

SWEDEN



**National Profile
2009-2010**



Internationellt KulturUtbyte

Welcome to Sweden and IKU!

We would like to welcome you to Sweden for a year as a volunteer 2009–2010. IKU (ICYE Sweden) is a youth organisation, run by young people, and we are responsible for your year here. Almost all the members of IKU have participated in exchange programmes and lived in other countries. You will meet many of those members during your year in Sweden.

As a volunteer here you will meet the Swedish people and culture in a way you could never do as a tourist. The outcome of your year abroad is to a great extent depending on your own effort to adapt and to express your needs and wishes. If you as a volunteer are honest with us, we promise to try to make your year worthwhile and an experience that you will never forget.

Välkommen till Sverige!

Internationellt KulturUtbyte
Tegelviksgatan 40
S-116 41 Stockholm
Sweden

Tel/fax: +46 - 8 - 615 05 58

Email: info@iku.nu

Website (mostly in Swedish): www.iku.nu



Internationellt KulturUtbyte



Internationellt KulturUtbyte - ICYE Sweden

It all started in 1973, when an American exchange organisation called ICX wanted to start working with Europe, and especially Sweden. They contacted a former exchange student, and a small committee - ICX Sweden - was formed. Later the committees created the American Scandinavian Student Exchange (ASSE). In 1976, the American ICX went bankrupt and ICX Sweden translated its name into Swedish - Internationellt KulturUtbyte - IKU. The ICYE Sweden committee was formed in March 1995 after some time of co-operation between IKU and ICYE Europe, and the first Swedish ICYE exchange took place in 1996-1997 with a small group of outgoing and incoming volunteers.

Apart from functioning as the Swedish branch of ICYE, IKU organises some seminars and other events for its members. Now we have almost 2000 members and more than 10 local groups of members spread around the country which have both local and international activities and projects. The members are often ex-volunteer but the last years we have become an organisation for any young person who is interested in peace and global issues. We have a member magazine that is published, with letters from the volunteers we have abroad and also from our incoming volunteers - you are very welcome to contribute to it!

The board of IKU consists of 5 young people, elected by the members, and working for the organisation in their free time. The day-to-day work is taken care of by our office staff, who at the moment are two part-time employees.

IKU is a full member of Forum Syd, an umbrella organisation for Swedish organisations working with voluntary service and aid in foreign countries.

Sweden - facts about our country

Population: 9 000 000

Area: 486 700 square kilometres

Religion: 95% Christian Protestants (Lutheran). Full freedom of religion is guaranteed.

Official language: Swedish. Minority languages: Finnish, Sami, Meänkieli, Yiddish, Romani

Capital: Stockholm, population 1,5 millions

Other big cities: Göteborg (Gothenburg), pop. 600 000, Malmö, pop. 250 000.

Currency: 1 krona (kr or SEK) = 100 öre

Form of government: Constitutional monarchy

Head of state: King Carl XVI Gustaf

Head of government: Prime minister Fredrik Reinfeldt (Moderate Party)



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Population

If you only look at its size, Sweden is one of the largest countries in Europe. However, only 9 million people live here, which means that most of the country is very sparsely populated. The average for the whole country is only 18 people per square kilometre. Most people live in the larger cities in southern Sweden, especially in the area surrounding Stockholm.

Sweden's indigenous people, the *Sami* (historically called "Lapps") traditionally live in an area known as *Sápmi*, or Lapland, which spreads across the northern part of the Scandinavian peninsula through Norway, Sweden and Finland. Historically, these people had their own language, culture, religion and traditions, and most Sami spent their life coexisting with nature, taking care of large herds of reindeers. Today, however, many of them have moved to towns in both northern and southern Sweden, and not many live in the traditional Sami way.

Climate

The warm Gulf Stream in the Atlantic Ocean gives Sweden a milder climate than other areas this far north. Stockholm is on the same latitude as southern Alaska but has an average temperature in July of 18 C. Thus, we don't have snow all year...as a matter of fact, the very south of the country doesn't even get snow every winter. In the far north, though, winter can last for more than half the year. Part of Sweden is north of the Arctic Circle, which means that the people who live there have some time without sunlight every winter - but on the other hand they have the Midnight Sun in the summer, with round-the-clock sunshine.

If you arrive to Sweden in August, it's likely that the weather will be sunny and quite warm (at least by Swedish standards), but it may just as well be raining, so bring some water-proof clothing. And for those coming in January, it will be mid-winter. During the winter months (around December to February), but also the months before and after, it can be minus degrees C. If you have it is good to bring warm clothes, but you can also get in Sweden. Clothing is quite expensive, but usually you can get fairly good prices of e.g. winter jackets in second hand shops.

Nature and Wildlife

With a length of over 2 000 km from north to south, Sweden offers a diverse and very varied nature. The northernmost two-thirds of the country are covered with large forests, crossed by rivers. In the Northwest there are big mountains, forming the border to Norway. The highest mountain, *Kebnekaise*, reaches 2 111 metres. Southwards the landscape is more open and more agricultural, and it is closer between the cities.

Although many Swedes live in urban areas nowadays, the natural landscape is rarely far away. There are green parks in most towns, even in the major cities, and even in central Stockholm the water is clean enough to swim in. Nature is very important to most Swedes, which also means that the laws protecting the environment are very strict. In many towns all waste is sorted to recycle everything that can be recycled, in order to reduce the impact of human settlement on nature.

The most important base for recreation in nature is the "Every Man's Right" (*Allemansrätten*) providing the possibility for everyone to visit anyone else's land, to take a swim in or to travel by boat on somebody else's waters, and to pick most kinds of wild flowers, mushrooms and berries. However, as people are allowed to enter areas where rare birds might nest, where protected flowers grow, and so forth, it takes great responsibility by those using these rights. It is prohibited to dig up live flowers and trees, and several types of flowers are protected.

The number of species of various wild animals is very large. The "Big Four" of Sweden are bear, lynx, wolverine and wolf - however, most of these are rare, in fact there are less than 40 wolves in the whole country! Other animals are more common, for example elk (moose) of which we have about 250 000. In the north there are also large herds of reindeer, but these are not wild but owned by Sami people. All in all, there are only two animals that could be hurting you. There is one small snake called *Huggorm*, and a little tic called *Fästing*. But none of them are neither very dangerous nor very common, so you won't have to worry walking out in the nature.



White backed woodpecker, a rare and protected species in the Swedish forests.

History

Sweden has a long and well-documented history. The first people came here in 8000 BC, just after the last ice age. The Swedish pre-history is divided into three time periods - the *Stone Age*, the *Bronze Age* and the *Iron Age* - depending on what material the people used for their weapons and tools.

The Iron Age (750-1060 AD) is also known as the time of the Vikings, when Scandinavians built large ships and sailed off to merchandise or rob; depending on how you see it. The Vikings are often considered wild, drunken, merciless robbers, but in fact their main occupations were farming and trade. Rune stones and archaeological artefacts found in eastern Sweden and on the island of Gotland show that the trade exchange between eastern Sweden and the Near East was very intense at this time in history. After the christening of Sweden in the 11th



century, the Viking culture, its gods and large parts of the traditions disappeared, although the Swedish Midsummer feast is a remnant of an old Viking ritual.

The modern Swedish history starts with the *Vasa period*, when Gustav Vasa united the country, which by that time included Finland and parts of Norway. The southern part of Sweden belonged to Denmark. Gustav Vasa proclaimed himself king in 1523, on the 6th of June, now the date of the Swedish national day. Gustav Vasa's grandson, Gustav II Adolf (Gustavus Adolphus), together with his army conquered all areas of land south and east of the Baltic Sea, and intervened in the Thirty Years' War on the side of the German Protestants. Gustav II Adolf was eventually killed in a battle on the 6th of November 1632; this day is still marked in the calendar as "Gustav Adolf Day".

The time between 1654 and 1719, when king Karl XII ruled Sweden, is known as the *Carlovignian period*. Karl XII is known for the many wars that were fought during his time on the throne. He tried to conquer Russia, but was defeated at Poltava in 1709, probably the worst disaster ever for the Swedish army. Some years later, the king decided to attack Norway, but at a battle in Fredrikshald he was shot and killed - historians and scientists are still trying to figure out whether the murderer came from the enemy or was someone from the Swedish army. The death of Karl XII led to a huge crisis in Sweden, and most of the land that had been conquered was lost.

After 1719, the royalty lost their absolute power in favour of the Parliament. This period, known as the *Period of Liberty*, saw many economical and scientific improvements - some well-known Swedes during this time were the scientist Anders Celsius (inventor of the Celsius temperature scale) and the botanist Carl von Linné/Linnaeus. However, the Swedish politics at this time were chaotic, and in 1772 the king Gustav III managed a coup d'état to restore the royal power. This was the start of the *Gustavian Time*. Gustav III is known for his interest in culture - among other things he started the Swedish Academy - but he also made a lot of enemies through the way he ruled the country. In 1792 he was murdered at a masquerade ball.

Between 1750 and 1850 the Swedish agriculture was modernised. The changes brought an increased production, which was necessary to feed the growing population, but the change in distribution of farming land, together with the population increase, meant that there were more and more people without any land at all. Some of them found work in the growing Swedish towns, where the developing industries needed more workers; for others, emigration was the only solution. During this period almost one million people left the country in search of a better life elsewhere. Many of them ended up in North America - at one time, Chicago was known as "Sweden's third city", because its population of Swedes was larger than all but two Swedish towns at that time.

In 1814, the king Karl XIII was overthrown and in his place came a young French marshal, Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, as king known as Karl XIV Johan. He is the



ancestor of the present Swedish royal family. Karl XIV Johan initiated a union between Sweden and Norway, a union that wasn't dissolved until 1905.

1814 is also the year of the Kiel peace, which meant the fall of the Swedish empire but also the start of a very long period of peace - Sweden has not been in war since that time. It is the longest time any country in the world has had peace. During both World Wars Sweden was officially neutral.

Since a referendum in 1994, Sweden is a member of the European Union. Mobility between other European countries has become much easier. By tradition we already have co-operation between the Nordic countries (Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark and Iceland) that among other things means that one can travel and move freely between these countries. Sweden is however not part of the European Monetary Union (EMU), but a referendum about whether to join or not is planned in September 2003.

Government, parliament and constitution

Sweden is a monarchy and the King is the Head of State, but nowadays he only has a symbolic function. The present king, King Carl XVI Gustaf (born 1946), became king after his grandfather's, King Gustav VI Adolf, who died in 1973. In 1976 the King married Silvia Sommerlath from Germany and they have three children: Crown Princess Victoria (born 1977), Prince Carl Philip (born 1979) and Princess Madeleine (born 1982). The King is known for his great interest in nature and environmental issues; he is Chairman of Honour in the World Scout Federation and Chairman of Honour of the Swedish branch of the World Wildlife Fund. The Queen is also well known for her interest in the situation of disabled people.

Sweden has had a written Constitution (Grundlag) since the middle of the 14th century. It now consists of four constitutions: Regeringsformen (form of government), Successionsordningen (order of succession), Tryckfrihetsförordningen (press law) and Ytrandefrihetsgrundlagen (constitution for freedom of speech).

"All public power in Sweden comes from the people" is the first sentence of the Swedish constitution. The people are represented by the Swedish parliament, *Riksdagen*, which has 349 members who are elected for a period of four years at a time. Every Swedish citizen over the age of 18 has the right to vote in the general election. The number of female members of parliament in Riksdagen is amongst the highest in the world.

Because the King has no authority in the governing of the state, it is the government, *Regeringen* - consisting of the prime minister and the other ministers - that governs the state and is answerable to Riksdagen. Sweden applies a so-called negative parliamentarism, which means that Regeringen can stay in office as long as Riksdagen does not openly show a lack of confidence in it. It is Riksdagen that has the legislative power and Regeringen has the executive power. Regeringen is also responsible for the administration.



The head of the government, the prime minister, is called *Statsminister*. In early 1996 Göran Persson succeeded Ingvar Carlsson as party leader of the Social Democratic party and subsequently became Statsminister. Since 2006 the power has changed, and now it is the right wing Fredrik Reinfeldt who is the Prime minister.

Perhaps the internationally most well known Swedish politician was Olof Palme. He was Social Democratic prime minister in 1982 - 1986. On the 28th February 1986, Olof Palme was assassinated in central Stockholm and Sweden got its own "Kennedy murder" - the murder still hasn't been solved.

Sweden today

Today, Sweden is a fairly rich and well-developed country, with a high standard of education, one of the highest average life length expectancies in the world and the highest representation of women in the parliament and government. In many respects Sweden is also a country of relatively small class differences. On the downside, unemployment, shortage of housing and other social problems are more common today than they used to be, and Sweden also has the highest divorce rate in Europe.

Sweden today is also very much a country of immigrants. Ever since the first people came here after the ice age, people from all parts of the world have settled in the area now known as Sweden. Probably even the people who believe they are 'purely Swedish' have foreign ancestors. Today, many different cultures are represented in the population. There are also a lot of foreign influences - especially from the USA - reaching us through TV, music, fashion, food, and so on.

Religion

One of the ties that link the Scandinavian countries is the common Lutheran (Protestant) religion. The fact that the Church of Sweden has many members does not mean that the average person goes to church every Sunday or that they have a personal Christian belief. As a matter of fact, only few percent of the population regularly attend church services, and you can say that Sweden is a very secularised country.

The Swedish people

You will probably soon learn the Swedish word *lagom*, which means something that is "in-between" - not too much, not too little, just enough. Swedes often refer to this word when they are to describe their countrymen (and -women): we are not supposed to be any better or any worse than anyone else, but rather bland and *lagom*... Another thing that is often mentioned is that we are supposed to believe - or at least act like we believe - that we are just like everyone else and not special in any way. This rule that one shouldn't believe one is anything special is called the "Law of Jante", after a text by Danish-Norwegian writer Aksel Sandemose.

Foreign people often say that it can be difficult to get in contact with Swedes, as they are often very quiet, a bit shy and individual. You might find that Swedes are



not as 'open' or 'social' as people from your country. From our volunteers we sometimes hear this reflection, and therefore it is encouraged to have a lot of patience, and not just stop taking social initiative.

The Swedish language

Swedish is a Germanic language, very similar to Norwegian and Danish and closely related to German and Dutch. If you already know one of these languages you will find that many words and much of the grammar is similar to Swedish.

Do not hesitate to learn at least a few words of Swedish before your arrival here. You will receive some training on the arrival camp, and as far as possible we will also try to find you a Swedish course near your project. This is because we think that learning the language is a very important part of your stay in Sweden.

Don't expect to learn Swedish without practising a lot, though - try not to speak English at your host project, since you will learn Swedish much faster if you don't use both languages. But for your feeling of security: almost every Swede speaks good English, and many people also speak German, French or some Spanish. And remember, no one expects you to speak perfect Swedish, but we all expect you to try to learn!

Å å Ä ä Ö ö

The Swedish alphabet has 29 letters; the "extra ones" are å, ä and ö. You will learn how to pronounce them when you arrive in Sweden.

The sound of "å", is the same as in "Paul" and "fall". You can hear the sound "ä" in the English words "mad" and "ran". "Ö" is more difficult in Swedish, but it's close to the sound in "learn" and "early" (ea).

Small wordlist

Sweden	Sverige	Hospital	Sjukhus
Swedish	Svenska	Police	Polis
		Train	Tåg
Hello	Hej	Bus	Buss
Good morning	God morgon	Aeroplane	Flygplan
Good-bye	Hej då	Car	Bil
My name is...	Jag heter...	Exchange (money)	Växla (pengar)
I come from... från...	Jag kommer		
What's your name?	Vad heter du?	One	Ett
Where do you live?	Var bor du?	Two	Två
Thank you	Tack	Three	Tre
You're welcome	Varsågod	Four	Fyra
		Five	Fem
I do (not) speak Swedish	Jag talar (inte) svenska	Six	Sex
		Seven	Sju
I (do not) understand	Jag förstår (inte)	Eight	Åtta
		Nine	Nio
		Ten	Tio
		One hundred	Ett hundra
Can you help me?	Kan du hjälpa mig?	Boy / Man	Pojke / Man
		Girl / Woman	Flicka / Kvinna
Where is...?	Var är...?	He	Han
		She	Hon
When?	När?	They	De
		We	Vi
Where?	Var?	Is/Are	Är



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Food and beverages

There is at least one prejudice about Sweden that is true, the one about Swedish meatballs. Meatballs and spaghetti or potatoes is one of the most common food on Swedish tables. Otherwise the food is pretty similar to that of other European countries - in fact, we eat a lot of "foreign" food such as pasta, Asian dishes, pizza and hamburgers, and not very much "traditional" Swedish foods. Almost every Swedish town, no matter if there are 5000 citizens or 500 000, has at least one pizza restaurant and at least one Chinese restaurant. There are a lot of vegetarians in Sweden, so it should not cause you much trouble if you do not eat meat or fish, but please inform us about your special needs.

In general, we have a large breakfast at 7-9am, usually with coffee (almost a national beverage), juice, yoghurt or milk and cereals, or sandwiches. At lunch, around noon, Swedes usually eat a warm meal, and dinner, which is eaten around 6pm, is often also warm. Between meals we have lots of *fika*, which means coffee/tea and biscuits/cakes/sandwich or a fruit. Swedes drink the most coffee per capita in the world.

Swedish restaurants are expensive. For a lunch in a restaurant you will have to pay about 50-80 SEK, a dinner in evening time costs about 80 – 150 SEK and a beer costs 30-50 SEK.

In Sweden you must be 20 years or older to buy alcohol, except in pubs, restaurants and night clubs where you are allowed to order alcoholic drinks if you are 18 or older. There are heavy taxes on alcohol in Sweden so it's very expensive. Apart from some types of lighter beer you can't buy alcohol in supermarkets, but have to go to a special shop called *Systembolaget*.



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Your year in Sweden as a volunteer

A year abroad is of course an extraordinary experience, and this experience does not get smaller if it also includes the possibilities to learn a new language and meet new people, and to communicate with them in this, for you, new language. To enjoy these possibilities you will have to have an open mind and a will to adapt. Many of the problems you will face during the year you will not have been able to anticipate before your arrival.

The last couple of years Sweden have had an increasing number of tourists. As an exchangee you will find a whole different Sweden from what the tourists see. To live and work in a Swedish project with other Swedes will not only give you an experience for life but also a chance to broaden your mind and increase your understanding for other cultures. This process will be much less "painful" if you already before your departure try to get rid of your prejudices about the Swedes, Sweden and what it is like to work in a project here. This is not an easy task, if not impossible, but just try to be aware of your preconceived opinions and the fact that the world does not necessarily look that way.

To be able to take part in the Swedish society all exchangees will be placed in a host project, often situated in the countryside. It could for instance be a conference centre or an organic farm with animals and cultivation. You should not expect to stay in a city, but of course there will be possibilities for you to go to the nearest town sometimes. There are local means of transportation in the countryside, even though they may not leave so often, so that is why it is better to be prepared that it needs some planning and time.

Voluntary work in Sweden will probably look a bit different from what you might be used to in your home country. Our social welfare system takes care of the elderly, handicapped and others in need, and we have a functional day-care and schooling system where you need to be educated and experienced to work. The placements therefore are more about voluntary work in the broader sense of the word.

It is not always possible for us to fulfil the geographical preferences the volunteer might have, but of course we will try to find you a project that meets your needs and preferences. Therefore it is helpful for us if you are very specific about yourself in your application.

Some of the volunteers coming to Sweden will live at the work-placements while others will live with host families. It is quite difficult to find host families in Sweden, which is why not all exchangees can be offered to stay in one. For those who wish we will try to find 'weekend families' for the volunteers who live at the projects; these families will host the volunteer for perhaps a weekend a month, and will act as an extra contact for the exchangee.

IKU will, if possible, provide you with a local contact person to help you integrate well in your community. We hope we can solve upcoming problems together with you, the local contact person and the project. You should never hesitate to contact



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us if there is any kind of problem at the project, or with the contact person, since it is essential that you have a good experience here.

All incoming volunteers will be asked to sign a volunteering contract when they arrive to Sweden; this contract is attached to the National Profile.

What are some of the volunteers in Sweden 2008/2009 doing?

- Binod from Nepal and Jorgé from Costa Rica works with mentally disabled people.
- Lorena from Colombia works for a solidarity organisation that runs second hand shop.
- Alina from Honduras works in folk high school where she e.g. helps with teaching Spanish.

Living in a host family

The willingness to adapt is especially important in the relations with the host family. In this situation there has to be some giving and taking from both sides, especially since you as an exchangee will want to become a member of the family, not only a guest. The rules of the family you stay in might be very different from those in your own family, so maybe it's not even enough that you behave like you would expect from someone who came into your own family. In some cases you do not stay in a typical host family, but on the project itself, sometimes with other staff members and international volunteers. Also in these cases, it is very important that you are open to cooperate and communicate with the people you live with.

The family and the work placement are the most important contacts you will have with the Swedish society; therefore ask questions, take an active role in the social life, and share your experiences with them.

Activities during the year

Language/arrival camp – The language and arrival camp will be held during the first week of your stay in Sweden. It will be held someplace near Stockholm, so when you book your tickets your destination should be Stockholm. The name of the main airport is Arlanda. The camp will be about a week long. We will stress the verbal day-to-day communication, but also include grammar, reading and writing. Of course, a great deal of the week will be spent introducing the volunteers to Sweden and Swedish culture, and answering any questions you might have about the country. The IKU co-workers will be responsible for the language camp, which will give you the chance to meet and get to know the people who will follow you through your stay in Sweden.

Mid-year camp – After about six months the mid-year camp will be held during a weekend. By this time you should have received a lot of impressions of the Swedish



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society and be eager to discuss with others. At the meeting we will talk about any difficulties that have occurred and ways to get through them.

Final evaluation camp – This meeting, which is held a weekend, will be the final evaluation before your departure. This meeting is of course of great importance to IKU, since it gives us a chance to improve our program for the following years. But it is just as important for the volunteers who will get the chance to discuss “coming home”, which might be just as hard, or harder, than going away to another country.

Money and costs

You will receive 750 SEK in pocket money each month. This is supposed to cover the basic costs that you will have outside of food and lodging, which of course are covered by the work placement or host family. Your travels to and from your work will also be paid for. IKU will pay for your tickets to and from the IKU camps. Costs in Sweden are expensive, and we recommend the exchangees to bring some extra money, especially if they want to do some travelling.

Some sample prices to give you an idea what things cost:

A 500 km trip by train	200-500 SEK (depending on the type of ticket)
Cinema ticket:	85 SEK
Coffee/tea at a café	15-25 SEK
Hamburger	25-35 SEK
Bus trip, in town	20 SEK
A newspaper	10 SEK
Sending a 20g letter within Sweden:	5 SEK
Sending a 20g letter within Europe:	11 SEK
Sending a 20g letter outside Europe:	11 SEK
A bottle of shampoo:	25 SEK
A music-CD	150 SEK

Some practical information

If you fall ill, you can go to the nearest doctor or hospital and get medical care. Your ICYE insurance will cover everything as long as you keep the receipts. The shops where you buy medicines (both prescription and non-prescription) are called *Apoteket* and are generally open Mondays to Fridays 9.30 am to 6 pm.

Most banks are open Monday to Friday 10am to 3pm, sometimes longer. On Saturdays and Sundays the banks are closed. All banks have a currency exchange service, and there are also independent exchange offices. Usually banks charge a fee for exchanging money, while exchange offices do not - ask about it and compare exchange rates to get the best deal. If you need to send or receive money from abroad, the absolutely best way to do that is to have a credit card tied to a bank account in the home country. Most other methods are time consuming, as well as expensive.



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Grocery shops and other shops are generally open from 10am to 6pm, some larger departments stores from 9am-8pm. In larger towns there are usually a couple of supermarkets that are open longer, sometimes even 24 hours a day.

The Swedish postal service has been reorganised recently - there are now few post offices; instead, many grocery shops and petrol stations have small post 'centrals' where you can mail letters and packages and also pick up parcels that have been sent to you. You will recognise the shops that have postal services by the blue and yellow sign. ®



The opening hours of the post offices can vary, but in general they are open at least between 10am-6pm Monday-Friday. Note that the envelopes they sell in the post offices include postage fees, but are usually more expensive than buying envelope and stamp separately.

Visa procedures

The ICYE committee in your country will send IKU the ICYE application form that you have filled out. We will then send a letter of recommendation/invitation to your sending organisation, and you fill out a visa application form for exchange studies (which you can get from the nearest Swedish embassy or consulate). The form and the invitation letter should be given to the Swedish embassy in your country, which in turn will send it on to the Swedish migration authorities. It can take up to 8 weeks to get the visa after applying at the Swedish embassy, thus it is important that ICYE Sweden has your application form at least 2 1/2 months before you arrive in Sweden. A Visa costs 275 SEK.

What to bring to Sweden

Warm clothes for the wintertime, or money to buy clothes.
Sleeping bag (for our camps).
Pictures of your country and your family.
Recipes of traditional food from your country.

Would you like to know more?

See if your local library has books (travel guides or fact books) on Sweden or Scandinavia. There are also some good web sites about Sweden:

<http://www.si.se> - The Swedish Institute publishes various materials about Sweden; some of them are available on-line.

<http://www2.si.se/young> - Young Sweden, a page about what it is like to be young in Sweden today. You can also hear what the Swedish language sounds like.

<http://www.sverigeturism.se/smorgasbord> - Sweden Information Smorgasbord.

<http://www.visitsweden.com> - Official Swedish web site for tourism and travel information.

<http://www.travlang.com> - Free on-line language courses, including Swedish.

**Finally, IKU would like to welcome you to an exciting,
interesting and educating year in Sweden!**