

# Swedish Rural Areas and Covid -19



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# The Swedish strategy



- Protect risk-groups
- Minimize the spread of the virus
- Maintaining critical health care

Through a Voluntary-based approach that can be maintained for a long time

- General guidelines
- Recommendations



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# General guidelines

- Stay at home when slightest symptoms
- Wash your hands
- 1 m distance outdoors and indoors
- Avoid public transport
- Avoid gatherings like parties, funerals, weddings etc
- people +70 and in at-risk groups strongly recommended to self-isolate

# Prohibited

- More than 50 people in public gatherings (such as demonstrations, theater, lectures, sportevents, concerts, markets, fairs...)
- Visits in elderly care homes – (allowed again from 15.9.2020)
- Sweden closed schools for the over-16s in spring but kept those for younger pupils open, insisting on full attendance. All schools and universities are now open again.

# This meant:



- Shops, bars, restaurants and gyms stayed open and the wearing of masks has not so far been recommended – even though vividly discussed!
- Schools stayed open
- Jobs stayed open, many with home-office especially in urban areas
- public transport was avoided



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# Looking back on Rural Areas from March-August



- March-April: waiting
- Economic consequences for already weak organizations
- May – August: Immense increase in outdoor tourism and national tourism
- Too many orders in small industries in summer vacations when Europe came out of their lock-downs
- Local solidarity strong
- Summer cottages well visited
- Housing prices rising in some parts



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# On a national level right now



- fewest daily cases since the virus emerged
- only 1.2% of its 120,000 tests last week came back positive.
- Thirteen Covid-19 patients are in intensive care in Swedish hospitals, and its seven-day average of coronavirus-related deaths is zero.



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# Rural Areas – current needs



- NGOs are waiting for – and needing - support
- Event organizers are waiting for a new decision on public gatherings adjusted to the circumstances, not the exact number of participants – especially outdoor events and cultural events
- Mainly we are doing modified business



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- Swedish LAGs and society well adapted to digital life already before COVID-19
  - Application system completely digital since before
  - Many LAGs already tried digital meetings before
- Business modified but ongoing
  - Zoom-LAG-meetings, General Assemblies and conferences
  - Home-office for many
- In the beginning LAGs as multiplier: Promoting local shops and stores, promoting local businesses, communicating possibilities of support
- No big events in the projects
- Most usual effect is the delay in projects, which is easy to handle in our system
- Ongoing calls – project applications keep coming in, modified but not only invented because of Corona



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# Outlook for rural areas and LAGs



- Keep attracting the new group of tourists that have shown up
- Attract potential inhabitants that are spending time in the summer-cottages
- Keep using digital tools to save time and resources - as a complement to physical meetings
- Support NGOs
- Keep the distance!



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# Thankyou



Questions:

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