A good life
A presentation of Region Västra Götaland
Live well in Västra Götaland

Good health is a prerequisite for a good life. But we also need work and education, access to a rich cultural life and good communications. The air must be clean and the sea healthy; a good environment for future generations to grow up in. Region Västra Götaland aims to contribute to a thriving Västra Götaland where people want to live and work.

Important tasks for Region Västra Götaland are to promote good health for all its inhabitants and to ensure good healthcare. Some 45,000 of our approximately 50,000 employees work in healthcare at hospitals, healthcare centres and dental care centres. This makes Region Västra Götaland one of the biggest employers in Sweden.

Region Västra Götaland also creates prerequisites for growth in Västra Götaland. This is done in cooperation with local authorities, universities and other institutions of higher education, trade and industry, associations and federations, and government bodies. Growth must take people, the environment and finances into consideration.

The Västra Götaland Region is governed by democratically elected politicians. The 149 members of the Regional Council are elected by the inhabitants of Västra Götaland on election day every four years. 
Good health is a bliss and a basis for sustainable development and growth in Västra Götaland.

The foundation of good public health is a society where people enjoy good living conditions and a healthy environment and are able to participate and make their voice heard.

It is therefore important to pay attention to the prerequisites that create good health on equal terms for everyone.

Public health matters in Region Västra Götaland are the province of the Public Health Committee, whose task it is to develop and evaluate public health work in Västra Götaland. In this area, Region Västra Götaland cooperates with the local authorities, non-profit associations and government authorities and agencies. But public health work is a responsibility and an important issue in all activities and operations within Region Västra Götaland.

Lars Nilsson and Ella-Stina Wijk work in the Green Rehab project at Göteborg’s Botanical Gardens. The project provides rehabilitation for employees of Region Västra Götaland who have been on sick-leave for stress-related illnesses.

Nine out of ten people in Västra Götaland consider their health to be good.

Alen Delija and his father Ivan enjoying a visit to Skräckle Park in Vänersborg.
Health and Care

Region Västra Götaland is responsible for providing the inhabitants of Västra Götaland with the healthcare and medical treatment that they need. Care may be anything from advice over the telephone to a visit to a healthcare centre and qualified specialist treatment at a hospital.

Care in Västra Götaland must be of high quality, provided on equal terms and easily accessible. Patients should, as far as possible, be able to choose the hospital or healthcare centre where they wish to be treated.

The Health and Medical Care department works proactively through information and direct action. More and more hospitals are becoming so-called “Health-promoting Hospitals”, which means that they work actively to help their patients and personnel and the inhabitants of their catchment area to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

This twofold responsibility, for both healthcare and medical treatment and regional development, is positive for both healthcare and economic development in Västra Götaland. For example, research and development carried on in co-operation with trade and industry helps to provide healthcare access to new, effective methods and technologies at the same time as they create new products and services.

In Västra Götaland there are 17 hospitals, 138 healthcare centres and 170 public dental care centres. Some care is provided by private centres that have contract agreements with Region Västra Götaland.

Some 45,000 people work in health and medical care and the budget is approximately SEK 35 billion, or about 90% of Region Västra Götaland’s total budget.
Primary healthcare

The basis for healthcare and medical treatment is primary healthcare; the kind of care largely provided by the healthcare centres.

Primary healthcare deals with the most common illnesses, chronic illnesses, many of the illnesses specific to children and the elderly, mental illness and substance abuse. Healthcare centres possess the professional skills required to work with general medicine, psychiatry, geriatrics, gynaecology, prenatal care, paediatrics, physical therapy and occupational therapy.

Primary healthcare also works preventively through various health-promoting initiatives, such as family centres, children’s clinics and prenatal clinics, education and information for parents, and in schools.

Local healthcare

To give the inhabitants of Västra Götaland good healthcare and medical treatment, primary healthcare, municipal healthcare, private caregivers and hospitals must cooperate closely. The basic concept is for most inhabitants to have the healthcare they need close at hand.
Hospital care

Hospital care is primarily intended for patients with serious illnesses and life-threatening conditions. Many hospitals provide both emergency and planned treatment in a number of specialised fields, including internal medicine, surgery, urology, orthopaedics, ear, nose and throat care, psychiatry, women’s healthcare, children’s and young people’s healthcare and geriatric healthcare.

But not all hospitals specialise in everything. In order to maintain a high level of quality and safety, emergency treatment, for example, is concentrated to certain hospitals. Other hospitals specialise in planned care and have developed profiles of their own. Alingsås hospital, for example, specialises in hip and knee joint operations.

Most hospitals are also organised into hospital groups.

Sahlgrenska University Hospital, SU, is responsible for specialised diagnostics and treatment that cannot be offered at Region Västra Götaland’s other hospitals. Southern Älvsborg Hospital, SÄS, provides highly specialised care in the form of radiology for cancer patients. Sahlgrenska University Hospital provides patients from all over the country with certain specialised fields through the National Medical Care system. Examples of such specialised fields include cardiology for children and young people and transplant surgery.
Play therapy is an important activity at The Queen Silvia Children's Hospital in Göteborg. Play therapy allows children to play and create, and at the same time handle their experiences and gain strength from their stay in hospital. There are also activities for siblings like Marcus and Johanna Huttu, pictured here together with sibling support therapist Toni Berisa.

17 hospitals, 4 hospital groups

**Sahlgrenska University Hospital, SU**
The hospital group consists of SU/Sahlgrenska, SU/Mölndal and SU/Östra.

**The NU Hospital Group**
The hospital group consists of Northern Älvsborg County Hospital (NÄL), Uddevalla Hospital, and the local hospitals in Strömstad, Lysekil, and Dalsland.

**Skaraborg Hospital, SkaS**
The hospital group consists of Skövde Hospital, Lidköping Hospital, Falköping Hospital and Mariestad Hospital.

**Southern Älvsborg Hospital, SÄS**
The hospital group consists of the hospitals in Borås and Skene.

**Kungälv Hospital**

**Frölunda Specialist Hospital**

**Alingsås Hospital**

(Angered Local Hospital will be completed in 2011)
The sleep medicine unit at Skövde Hospital investigates and treats people with sleeping disorders. Here, Yüksel Peker, associate professor and senior physician, is telling Jonny Eriksson how a polysomnography study is performed.

At 3.44 pm on 28 March 2008, little Melker was born to proud parents Mariella Rundqvist and Daniel Karlsson at North Älvsborg County Hospital in Trollhättan.

7,500 visits are made to Region Västra Götaland’s hospitals every day.

50 children are born in Region Västra Götaland’s hospitals every day.

The Three Cities’ ambulance turns out. Nowadays nurses always accompany the ambulances on emergency calls. From left to right: Hasse Zetterman, (nurse), Jessica Råbe, (nurse) and Thomas Svensson (paramedic).
Research, development and education

Care is constantly being developed and improved. Much medical research is devoted to preventing and treating major national diseases, for example cardiovascular diseases, asthma, allergies, dementia, and diabetes. The aim is for research to benefit patients as quickly as possible.

Sahlgrenska University Hospital is a driving force when it comes to research and development of methods of treatment. This knowledge is transferred continuously to other hospitals in Region Västra Götaland so that new methods can benefit the whole population. One example of this is balloon dilation of coronary arteries, which is now performed at several other hospitals.

In primary healthcare, research and development focuses on methods of treatment and ways of working. The Sahlgrenska Academy at Göteborg University is the node for education, research and development in healthcare and medical treatment. The university is responsible for basic research, while Region Västra Götaland is chiefly responsible for point-of-care clinical research and participation in medical training. Education, research and development are also conducted in cooperation with the University College of Borås, University West in Trollhättan and the University of Skövde.

Region Västra Götaland’s different healthcare units supervise and train doctors, nurses, physical therapists, speech therapists and other healthcare personnel.

Sahlgrenska University Hospital has Sweden’s first biobank for umbilical blood. Umbilical blood contains stem cells that can be used to cure severe diseases like leukaemia and certain other blood diseases.
The Care Portal –
www.vard.vgregion.se

Region Västra Götaland’s care portal is a meeting place on the internet for health and care services. The portal provides paths to information and services that assist the region’s inhabitants in making contact with such care services as:

- Information about health issues, illnesses, symptoms, examinations and treatments.
- A search function, with directions to hospitals, healthcare centres and other care institutions, linked to a map and a travel planner.
- The possibility to book and cancel visits to the doctor, renew prescriptions and ask a care provider questions by means of a personal contact function.
- Information about patients’ rights, what laws and regulations govern care services and the cost of various treatments.

A heart operation. 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.

Tvätteriet i Alingsås, the central laundry, washes hospital clothes, surgical clothing and drapes and sheets for Region Västra Götaland’s healthcare services. Personnel handle 40 tons of textiles and 35,000 garments very day. Nancy Muuna and Camilla Svensson are seen here sorting work clothes ready to be washed.
Approximately 800 people have an operation at one of Region Västra Götaland’s hospitals every day.

**Sahlgrenska International Care**

Sahlgrenska International Care AB sells healthcare to patients from abroad and arranges study places for students from outside Sweden who want to train to be doctors and dentists. Sahlgrenska International Care is also tasked with coordinating Region Västra Götaland’s healthcare equipment donations to other countries. Sahlgrenska International Care is a wholly owned subsidiary.

Christer Svensson is being cared for at the rehabilitation clinic at Southern Älvsborg Hospital in Borås after suffering a stroke. Here he is practising balance, strength and coordination with the assistance of physiotherapist Marianne Giesler-Hörnberg.

The largest patient group at the Oral and Maxillofacial Rehabilitation Clinic at Skövde Hospital consists of people who for some reason have lost an eye. There are only approximately 15 maxillofacial prosthetists in the whole of Scandinavia and this is the only one outside the university hospitals. – The combination of craftsmanship and intensive contact with the patient make this a very exciting profession, says maxillofacial prosthetist Håkan Olsson.
Public dental care

Healthy teeth in a healthy mouth are important for health and well-being.

Public dental care centres carry out everything from the most common dental treatment to the most complicated specialised dental care, the latter in cooperation with the healthcare services. 95% of the children and approximately 50% of the adults in Västra Götaland are public dental care patients. As from 2009 all Västra Götaland citizens will be entitled to free dental care until the age of 21, in public or private dental care.

The guiding principle is to “keep healthy teeth healthy” so Public Dental Care promotes preventive dental care to make more young adults visit their dentist regularly. They will pay a fixed monthly fee for dental care and the amount depends on the state of their oral health when they sign up.

All children in grades 6-9 have their teeth varnished with fluoride three times every school year. This is part of Public Dental Care’s initiative focused on children and young people in the whole of Västra Götaland. Information and knowledge about oral health is provided by dental clinics, schools and children’s and mothers’ healthcare services.

Public Dental Care has clinics for general dental care, specialised dental care and hospital dentistry throughout Västra Götaland.

X-ray pictures reveal what the dentist cannot see through visual observation. The most common dental diseases are caries and periodontoclasia.
Madelen Bynander pays SEK 45 for preventive dental care, so-called dental care at a fixed cost. Most people sign up, says dental hygienist Mirna Azzam at the public dental care clinic in Svenljunga.

Dental care is free up to the age of 21.

2,500 children and adults visit the public dental care services every day.

Fluoride treatment at Kareby school, just north of Kungälv. Dental nurse Siv Landgren flosses and sprays fluoride between the children’s teeth.
Habilitation, interpreter services and aids and appliances

Region Västra Götaland helps people with disabilities to take part in society and gives them opportunities to influence their situation and live a good life.

The unit for habilitation has 1,000 employees working at some fifty locations in Västra Götaland.

Access to aids and appliances in daily life is an important prerequisite for participation. The Medical Aids and Appliances section of Regional Service provides Region Västra Götaland’s services and the local authorities with various kinds of aids, appliances and services. The Medical aids and appliance centres play a prominent role in this service.

Specialist services for people with congenital or permanent disabilities.

- Habilitation for people with, for example, learning difficulties, neuropsychiatric disabilities or serious physical disabilities.
- Habilitation for people suffering from hearing impairment, deafness or deaf-blindness or visual impairment.
- Interpreter services for people who are deaf or deaf-blind or have a hearing impairment and people with voice, speech and language impairment.

This is additional to other help from local authorities, primary healthcare and other healthcare services.

Approximately 90 hours of interpreter services for deaf people are provided every day.

A hearing aid can make it possible to continue working even with a hearing impairment. Region Västra Götaland provides hearing aids that use state-of-the-art technology.
– I must sit comfortably and it has to roll easily, says Hugo. Claes, a member of the child and youth team, helps Hugo adjust his wheelchair at the medical aids and appliances centre in Mölndal. The team consists of engineers, consultants and technicians who help people with fitting, adjustment, special fitting and service of their aids and appliances.
Sustainable development
Västra Götaland’s development must be viewed in a long-term perspective – production and consumption must not erode but support future possibilities. Short-term gains must not diminish future prerequisites.

Good health is a prerequisite. It is also important that people have access to work and education, a rich cultural life, a good environment and good communications. All these together, provide a foundation for strong sustainable growth in Västra Götaland.

Region Västra Götaland has the principal responsibility for creating the prerequisites for a Västra Götaland that takes into consideration people, the environment and finances.

Together with other players, for example local authorities, trade and industry, institutions of higher education, authorities and organisations, Region Västra Götaland supports and drives development with Västra Götaland’s best interests as its objective. Greater equality and integration are two important issues that must permeate all work relating to sustainable development.

Västra Götaland affects and is affected by its surroundings in many ways. Region Västra Götaland’s politicians and public officials therefore work to follow and influence decision-making in the EU and to listen to and learn from the surrounding world in various ways. Membership of international organisations and networks, cooperation in EU programmes and projects and with other regions, countries and cultures, provide important opportunities for the exchange of knowledge and experience.

Västra Götaland is surrounded by sea and lakes. The maritime sector creates jobs, provides important knowledge about the sea, and promotes well-being among the region’s inhabitants. All good reasons for Region Västra Götaland’s development of maritime strategy.

The growth programme – an important tool

Together with other players, Region Västra Götaland is responsible for drawing up a growth programme for Västra Götaland. The growth programme is an important tool in the joint work of securing sustainable development in Västra Götaland.

This region-wide programme covers the whole of Västra Götaland and four local programmes are focused on Fyrbodal, the Göteborg region, Sjuhärad and Skaraborg.

Based on Västra Götaland’s prerequisites, cooperation between different players who affect the development of trade and industry in different ways is prioritised, coordinated and created. Region Västra Götaland has a coordinating function and supports a number of especially prioritised activities.

The growth programme has been introduced to coordinate action to promote sustainable growth in Sweden. To complement the growth programme, Region Västra Götaland also draws up programmes and strategies in areas that are particularly important to trade and industry in Västra Götaland. Maritime strategy is one example.
A good life for everyone

A quarter of a million people in Västra Götaland have permanent disabilities – difficulty in moving, hearing or seeing, processing and interpreting information, or being allergic to certain substances.

Our objective is for all the region’s inhabitants to be able to participate in society – to become educated and support themselves, use public transport, go out to restaurants and the theatre, and exercise their civil rights and obligations.

Work on increasing participation and accessibility is carried out at both individual and community levels.

Region Västra Götaland aims to set an example as regards accessibility; everyone shall have access to what Region Västra Götaland provides and be treated well. Obstacles must be counteracted or removed. Attitudes must be influenced.

Greater accessibility for people with disabilities makes society more accessible for everyone. If places are easy to access with a wheelchair, they are also easy to access with a pram.

There are approximately 180,000 people of working age in Västra Götaland who have some form of disability.

Elvira Kivi enjoys a latte. The West Swedish Tourist Board, a company owned by Region Västra Götaland, has compiled a database of information about how such places as theatres and cafés function for guests with disabilities. www.vastsverige.com

Zandra Classon and Hélén Andersson are journalists at CTI, a centre that makes information accessible to inhabitants with reading difficulties. This is where the talking magazine is produced. Information can be provided in Daisy format, via the internet, on audio CD or as a podcast. The centre has editorial offices in Göteborg, Borås and Skövde.

There are approximately 180,000 people of working age in Västra Götaland who have some form of disability.
The environment

Region Västra Götaland shall promote a good environment in two ways. Partly by itself setting an example as a large organisation and partly by cooperating with other players in Västra Götaland to secure environmentally acceptable sustainable development.

Our internal environmental efforts involve working actively and strategically to try to reduce negative environmental impact, for example by procuring environment-friendly products that reduce risks to the environment and health and by reducing transportation.

Externally oriented environmental work involves running development projects – Region Västra Götaland contributes ideas, networks and support to solve problems or offer a solution. By acting as the driving force in Västra Götaland’s efforts to achieve environmental objectives, many positive forces in trade and industry, local authorities, the county administrative board, universities and university colleges, and organisations are brought together, and this enhances the effect of the action taken. Energy, food and transportation are at the top of the region’s list of priorities.

An energy system that is sustainable in a longer perspective and a reduction of climatic impact are two important environmental ambitions. More efficient production and use of energy, more renewable energy and lower energy consumption are means to achieve this end.

The “Smart Energi” climate change dialogue is the main climate initiative being pursued by Region Västra Götaland and the 49 local authorities. The goal is for Västra Götaland to be independent of fossil energy
by 2030. The work is focused on methods that can be imple-
mented in Västra Götaland.

More efficient and energy-efficient transportation and a change-
over to renewable fuels and new technology are important factors
in making Västra Götaland’s transport system sustainable from
an environmental point of view.

Region Västra Götaland’s employees travel extensively and
only eco-cars are purchased as official cars. The procurement
of eco-vehicles affects the market and also creates a demand for
more filling stations for renewable motor fuels.

Biogas is one of the best environmental vehicle fuels. Biogas
produced from waste creates an ecocycle and provides revenues,
reduces emissions and is 20-30% cheaper than petrol. Region
Västra Götaland has been one of the major financial contributors
to the Biogas Väst project since 2001.

Vätgas Sverige (hydrogen gas) started in 2003 on the initiative
of Region Västra Götaland. Its task is to promote the introduction
of hydrogen and fuel cells in Sweden.

Over one third of all energy in Sweden is used in buildings
and Region Västra Götaland is promoting the market for energy-
efficient construction. Region Västra Götaland also puts great
effort into developing the market for solar power, wind power
and bioenergy.

Region Västra Götaland has some 50,000 employees all over
Västra Götaland. They affect the environment in many ways.
Region Västra Götaland purchases goods and services for over
SEK six billion every year and contributes to more sustainable
production and consumption by setting high environmental
requirements. The “green list” of furniture and fittings for example,
includes only environment-friendly products.

Together with Stockholm County Council and Region Skåne,
Region Västra Götaland procures 55% of all medical articles in

Viveca Reimers, coordinator of environmentally adapted
procurement and purchasing at Region Västra Götaland,
filling up with biogas.
Houses that require little energy are good for the environment and climate. One example is “passive housing”, such as this extremely energy efficient house being built in Lidköping. Region Västra Götaland has a programme supporting this kind of technology.

Every day Region Västra Götaland’s various activities consume

- 620 litres of alcohol-based disinfectant
- 380 kg of machine dishwashing detergent
- 1,400 batteries
- 95,000 pairs of disposable gloves
- 130 km of toilet paper
- 130 litres of liquid soap
- 56,000 disposable cups
- 26 tons of photocopying paper or 280,000 sheets
- 35,000 rubbish bags

... and a distance of 80,000 km is travelled on official business trips by car.

Sweden. This cooperation has meant that more than half of Sweden’s medical articles are procured according to set economic, social and environmental standards.

Pharmaceuticals are manufactured to fortify and cure but they can also be dangerous if allowed to enter the eco-cycle. Environmental measures include choosing drugs with a low environmental impact and disposing of leftover drugs in a suitable manner.

Good food is good for both health and the environment. Region Västra Götaland works to increase the production of ecological and locally produced food. Region Västra Götaland itself is a major consumer of environment-friendly food. In our own institutional kitchens in hospitals, cultural institutions and schools, the proportion of ecological food is steadily growing.

Region Västra Götaland has established Skolmatsakademin (the School Food Academy), a network for the promotion of good eating habits in schools. Around 20 municipalities are participating in the project.

Read more at
www.vgregion.se/miljo

Region Västra Götaland wants to increase the amount of ecological food in its own restaurants. 13% of the food used in the kitchen at Southern Älvsborg Hospital in Borås is ecologically produced. Head Chef Aila Nyman is seen preparing a climate-smart dish.
Flourishing trade and industry

All successful companies begin with a good idea. If ideas are to grow and develop into healthy, profitable companies, they need good breeding grounds. Västra Götaland has good prerequisites for trade and industry and many opportunities for education. Not least important being co-operation between trade and industry, universities and university colleges.

In cooperation with other players, Region Västra Götaland works to take advantage of the development potential that exists in the region. An important element in this endeavour is to develop entrepreneurship by interesting young people in enterprise, supporting innovations and providing financing of different kinds to support companies. Another important tool is support of company incubators. An incubator is a growth environment for young companies linked to universities and other institutions of higher education and offering offices, professional skills, contacts and capital.

Region Västra Götaland works to strengthen and develop areas that are important to Västra Götaland’s trade and industry, such as biomedicine and health, vehicles, energy, films and the experience sector. Region Västra Götaland provides financial support for projects and activities that contribute to sustainable development in trade and industry in different ways. One example is Almi Väst, Region Västra Götaland’s provider of risk financing, business counselling and support for innovations.

Supporting women’s enterprise is given high priority as is stimulating enterprise among people with a non-Swedish background.

The film industry has grown into a strong sector in Västra Götaland and Region Västra Götaland’s own film company, Film i Väst, plays an important role in this development. Film i Väst contributes to the financing of film projects and thereby attracts both Swedish and international companies to Trollhättan. Approximately 160 feature films have been co-produced here since 1997. The photograph was taken during the filming of Josef Fare’s Zozo.

Discovering new concepts can contribute to new ideas and in the long term lead to entrepreneurship and new companies. At Innovatum in Trollhättan, which is one of the Science Centres that Region Västra Götaland supports, children and young people can try their hand at different scientific and technical experiments.
If women were to establish companies to the same extent as men, Västra Götaland would see 3,000 new companies every year.

Many industrial companies in Västra Götaland have to keep on developing to remain competitive. Region Västra Götaland supports the Industriell Dynamik network that works to develop small and medium-size industrial companies.

Region Västra Götaland uses the East India man Götheborg as a platform for tourist information, encounters leading to new contacts and cultural exchanges. Seminars, concerts and exhibitions are popular attractions at all ports of call.

The computer games company Lockpick is one of many technology and knowledge based companies that have received financing (seed capital) from Region Västra Götaland. The company is based at Gothia Science Park in Skövde, one of ten incubators supported by Region Västra Götaland.
The teachers are just wonderful,” says Lorraleine who studies with Muhamed at Göteborgs Folkhögskola in Bergsjön. The school has 120 students and most of them take a general course that will qualify them for higher studies.

Region Västra Götaland works to strengthen the prerequisites for the Swedish automotive industry with an emphasis on Västra Götaland and stimulates research and development in vehicle safety. The largest industrial investments in research and development in Swedish are made in the automotive sector.

Research and development for growth

Compared to the rest of Europe, Västra Götaland tops the ranking when it comes to trade and industry’s investment in research and development (R&D). In order for Västra Götaland to continue to be attractive for research and development, it is important that its universities and other institutions of higher education maintain a high international standard. Good cooperation between companies and institutions of higher education is important. Region Västra Götaland stimulates R&D cooperation between companies and institutions of higher education in areas that are important to Västra Götaland’s growth and development.

Knowledge and professional skills development

One key to competitive sustainable development is knowledge and professional skills. Together with universities, university colleges and other education providers, Region Västra Götaland analyses and adapts tertiary education to the needs of working life.

One area of focus is to reduce the differences in the level of educational attainment. There are substantial differences between men’s and women’s choices of education and also a marked social and geographical imbalance in recruitment to higher education. Our own educational centres, six folk high schools and seven rural studies colleges in Västra Götaland, are important in pushing development forward.
Tourism

Experiences and events are important for creating an attractive Västra Götaland. Tourism is an important growth and development factor that creates jobs. The West Sweden Tourist Board, owned by Region Västra Götaland, develops and markets Västra Götaland in co-operation with, among others, the local authorities and tourism companies. One important initiative is the common web-site, where information can be found about almost all sights and attractions in Västra Götaland. www.vastsverige.com

The Dalsland Canal, dating from the 1860s, is one of Europe’s most beautiful waterways and a very popular destination for tourists. The most popular place of all is the Håverud aqueduct, which attracts some half a million visitors every year.

Guest nights in Västra Götaland total some 7.9 million a year.

The Swedish scenes in the films about the Swedish Knight Templar Arn were filmed in Västra Götaland. Jan Guillou’s novels started Arn tourism in Skaraborg.
Infrastructure and communications

Västra Götaland has been a centre of trade for thousands of years. Half of all Swedish exports pass through the Port of Göteborg and the freight must arrive at the right time and without being damaged. People must also be able to travel quickly, safely and in an as environment-friendly way as possible.

Region Västra Götaland takes part in the planning of infrastructure and public transport. An important part of the work involves compiling information, together with the local authorities. This indicates which investments in roads and railways are most important, information then used to persuade the Government, parliament and government agencies to increase investment in Västra Götaland. Region Västra Götaland also contributes funds to enable upgrading and extension of strategically important roads to begin sooner than planned by national authorities.

Together with the local authorities, Region Västra Götaland own Västtrafik AB, providing public transport in the form of buses, trams, trains and ferries. The number of passengers travelling by public transport in Västtrafik is Sweden’s second largest public transport company. 3,400 Västtrafik season tickets are recharged every day and 12,300 people buy a ticket at a reduced price.
More than 580,000 journeys are made with Västtrafik every day.

Västra Götaland is increasing steadily, but if Västra Götaland’s development is to be sustainable in the long term even more people must travel by public transport. This requires public transport that is efficient, safe, reasonably priced, and environmentally friendly and that can be used by everyone.

Almost all households in Västra Götaland have a broadband internet connection. Region Västra Götaland and the local authorities have built a high-capacity broadband network linking all the main conurbations in Västra Götaland. Region Västra Götaland has distributed government grants and in some cases contributed further financing. The network is being extended continuously to reach more households and satisfy increasing needs.

Broadband strengthens Västra Götaland’s competitiveness by providing possibilities for more enterprise, better service and personal development. Telecommuting is also possible which means that people might choose to travel less.

Västra Götaland is Sweden’s main transport and industry region and an important transit area for increasing amounts of freight from the whole of Scandinavia. Göteborg has the largest port in Scandinavia, which makes great demands on the region’s roads and railways.
Culture for the whole of Västra Götaland

Culture is part of human life. Culture can be found wherever there are people. Culture is important to the individual’s development and quality of life. And to the development of society – for employment, regional development and growth.

Since the start, Region Västra Götaland has invested consciously in culture and has the largest regional culture budget in the country, both in real terms and per inhabitant.

Culture’s role in society is indisputable. Alongside the major institutions, organisations, non-institutional culture, and others who work with culture are all important cogs.

Region Västra Götaland allocates SEK 600 per person to culture annually. This is twice as much as other regions and county councils.

Handicraft is a part of our cultural heritage. Kristinn Petursson is a homecraftsman and makes things out of steel wire in his studio in Olofstorp. Here he is holding a large bowl made out of black wire and brass. In Region Västra Götaland seven homecraft consultants work to spread homecraft knowledge – about natural materials, energy-efficient techniques and reuse.

Approximately 2,000 people visit Region Västra Götaland museums every day.

Göteborgs Symfoniker, the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, which is also the National Orchestra of Sweden, is internationally renowned. The orchestra puts on some 170 concerts or other musical events at Gothenburg Concert Hall annually. Music Director Gustavo Dudamel is one of the most sought-after conductors in the world. Göteborgs Symfoniker AB is owned by Region Västra Götaland.
Culture is everywhere. The map shows the main centres owned or financed by Region Västra Götaland.

The Göteborg Culture Festival is one of Sweden's biggest city festivals. For six days every year, everyone can enjoy music, art, poetry, dancing, food and much more besides right in the centre of Göteborg.

Information about Region Västra Götaland's museums can be found at www.vastarvet.se.
Information about Västra Götaland's cultural events can be found at: www.kulturvast.se
Region Västra Götaland wish to give artists and cultural workers better prerequisites to develop and work in Västra Götaland. Scholarships and international artistic exchanges are two ways in which this is done.

International exchange and competition from outside are becoming increasingly important factors in this respect. The cultural diversity of today is in itself a source of inspiration and development.

Region Västra Götaland implements its cultural policy by issuing written directives and providing financial grants to regional institutions and organisations supporting free culture. A large part of the budget goes to the institutions, but “free” culture and almost a hundred cultural organisations around Västra Götaland also receive funds in the form of operating grants or project support.

Alongside the major public cultural institutions, other regional

It is important that all inhabitants of Västra Götaland have access to culture, both as visitors and audiences and through their own cultural creations. The Göteborg Opera, for example, has premises in Göteborg and Skövde and tours extensively throughout the region. The Göteborg Symphony Orchestra is commissioned to perform at Vara Concert Hall and tour.

In order for children and young people to be able to participate and enjoy these cultural offerings, Region Västra Götaland pays an organiser’s subsidy, a financial grant, to encourage local authorities to provide opportunities for children and young people to encounter culture in their everyday life, and to use art and culture in schools and preschools. Promoting culture for children and young people is included in the directives of all regional institutions and organisations.

Culture as a sector is growing and more people are working with culture, thereby contributing to Västra Götaland’s growth. Eco-tourism and culture tourism are the fastest growing areas.

Devina Alfredsson-Palm attends an unusual day-care centre: the world heritage preschool at Vätlycke museum, right at the heart of Tanum’s rock carving area, the only world heritage site in the west of Sweden. The rock carvings at Tanum were inscribed on the world heritage list in 1994. The area contains thousands of carvings in some 510 locations.

A year’s admission ticket to Göteborg’s museums costs SEK 40 and is valid for the Natural History Museum and the city’s municipal museums: the Museum of Art, the City Museum, Röhsska Museum and the Maritime Museum. The entrance ticket is a cooperation between the City of Göteborg and Region Västra Götaland. Other museums owned by the Region have free entrance for visitors up to the age of 25.

Regionteater Väst tours the whole of Västra Götaland with theatre and dance performances. Seen here are Rebecca Hayman and Mattias Brunn in a performance of The Angel and the Blue Horse by Ulf Stark.
Chen Qun Jie is an artist from China and is participating in Region Västra Götaland's international guest studio programme. He will live and work for three months in a studio at the Nordic Watercolour Museum in Skärhamn on the island of Tjörn. Through the exchange programme artists and craftsmen from Västra Götaland can enjoy the use of guest studios in Kunming, Querétaro and Berlin.

Traditional dances from the west of Sweden, Celtic reels and Senegalese folk songs – whatever they play sets feet tapping. World Wide Orchestra contains a number of Region Västra Götaland's most global musicians. Musik i Väst runs this ensemble of young musicians from all over Västra Götaland.

Organisations work to promote cultural life in different ways. At Kultur i Väst, consultants in different cultural areas work to improve conditions for cultural practitioners and organisers. They also work on different measures and projects that aim to improve conditions for people with disabilities in cultural life.

Culture is also about learning. To meet the citizen’s wish to learn and develop, Region Västra Götaland aims to make use of all its knowledge resources to open up education for people of all ages. Folk high schools and educational associations are important resources in lifelong learning but the directives of other cultural institutions, for example museums and theatres, also require these to function as assets in regional inhabitant development and education.
How Region Västra Götaland is run
Region Västra Götaland was formed in 1999 by merging the county councils of Skaraborg, Älvsborg and Bohus and parts of the City of Göteborg.

Region Västra Götaland and Region Skåne were given responsibility for regional growth and development issues that had earlier been controlled by the Government through the county administrative boards. This means that the citizens, through their elected representatives, have greater influence over regional social issues such as infrastructure, culture and the environment.

The highest decision-making body in Region Västra Götaland is the Regional Council, which has 149 members. They come from all over Västra Götaland and are directly elected by the region’s inhabitants every four years. Most of them have other jobs and devote their spare time to politics.

The Regional Council decides on the overall objectives and emphasis, priorities and resource allocation.

The Regional Council distributes the budget to the various political committees and boards, who in turn decide how the funds are to be used within their own respective fields of responsibility.

The Regional Executive Board leads and coordinates Region Västra Götaland’s political activities. It consists of 15 members, both from the majority party or parties and the opposition, reflecting the political spectrum of the Regional Council. They are full-time politicians. The Regional Executive Board prepares issues that are to be dealt with by the Regional Council and takes decisions on a great many other issues on a continuous basis.

The Regional Executive Board has a number of special committees with specific fields of responsibility: the healthcare committee, the human resources committee and the accounts committee. There is also an international drafting committee.

Region Västra Götaland has approximately 1,800 politicians/elected representatives.
With its 50,000 employees and almost 2,000 workplaces, Region Västra Götaland is one of Sweden’s biggest employers. 80% of the employees are women and the average age is 46. Most work in healthcare. In addition to medical and care staff, many other professions are also represented, including technicians, teachers, administrative staff, service staff, engineers and caretakers.

Region Västra Götaland is a large organisation with many different fields of activity, which provides scope and opportunities for building networks and switching jobs without changing employers. Development opportunities are many.

Most of Region Västra Götaland’s central offices, secretariats and common administrations can be found in its offices, Regionens Hus, in Vänersborg, Göteborg, Skövde, Mariestad, Uddevalla and Borås. The Regional Executive Board and Regional Management are based in Vänersborg and the Regional Council convenes here eight times a year.

Region Västra Götaland’s officials prepare issues before the politicians take decisions. The officials compile facts, analyse the consequences of different proposals, calculate costs etc. Executing the decisions is also one of the duties of the region’s officials.

The highest official is the Chief Executive, who in turn appoints the managers of the various administrations in the regional organisation.

Region Västra Götaland’s operating budget amounts to approximately SEK 40 billion. Regional taxes provide Region Västra Götaland’s major source of income. The region’s economy is affected by general economic development in Sweden and abroad. Tax revenues are dependent on what the region’s inhabitants earn and pay in tax, which amounts in turn are affected by the general economic situation and the number of people in paid employment.

School pupils and politicians from Region Västra Götaland meet at a Democracy Forum to discuss topical and important issues. The pupils are given the opportunity to put forward their views and opinions in personal dialogues with the politicians. Here are three of them: Niclas Andersson Nordh, Natalie Lindqvist and Karolina Höcke from Porthälla upper secondary school in Partille.
It takes some SEK **40 billion** to run Region Västra Götaland's activities for one year.

Read more at www.vgregion.se/ekonomi
Political organisation

Executive boards of:
- Sahlgrenska University Hospital
- Southern Älvsborg Hospital
- NU
- Skaraborg Hospital
- Alingsås Hospital
- Kungälv and Frölunda Hospitals
- Primary Healthcare (5)
- Dental Care
- Disabilities’ Administration

Regional Development Committee
Regional Development Drafting Committee
Cultural Affairs Committee
Cultural Affairs Drafting Committee
Environmental Committee
Environmental Drafting Committee
Upper Secondary School Board
Folk High School Boards (6)
Botanical Garden’s Board
Cultural Development Board
Board of Västarvet
Companies
Trusts

Read more at www.vgregion.se/organisation
Administration
Västra Götaland comprises 49 municipalities and has 1.5 million inhabitants. The largest city is Göteborg, which with its surrounding municipalities has 800,000 inhabitants.
This is Region Västra Götaland

The institutions listed below are wholly owned, majority owned, or partly or wholly financed by Region Västra Götaland.

**Healthcare:**
- Alingsås Hospital
- Angered Local Hospital
- Fröila Specialist Hospital
- Kungälv Hospital
- The NU Hospital Group
- Primary Healthcare
- Sahlgrenska University Hospital
- Skaraborg Hospital
- Southern Älvsborg Hospital

**Primary Healthcare**
- Sahlgrenska University Hospital

**Disability administration**

**Schools and colleges:**
- Billströmska folkhögskolan
- The Biological Sciences College, Skara
- Dalslands folkhögskola
- Fristads folkhögskola
- Gerlesborg School of Fine Art
- Grebbestads folkhögskola
- Göteborgs folkhögskola
- Naturbruksgymnasiet Dingle
- Naturbruksgymnasiet Nuntorp
- Naturbruksgymnasiet Sparresäter
- Naturbruksgymnasiet Strömma
- Naturbruksgymnasiet Svenljunga
- Naturbruksgymnasiet Sötaßen
- Naturbruksgymnasiet Uddetorp
- Stenebyskolan
- Vara folkhögskola

**Culture:**
- Bohuslän Museum
- Näss
- Folkteatern Göteborg
- Forsvik Industrial Monuments
- Göteborg Museum of Art
- The Natural History Museum in Gothenburg
- The Göteborg Opera’s Skövde Stage
- Göteborg City Museum
- Göteborg City Theatre
- Hemslöjd Västra Götaland
- Kultur i Väst
- Läckö Castle
- Lödöse Museum
- Musik i Väst
- The Nordic Watercolour Museum
- Västra Götaland Regional Library
- Röhsska Museum
- The Maritime Museum and Aquarium
- Studio västsvensk konservering
- Vara Concert Hall
- Vitlycke museum
- Museum of Västergötland

**Industrial development:**
- Agroväst
- Brewhouse Innovation
- Chalmers Innovation
- Connect Väst
- Espira Tillväxtcenter
- Framtidens Företag
- Gothia Science Park

**The environment:**
- Västkuststiftelsen/Stiftelsen Västsvenska Friluftsområden
- Göteborg Botanical Garden

**Companies:**
- Almi Företagspartner Väst AB
- Dalslands kanalbolag
- Film i Väst AB
- The Göteborg Opera
- Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra
- Regionsteater Väst AB
- Sahlgrenska International Care AB
- West Swedish Tourist Board
- Västrafrik AB

**Internal service and administration:**
- Hälsan och arbetslivet
- Regionarkivet
- Regionservice
- Västfastigheter

*Where an organisation has an English name it has been used.*
Contact information

Västra Götalandsregionen (Region Västra Götaland)
Regionens Hus
462 80 Vänersborg
Telephone: +46 521 27 57 00
post@vgregion.se
www.vgregion.se

Regionstyrelsen (Regional Executive Board)
462 80 Vänersborg
Visiting address: Residenset, Torget
Telephone: +46 521 27 57 00

Miljösekretariatet (Environmental Secretariat)
Regionens Hus
Box 1726, 501 17 Borås
Visiting address: Solhem, Ekenäsgatan 15
Telephone: +46 33 17 48 27

Kulturekretariatet (Cultural Affairs Secretariat)
Regionens Hus
Box 764, 451 26 Uddevalla
Visiting address: Kilbäcksgatan 32
Telephone: +46 522 67 08 00

Regionutvecklingssekretariatet (Regional Development Secretariat)
Regionens Hus
Box 1091, 405 23 Göteborg
Visiting address: Norra Hamburgergatan 14
Telephone: +46 31 63 09 00

Regionens Hus
Östergatan 1
462 80 Vänersborg
Telephone: +46 521 27 57 00

Visiting address: Residenset, Torget
Telephone: +46 521 27 57 00

Regionens Hus
Drottninggatan 1
542 87 Mariestad
Telephone: +46 501 620 00

Health and Medical Care department
Regionens Hus
541 80 Skövde
Visiting address: Hertig Johans gata 6
Telephone: +46 500 49 56 00

Dial 1177 for medical advice
1177 is a national number for medical advice by phone.
Experienced nurses answer callers’ enquiries and give advice on what to do.
Medical advice by phone is available at four locations in Västra Götaland.

www.1177.se is a national website where you can seek information about illnesses, symptoms, treatment, self-care, medicines, etc.

The healthcare portal
On the www.vard.vgregion.se website you can find information about medical services and contact details for various places where you can receive care in Västra Götaland.

Sahlgrenska University Hospital Group
SU/Sahlgrenska
SU/Mölndal
SU/Östra including the Queen Silvia Children’s Hospital
Telephone: +46 31 342 10 00

NU Hospital Group
North Älvsborg County Hospital, Trollhättan
Telephone: +46 520 910 00

Uddevalla Hospital
Telephone: +46 522 920 00

Lysekil Hospital
Telephone: +46 523 180 00

Strömstad Hospital
Telephone: +46 526 280 00

Dalsland Hospital, Bäckefors
Telephone: +46 530 666 00
The Västra Götaland Vision – the good life is the common vision and strategy for development in the whole of Västra Götaland. The vision was devised by many players with the aim of strengthening Västra Götaland as an attractive and competitive region. A good life for the inhabitants of Västra Götaland includes:
• good health • work and education • security, community and participation in society • a good environment • meeting children’s and young people’s needs • sustainable growth • a rich cultural life.

Region Västra Götaland’s mission statement
Our assignment is to contribute to a good life for the people of Västra Götaland – for health and security in everyday life and a flourishing Västra Götaland now and in the future.
– We have a responsibility to attend to both the individual’s needs and the collective needs of the region’s citizens.

www.vgregion.se