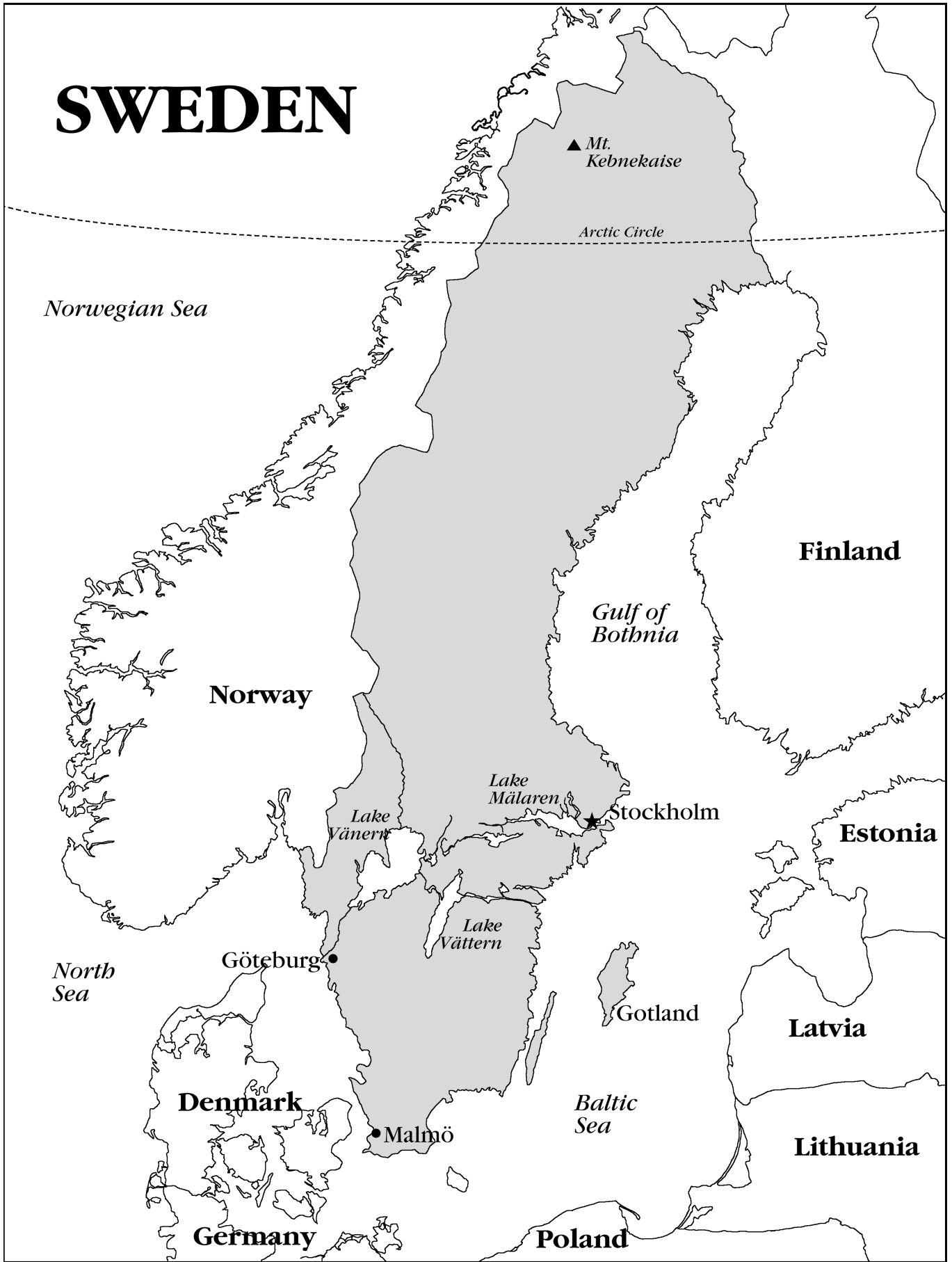


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# SWEDEN



▲ *Mt. Kebnekaise*

*Arctic Circle*

*Norwegian Sea*

**Finland**

*Gulf of Bothnia*

**Norway**

*Lake Mälaren*

**Stockholm**

*Lake Vänern*

**Estonia**

*Lake Vättern*

*North Sea*

**Göteborg**

**Gotland**

**Latvia**

**Denmark**

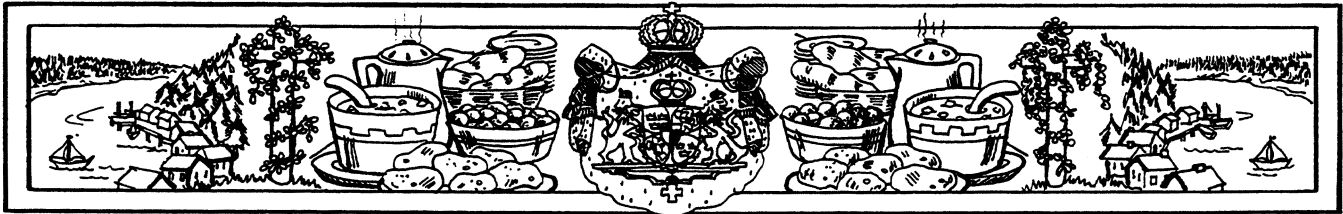
*Baltic Sea*

**Malmö**

**Lithuania**

**Germany**

**Poland**



# Sweden

Sweden, a long, narrow country in western Europe, is the largest and most prosperous country in Scandinavia. The country combines both ancient and modern, with a modern, efficient industrial society prospering alongside the slow-paced and simple lifestyle of reindeer herders and craftsmen. Independent and proud, the Swedes take care of themselves by participating in a comprehensive welfare system that is beneficial to all Swedish citizens.

**Official Name**—Kingdom of Sweden (Konungariket Sverige)

**Area**—173,732 square miles (449,964 square kilometers)

**Population**—approximately 8,986,400 (2004 estimate). 85% is urban; 15% is rural.

## Major Cities

*Stockholm*, the capital

*Göteborg*, the second largest city and chief seaport

*Malmö*, the third largest city, is across from Copenhagen, Denmark.

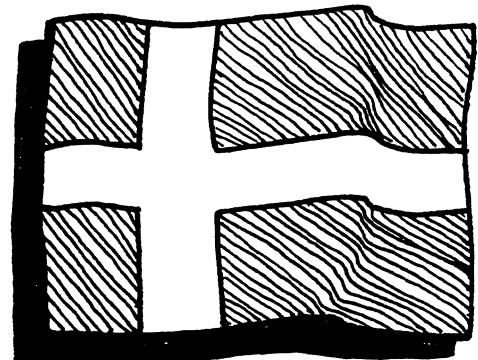
**Government**—Constitutional Monarchy. The head of state is the king or queen. The prime minister is the head of government.

**Language**—Swedish, a Germanic language. Most people also speak English.

**Climate**—Due to the Gulf Stream and constant sunlight, summer is remarkably warm, especially in the southern part of the country. Winter in Sweden is cold, with temperatures below freezing in the area near Stockholm in January and February.

**Elevation**—The highest point is Mount Kebnekaise of the Kölen range at 6926 feet (2111m). The lowest point is sea level.

**Flag**—The Swedish flag consists of a large yellow cross on a blue field; the colors come from an ancient coat of arms which dates back to A.D. 1364. The Swedish national flag has flown since King Gustavus Vasa's reign in the sixteenth century.



**National Anthem**—”Du gamla, du fria” (“Thou Ancient, Thou Free Born”)

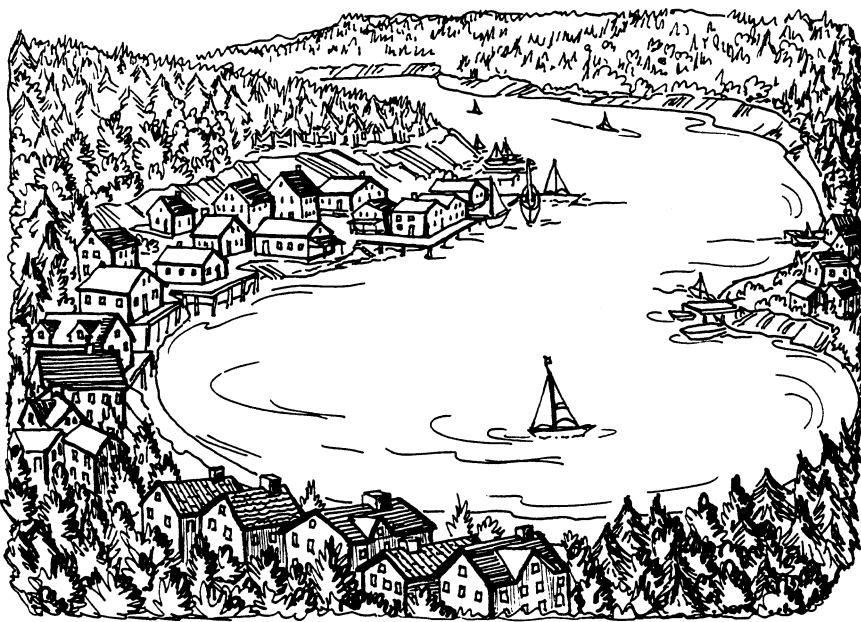
**Religion**—More than 90% of the Swedish are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, which is the national religion. Others are members of other Protestant denominations, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox religions.

**Currency**—The main unit is the krona, which is divided into 100 öre and written as Skr. There are notes in 10, 20, 50, 100, 500, 1000, and 10,000 Skr. Coins are minted in 1 and 5 Skr. The exchange rate varies, but currently one U.S. dollar is equal to approximately six and one half krona.

## Physical Features

Sweden, the fourth largest country in Europe, is nearly 1000 miles (1600km) long and about 300 miles (500km) wide. It borders Norway on the west and Finland on the northeast. Denmark is just southwest of Sweden. Across the Baltic Sea, on the southeast side, are Russia and Poland.

Sweden is a land of immense forests and shimmering lakes. Half of Sweden is covered by forests, and the country has over 96,000 lakes. In the south, wheat-covered plains can be found. This region is the Skåne province and is known as Sweden’s breadbasket because its rich farmland and mild climate produce most of the food for the country. This affluent area boasts many castles and estates, bird wildlife, and coastal resorts. Malmö, Sweden’s southernmost city, is located in the Skåne and is known as the “gateway” to Denmark. Göteborg, the second largest city, is located a little farther up the coast. This large seaport town, which was built for Gustav II Adolf in 1621, is the home of the Volvo car industry and now stages most of the top entertainment events held in northern Europe.



Småland, the area in the center of southern Sweden, provides a stereotypically beautiful image of Sweden. Here the plains of the lower south give way to dark green forests, sparkling blue lakes, and cozy red farmhouses. This is also the center of the Swedish glass industry, where some of the world’s finest glassblowers work.

Stockholm, Sweden’s capital, is on the country’s east coast; it looks out onto the Baltic Sea and is one of the most