

## SWEDEN

# Local development

### Location

Kristianstad

### Programming period

2014 - 2020

### Priority

P6 – Social inclusion and  
local development

### Measure

M19 – LEADER/CLLD

### Funding (EUR)

Total budget 97 773  
EAFRD 48 887  
National/regional 16 621  
Other 32 265

### Project duration

2016 – 2018

### Project promoter

Skånemedia AB

### Contact

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### Website

[www.kristianstadsbladet.se/](http://www.kristianstadsbladet.se/)

**At a time when news reporting is often controlled by a few, large media channels, a LEADER project gave voice to small local communities.**

## Summary

The number of local newspaper offices in Sweden is declining, leading to an increasing number of people in rural areas feeling that their life and everyday surroundings are not covered by the media. Kristianstadsbladet wanted to change this centralising trend in news reporting, and decided to engage locals from villages outside the city.



The project has engaged, trained and organised a large number of 'local correspondents' who with the guidance of the project leader write articles about their neighbourhood.

## Results

Local correspondents have published 300 articles (totalling around 100 pages) from the areas outside the main city. Some were published online while others in the print-form of the newspaper.

The office's network for receiving news tips has broadened.

The newspaper now reaches out to readers that previously they didn't engage. The initiative has highlighted readers' interest in stories about their villages.

## Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ The project leader plays a key role, assisting and organising the correspondents around the municipality, and this role will continue after the funding.
- ❑ Valuing local engagement is also key. Even though many of the local correspondents weren't financially incentivised, paying contributors for their work is a way of showing them that their work is valued.

### Context

Kristianstad is a rural municipality covering a relatively large and widespread area. It is not easy for the local newspaper Kristianstadsbladet to report on stories from the municipality as a whole, especially since the trend in local journalism in Sweden has been to centralise news reporting at a main editorial office. According to the project leader Lukas Ernryd, there is a false perception that readers are interested in reading only about the main city.

This project is founded on the idea that media coverage is an issue of democracy, and that there is a demand for very local news among readers. This kind of news might be difficult for ordinary journalists to pick up and the project thus identified a need to engage local correspondents around the municipality. They asked themselves, what happens if we give readers a go?

### Objectives

Objectives of the project were to:

- Publish more articles from the various areas outside the city; and
- Increase the attention paid to these various villages.

This would be achieved by engaging, training and creating a network for locals to report news from their own villages

### Activities

Building on the idea that no one comes closer to the news than those living among it, Kristianstadsbladet wanted to mobilise local people and engage them in reporting from their own areas. The project started to reach out at meetings to people in these areas – sometimes through existing organisations.

The recruited local correspondents had meetings and training sessions on journalism and other issues related to the reporting of news. For example, Ola Isaksson, a teacher of journalism at Lund's University, talked to the group of local correspondents about a range of issues from source criticism and ethics to how to write in an interesting and relevant way.

The correspondents were encouraged to send in news from their own local areas, and thanks to the Leader-funding the correspondents could be paid for their work and receive guidance from the journalist and project leader Lukas Ernryd.

### Main results

- The local correspondents have published 300 articles (totalling 100 pages) from the areas outside the city, some online and others in the print form of the newspaper.
- The office's network for receiving news tips has broadened.
- The newspaper now reaches out to readers that previously they didn't engage. The initiative has highlighted readers' interest in stories about their villages.

### Key lessons

- The project leader emphasises the importance of a engaging someone to organise the correspondents around the municipality. The person will continue in the role at the end of the project.
- He also emphasises the value of local engagement. Even though many of the local correspondents weren't financially incentivised, paying contributors for their work is a way of showing them that their work is valued.



*“The people that live out there know what they want to read. We are dependent on their ears and eyes. We can only survive by living in symbiosis with our readers”*

Lukas Ernryd, project leader

### Additional sources of information

n/a