

Geography Reference Guide

This is a reference guide for comparing provinces to their corresponding county or counties, and vice versa. Keep in mind that provinces define cultural identity and counties are where the genealogical records are kept.

Points of confusion

- Some provinces and counties overlap in both area and name
- Some provinces contain more than one county
- Some counties encompass more than one province
- Some counties have been renamed or were phased out in 1998 and replaced with new county names and geographic area.

Alphabetical Comparison Lists

Province to County comparison

Use this list to determine which county or counties are the administrative center(s) for a particular province. Names that start with special letters such as Ä or Ö are at the end of the alphabet. As stated above, the appendage “län” is usually left off in genealogy databases and indexes.

Blekinge — Blekinge län

Bohuslän* — Göteborg och Bohus län (now Västra Götalands län)

Dalarna — Kopparbergs län, occasionally Falu län (now Dalarnas län)

Dalsland — Älvsborgs län (now Västra Götalands län)

Gotland — Gotlands län

Gästrikland — Gävleborgs län

Halland — Hallands län

Härjedalen — Jämtlands län

Hälsingland — Gävleborgs län

Jämtland — Jämtlands län

Lapland — Västerbottens län and Norrbottens län

Medelpad — Västernorrlands län

Närke — Örebro län, Närke och Värmlands län (older records / Ancestry category)

Skåne — Malmöhus län and Kristianstads län (now combined as Skåne län)

Småland — Jönköpings län, Kalmar län, Kronobergs län

Södermanland — Södermanlands län, Stockholms län (small part)

Uppland — Uppsala län, Stockholms län

Värmland — Värmlands län, Närke och Värmlands län (older period)

Västerbotten — Västerbottens län

Västergötland — Skaraborgs län, Älvsborgs län, Göteborg och Bohus län (city of Gothenburg only) – all of these are now in the new county Västra Götalands län

Västmanland — Västmanlands län, Örebro län (small part historically)

Ångermanland — Västernorrlands län

Öland — Kalmar län

Östergötland — Östergötlands län

*Bohuslän without a space is the province, the county was historically known as “Göteborg och Bohus län.” The space between Bohus and län makes the distinction.

County to Province list

Use this list if you know the county name and want to locate it in relation to its province or provinces. This can be helpful for understanding regional customs and identity.

Older counties and their new counterparts are listed separately and in alphabetical order. Names that start with special letters such as Ä or Ö are at the end of the alphabet.

New county names are marked in red:

Blekinge län — Blekinge

Dalarnas län — Dalarna (name change only from Kopparberg)

Gotlands län — Gotland

Gävleborgs län — Gästrikland, Hälsingland

Göteborg och Bohus län — Bohuslän and the city of Gothenburg

Hallands län — Halland

Jämtlands län — Jämtland, Härjedalen

Jönköpings län — Småland

Kalmar län — Småland, Öland

Kopparbergs län (sometimes Falu län) — Dalarna

Kristianstads län — Skåne

Kronobergs län — Småland

Malmöhus län — Skåne

Närke och Värmlands län (older) — Närke, Värmland

Norrbottnens län — northern section of Lappland, Norrbotten

Örebro län — Närke, (small part of Västmanland historically)

Skaraborgs län — Västergötland

Skåne län — Skåne (county and province are now identical in area and name)

Stockholms län — Uppland, Södermanland (small part)

Södermanlands län — Södermanland

Uppsala län — Uppland

Värmlands län — Värmland

Västerbottens län — Västerbotten, southern section of Lappland

Västernorrlands län — Medelpad, Ångermanland

Västmanlands län — Västmanland

Västra Götalands län — Västergötland, Bohuslän, Dalsland

Älvsborgs län — Västergötland, Dalsland

Östergötlands län — Östergötland

What changed in 1997/98?

- **Dalarnas län** — formerly Kopparbergs län (sometimes Falu län)
- **Västra Götalands län** — replaced Göteborg och Bohus, Skaraborg, Älvsborg
- **Skåne län** — replaced Malmöhus and Kristianstad
- **Stockholms län** — city/county divisions merged in database usage

Which online genealogy platforms reflect that change?

Only Riksarkivet. This is because Riksarkivet is not technically a genealogy platform but is a part of the National Archives. However, since it is free to use, it is a very good option for browsing the church books.

Family Search, Ancestry, MyHeritage, and ArkivDigital all use the names as they were prior to the later reforms, though you may see modern names in some indexed records and in public family trees.

For more information about Swedish provinces, counties, and parishes see the FamilySearch Research Wiki.

Maps can be found here

https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Provinces_of_Sweden

https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Counties_of_Sweden