



ZUSAMMEN GEGEN EU-SKEPSIS

Warum wählen Menschen EU-skeptisch? Wie lässt sich dem entgegenwirken? Und wie arbeiten Regionen in Europa zusammen? Im Gespräch mit der IzR-Redaktion berichten Akteure aus Regionen in Schweden, Schottland und Österreich von ihren Erfahrungen mit EU-Skepsis und europäischer Zusammenarbeit.

Region Skåne



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Annika Annerby Jansson

is the Chairman of the Regional Council of Skåne since 2018, where she represents the Swedish liberal-conservative party Moderaterna. Between 2006 and 2014 she was the Chairman of the Local Council of the city of Lund. Amongst other assignments Mrs Annerby Jansson has also been both president and vice president of CPMR, Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions.

Region Skåne is responsible for health care and public transport, business development, culture, infrastructure, social planning and environmental and climate-related issues in Skåne. With 34,000 employees, Region Skåne is one of Sweden's biggest employers. The region is a self-governing administrative region, funded by taxes and governed by a Regional Council of 149 members who are directly elected by the inhabitants of Skåne.

How did the region's economy develop in the last ten to twenty years? In which sectors were new jobs created, in which ones were jobs cut?

Jansson: Since 2008 there has been a large restructuring of the business sector in Skåne. The number of employees within the production industry has sharply decreased, while the number of employees within the knowledge intensive business services, education and health care has increased greatly. We have also seen a restructuring of the business community in the north east of Skåne when many large industries have shut down production or drastically reduced their workforce. At the same time economic growth and employment within the service sector has mostly taken place in western Skåne.

Since the beginning of the new millennium, Skåne has had the lowest employment rate in Sweden. The explanation for this is that although the region, as a whole, has had a marked increase in employment, this has been accompanied by almost the same percentage increase in population. As a result, the gap between the regional and national employment rate has largely remained constant.

It is worth noticing that Sweden is the European country that has granted asylum to the highest number of migrants per capita and Skåne is a region where this is very evident; 22 % of the inhabitants are foreign born. Foreign born have generally a longer way to walk to reach employment. It is

also worth noting that Skåne despite this has a high employment rate seen from a European perspective. Sweden as a whole has the highest employment rate in the EU.

In latest studies, the connection between long-term economic change and EU-scepticism is emphasized in particular. Is this a matter in your region? Which other topics play a role among EU-sceptics?

The Swedish population as a whole is very positive towards the European Union so also in Skåne. An average of 77 percent of the people in Skåne said in the Commissions Survey on Public Opinion from November 2018 that they had a high trust in EU which is slightly above the Swedish average. In this study also the results from questions on the present quality of life in the region, the economic situation in the region and the expectations for the future were very high in Skåne. It is worth noticing that in the referendum 2003 on entering the euro zone more Scanians voted yes than no.

How much do the election results in your region differ from the country as a whole?

The most EU-sceptical party in Sweden the Swedish Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna) had a higher amount of voters in the national elections of 2018 in Skåne (25,4 %) compared

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Gainfully employed 16+ years by region of residence (RAMS) by region, industrial classification NACE Rev. 2 and year

Industry	2008	2017	Diff
A companies in agriculture, forestry and fishing*	10,500	12,114	1,614
B+C mining, quarrying, manufacturing	73,679	58,673	-15,006
D+E energy and environmental companies	5,338	5,834	496
F construction industry	37,954	44,132	6,178
G trade	74,790	82,726	7,936
H transport and storage companies	31,175	30,208	-967
I hotels and restaurants	14,762	20,011	5,249
J information and communication companies	17,865	21,883	4,018
K financial institutions and insurance companies	8,307	8,433	126
L real estate companies	8,711	11,084	2,373
M+N professional, scientific and technical companies; administrative and support service companies	61,484	73,623	12,139
O public authorities and national defence	26,290	32,212	5,922
P educational establishments	58,176	72,583	14,407
Q human health and social work establishments	88,095	103,193	15,098
R+S+T+U establishments for arts, entertainment and recreation; other service companies etc.	22,300	27,035	4,735
00 unknown activity	6,400	7,196	796
Total	545,826	610,940	65,114

Source: Statistics Sweden

to the nation as a whole (17,5 %). At the same time the party receives a lower share of votes from Skåne in the regional elections compared to the national elections.

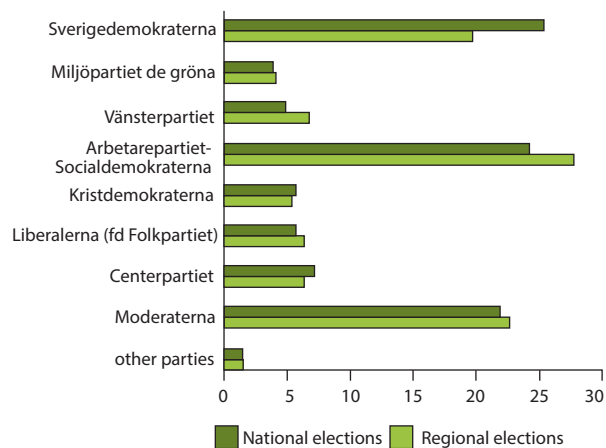
Who votes EU-sceptically in your region (according to socio-demographic categories, e.g. gender, age, income, qualification etc.)?

The most pronounced EU-sceptical party are the Swedish Democrats, which became the largest party in 20 of Skånes 33 municipalities in the latest election 2018. Another traditionally EU-sceptical party is the left wing party, Vänsterpartiet. Also, other parties have to various degrees been sceptical towards the EU and have had discussions on how to limit the scope of the union's mandate. However, it should be noted that none of the parties in the Swedish parliament are demanding that Sweden leave the EU. The Swedish population as a whole are generally positive towards the EU, with more than 60 percent saying they are in favour of Sweden being a member of the EU, in November 2018 (Source: Statistics Sweden).

Statistics Sweden notes in a poll from November 2018 that the support for the Swedish Democrats is twice as large among men as among women. When it comes to age groups it is not possible to see any clear patterns for who votes

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The parties share of votes from Skåne county in the national and regional elections, 2018



Source: Region Skåne

EU-sceptically. However the party has a larger support from citizens born in the country compared to foreign born citizens. Looking at the level of education among the party has a considerably larger support among those with a lower level of education compared to those with higher educational level. The numbers from Statistics Sweden refers to Sweden as a whole but can be assumed to apply also for Skåne.

How does the region face this trend? How do you face this trend in your work environment?

Skåne is a border region with longstanding traditions of collaborating with our neighbours. We are also a tourist destination and welcome large numbers of visitors from all over the world. As said above most Swedes also cherish the EU-membership. Even so it is important to consistently focus on and put the attention to the importance of international relations and promote interregional and international collaboration. Region Skåne is working internationally within the Öresund and Baltic Sea regions and within the EU to strengthen Skåne's development and promote interregional and European territorial cohesion and integration. The most intense collaboration takes place within the Öresund and Baltic Sea regions, where we are working with improvements and developments in areas including infrastructure, green economy, health care, tourism and culture through interregional and international organisations, collaborations and projects.

To increase international interest in Skåne, Region Skåne also has a representation office in Brussels. The office keeps track of EU's politics and looks after Skåne's interests in important issues. The office also works to increase Skåne's knowledge

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Share of votes in the county elections 2002–2018

Parties	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Moderaterna	19,5	27,9	30,9	22,3	22,6
Centerpartiet	5,3	5,9	4,5	4,2	6,3
Liberalerna	11,5	8,5	7,8	5,9	6,3
Kristdemokraterna	6,7	4,7	3,5	3,3	5,4
Miljöpartiet	3,4	4,4	6,6	6,7	4,1
Socialdemokraterna	40,1	34,4	30,5	32,4	27,3
Vänsterpartiet	6,0	4,2	3,9	5,3	6,7
Sverigedemokraterna	0,0	6,6	9,3	14,5	19,7
other parties	7,5	3,5	2,9	5,4	1,6

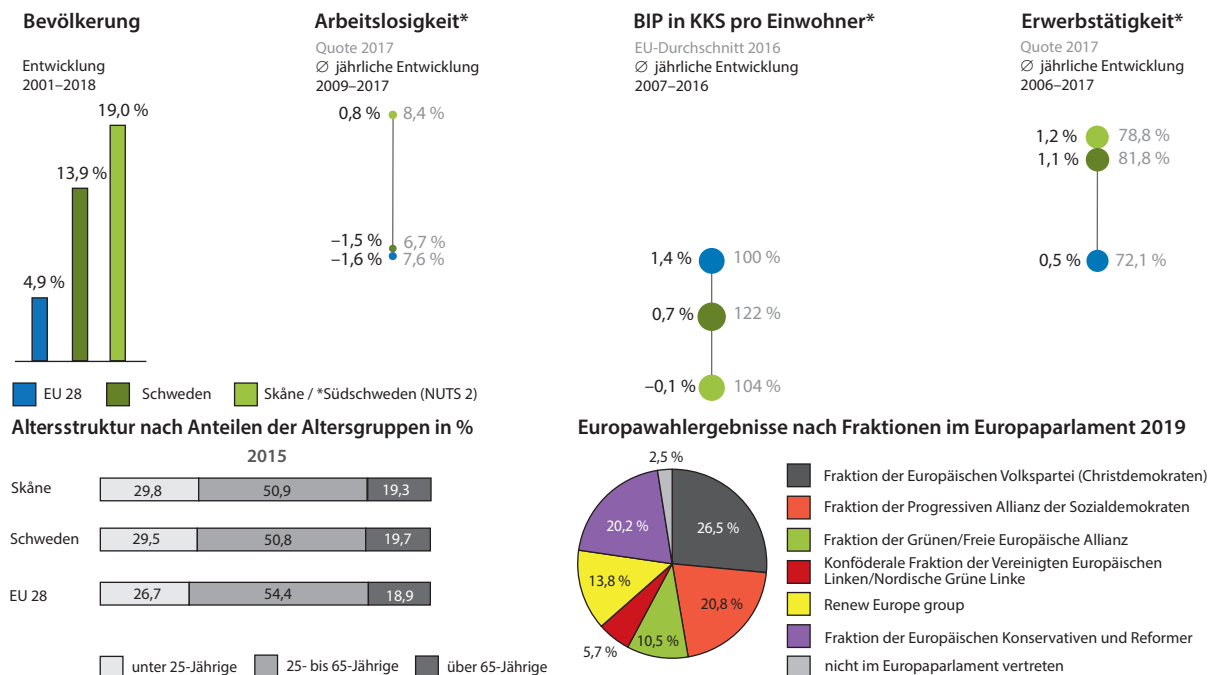
Source: Statistics Sweden

of European political processes. Together this work and the aim to make Skåne more internationalised is one way to face the trend of EU-scepticism in our region and in Europe as a whole.

We think that EU-scepticism also can be seen as scepticism against globalization as whole and in some cases it coincides with negative attitudes towards migration. A very important part of our work therefore is to foster integration and facilitate for newcomers to adopt to the Swedish society and to become active members of the community.

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Key figures Skåne (NUTS 3)



Datenbasis: Laufende Raumbewertung Europa, Datengrundlage: Eurostat, Europäisches Parlament – Ergebnisse der Europawahl 2019

Highlands and Islands of Scotland



Carroll Buxton

is currently the Interim Chief Executive of Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE). Her permanent post is as HIE's Director of Strategy and Regional Economy. She has responsibility for a diverse portfolio, leading on strategic planning, property and infrastructure, next generation broadband, universities, research and economics, marketing and communications. Carroll has worked for HIE since 1992.
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With fewer than 12 inhabitants km², the Highlands and Islands of Scotland is one of the most sparsely populated regions in the European Union. Covering an area of 40,000km², it has a population of just 470,000 across a geography characterised by islands (over 90 of them inhabited), a fjord like coastline and a mountainous interior.

The region's economy is dominated by SMEs across a diversity of sectors including "traditional" rural industries such as agriculture, food and drink, and tourism, and with significant strengths in other areas such as energy, manufacturing, life sciences and creative industries.

How has the Highlands and Islands developed over recent years?

The Highlands and Islands today is economically diverse, globally connected with excellent transport links and widespread digital infrastructure. It has an increasing population. The energy sector is world-leading, with expertise in marine renewables – wind, wave and tidal. Life sciences businesses serve global markets from our region and there are vibrant creative industries in digital media, film, TV, music, fashion and publishing. The food and drink sector is the region's biggest exporter and tourism is thriving.

At Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), we're particularly pleased that, increasingly, our young people want to continue to live and work in the region – looking for opportunities to study and build a career.

How has EU membership contributed to this development?

EU membership has had an overwhelmingly positive impact on the Highlands and Islands. Businesses have benefit-

ed from being part of the single market, making exporting within the EU relatively straightforward. The ability of our businesses to trade internationally is a vital component in growing the regional economy and increasing wealth.

The region has attracted a significant number of EU nationals to live and work here, bringing skills and knowledge to our businesses and making a positive contribution to life in our communities.

The region has also benefited greatly from EU funding including CAP/Rural Development Funds and particularly Structural Funds. Successive Structural Funds programmes since 1990 have been invaluable in supporting regional development through investment in infrastructure, business support, training programmes and community facilities. Good examples of this are investments in the University of the Highlands and Islands to enable our people to access third level education in all parts of the region and the European Marine Energy Centre (EMEC), a world first in marine renewable energy testing and development.

The benefits of EU membership are recognised by the Scottish Government whose position is that the best option for Scotland is to remain in the EU.

What have been the benefits of EU collaboration for the region?

We have always recognised the value of working with others to learn, share our knowledge and work together on common challenges and opportunities. For example, the development of the University of the Highlands and Islands has been influenced by the experiences of similar institutions elsewhere in Europe. Today, research collaborations, often through Horizon 2020 projects, are enhancing the university's reputation in areas such as marine science.

Regional partners are engaged in Interreg projects, addressing issues as diverse as women's entrepreneurship, healthcare in remote rural communities, and developing new models of sustainable tourism.

Not only does this give us access to new ideas to support regional development, it also demonstrates our commitment to be a collaborative partner, interested in the knowledge and expertise of others and open to sharing our own skills and experience. The benefits include access to expertise and financial resources, the opportunity to learn from one another

and, above all, the establishment of long-term, co-operative relationships, where the partnership is greater than the sum of its parts.

What does future EU collaboration look like?

International collaboration will continue to be important. While our future relationship with the EU is uncertain, we are committed to seeking out productive collaborations in Europe and further afield.

These may be through mechanisms such as Horizon and Interreg. In other cases we may need to find new ways to enable collaboration.

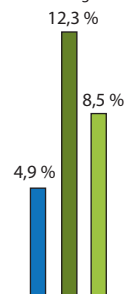
The strength of our existing relationships is undoubtedly an advantage, as is our reputation as a good partner. Key however, is the identification of partnerships and collaborations where everyone benefits and where partners could not act on their own – where the partnership is greater than the sum of its parts.

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Key figures Highlands and Islands

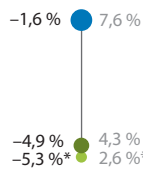
Bevölkerung

Entwicklung 2001–2018



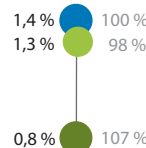
Arbeitslosigkeit

Quote 2017
 ☉ jährliche Entwicklung 2009–2017



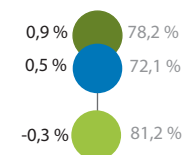
BIP in KKS pro Einwohner

EU-Durchschnitt 2016
 ☉ jährliche Entwicklung 2007–2016



Erwerbstätigkeit

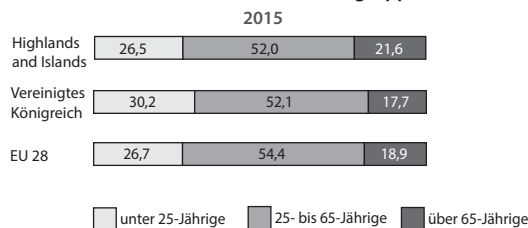
Quote 2017
 ☉ jährliche Entwicklung 2006–2017



EU 28, Vereinigtes Königreich, Highlands and Islands

* unsichere Datenlage

Altersstruktur nach Anteilen der Altersgruppen in %



Europawahlergebnisse nach Fraktionen im Europaparlament 2019



Datenbasis: Laufende Raumbewachtung Europa, Datengrundlage: Eurostat, Europäisches Parlament – Ergebnisse der Europawahl 2019

„ Wenn der Mehrwert der Zusammenarbeit bei den Menschen ankommt, wird auch die EU-Skepsis abnehmen. “



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Ihre Region arbeitet aktiv mit anderen Regionen in Europa zusammen – wie kann die Zusammenarbeit Ihrer Erfahrung nach dazu beitragen, europaskeptischen Trends zu begegnen? Wie sonst begegnet man solchen Trends?

Kooperation ist ein probates Mittel, um den europäischen Gedanken zu unterstützen. Dies impliziert aber auch eine Bewusstseinsbildung, sich als Europäer zu fühlen bzw. europäisch zu denken. Und dies wiederum bedeutet nicht, seine regionale Identität aufzugeben.

In diesem Zusammenhang ist es wichtig, den durch Kooperation entstehenden Mehrwert auch gegenüber der Bevölkerung zu kommunizieren. Dabei geht es weniger um die Höhe der EU-Mittel, die in Hinblick auf Kooperationsprojekte lukriert werden können, als vielmehr darum, strategische Themen in den Vordergrund zu rücken. Kooperation muss dazu führen, dass weite Teile der Bevölkerung spürbare Änderungen in Bereichen der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit, Bildungszusammenarbeit, Lebensqualität etc. erfahren. Hier kann die Europäische Union mit ihren Förderprogrammen zur grenzüberschreitenden oder transnationalen Kooperation positive Rahmenbedingungen für die Zusammenarbeit festlegen.

Vor allem bei kleinen Regionen ist die Bereitschaft und vor allem auch die Notwendigkeit zur Zusammenarbeit nahezu zwingend. Man ist schlicht und einfach nicht mehr in der

Lage, globalen Trends alleine zu begegnen. In diesem Zusammenhang ist aus meiner Sicht das Instrument der EVTZ (Europäische Verbünde für Territoriale Zusammenarbeit) gut geeignet, den europäischen Gedanken in kleinerem Maßstab umzusetzen. Aber selbst hier bedarf es einer gemeinsamen Sichtweise. Nicht: „was kann ich für meine Region tun?“, sondern „welche Probleme haben wir gemeinsam und wie kann man diese für die Bevölkerung spürbar lösen?“, sollte hier die zentrale Frage sein.

Wenn der Mehrwert dieser Zusammenarbeit bei der Bevölkerung angekommen ist, dann wird auch die EU-Skepsis abnehmen. Voraussetzung dafür ist neben einer nachhaltigen Themenauswahl und Lösungskompetenz auch eine entsprechende Kommunikation nach außen, nach dem Motto: „Tue Gutes und sprich darüber“. Es fehlt in der Bevölkerung vielfach das Wissen, was Europa tatsächlich für den einzelnen tun kann und auch tatsächlich leistet. Nur wenn man dies der Bevölkerung bewusstmacht, und vieles davon beruht auch auf Kooperation, wird man europaskeptischen Trends erfolgreich begegnen können.

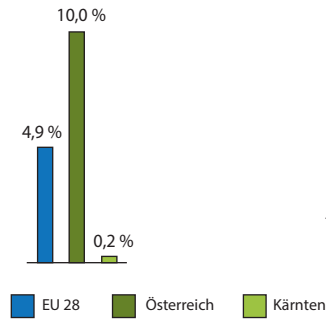
Die Kohäsionspolitik als Instrument des Solidaritätsgedankens ist zentral mit dem eigentlichen europäischen Mehrwert verbunden. Dies muss sich auch auf Ebene des politischen Denkens etablieren. Zusammenarbeit basiert auf Solidarität und diese gilt es, in allen Bereichen zu praktizieren.

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Kennzahlen Kärnten (NUTS 2)

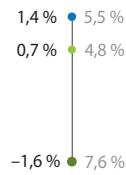
Bevölkerung

Entwicklung 2001–2018



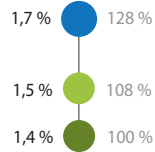
Arbeitslosigkeit

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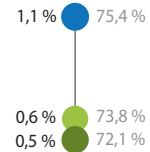
BIP in KKS pro Einwohner

EU-Durchschnitt 2016
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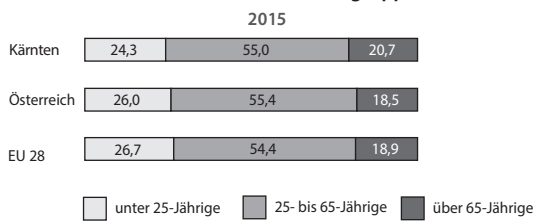


Erwerbstätigkeit

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Datenbasis: Laufende Raumbewachtung Europa, Datengrundlage: Eurostat, Europäisches Parlament - Ergebnisse der Europawahl 2019