

Industrial District of Skaraborg

Skaraborg is a sub-region to the administrative Västra Götaland region (VG region). The VG region is the second largest region in Sweden.

Skövde (50,000 inhabitants) is the main town in the Skaraborg area. Communications are efficient and the town is linked to Stockholm (2 hours) and Gothenburg (one hour) by high-speed trains. A fully equipped regional airport and an university is also located in Skövde. Volvo has made Skövde its engine centre, turning out engines for passenger cars and heavy vehicles. Engines for marine and industrial applications are made as well.

Lidköping (37,000 inhabitants). The town has been ranked high on the list "Towns of the future in Sweden", thanks largely to the town's character and amenities and the surroundings with water (lake Vänern). Among companies with an international reputation located in Lidköping, is Bahco Metal Saws.

Mariestad (23,000 inhabitants). Electrolux, the largest refrigerator-making plant in Sweden, is located in this town.

Volvo and Electrolux are far from being the only industrial groups in Skaraborg. Other major international companies are:

- Asko Cylinda – manufacturers household appliances
- Parker Hannifin – design and manufacturers pneumatic products
- Elos – develops and manufacturers high-precision products such as orthopaedic implants and surgical instruments
- Cejn – manufacturers quick-connect couplings
- PM-Luft – develops and manufacturers products for air handling applications
- Emtunga (Pharmadule) – constructs living quarters (modules) for offshore installations and other specialised installations
- Arkivator Falköping – manufacturers high-tech assembly of advanced industrial components
- Dilox – manufacturers resin-bonded grinding tools
- Cementa and Paroc AB – manufacture materials for the building industry
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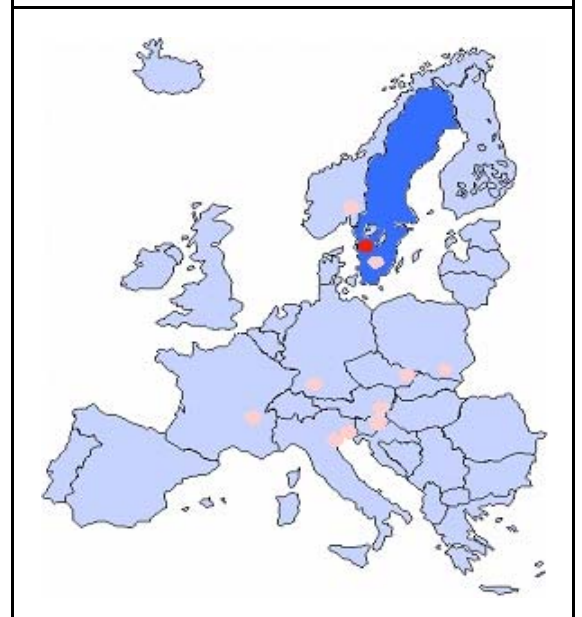
Västra Götaland region: The IDS is working in partnership with a technology development network, the IFS Network with centres in the Västra Götaland region. This network is composed of the majority of qualified support organisations, such as universities, R&D organisations, private and public organisations. Altogether the network has an expertise supply of 800 people. The main research institutes are:

IVF – The Swedish Institute of Production Engineering Research (coordinator of the IFS Network)

IFP – The Swedish Institute for Fibre and Polymer Research

IVL – Swedish Environmental Research Institute

| | IDS | Sweden |
|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| area | 34,000 km ² | 450,000 km ² |
| population | 1.5 millions | 8.9 millions |
| Unemployment rate | ~ 3.8 % | ~ 4.5 % |



SCI – The Swedish Ceramin Institute

SIK – The Swedish Institute for Food and Biotechnology

SIQ – Swedish Institute for Quality

SP – Swedish National Testing and Research Institute

Universities:

Chalmers University of Technology (Gothenburg) and the *Gothenburg University*. Both are higher educational establishments of international repute.

Skaraborg region: *University of Skövde* has programmes that aim at meeting both national and regional demands for industry within traditional technical skills as well as intensive research. The research is multidisciplinary and is in the frontline of intelligent automation, artificial intelligence, database theory, real time systems and system analysis. At present some 4,000 students are enrolled in nine departments.

Volvo Competence Centre offers educational programmes for industrial companies.

“IDS—Industrial District Skaraborg” cluster profile

The IDS – Industrial District of Skaraborg – was at first initiated by some local companies in the Skaraborg area. Later on, in 1999-2000, a RITTS study was conducted and the findings of this study highlighted the weaknesses in many of the industry SME's (mainly suppliers/sub-contractors) in the region; low grade of collaboration between companies, lack of innovative capacity and no habit of co-operation with academic and applied research. This was the starting point for developing the projects of IDS and IFS (IFS, see “Research Institutions”).

The prime objective of IDS is to provide a platform for creating new contacts and developing existing ones. Contacts which can promote business in and around the Skaraborg region in particular. Of equally importance is to provide supply of various external competences into the IDS member companies.