

Norrbotten has magnificent nature. The highest mountains, the deepest lakes, the mightiest rivers and the remotest forests are here in Norrbotten. The county has no fewer than three world heritage sites, eight national parks and nearly two hundred nature reserves and conservation areas.

All this, together with safe, well-run communities, good service, an excellent living environment, good schools, a wealth of cultural and leisure activities and exemplary care services and facilities, makes Norrbotten a rich and attractive county.

Our common ambition in the county is to ensure that we utilize our resources to secure these living conditions and a sustainable future for Norrbotten.

Norrbotten has a wonderful living environment that gives content and meaning to the term 'quality of life'. We wish you a warm welcome to benefit from all that Norrbotten has to offer."



PER-OLA ERIKSSON
Governor, Norrbotten County



The northern location, the large land area and the winter climate are added values for Europe. Norrbotten offers excellent conditions for test operations and space and environmental research.

MOST EUROPEAN AUTOMAKERS do their testing here in Norrbotten. Around the inland municipalities, principally in Arvidsjaur and Arjeplog, local entrepreneurs have built winter testing facilities.

Automotive testing companies and their suppliers, which employ about 1,000 people, continue to grow. Component manufacturer Bosch conducts the most extensive testing.

Vidsel has one of Europe's largest missile testing ranges and is larger than Luxembourg. Many European nations have in recent years tested aircraft and weapons systems at the Vidsel base. The sparsely populated areas of Norrbotten offer good conditions for large-scale manoeuvres and test operations, both for military and civil purposes.

Kiruna is Europe's northernmost operative space centre. The location has ideal conditions for space and environmental research. IRF, the Swedish Institute of Space Physics in Kiruna, works with space plasma physics, atmospheric studies and research within the framework of European space research collaboration.

Space centre Esrange launches research rockets and balloons, and monitors and controls satellites on contract from international space organizations.

Space research activities in Kiruna involve about ten companies and institutes which together employ about 1,000 people. This will become even more extensive and widely known when the commercial space flights begin.

Much of the research at Luleå University of Technology takes as its starting point the modern communication technologies; for example, mobile Internet, e-commerce and applications for medical technology and health care. Other strong focus areas of research are mining and mineral engineering, product development, materials science, sustainable development and environmental physics.

Throughout Norrbotten there are also a number of other research and development institutes. Mefos, in Luleå, is a metallurgical research centre that conducts research for the world's steel industry. This is also the site of LKAB's experimental blast furnace, a world-



RIKARD GEBART

is managing director of Energitekniskt centrum (ETC) in Piteå, a research institute that works with combustion technology and gasification of biomass.

One of ETC's main focus areas is the national research programme for black-liquor gasification. This is one of the larger Swedish projects of which the aim is to develop renewable energy and reduce dependency on oil.

Black liquor is the pulping liquid that is a by-product of paper pulp production. By gasifying the black liquor, it is possible to produce both electricity and methyl alcohol.

"Within a few years, the process may be used commercially and the methyl alcohol can be used to fuel cars." A third of the petrol and diesel consumption in Sweden can then be replaced by fuel from the paper pulp industry.

The exhaust gases imply no net emissions of carbon dioxide, since the fuel originates from the forest, which binds just as much carbon dioxide as the methyl alcohol generates.

unique facility for developing the company's iron ore products.

The energy engineering centre in Piteå, Energi-tekniskt centrum, is an R&D centre for combustion and gasification technology with a focus on renewable energy sources. Also in Piteå is Sicomp, which pursues research in the field of fibre-composite engineering.

The Abisko Scientific Research Station plays an important role in climate and environmental research. The effects of climate change are most evident in the north, and the station attracts researchers from around the world.

From space base Esrange, outside of Kiruna, research balloons and rockets are launched. At the Vidsel base, European air forces test new missile systems. Automakers carry out winter testing on prepared ice tracks on the winter lakes. The Abisko Scientific Research Station is making a significant contribution to global climate research.



JÖRGEN AND ANGELA STENBERG

are entrepreneurs and pioneers in automotive testing. They saw an opportunity to do business with the German automakers that had started coming to Arjeplog to test their new models under winter conditions.

At that time, he worked as a journalist for the local paper and she worked at a hotel. Together with three partners, Jörgen started Tjintokk AB, which offered the car companies a full range of services including ice tracks, test drivers and hotel accommodation.

"But no one else believed in our business concept. Banks and other lending institutes said no to a 30-year-old who wanted to borrow 25 million kronor to build a hotel in the tiny village of Slagnäs. Finally, we managed to raise a million and got started."

Today, he and his partners own the NMI Group, which operates facilities and hotels in Arjeplog and Slagnäs, as well as in Sorsele, Västerbotten, with Bosch and Volkswagen as major clients. The group has sales of 200 million kronor and employs 250 people. Of these, 150 are test drivers.

"The drivers are local residents. We train the drivers and they drive our clients' test vehicles. In addition, we conduct driver training in other parts of the world and we complement winter testing with desert tests in the Sahara."

JOSEFINA NORDMARK

architect in Luleå, was commissioned to design Sweden's new embassy in Santiago de Chile. She won a competition that was arranged by the National Property Board (SFV). "Trandans" was the title of her entry, which the jury deemed superior to all other proposals in the competition.

Josefina Nordmark is one of many talented architects that have worked in Norrbotten, from Gustav Wickman and Ralph Erskine who left their mark on Kiruna to today's architects with commissions throughout Sweden.



BERIT TILLY

film commissioner, markets Norrbotten as a shooting location for international film companies. She works at Filmpool Nord, a development company for Swedish film that has helped to bring filmmakers to the county to shoot a large number of films.

"Norrbotten has fantastic settings and is very popular during all seasons of the year. The snow and winter climate are especially unique assets, since the rest of Europe seems to be getting less snow than in previous years. Norrbotten is also one of Sweden's biggest film production centres and has many talented film-industry professionals."

Kiruna's church was recently designated Sweden's most attractive building. Kulturens hus in Luleå is a new and exciting meeting place for all forms of culture. Adventure, sports and outdoor leisure express the Norrbotten lifestyle. Filmpool Nord has made Norrbotten a centre of Swedish film production.





LOVE RYNBÄCK

is a tourism entrepreneur who would rather spend more time with guests in the great outdoors than behind a desk. The company, Creative Adventure, works with adventure tourism in Swedish Lapland, which is the brand name used by the regional tourism industry.

Love collaborates with other experienced guides who accompany guests on activities such as white-water rafting, climbing, angling, kayaking, snowmobiling and other outdoor experiences and adventures.

"We set no limits either geographically or activity-wise; instead, we customize the adventure to suit the guests and their level of ability."



Nature is one of Norrbotten's most valuable assets. Here, there are magnificent mountain and forest areas, but also verdant farmland and a beautiful archipelago.

KEBNEKAISE AND SAREK are Sweden's most magnificent mountain massifs. Hornavan and Torneträsk are the country's deepest lakes. Four major rivers run from the mountains, through the woodlands, to the Bay of Bothnia.

The Lule River is the largest and a source of power for all of Sweden. The Pite, Kalix and Torne Rivers are national rivers that have been saved from hydropower development.

The nature of Norrbotten is both generous and varied. Here, you will find everything from alpine landscapes to archipelagos, from verdant farmland in the river valleys to vast tracts of forest and wetlands. The coniferous forests closest to the high-fell country are the last Swedish virgin forest areas.

Norrbotten has eight national parks. World Heritage Laponia includes the four large national parks Sarek, Padjelanta, Muddus and Stora Sjöfallet and the nature reserves Sjaunja and Stubba and part of the Kvikkjokk-Kabla virgin forest reserve.

The mountain range is about 100 km wide. The area is sometimes referred to as Europe's last wilderness. However, it is in reality a landscape in which reindeer husbandry, which has been practiced for centuries, has in later years coexisted with modern infrastructure, mining and forestry in the eastern regions.

At the same time, it is an area for active outdoor lifestyles. Hunting and fishing are important to the people of Norrbotten. The mountains and woodlands offer abundant possibilities for recreation during all seasons. The magnificent and varied landscapes are also assets for the growing experience and adventure tourism sector.

The natural habitats host rare species of plants, particularly in the mountains, and animals such as lynx, wolverine and bear. The national parks and nature reserves have been established to preserve and to protect natural values and to monitor populations of predatory animals.

The river valleys and coastal areas offer special conditions for agriculture. The Midnight Sun promotes rapid growth of berries and vegetables, which taste better than produce grown farther south. The cold winters mean that farmers use fewer pesticides than their colleagues in the south.

The archipelago in the Bay of Bothnia, with thousands of islands, is one of the lesser known parts of the county. But for many Norrbotten residents, it is a favourite place for recreation. In summer, many leisure craft fill the fairways, bays and inlets. In winter, the islands are reached on skis, by car via prepared ice roads, or by snowmobile.





The varied landscapes of Norrbotten include both mountains and archipelagos; from Rapadalen in Sarek National Park to the harbour coves and winter-white expanses of ice on the Bay of Bothnia.



KARINA LÖVGREN

who is head of the County Administrative Board's field unit, works with supervision and maintenance of national parks and nature reserves, as well as with management of the large predatory mammal populations and mountain trails. The field unit also includes the County Administrative Board's game and parks wardens. Work is mostly in the field, often in country that is inaccessible by road during all seasons of the year.

"Norrbotten's nature and wildlife are significant not only for Sweden, but also from a global perspective. It is the County Administrative Board's responsibility to monitor and safeguard these valuable assets, mainly the parks and reserves, but also nature throughout the rest of the county.

It is a myth that there are large tracts of untouched wilderness here. Norrbotten's wilderness areas are accessible and they are used by many different stakeholders. It is therefore important for us to manage protected areas and the big predators well, and that the forest companies, reindeer herders, companies, municipalities and private individuals assume their share of the responsibility."



Norrbotten is rich in natural resources that give Sweden large export incomes. The primary industries are strong and creative drivers of the region's economy.

COMPANIES IN THE PRIMARY INDUSTRIES are characteristically high-tech, strong knowledge-based companies. Via well-established collaboration with research and service companies, for example, in the field of information technology, new systems and products are developed.

Luleå is northern Europe's main metallurgical development centre. SSAB is one of the world's leading producers of high-strength and cold-rolled steel. Plannja is the Nordic region's leading building sheet manufacturer. Gestamp Hardtech supplies the European and North American automotive industries with collision protection components. Ferruform makes chassis components for trucks and buses.

The forest industry is concentrated in Kalix and Piteå, where Billerud, Smurfit-Kappa and SCA produce paper and board, mainly for export. The forestry industry also includes several large sawmills.

One tenth of Sweden's electric power is produced in Norrbotten. Jokkmokk, with the big and small Lule Rivers, is Sweden's hydropower centre. The county is self-sufficient in electricity, including the power that is supplied to all of the process industries. Half of the electricity produced here is transmitted to other parts of the country.

Boliden's Aitik mine in Gällivare, which is one of

Europe's biggest copper mines, also produces gold and silver. Mining company LKAB, with mines and production facilities in Kiruna, Malmberget och Svappavaara manufactures iron ore pellets for the steel industry of Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

The LKAB of today is a world-class minerals group. With advanced technology, a strong capacity for innovation and successful product development, the underground mines of the Orefields can compete with the huge open-pit mines of Brazil and Australia.

Global demand for iron, steel and other metals is high, largely as a result of economic growth in Asia. The entire world market is affected by this strong growth, which means that companies in Norrbotten are realizing good market opportunities.

To increase production and secure the supply of iron ore, LKAB is implementing major investments in Kiruna and Malmberget. At the same time, Boliden is investing in Aitik to boost its copper production. These expenditures are a powerful injection for all of Norrbotten, since the primary industries are an important market for the construction, civil engineering and service sectors.

At the same time, mining operations have consequences for the surrounding communities. Buildings, roads and railways must be relocated when new orebodies



are to be developed. The planned relocation of Kiruna, in effect the creation of a new city, will mean the disappearance of significant cultural historic values, but it is also a spectacular undertaking that is attracting interest throughout the world.

Communications play a vital role for the regional economy. Shipping is essential for the supply of industrial raw materials and petroleum products. The harbours in Luleå and Piteå are open to shipping year-round, thanks to the national icebreaking service, which assists vessels all along the coast of northern Sweden during the winter.

In terms of tonnage, the port of Luleå is among Sweden's five largest, owing to the handling of raw materials for the mining and steel industries. Piteå is a shipping port for wood and paper.

For more than a century, the Ore Railway has been one of the country's most important rail lines. Ore trains operate around-the-clock, running from the mines in Kiruna and Malmberget to the harbours in Narvik and Luleå. Half of Sweden's total rail freight tonnage is hauled between Kiruna and Riksgränsen.

Some of the ore is processed at the steelmill in Luleå. From there, the steel is hauled by rail to SSAB's plant in Borlänge. Efficient rail links between north and south are important for the entire Swedish economy.

LKAB's mine and pelletizing plants in Kiruna, Plannja's thin-sheet production in Luleå, Vattenfall's power stations on the Lule River and Billerud's paper pulp operation in Karlsborg are important components of primary industry in Norrbotten.



LARS-ERIC AARO

is Vice President, Technology and Business Development, LKAB, and member of the board of directors of Luleå University of Technology. He works at the intersection of business and research.

"Norrbotten has unique prerequisites that will continue to make it a global player in the minerals and metals market. By investing in research and creating added value for customers, we have built world-class assets in our companies."

The process industry is an important driver of development in Norrbotten. LKAB and Boliden continue to invest tens of billions of kronor in new facilities for developing products and strengthening competitiveness. LKAB's pellets, upgraded from iron ore with unique properties, and SSAB's high-strength steel are world-leading products.

"To secure future expertise, we have our own research facilities and collaborate closely with the university."



Trade and industry are revitalized by education, research, new services and new products. Companies are growing, thanks to successes on markets outside of Norrbotten and Sweden.

PRODUCTION OF RAW MATERIALS may be the main driver of Norrbotten's economy, but small and medium-sized enterprises are assuming a role of ever-greater importance.

Älvsbyhus in Älvsbyn, which began as a local saw-mill, is now the largest manufacturer of prefabricated homes in the Nordic region. The company delivers most of the homes it builds to central and southern Sweden, Finland, Norway and Denmark. Älvsbyhus has factories in the southern Sweden and in Finland too.

Polarbröd in Älvsbyn not only delivers frozen bread all over Sweden, the company also exports to European countries including the food nation France. The company has two other bakeries in northern Sweden.

Polarica in Haparanda deals in berries and game meat for the European and world markets. Among Norrbotten companies, Polarica was a pioneer in trade

with Russia, and the company has a production plant in Poland.

Polaris Optic in Boden manufactures eyewear and has subsidiaries in England and Japan. Liko AB in Luleå, a world leader in patient lifts for the care sector, exports its products throughout the world and has a subsidiary in the USA.

The successes of export companies give the entire business community a strong belief in a bright future. According to an annual national survey by the Swedish Confederation of Enterprise, businesspeople in Norrbotten rank at the top when it comes to the will to grow. The business climate e.g., the interaction between business and society, has also improved.

In the early-1970s, the founding of Luleå University of Technology, then a university college, was an event that proved to have a tremendous impact on



KARIN JONSSON BODIN

is president of Polarbröd. Together with her sister Anna Borgeryd, she is a fifth-generation entrepreneur.

Polarbröd is a Norrbotten success story that began in the 1870s when a young baker's apprentice came to Älvsbyn and opened a café. Five generations later, the company employs about 400 people and bakes 35,000 tonnes of bread annually at three bakeries.

The main product is a traditional Norrbotten soft rye flatbread. The business concept is based on bread that is flash-frozen directly after baking and later thaws on the store shelf. Bread from Polarbröd is sold throughout Sweden and exported.



The manufacturing industry includes everything from turnkey prefab homes, designer eyewear and food production to mechanical engineering. Giving rise to new service companies, Luleå University of Technology plays a key role in economic development. Experience tourism and retail trade are growing sectors.

the development of Norrbotten. The degree and study programmes and research conducted at the university have been among the most important factors behind the rapid restructuring of business and industry in the county.

With 1,400 employees and 12,000 students, the university is Norrbotten's largest workplace. Study and degree programmes range over many areas including, applied sciences, humanities, social and behavioural sciences, teaching and learning, health sciences, music, media and drama.

Most education and research is based at the main campus in Luleå. The university also has campuses in Piteå and Skellefteå, and offers study programmes in different locations throughout Norrbotten.

(cont.)



YNGVE BERGKVIST

is the founder and owner of Icehotel, a hotel built of ice and snow and Sweden's internationally most popular tourist attraction. First, he worked with environmental issues at LKAB in Kiruna, began with white-water rafting, and then ran an inn and holiday camp in Jukkasjärvi; but he had few winter guests.

Jukkasjärvi is on the Torne River. Yngve harnessed the forces of nature and turned the cold, dark winter to advantage. The pure water freezes to crystal-clear ice, which is used as a building material for the world-famous hotel and as a raw material for sculpture and design. Each winter, the hotel is built anew of ice and snow; each spring, it melts away and returns to the river.

Icehotel welcomes guests from around the world and is fully-booked for most of the season. It is also one of Sweden's biggest PR products and the basis of a new service export. Ice from the Torne River is used, for example, to create sculptures for famous brands at events. Each year, hundreds of tonnes of ice are exported to every corner of the world for attractions such as the icebars in Stockholm, Milan, London and Tokyo.

Yngve Bergkvist has received many distinctions for his entrepreneurship, and in 2002 he was honoured as Swede of the Year.



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The university's early focus on computer and systems sciences explains the growth of the IT and telecoms sector. On the Luleå campus, the Aurorum Science Park is home to about a hundred companies, many of them exciting spin-offs from the university.

Education and human resources development have given rise to new businesses in many of the county's municipalities. At the university's School of Music in Piteå, the focus of the Acusticum business park is on music and media. Gällivare has concentrated on medical technology; Kalix and Pajala on computer technology and electronics.

The basis of Boden's local economy has shifted from the public to the private sector. Arjeplog, Arvidsjaur, Jokkmokk, Älvsbyn and Kiruna attract the European automakers. Kiruna is also a centre of space research.

Luleå is an industrial city as well as an educational and commercial centre. If Luleå is known internationally for its steel industry, retail trade is what gives it much of its local attraction.

In both Luleå and Norrbotten as a whole, the service sector continues to grow. More and more, tourism is becoming a new 'primary' industry. More than 3,000 people are employed in the hospitality trade, and their numbers are expected to rise as increasing numbers of Europeans wish to experience, year-round, the exotic nature and culture of Norrbotten.

Since the regional economy is so heavily dependent on business outside the county and the country, efficient air transport is essential. Luleå Airport is one of the country's largest airports in terms of total passengers. From a global perspective, the airport's location is very advantageous. From here, many of the world's major airports can be reached without intermediate stopovers, which presents many advantages for inter-continental carriers. The airport is also the base for F 21, Sweden's biggest air wing.

There are also airports with regular traffic in Kiruna, Gällivare, Arvidsjaur and Pajala. Norrbotten therefore has good infrastructure for further development of the tourism sector.

Giving rise to new service companies, Luleå University of Technology plays a key role in economic development. Experience tourism and retail trade are growing sectors.



SUSANNE JANGDAHL

manages Aurorum Science Park, a business park on the campus of Luleå University of Technology. Nearly 750 people are employed here in about a hundred companies.

"Cooperation with the university and close proximity to world-leading education and research gives both Aurorum and the companies strong competitive advantages.

The exciting thing is that many of the companies are out on the world market and are far advanced in terms of technology development. Many of them have started as research projects at the university, spun off, and later developed into successful companies."



BEHROUZ MORADDABASI

businessman, was born in Iran and came to Norrbotten to study mechanical engineering at Luleå University of Technology. After graduating with an MSc, he began working for a company that manufactured home-heating systems based on a new combustion technology.

Several years later, he took over the company and now runs Combi Heat Värmeprodukter AB in Vojakkala, just north of Haparanda. He has continued to develop the technology and has produced new models of home-heating boilers for wood, pellets, oil and gas.

"My family and I feel at home with the people here. The manufacturing is out-sourced to different engineering firms. I concentrate on sales and on developing new products."



MARKUS FAGERVALL

is a musician who rose to popularity on the television programme *Idol* by winning the jury's approval and the votes of the Swedish people. He is a hardworking singer with powerful charisma and presence.

Markus comes from Övertorneå and has strong ties with his hometown. He is proud of his origins, which has made him a worthy ambassador for the county and the Norrbotten way of life. He was Norrbottning of the Year in 2006.

"Growing up in Tornedalen has left its impression on me, and I'm prouder of my background the older I get."



LINA ANDERSSON

is an Olympic cross-country skiing gold medallist and one of Norrbotten's many gifted athletes. It was at the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin that Lina took the gold in team sprint together with team mate Anna Dahlberg. She also has several World Cup victories to her credit and has won Swedish Championship gold medals in several distance classes.

Lina grew up in Malmberget, just strides away from the skiing high school in Gällivare that has developed so many fine skiers.

"Besides sports, I enjoy fishing and the outdoors life. In spring, packing a tent and some food, putting on a pair of skis and taking off into the hills is rewarding after a competitive season."





PLANNJA BASKET

Sweden's most successful basketball team, has won championship upon championship since the late-1990s. The club owes much of its success to the longstanding tradition of the sport in Luleå. The city's basketball history dates back to the 1950s. In the 1970s, the club reached the first division and gained the support of Plannja AB, its main sponsor since then.

With American players on the team, basketball soon became a popular sport in Luleå. Strong support from local fans has made Luleå Sweden's basketball capital.



STEFAN JONSSON AND JON OSKAR ARNASON

together with Sarah Holmquist Arnason, own and operate Bryggargatan Restaurant and Bar in Piteå. In an old brewery steeped in tradition and dating from 1921, they have created a stylish gourmet restaurant. Their ingredients are a passion for well-prepared cuisine, produce from Norrbotten, a focus on the kitchen and art as an extra seasoning.

Jon Oskar's many years of experience from renowned eateries in Oslo have earned the restaurant a key position as a culinary forerunner. The proprietors generously share their knowledge and recipes with home chefs and competing restaurateurs.

"Our ambition has always been to promote an interest in food throughout Norrbotten. Today, it is much easier to obtain good local ingredients. Quality-wise, many restaurants have improved since we started in 2004."

Norrbotten is a melting pot of peoples and cultures. The Sami, Finnish and Swedish cultures together with a continuous influx of new people make the county multicultural.

10,000 YEARS AGO, people hunted and fished here. The first traces of agriculture and reindeer husbandry date back about one thousand years.

Most of Sweden's reindeer-herding Sami live in Norrbotten and two thirds of the country's reindeer are produced here. Many Sami work in other occupations, but reindeer husbandry is still an important source of income.

The traditional Sami culture is vital. Skilled Sami craftsmen make knives, jewellery and other items from horn, wood, leather, silver and pewter thread. Jokkmokk and Kiruna are centres of the Sami culture.

The most recent world heritage designation is Struve's meridian arc, a series of triangulation survey stations stretching from northern Norway to the Black Sea. Four of these points are in Norrbotten.

Other attractions in the county include about ten museums with exhibits covering everything from the Stone Age to mining. The Stone Age Village in Vuollerim depicts life as it was 6,000 years ago. Ájtte, Swedish Mountain and Sami Museum, in Jokkmokk describes the life of the Sami and the nature and culture of the high fell country.

Norrbottens Museum, the county museum in Luleå, manages extensive cultural heritage collections.



The people of Tornedalen, the border region of Sweden and Finland, share a common culture and history. The same place names are to be found on both sides of the Torne River; for example, Pello, Kolari and Kukkola.

Many of the people of Tornedalen have roots on both sides of the border, and their mother tongue, Meänkieli (meaning our language), a variety of Finnish, now has official national minority-language status.

Laponia is one of Norrbotten's three world heritage sites. This is a large area from the woodlands to fell country that will be preserved and protected, both for its unique nature and as a Sami cultural environment.

In Gammelstad, outside Luleå, is another world heritage site. Gammelstad is the world's largest and most well preserved church village. Surrounding the medieval church are more than 400 cottages that serve as overnight accommodation for parishioners. The church cottages are used to this day and Gammelstad is a living cultural environment.

The Silver Museum in Arjeplog has a unique collection of Sami artefacts and utility items once used by the Sami and local settlers.

Norrbottensteatern was Sweden's first regional theatre. Based in Luleå, the theatre company tours throughout the county. In addition to Norrbottensteatern there are several independent and amateur theatre groups such as the Sami theatre, Tornedalsteatern and local variety groups.

The musical scene spans many styles, from classical symphony orchestras and choirs to folk groups and rock bands. Kulturens hus in Luleå, a centre for the performing arts, is one of the county's finest music venues and home to Norrbotten Big Band and Norrbotten Chamber Orchestra.

Piteå, with the Luleå University of Technology School of Music, is a major musical centre in northern Sweden. Several music festivals are arranged every summer. Festspel i Pite älvdal is an event that gathers musicians from around the world for an intensive summer week of performances in the Pite River valley.



SOFIA JANNOK

Sami vocalist from Gällivare, has sung traditional Sami music since she was a child. She made her stage debut at the age of eleven and has performed on radio and television, toured in Sweden, Europe and the USA, and recorded CDs and music for film.

"It's difficult to describe my music in words. The notes dance somewhere between the mystique of the Northern Lights and the secure embrace of the fire; inspired by the heaven, the earth and the place where they meet."

Different influences can be heard in the music. At the heart of it is the Sami culture and the sounds of nature. With a combination of instruments and tonal variations, the music spans several genres, taking inspiration from jazz, pop, folk and traditional Sami jojk. Sofia performs in concert halls, on the jazz stage, in churches and at festivals.



MIKAEL NIEMI

author, native and resident of Pajala, won acclaim for his novel *Popular Music from Vittula*. The story, which has been released in about 30 countries, has appeared as a feature film and has been performed on stage in Sweden and Finland.

"At the age of fifteen, I started writing poems and short stories and dreamed of becoming an author. My maternal grandmother was Sami and my paternal grandfather came from Tornedalen. My roots are two cultures, which has given me strength and inspiration."

His first book was a collection of verse entitled *Nosebleed During Morning Service*. Since its publication, Mikael Niemi has continued to write poetry, prose and for the stage. *Popular Music from Vittula* is a humorous tale of boyhood in Pajala. The book won him the August Award in 2000 and he was hailed as Norrbotten of the Year that same year.

Cross-border cooperation is a way of life. There is a longstanding tradition of east-west interaction.

NORRBOTTEN IS UNIQUE in so many ways. The county borders on two countries; Norway and Finland. Here, cross-border trade has always played an important role. This is also the reason why Ikea chose to locate a store in Haparanda, right on the border with neighbouring Tornio.

The location gives the store a broad base of customers in both Sweden and Finland, and even Norway and Russia. Several Swedish retail chains have followed suit, and similar development is taking place across the border in Finland.

Exchanges between people on either side of the Torne River are intensive. Cooperation among border communities covers most aspects of civic life; for example, education, the service sector and emergency services.

The Bothnian Arc, the Swedish-Finnish coast around the Bay of Bothnia, is a region of cross-border cooperation in which trade and industry have much in common; forestry and metallurgy are important primary industries; IT and telecoms are vital new sectors, and universities and research are having a big impact on development. The university cities of Luleå and

Oulu share many similarities and their collaboration has intensified.

Norrbotten's strategic position makes the county's roads and railways important thoroughfares for traffic to and from the neighbouring countries. Via Norrbotten, Sweden has land links with Finland and Russia. Haparandabanan, the Haparanda railway line, is the only Swedish rail link with Finland. With the Ore Railway there is a link from the Norwegian Atlantic coast via Haparanda through Finland to Russia and Asia.

The northern counties of Norway, Sweden and Finland have long had close ties. In recent years this cooperation has also come to include northwestern Russia, in the so-called Barents Region. This is Europe's northernmost region and it is rich in natural resources in the form of minerals, oil, gas, forests, fisheries and attractive wilderness.

The vast reserves of oil and gas in the Barents Sea and the Norwegian Sea have not yet been tapped, but will soon be exploited. During the coming decade, more than 1,000 billion kronor will be invested in Norway and western Russia. The wealth of natural and energy resources in the Barents Region and the Arctic is now attracting increasing interest.



Fisheries, oil and gas, in northern Norway and northwestern Russia, are big and growing industries in the Barents Region, our part of Europe.



CHRISTINA LUGNET AND SVEN-ERIK BUCHT

respectively municipal director and mayor of Haparanda, are two proponents of the dynamic growth now taking place in the border town.

Cooperation with the Finnish twin city Tornio has been longstanding and has taken many forms; social services, education, athletics and even a golf course with holes on both sides of the border. The towns now market themselves jointly under the name HaparandaTornio.

The vision, based on the towns' location at the border, has been to create a trade area and meeting place for the entire region. This is a vision which Sven-Erik Bucht personally communicated to Ikea founder Ingvar Kamprad and which resulted in the establishment of Ikea's northernmost outlet in Haparanda.

The role and tasks of the County Administrative Board.

THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD, is a government agency that works with a wide variety of issues covering the entire sphere of civic life. The County Administrative Board has a mandate from the Government and Parliament to coordinate different societal interests, to realize national objectives and to promote development in the county.

It is the job of the County Administrative Board to see that the decisions taken by the Government and the Parliament have the best possible effects in the county. The County Administrative Board does this, in among other ways, by:

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- establishing regional objectives
 - coordinating efforts in the county in the form of joint strategies, planning, measures and activities
 - monitoring, supervising and inspecting to ensure that various activities are conducted in accordance with laws and regulations
 - reviewing appeals of municipal decisions
 - granting permits of various kinds
 - supporting development projects and companies via funding
 - management of e.g., predatory wildlife and national parks
 - providing information and advice, follow-up and assessment

Some of the County Administrative Board's areas of responsibility include:

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- General elections
 - Housing and urban environmental planning
 - Animal protection and veterinary issues
 - Public health
 - Integration
 - Hunting and fishing
 - Gender equality
 - Communications
 - Crisis management
 - Cultural sites
 - Drivers' licences
 - Agriculture
 - Foodstuffs
 - Environmental protection
 - Conservation
 - Regional development
 - Reindeer husbandry
 - Social services
 - Commercial traffic

In addition, the County Administrative Board is responsible for certain administrative issues in connection with gaming and lotteries, funerals, foundations, state loan guarantees, citizenship and guardianship.

*The county is just as large as Austria
and twice as large as the Netherlands.*

NORRBOTTEN IS NEARLY 100,000 square kilometres in area. The population of the county is about a quarter of a million. This means that three percent of the Swedish population lives in a region that covers one quarter of the country's area.

However, not all of Norrbotten is extremely sparsely populated. Most residents live in and around urban areas.

The interior holds natural resources in the form of timber, ore and hydropower, but most of the industry is located near the coast; in Piteå, Luleå and Kalix. The coastal area is also the most densely populated part of the county. More than half of Norrbotten's residents live within a radius of about 100 kilometres from the county town of Luleå.

The area has 170,000 residents. This is the greatest population concentration in northern Sweden.

The Orefields region, which includes the mining centres of Kiruna and Gällivare, with a population of about 40,000, is the county's other industrial driving force.

Around the Bay of Bothnia, on the Swedish and Finnish sides, live more than half a million people. From a Nordic perspective, the Bothnian coast is a densely populated growth region.

The Barents Region, which consists of the northern parts of Sweden, Norway, Finland and northwestern Russia, has a population of about six million.

Norrbotten belongs to this vast northern region, which is attracting increasingly greater interest in the EU and other parts of the world.





**County Administrative
Board of Norrbotten**

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