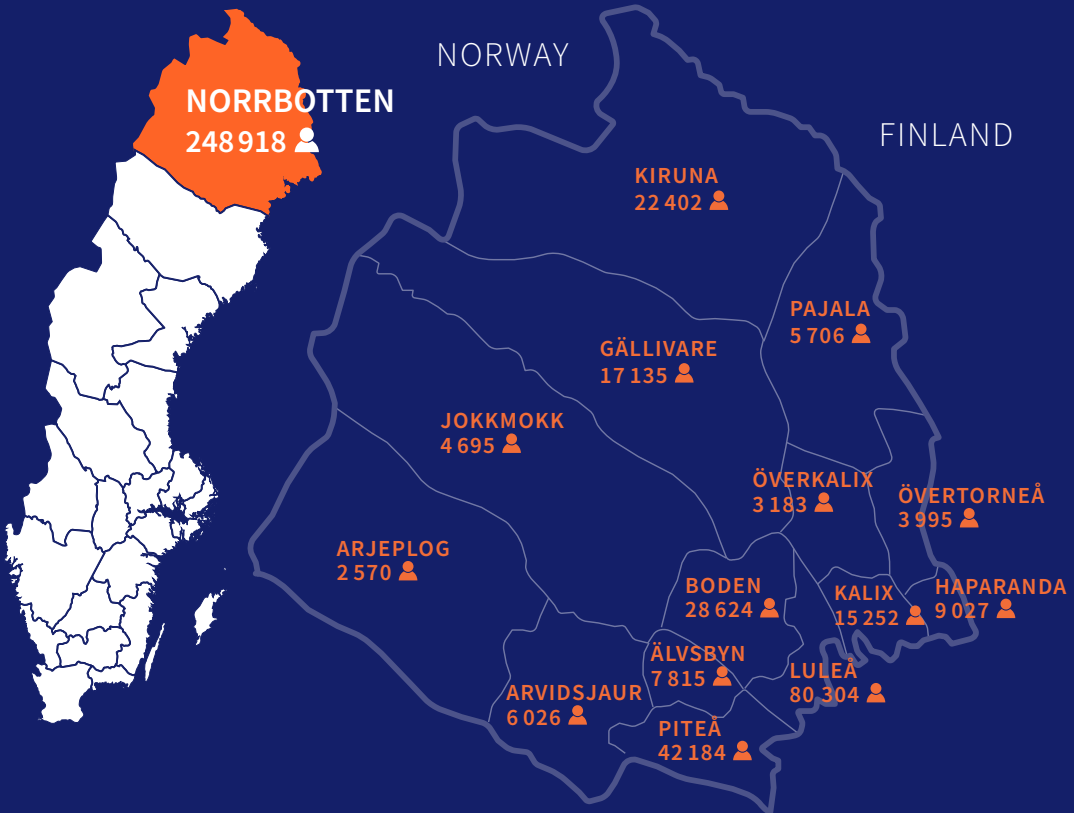


A photograph of two women walking on a city street. Both women are wearing traditional green shawls with colorful floral patterns and fringes. The woman on the left is wearing a denim jacket and has a yellow bag strap over her shoulder. The woman on the right is looking at her smartphone. In the background, there are modern buildings, a crosswalk, and other pedestrians. A sign on a building in the background reads "DAGENS NYHETER".

# 100

**TRUE FACTS  
ABOUT NORRBOTTEN**



Norrbotten is a county of contrasts. Here, the deep cold of midwinter meets the warmth of midsummer, polar night gives way to the midnight sun, and modern cities coexist with magnificent nature. The county is home to both the tranquillity of a campfire and a working life full of opportunity. It also holds Sweden's deepest lake, Hornavan, and the country's highest mountain, Kebnekaise.

In Norrbotten, tradition and innovation meet. We are as much at home deep in the mine as high in the cosmos — and at the same time, a place where cultural heritage is nurtured and passed from generation to generation. Here, sustainable technological solutions are developed that resonate around the world. Norrbotten is cultural experiences, outdoor life with endless possibilities, a home and a history.

■ **Here we have gathered 100 true and unique facts about Norrbotten.**

**Source references for all true facts can be found on page 73.**

# 1 | Norrbotten's Economy Is Exceptionally Strong

Norrbotten has for many years ranked among the top counties in Sweden for GRP\*. In 2024, Norrbotten was the county with the second highest GRP per capita in the country, after Stockholm.

\*Gross Regional Product is the value of all production of goods and services in a region and reflects economic development within the region.

# 2 | No River Generates More Electricity than the Lule River

No river in the entire country generates as much electricity as the Lule River: in 2024, production reached 12.6 TWh (terawatt-hours). That is nearly one-fifth of Sweden's total hydropower production and just over 7% of Sweden's total electricity output. The Lule River could power the entire region of Skåne.

# 3 | One of Sweden's Safest Counties

More than eight in ten residents of Norrbotten never avoid going out alone, which is higher than the national average.



# 4 | The Robot Dog Spot Makes LKAB Safer

The robot dog Spot® works at the mining company LKAB and is intensively trained for underground work. It gives LKAB the ability to inspect damaged areas of the mine in a safe and efficient manner.

## 5 | First Olympic Gold Medal in the Women's 50 km

At the Milan Olympics, the women's 50 km cross-country skiing event was held for the very first time. Ebba Andersson, who competes for Piteå Elit, took the gold. Together, Ebba Andersson and her clubmate Jonna Sundling won seven medals at the 2026 Milan Cortina Olympics.



## 6 | 43,515 Dogs

There are 43,515 registered dogs in Norrbotten, making it one of Sweden's most dog-dense counties per capita. The most common breed in Norrbotten is the Alaskan Husky.

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## 7 | 48,369 Snowmobiles

Almost a quarter of all registered snowmobiles in Sweden are found in Norrbotten.

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## 8 | 10,000 Boats and 28 Harbours

Luleå ranks among Sweden's most boat-dense municipalities, with 28 recreational boat harbours and more than 10,000 leisure boats.

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## 9 | 4,000 Islands

Norrbotten's beautiful archipelago has more than 4,000 islands, most of them uninhabited.



## 10 | The Church Relocation in Kiruna

Over two intensive days in August 2025, LKAB moved Kiruna Church to a new location between the cemetery and the new town centre. The move was necessitated by the expansion of the mine, and preparations had been underway since 2020. The church, which weighs 672.4 tonnes and is 40 metres wide, was transported in a single piece along a five-kilometre road built specifically for the move.

## 11 | Kiruna Attracts Worldwide Attention

In Kiruna, approximately 12,000 people must relocate as LKAB's mining operations expand. The affected area encompasses around 5,700 homes. By 2035, the current town centre will have been decommissioned and the new one, three kilometres to the east, fully developed.



## 12 | 11,000-Year-Old Tornedalians

People lived in the Torne Valley 11,000 years ago. In Aarevaara, 35 kilometres north of Pajala, archaeological sites have been discovered that were once located near the edge of the inland ice sheet.

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## 13 | Rubus Arcticus Cultural Scholarship

Each year, Region Norrbotten awards one of Sweden's largest cultural scholarships. Four recipients across four different artistic fields each receive SEK 100,000. Since its establishment in 1995, more than SEK 12 million has been distributed to cultural creators connected to the county.

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## 14 | A World-Class Organ

In Piteå, you will find one of Europe's most modern concert halls, Studio Acusticum. The organ is a world-class instrument created by German organ builder Gerald Woehl. It is 10 metres wide, 9.5 metres tall, and has 9,000 pipes.

## 15 | An Orange Delicacy

Kalix löjrom (vendace roe) is an exclusive delicacy. It is the roe of vendace fish caught in the Gulf of Bothnia during September and October. Each year, the fishery produces 40–60 tonnes of Kalix löjrom in Norrbotten. It is often served as a starter, frequently on rye bread with sour cream and red onion.





## 16 | Sámi Dance Centre

In Vuollerim in Jokkmokk, you will find the world's first Sámi dance centre, Jillat. It provides space for dance, circus, and creative production. The centre offers music recording facilities and opportunities to create duodji and stage costumes while developing dance, circus, and all that the performing arts entail.

## 17 | Money in the Bank

Residents of Norrbotten have the second highest income levels in Sweden, after Stockholm. Statistics Sweden's data on total earned income for 2024 places Norrbotten clearly in second place, with a median income of SEK 421,300 — compared to the national median of SEK 401,400.

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## 18 | The First Feature Film in Meänkieli

The film *Rörelser* is the first feature film in the national minority language Meänkieli and won the Swedish film award Guldbaggen in two categories in 2026. The Swedish-Finnish production, written and directed by Norrbotten native Jon Blåhed, is set in the Torne Valley of the 1930s and depicts a religious revival movement.

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## 19 | Swedish Snow Record

Kopparåsen, between Riksgränsen and Björkliden, holds the Swedish snow depth record. In February 1926, a snow depth of 327 centimetres was recorded.

## 20 Golden Celebration

In 2025, Luleå Hockey became Swedish ice hockey champions, ending a 29-year wait for gold in the hockey-obsessed city. Tens of thousands celebrated their heroes at Södra Hamnplan, many dressed in white jeans — a local tradition when celebrating a hockey championship.



## 21 | A Community Is Being Dismantled

The town of Malmberget in Gällivare municipality is being dismantled to allow expansion of the iron ore mine. Entire blocks and buildings have been demolished and in some cases relocated, and the community is now largely wound down. Residents and essential public services have been moved into Gällivare, five kilometres to the south, where the new neighbourhood of Repisvaara has been developed. The transformation is expected to be completed by 2035.

## 22 | Duodji Collection

Ájtte in Jokkmokk is Sweden's national museum of Sámi culture. It houses one of the world's finest collections of Sámi handicraft objects, known as duodji.

## 23 | Europe's Largest Unregulated Rapid

Storforsen, 40 kilometres west of Älvsbyn, is Europe's largest unregulated rapid. The drop is 82 metres and the rapids stretch over 5 kilometres.

## 24 | National Park in Sweden's Northernmost Archipelago

Haparanda Archipelago is Norrbotten's youngest national park and the only one situated in the Norrbotten archipelago. Highlights include sweeping sandy beaches with sand dunes, interesting flora, and abundant birdlife. The national park covers 60 square kilometres and consists of a number of islands, the largest of which is called Sandskär.

## 25 | The World's Most Labyrinth-Dense Archipelago

Labyrinths can be found in many parts of the world. They are almost always built on boulder fields near a fishing settlement. The oldest are believed to date from the 13th century. Around 300 labyrinths have been found in Sweden, and 100 of them are located in Norrbotten's archipelago — the world's most labyrinth-dense area.

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## 26 | Tourists Experience Village Life

In the small village of Vitsaniemi, there is an unusual hotel: Arthotel Tornedalen. Guests from around the world stay in restored old houses that still bear the surnames of their former owners. As the name suggests, art plays an important role here — it can be found in every room and outdoors as well.

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## 27 | Sweden's Northernmost and Easternmost Points

Norrbotten is home to both Sweden's northernmost point, Treriksröset, and its easternmost, Kataja in the Haparanda archipelago.





## 28 | Christmas Viewing Success

SVT's Christmas calendar Snödrömmar became a historic ratings hit in 2024, averaging 2.6 million viewers per episode. The series, which portrays Sámi culture and folklore, was highly praised and won the TV prize Kristallen for best children's programme in 2025. Snödrömmar was filmed in Kåbdalis and Älvsbyn in Norrbotten.

## 29 | The Laponia World Heritage Site

The Laponia World Heritage Site is Europe's largest unspoiled natural area, covering 9,400 square kilometres — slightly larger than the island of Cyprus. Laponia is a living Sámi cultural landscape with pristine nature including glaciers, mountains, and ancient forests.

## 30 | Green Steel

At several locations in the county, major investments are being made in producing fossil-free steel using hydrogen — a new technology that could revolutionise the steel industry. Globally, steel production accounts for 7% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but with hydrogen the by-product becomes water vapour rather than carbon dioxide. In August 2021, SSAB delivered the first steel produced using this new technology.

## 31 | Sunshine for 47 Days in a Row

The Arctic Circle passes through Norrbotten at latitude 66°33'30"N. North of the Arctic Circle, the midnight sun is visible — in Kiruna for 47 consecutive days, from 28 May to 16 July.

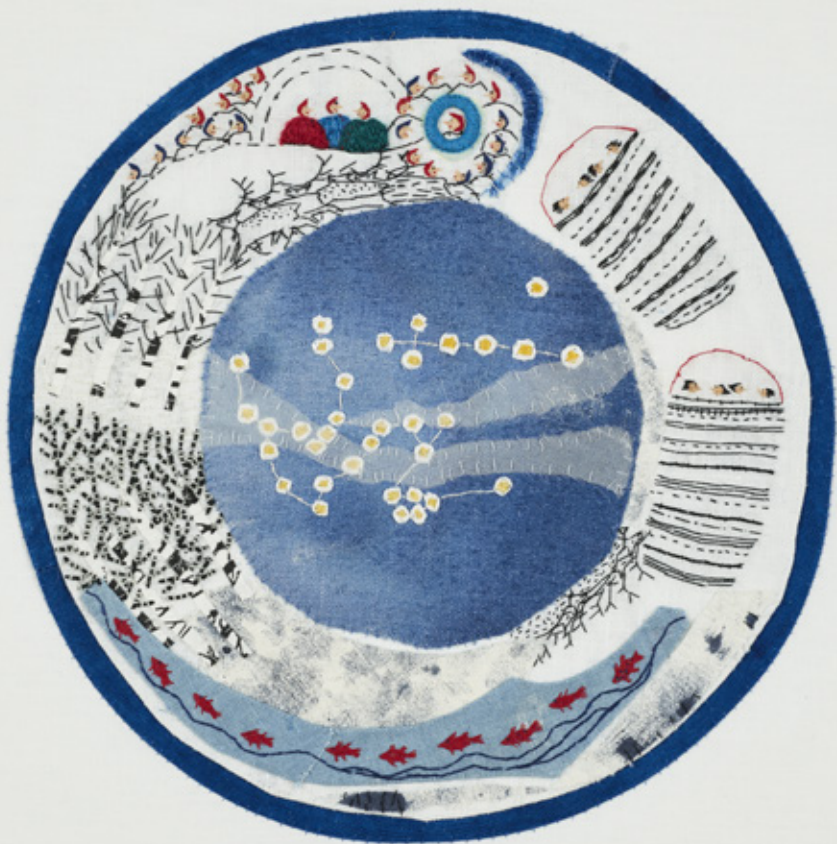


## 32 | Sleep Among the Treetops

Eight architect-designed treehouses have put the small village of Harads, northwest of Boden, on the world map. Television crews and overnight guests have come from near and far to experience the imaginative and entirely unique creations at Treehotel. Seventy percent of visitors are international guests. In 2024, Treehotel generated nearly SEK 24 million in revenue.

## 33 | Tourism in Northern Sweden Sets Records

In 2025, the tourism industry in Norrbotten set a record for the number of overnight stays. It is one of northern Sweden's most important industries. The largest numbers of foreign visitors come from Norway, Germany, and Finland.



The title of this artwork is ***I mina drömmar***

## 34 | One of the Century's Best Works of Art

Artist Britta Marakatt-Labba's embroidered narratives depict Sámi life and daily existence, as well as state oppression and nature threatened by exploitation. In 2025, the world-renowned Tate museums acquired her work "Inclosed."

Her 24-metre-long embroidery "Historjá" has been named one of the century's best works of art by the prestigious art magazine ArtNews.

## 35 | A Measuring Tape for the Globe

Three of Sweden's fifteen UNESCO World Heritage Sites are located in Norrbotten. One of them is the Struve Geodetic Arc. In the early 19th century, astronomer Wilhelm Struve initiated a gigantic measurement project to determine the exact shape and size of the Earth. Four measuring points in the Swedish part of the Torne Valley are included in the Struve Arc.

## 36 | The Swedish Polar Research Secretariat

The Swedish Polar Research Secretariat is a government agency that organises and supports research expeditions to polar regions and manages research infrastructure. The Secretariat is based in Luleå and operates a scientific research station in Abisko, in the mountains of Kiruna.

## 37 | Sweden's Most Popular Hiking Trail

Kungsleden is Sweden's most popular and one of the world's most well-known hiking trails. It is over 450 kilometres long and stretches from Abisko in the north to Hemavan in the south.



## 38 | Secrets Worth SEK 1.4 Billion

Future vehicles are tested in Norrbotten under strict secrecy. One-third of the world's vehicle testing activities over SEK 1.4 billion annually and provides locations such as Arjeplog, Arvidsjaur, and Älvsbyn with over 100,000 guest nights per year. For Arjeplog, this means the population doubles during winter.

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## 39 | NATO Increases Its Presence

Norrbotten has been given a central role in NATO as one of the strategic hubs of the Nordic region. It is home to powerful mechanised winter combat units and airspace protection forces. Activities include exercises, defence planning, and extensive defence cooperation with Finland. The regiments F 21 in Luleå, I 19 and A8 in Boden, and K4 in Arvidsjaur also play an important role in providing host nation support for allied forces. The Northern Military Region, which covers all of northern Sweden, is commanded from Boden.



## 40 | Sweden's Northernmost Science Centre

Teknikens Hus in Luleå is one of the country's first science centres. Since its doors opened in 1988, Teknikens Hus has welcomed millions of visitors and received numerous awards. Children can explore industries important to Norrbotten in a playful way: mining, forestry, steel production, the space industry, energy production, and much more.

## 41 | Basketball Champions

Luleå Basket is a dominant force in Swedish women's basketball, with nine national championship titles between 2014 and 2025. The team's dedicated fans have also helped Luleå Basket win awards for the highest attendance and best match-day experience.



## 42 | Women's Sports in Norrbotten — Pride and Community Across the County

Despite being a sparsely populated county, Norrbotten attracts larger audiences to women's sporting events than many other parts of Sweden. Sport creates community, pride, and meeting places that bring people together across great distances. Elite teams that draw crowds include Luleå Basket, Piteå IF Women's Football, Boden Handball, and Luleå Hockey/MSSK.

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## 43 | One of the World's Largest Football Tournaments

One of the world's largest youth football tournaments is held in Norrbotten — Piteå Summer Games. The tournament attracts players from many parts of the world. In 2025, 930 teams participated and nearly 2,250 matches were played. In addition to neighbouring countries, Piteå welcomed visitors from Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Mexico, South Africa, Tanzania, and Mongolia.

## 44 | Aurora Borealis

For many, seeing the Northern Lights dance across the sky is a lifelong dream. Aurora Sky Station in Abisko is one of the world's best places to experience this phenomenon, also known as Aurora Borealis.

## 45 | The World's Second-Largest Bifurcation

In Tärendö lies the world's second-largest bifurcation. The 52-kilometre-long Tärendö River draws water from the Torne River and diverts it to the Kalix River. The world's largest bifurcation is found in South America.

## 46 | Sweden's Deepest Lake

Hornavan in Arjeplog is 210 metres deep, making it Sweden's deepest lake. Torneträsk in Kiruna comes in second at 168 metres.

## 47 | Buoris, Buoris!

Norrbotten is an administrative area for three national minority languages: Finnish, Meänkieli, and Sámi. This means that Norrbotten has a particular responsibility to protect and promote these languages. “Buoris, buoris” means “hello, hello” in Lule Sámi, one of five Sámi languages spoken in Sweden.



## 48 | Sold Out at the Theatre

Norrbotten Theatre’s production of Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol sold out all 29 performances before its premiere in October 2025. The production was praised by both critics and audiences. With fifteen actors, music, set design, and over 100 period-appropriate costumes, audiences were transported to London of the 1870s.

## 49 | Floating Spa Hotel on the Lule River

Arctic Bath is a floating spa hotel moored on the Lule River in the village of Harads in the city of Boden. Arctic Bath is a member of Small Luxury Hotels and was awarded the MICHELIN Key in 2025 — a prestigious distinction.

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## 50 | The World's Most Peaceful Border

The border between Sweden and Finland in Haparanda/Tornio runs through the middle of the Torne River. It was drawn in 1809 and is often called the world's most peaceful border. The border divided a Finnish-speaking area between Sweden and Finland, and strong cultural and linguistic ties between the Finnish and Swedish sides of the Torne Valley remain to this day.

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## 51 | Norrbotten Is the Heart of the European Arctic

The Arctic is the vast ocean at the North Pole and its surrounding land areas. The Swedish government has adopted a strategy for the Arctic region, focused on people, peace, and climate. Norrbotten is a competitive Arctic region and an important actor in implementing the strategy.



## 52 | Efficient Copper Mining

Aitik, just south of Gällivare in Norrbotten, is Sweden's largest and one of the world's most efficient open-pit copper mines. Around the clock, ore deposits are extracted using some of the world's largest machines, including haul trucks that weigh 570 tonnes (loaded) with wheels four metres in diameter. With over 900 employees, Boliden is the largest private employer in Gällivare municipality.

## 53 | A View to Remember

From the urban fell of Dundret in Gällivare, you can see one-eleventh of Sweden's entire land area, including the mountain Kebnekaise and the Sarek National Park. The name Dundret comes from the Finnish word for fell, tunturi. It can also be traced to the Sámi word for low fell, tuoddar.





## 54 | Different Saunas

Since 1988, the Swedish Sauna Academy has been based in Kukkolaforsen in Haparanda. There are 16 different saunas on site, and the sauna year culminates around National Sauna Day, the second Saturday in June. Research at Luleå University of Technology has shown that people who take a sauna 1–4 times a month have better health outcomes.

## 55 | Europe's Only Indigenous People

The Sámi, Europe's only indigenous people, live in Sápmi — the vast territory spanning the northernmost parts of Sweden, Norway, Finland, and the Russian Kola Peninsula. The Sámi are an important part of Norrbotten's history and future.

## 56 | Sweden's Tastiest Tap Water

Älvsbyn has Sweden's tastiest tap water. This was the verdict of the jury in the 2025 tap water competition, with the motivation: "A winning water with a stylish character. A star water that tastes just as good from a wooden cup as from a crystal glass."

## 57 | A Hub During the First World War

Countless millions of letters and parcels were exchanged in the small border town of Haparanda during the four years of the First World War. All postal traffic and goods between the continent and Russia passed through Haparanda, making the town a hub for all manner of business — both legal and illegal. Post was transported across the Torne River by horse-drawn sleds over the ice and by cable car.



## 58 | Icehotel — A World-Unique Attraction

Each year, ice is harvested from the Torne River and transformed into world-leading design and architecture. Icehotel, outside Kiruna, is an international attraction and the world's first and largest hotel created from snow and ice.

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## 59 | Sweden's Highest Mountain

Sweden's highest mountain is Kebnekaise, at approximately 2,096.8 metres above sea level. Due to climate change and the melting of the glacier on the southern peak, Kebnekaise's northern peak is now the highest point. The southern peak is somewhat lower and varies in height.

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## 60 | Sea-Ice Classic Running Marathon

The setting of the Sea-Ice Classic Running Marathon is undoubtedly one of the most striking aspects of this event. The entire race takes place on natural sea ice in Luleå, where nearly 800 runners from 35 different nations competed in the 2026 edition.



## 61 | Small Cities, Secure Students

Among the best school municipalities in Sweden, Arjeplog stands out in third place and Övertorneå in eleventh in the Primary School Index, based on a composite measure of municipalities' responsibility for primary education.



## 62 | Pride Across the County

Pride is an arena for celebrating everyone's equal right to love and to be who they are. Every year, Pride is celebrated across Norrbotten. Among the 2025 activities are Pride parades in most municipalities, a picnic and rainbow mass in Haparanda, a drag show in Pajala, a mixer in Pride Park in Luleå, lectures in Boden, and a musical cabaret in Piteå.

## 63 | The World's Largest Collection of Sámi Silver

Silvermuseet is a museum in central Arjeplog. Its collections document the local history — from prehistoric times to the present day. The lives of nomads and settled communities are brought to life in various exhibitions. One room houses one of the world's largest collections of Sámi silver objects. Research is also conducted at Silvermuseet.





## 64 | More People Finding Home in Överkalix

After 60 years of population decline, Överkalix is now experiencing the highest percentage population growth in Norrbotten. Much of the increase comes from migration from the Netherlands, Italy, France, Germany, and Spain. The influx also means that Överkalix is currently the only municipality in Sweden not expecting a decline in preschool children over the next five years.

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## 65 | A Distinctive Dialect

Överkalixbondska, Överkalixmål, or simply Överkaliska — the local dialect of Överkalix is so distinctive that it is sometimes regarded as a language in its own right. Over the course of the 20th century, residents largely shifted to speaking standard Swedish, but efforts are now underway to revitalise the dialect.

## 66 | Europe's Largest Moose Antlers

Europe's largest moose antlers were from a bull shot by Leif Jacobsson from Vuollerim in 1982. It was a 26-point rack and received a score of 420.2, a record that still stands today.

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## 67 | The Gold Reserve

Boden Fortress is Sweden's most costly defence installation of all time. Construction began in 1900 and it was decommissioned in 1997. Parts of Sweden's gold reserve were stored in underground vaults beneath Boden Fortress until 1982.

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## 68 | Our History Is Being Rewritten

New research shows that steel production was widespread across northern Sweden, Finland, and Norway as long as 2,000 years ago. That it occurred so early and so far from the Roman Empire was previously unknown. It was hunting and trapping communities that possessed these advanced skills — a finding that also contradicts the prevailing historical view.



## 69 | 5,000 Reindeer Owners

There are approximately 5,000 reindeer owners in Sweden (owning at least one reindeer), 85 percent of whom live in Norrbotten County. Forty percent of reindeer owners are women.

## 70 | 103 km/h — on Skates

Every winter, hundreds of Dutch speed skaters come to Luleå to compete on the ice track in the city centre. In 2018, speed skater Kjeld Nuis broke the world record on the Luleå ice track, reaching 93 km/h — a record he then broke four years later when he reached 103 km/h.



## 71 | Beware of “Palt Coma”

Pitepalt is a culinary speciality and cultural treasure. These large dumplings are made from grated raw potato, barley flour, wheat flour, and salt, filled with cured and diced pork. Traditionally, pitepalt is served with butter and lingonberry jam. Palt is famously filling, sometimes leading to the so-called “palt coma” — an intense drowsiness after the meal.

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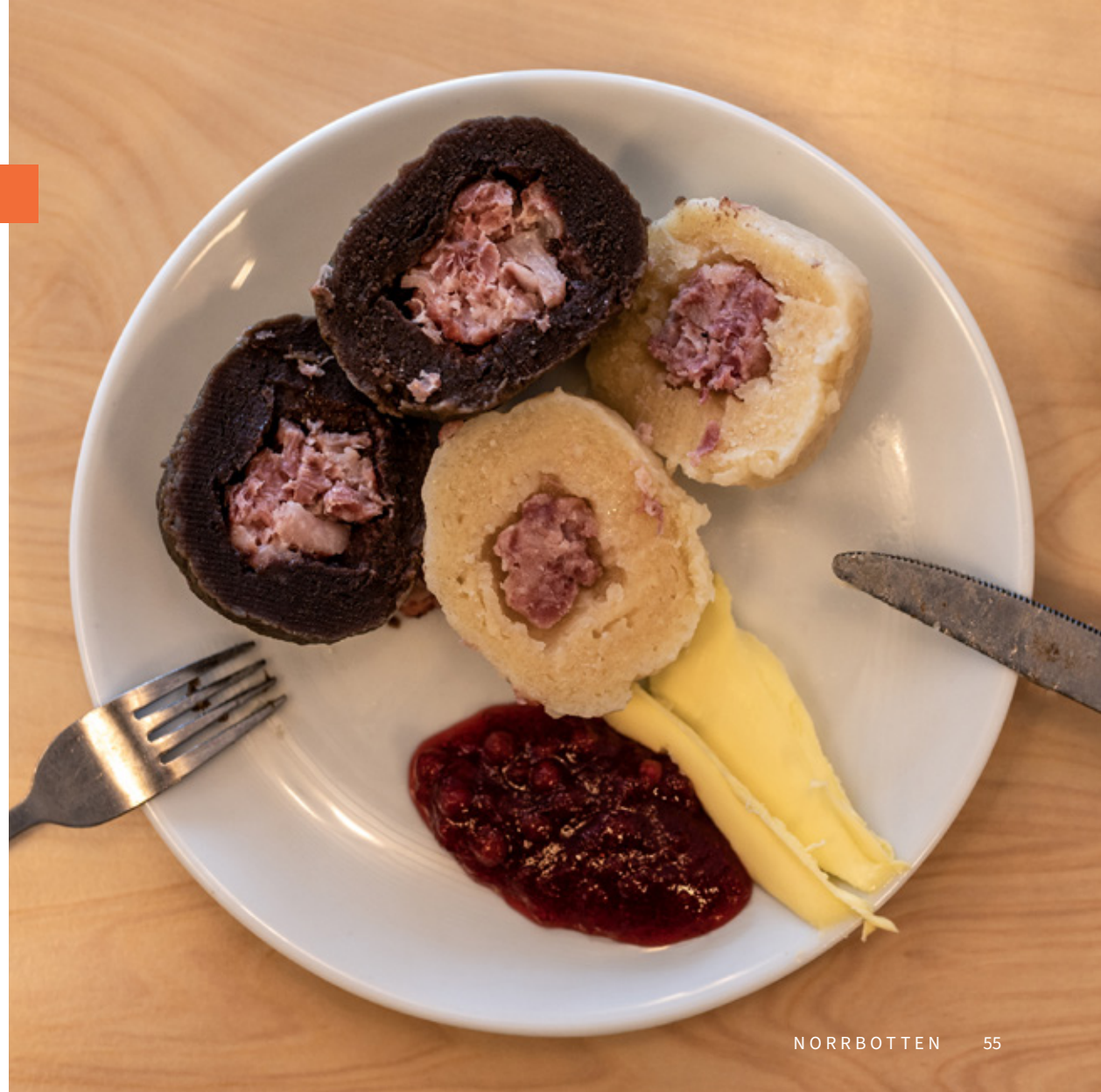
## 72 | A Food Laboratory

In Älvsbyn, you will find the CHARM factory, where small and medium-sized businesses can create, refine, and experiment with the food of the future. CHARM is a food lab, a network, and a knowledge hub.

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## 73 | Enjoy Your Meal

Norrbottnen has fifteen restaurants featured on the prestigious White Guide — Sweden’s best restaurants 2025. Leading the way are Arctic Bath in Harads, Restaurang Tage in Piteå, Hemmagastronomi, Restaurang CG, and Biströn in Luleå, Niehku Mountain Villa in Riksgränsen, as well as newcomers ATs Restaurang and Arkipelag in Luleå.



## 74 | The World's Northernmost Triathlon

Under the midnight sun, competitors from around the world gather to take part in the world's northernmost triathlon at Ironman distance — Laponia Triathlon 67°N.

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## 75 | The World's Most Border-Crossing Golf Course

Right on the border between Swedish Haparanda and Finnish Tornio lies one of the world's most unique golf courses. Eleven holes are in Sweden and seven are in Finland, with players crossing the border four times. When you tee off on hole 6 at Haparanda-Tornio GK, the ball lands in Finland — one time zone later.

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## 76 | A Chapel Washed Away

Särkilax Chapel was Sweden's northernmost medieval church. It was built in the 15th century on the banks of the Torne River in Kuivakangas, just north of Övertorneå. The chapel was swept away in a single piece by an exceptionally powerful spring flood in 1617. Four hundred years later, the Friends of Särkilax Church association was founded with the goal of building a new, similar chapel on the same site. In July 2018, the chapel was completed and inaugurated.



## 77 | From Viral Success to Nordic Collaboration

Following the Hooja craze of 2022 and the SVT documentary Hooja – The Movie, the success has continued. The duo has topped Spotify charts, been the most-requested artist on Musikhjälpen in 2023, and had one of Sweden's most-played songs in 2024.

In 2025, Hooja took the next international step through a collaboration with Finland's Käärijä, who achieved major international breakthrough at Eurovision Song Contest 2023 with the song Cha Cha Cha.



## 78 | The Sun Shines Bright in Luleå

Luleå regularly ranks at the top of the Solligan competition — a prestigious contest measuring the number of sunshine hours from Midsummer’s Eve over seven weeks each summer. Luleå has topped the list in 2003, 2005, 2007, 2011, 2014, 2021, and 2025.

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## 79 | Hot and Cold

The lowest temperature ever recorded at an official Swedish weather station is  $-52.6^{\circ}\text{C}$ , measured in Vuoggatjålme in the municipality of Arjeplog in 1966. Norrbotten’s heat record is  $36.9^{\circ}\text{C}$ , recorded in the village of Harads in the municipality of Boden in 1945.

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## 80 | The Riviera of Norrbotten

Piteå Havsbad is a kilometre-long sandy beach about ten kilometres from the town of Piteå. Today it is home to a hotel with spa and adventure pool, as well as one of northern Europe’s largest conference facilities. Up to a thousand people can stay, dine, and hold meetings there at the same time.



## 81 | 109,000 Students

Luleå University of Technology has strong Arctic expertise. Cooperation with six leading universities in northern Sweden, Finland, and Norway — The Arctic Six — creates a major knowledge region with more than 109,000 students and over 10,000 researchers, comparable in scale to the Stockholm region.

## 82 | Sweden's Quietest Room

Sweden's quietest room is located at Luleå University of Technology. The room is so quiet that visitors can hear their own heartbeat, the sound of their eyelids blinking, and the flow of blood in their ears. It is primarily used by researchers and companies to test sound levels — for example in machinery — or for audiological experiments.

## 83 | Champions of Bottle Recycling

Swedes are among the best in the world at returning bottles and cans for recycling. Norrbotten ranks third among Swedish counties, with an average of 389 bottles and cans returned per resident (2024). The top recyclers in the county are the residents of Haparanda, who average 1,118 items per person — placing them fifth among all Swedish municipalities.

## 84 | Finish Line in the Midsummer Light

Töre Harbour in Kalix is the finish line of the Midsummer Sail Regatta — the Baltic Sea's longest and perhaps toughest regatta. The race runs from the southernmost to the northernmost point of the Baltic Sea, from Wismar in Germany to Töre, 1,670 kilometres further north. The finish, when the Norrbotten summer nights are at their lightest, is celebrated with a harbour festival.

## 85 | The World Heritage Site in Luleå

Gammelstad Church Town is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the place where Luleå was founded. It features a beautiful church from 1492, built the same year Columbus arrived in America. The church is surrounded by 404 small red church cottages. Nearby lies the popular open-air museum Hägnan. The city of Luleå was moved to its current location in 1649 due to land uplift.

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## 86 | One Quarter of Sweden's Area

Norrbottn accounts for 24 percent of Sweden's total land area, yet is home to just 2.4 percent of the country's population. Norrbotten has fewer than three inhabitants per square kilometre. In Stockholm County, the figure is 378 per square kilometre.

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## 87 | Direct Flights to the Continent

With over one million passengers annually, Luleå Airport serves as a central gateway for Norrbotten. In recent years, new international direct routes have been added. You can now fly directly to both Paris and Zurich from Luleå.



## 88 | 30 Kilometres on Sea Ice

Luleå maintains a total of 30 kilometres of municipal ice roads in its archipelago, including Sweden's longest ice road — 16 kilometres between Hindersöstallarna and Stor-Brändön. The ice roads are very popular and many Luleå residents make day trips by car to visit the islands of Hindersön, Långön, Storbrändön, Sandön, and Junkön.

## 89 | Six Icebreakers

Sweden has six icebreakers, all stationed in Luleå — Oden, Ymer, Frej, Atle, Ale, and Idun. Without them, several ports would be forced to close for up to 130 days a year. Oden is one of the world's most powerful icebreakers and has undertaken expeditions to both the Arctic and the Antarctic for the Polar Research Institute.





## 90 | The Ore Railway — the Lifeblood of the Mining Industry

The Ore Railway running between Luleå and Narvik is one of the world's oldest ore railways, built in stages around the turn of the last century. The first section from Luleå to Malmberget was completed in 1888, while the more challenging stretch from Kiruna to Riksgränsen/Narvik was finished and opened for traffic in 1902. Today it is Sweden's most heavily trafficked railway, with trains weighing up to 9,400 tonnes.

## 91 | Important Rare Earth Deposit

One of Europe's largest deposits of rare earth elements is located near LKAB's mine in Kiruna — a deposit known as Per Geijer. Rare earth elements are used in electric cars, fighter jets, and iPhones. Today, Europe is dependent on imports of these minerals, with China completely dominating the market, increasing vulnerability for European industry.

## 92 | Europe's Space Base

Esrangle Space Center in Kiruna is Europe's gateway to space. With the space base as its foundation, Sweden has built a strong space industry over more than four decades. Modern defence and intelligence work requires access to space infrastructure. Satellite-based systems control communications, navigation, and surveillance. This makes Esrange, which has a new satellite launch pad, important for both Swedish and European security.

## 93 | World-Leading Research

Luleå University of Technology (LTU) is growing rapidly and has world-leading expertise in several research areas, including snow and winter conditions, space technology, and new applications for hydrogen. LTU has an annual turnover of SEK 2.1 billion, approximately 1,900 employees, and 18,700 students.



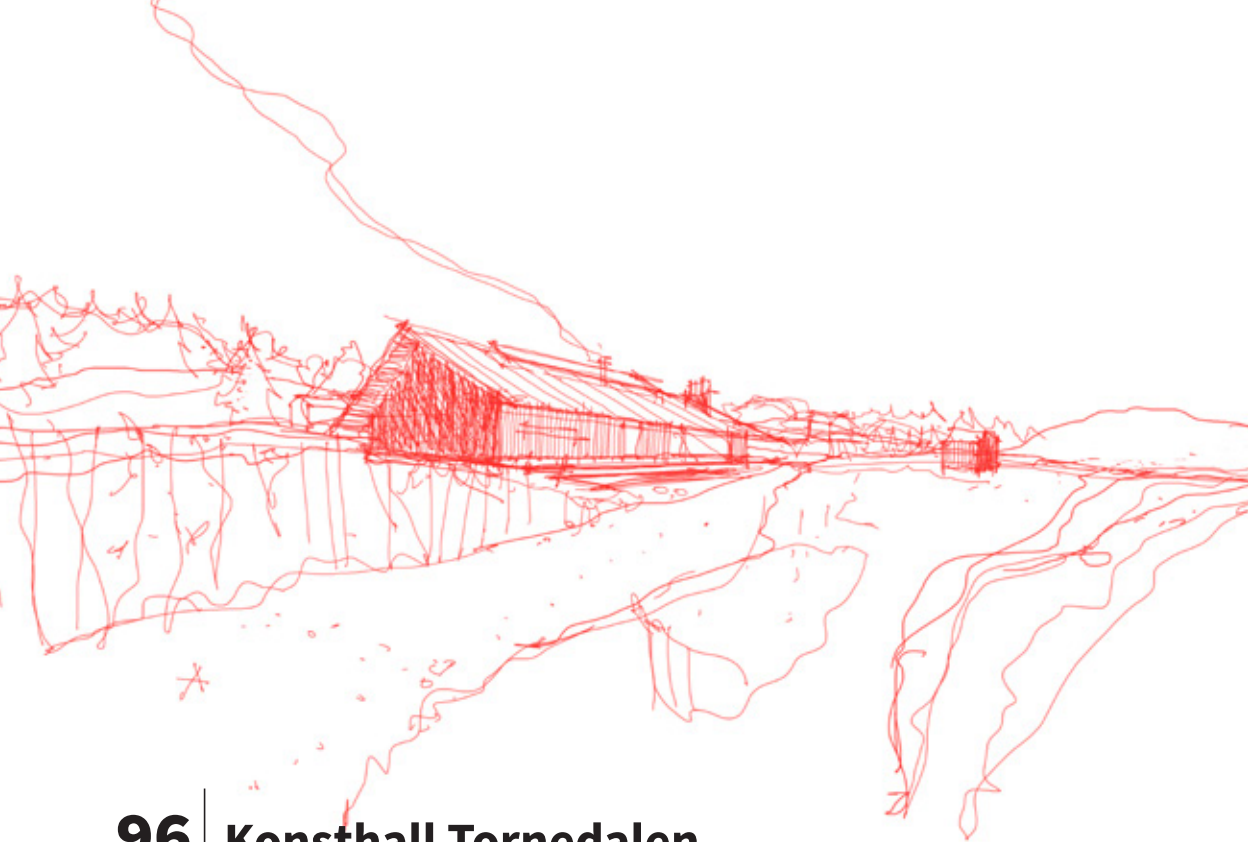
## 94 | Gold Fever in Lannavaara

Gold glimmers in the waterways of the village of Lannavaara. Gold panning competitions have been held here since 1983, attracting participants from across Sweden, other Nordic countries, and occasionally from across Europe. Beginners can attend gold panning courses or sign up for gold panning camps.



## 95 | One of the World's Oldest Markets

Jokkmokk Market is one of the world's oldest markets and was held for the 421st time in 2026. The market always takes place on the first Thursday of February.



## 96 | Konsthall Tornedalen

In February 2026, the first sod was turned for what will become Konsthall Tornedalen in the village of Vitsaniemi located in Övertorneå. The goal is an institution that systematically engages with local art history. The art hall is partly funded by a crowdfunding campaign in which 1,500 people contributed. By purchasing a bag of concrete or a packet of screws, contributors can have their name inscribed in the new art hall.

## 97 | Norrbotten Rising from the Gulf of Bothnia

The Norrbotten coastline is experiencing one of the highest rates of land uplift in the world, at nearly 10 mm per year — approximately one metre per century. This process constantly reshapes the coastal landscape, creating new islands and making shipping lanes shallower. The phenomenon means that the land is slowly rising from the Gulf of Bothnia.

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## 98 | Burgers from Luleå to New York

Bastard Burgers opened its first restaurant in Luleå in 2016, with just 17 seats. Today there are 70 restaurants across Sweden and also in Norway, Finland, and New York.

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## 99 | The World's First Shopping Centre

Luleå's Shopping centre opened in 1955 and was the world's first shopping centre. It was designed by the renowned architect Ralph Erskine. The second shopping centre was built in the United States in 1956.

# 100 | Åkerbär — Norrbotten's Provincial Flower

Åkerbär (Arctic raspberry) is an exquisitely flavoured berry with a delightful taste. Its Latin name is *Rubus arcticus*. The ruby-red berries resemble raspberries in shape — and the English name is indeed “Arctic Raspberry” — but that is where the similarities end.



**Reference sources:** kolada.se, Statistiska Centralbyrån, Folkhälsomyndigheten, LKAB, Sveriges Olympiska Kommité, UNESCO, Svt, Filmpool Nord, pantamera.nu, Havs- och Vattenmyndigheten, Transportstyrelsen, Piteå kommun, Swedish Space Corporation, Swedish Lapland Visitors Board, Försvarsmakten, Samiskt Danscenter, Luleå tekniska universitet, Sveriges Kommuner och Regioner, Polarforskningsinstitutet, Swedish proving ground association, Norrbottens Museum, Riksidrottsförbundet, Sametinget, ArtNews, Region Norrbotten, Swedavia, tarendo.se, SMH, Jordbruksverket, Haparanda kommun, Kiruna kommun, Svenska Turistföreningen, Luleå kommun, Gällivare kommun, Bastard Burgers, Resmål Sverige, Silvermuseet, Norrbottenskuriren, Boliden, bottenviken.se, Lantmäteriet, Regeringen, Arctic Bath, charmfabriken.se, Icehotel, Teknikens hus, NSD, Åjtje - Svensk fjäll- och samemuseum, SSAB, Norrbottensteatern, Sveriges Nationalparker, visitlulea.se, Allt om Jakt och Vapen, försvarsmuseumboden.se, redbull.com, Haparanda Golfklubb, White Guide, Laponia.nu, Konsthall Tornedalen, Laponia Triathlon, Jokkmokks kommun, Sanningskommissionen för det samiska folket, svensktvatten.se, paltkoma.se, turistkanalen.se, alterhedens.se, Arthotel Tornedalen, Pite Havsbad group, broschyren Piteå - en arena för stora möten och upplevelser, Föreningen Särkilax kyrkas vänner, Kristallen AB, samer.se, midsummersail.com, Kalix kommun, Nationalencyklopedin och Postnord Plus.

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