kristiansand - city full of energy
Kristiansand is the business and cultural capital of Southern Norway. Nicknamed "the coolest Riviera" by the media, it is a modern city with a cosmopolitan history. A leading light in the technology sector and number one in exports, the Kristiansand Region is one of the fastest growing regions in Scandinavia.

Flourishing businesses around Kristiansand attract engineers and professionals from the University of Agder and other educational institutions. Some of the largest companies are energy-based, either as suppliers to the oil industry or as producers and suppliers to the emerging renewable-energy market.

The geographical proximity to the hub of the European continent, nature and the wide range of cultural activities is making the region an attractive place to live. Kristiansand is brimming with exciting opportunities, both professional and recreational.

Kristiansand is located on Norway’s southern coast and has long been a favourite summer holidays spot amongst Norwegians. The sea and surrounding fjords are perfect for recreational activities like fishing and sailing, and the nearby inland and mountains are ideal for skiing and hiking. In the more urban areas, you will find a rich variety of cafés, restaurants, art galleries and museums.

The region is well connected to the European continent and the major hubs in Norway. Kristiansand is the gateway for more than two million travellers each year.

**A SPARKLING REGION**

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**THE KRISTIANSAND REGION**

- **132,500 INHABITANTS**
- **2,154 SQUARE KILOMETRES**

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**Foto: Anders Martinsen Fotografer**
The Kristiansand Region offers a broad range of exciting opportunities in a variety of settings – for job seekers and businesses. A large number of international companies and many smaller, specialised companies are offering career choices associated with a region in rapid development.

The educational institutions, the large process industry and the energy technology cluster are some of the major contributors to the innovation that characterises the southern part of Norway. Southern Norway is on top of the entrepreneurial rankings. Strong industry groups provide excellent networking and collaboration opportunities in the region.

32 percent of Kristiansand’s adult population has a bachelor’s degree or higher. Many are therefore employed at universities and research institutes such as the University of Agder and Agder Research, or at one of the many privately funded research departments working in a wide range of activities in a variety of fields.

Kristiansand has an agreeable climate and a good quality of life, which have attracted many thousands of Norwegians to live and work here for decades. The City of Kristiansand alone has grown from 25,000 to 85,000 inhabitants in less than 60 years.
The Kristiansand Region is highly influenced by the broad research community and the educational institutions in the area. The University of Agder is the largest educational institution with 10,000 students. It is funded by the government and offers more than 150 different programmes. The numbers of researchers and research fellows are growing.

There are also several private educational institutions in Kristiansand. NLA University College Gimlekollen trains the journalists of tomorrow. Ansgar College and Theological Seminary offers programmes in religion, music and psychology and NORDFF University College has courses in interactive media and digital forensics.

Besides the University, there are many research activities in a variety of disciplines. Agder Research employs more than 45 specialised researchers, who are working on projects for Norwegian Ministries, local governments, regional partners, companies and the European Commission in the fields of business development, regional development and the public sector affairs.

Sørlandet Hospital is ranked as the non-university hospital carrying out most research in Norway. There are 50-100 researchers, and annually 5-10 employees are awarded their PhDs.

Teknova is a research institute for science and technology with a base in the Kristiansand Region. Their goal is to create an affiliation between the University of Agder, Agder Research and the industry and commerce in our region.

The Competence Development Fund aims to contribute towards raising the general level of competence in the county of Vest-Agder to secure jobs and create good living conditions.

Many companies, such as Elkem and Glencore Nikkelverk AS, invest heavily in extensive research, development and innovation.

The different research and educational institutions work closely together. In most projects, they look to each other for other research subjects. Private companies publish research, whereas different governmental funds also finance private research. The common goal is sustainable development based on environmentally friendly innovation.
The Kristiansand Region boasts a wide range of technological expertise with an international approach. The major clusters and networks are within the process industry, oil and gas technology, renewable energy, ICT and cross media and travel and tourism.

The industry cluster NCE NODE consists of about 60 companies of which several are world leaders in the oil technology industry. The cluster has the best expertise in equipment that enables oil and gas extraction from deep waters and under extreme conditions.

Firms in the NODE cluster have about 10,000 employees in Southern Norway. Turnover amounted to around NOK 48 billion in 2012, and the full order book means that this will rise in the coming years. National Oilwell Varco, Cameron Sense and Aker Solutions are some of the firms in the cluster.

The collaboration between NCE NODE, academia and national governments is resulting in Southern Norway gaining a national and international reputation as an expertise and skills region.

The process industry in Agder consists of companies in a global market with rigorous international owners. The ten process companies belonging to the Eyde Network have about 3,000 employees and a turnover of NOK 10 billion and include companies such as Glencore Nikkelverk AS, GE Healthcare, Saint Gobain and Elkem Solar.

Member companies have a unique position in their market and export world class sustainable products.

The ICT and Telecom Cluster in the region are putting their efforts into usage and development of existing and new networks. There is also a growing network of smaller companies working in the emerging cross media segment.
The Kristiansand Region has a national reputation to be a safe and peaceful place for children and teenagers. Crime rates are low, and the municipalities are heavily investing in day-care centres, state schools, culture and sports centres.

The public welfare system covers free state schools, affordable day-care for all children between 1 and 5 years old and dental and health care for minors, just to mention a few of the broad range of services available to foreigners and citizens living in Norway.

Organised sports are a deeply rooted tradition, and many children and teenagers belong to sports clubs. The clubs are open to everyone, and the activities take place on the children’s terms and all children are included regardless of their ambitions and needs.

Kindergartens and schools have an academic, research-based partnership to give students the best possible educational benefit and include all children and young people in mainstream provision. Emphasis is placed on well-being, a sense of belonging and zero tolerance for bullying.

Close cooperation exists between kindergartens, schools and businesses to ensure future recruitment and education in science, technology, and foreign languages are constantly being enhanced. Schools and kindergartens emphasize entrepreneurship throughout education to stimulate creativity and competence.

International education is available from 1st to 10th grade through the Kristiansand International School, which is offering the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme from Grade 1-5 and the IB’s Middle Years Programme from Grade 6 -10. Pupils with parents from abroad are given priority when they are here for a limited period of time. Kristiansand Katedralskole Gimle provides the opportunity to achieve an International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBDP).
Kristiansand is alive with culture and offers the best in quality performing arts all year round.

The new Performing Arts Centre, Kilden, opened its doors in 2012. With 2,277 seats, this is our most significant venture for decades in the cultural arena. Kilden provides all types of culture, including pop, rock and stand-up comedy, whilst housing the region’s theatre company, opera company and symphony orchestra.

Southern Norway is the region for festivals, which includes the Protest Festival, which aims to fight indifference, and the Children’s Film Festival as well as different music festivals. There are a number of activities to see and visit all year round. The most popular by far is Kristiansand Zoo, which attracts about 980,000 visitors a year. In addition to lions, tigers and other spectacular animals, there is a water theme park, a theatre and other attractions.

The region’s travel industry is becoming increasingly important, and it aims to be renowned for its hospitality and is working to attract even more tourists. Southern Norway is the preferred summer holiday destination for most Norwegians, and the coastal towns and cities are packed with people from June to August.

The city centre called “Kvadraturen” because of its grid street plan, is a well-preserved, cultural heritage locality.

The main library in the town square is Agder’s most visited cultural institution; as a meeting place, as well as a promoter of national and international news and literature.

The regional art gallery, Sørlandets kunstmuseum, offers a wide range of high quality art from the region and the most interesting artists in contemporary art today. The newly established Kristiansand Kunsthall hosts temporary exhibitions, curated by the best professionals on the Norwegian art scene and mainly focuses on contemporary and conceptual art.

Until 2004 Odderøya was a military training ground. When the military left the area, the buildings were allotted to different artists as ateliers, studios and galleries. The result is a vibrant area with small galleries, coffee shops and open studios. The area also offers a place for rest and relaxation with its quiet nature close to the city centre and where some of the city’s history can also be experienced.
The Kristiansand Region offers plenty of places for recreation – whether you are interested in sports, wildlife or relaxation.

Sports in general are quite popular, as a third of the population is a member of a sports club. The most popular sport is soccer, and at South Arena, the region’s largest sports venue, you can follow the local football club Start FC. It is also possible to ice skate, play ice hockey or curling at the ice rink Idda Arena.

In the city, you will find recreational areas, gyms and skateboard ramps. The new activity centre, Aquarama offers a water park, swimming pool, gym, and wellness and public health services. Aquarama is located on the waterfront, close to Kristiansand City Beach.

It is pleasant to walk from Odderøy, along the waterfront and River Otra, to Baneheia; the latter being a great area for those who want to go hiking. Kristiansand has made a huge effort to develop this area and received the Nordic Green Space Award in 2013.

Kristiansand is known as one of the best cities for cycling in Norway, with short distances and 150 kilometres of bicycle lanes.

Towns and villages in the region are relatively small and have easy access to nature. The sea and surrounding fjords are perfect for recreational activities like fishing and sailing, but there are also a great amount of trails across the islands and through the coastal forests.

Inland, there are extensive ski tracks, frequently used in the wintertime when most heaths and moors are covered in snow. You will also discover a whole range of activities like elk safari, salmon fishing, rafting and hunting.
INTERNATIONAL VIBES

Historically, Kristiansand has been a busy international shipping port, a role that is still emphasised by the growing number of companies supplying personnel, equipment and services to the North Sea oil industry and the rest of the world. Today, the increasing demand for professionals makes it important to recruit more people from abroad to move to the region.

The Kristiansand Chamber of Commerce offers a comprehensive expat programme tailored to serve the needs of the working expatriate and the companies employing them.

Amongst the services provided, you will find social events, monthly newsletters, a 24-hour emergency helpline, access to consultation, public lobbying and relocation services. The spouse career centre offers accompanying spouses advice with regard to working or studying in Kristiansand.

Through the EEA Agreement, Norway is part of an integrated European labour market. The rules cover free movement of workers, mutual recognition of diplomas, social security, health and safety at work, labour law and equal treatment of women and men. Equal opportunities are an important political issue in Norway.

The Mayor invites new citizens to the town hall for a welcoming ceremony. The purpose is to provide them with useful information about all the opportunities they have in Kristiansand.
Foreigners need go no further than Kristiansand, but as an international hub this is where their stay in Norway starts and ends. The city is well connected due to its proximity to the European Continent. The airport is connected with the major Norwegian cities and the international hubs in Copenhagen and Amsterdam. You will also find direct flights to many European destinations. The airport has a growing number of destinations and plans to expand to meet the increasing demand for new travel destinations.

The port of Kristiansand has historically been important to the region’s development. It is still one of Norway’s busiest, and there are a substantial number of shipping agencies based here. Ferries offer the fastest way to travel to Denmark by car.

The construction of new roads and highways in and around the region is shortening driving times and bus services are also available throughout the city and surrounding municipalities. Moreover, you will find an impressive number of routes offered by national express buses. By rail you can take the train to Stavanger or Oslo.

DISTANCE FROM KRISTIANSAND:  
- Amsterdam: 420 km  
- Bergen: 290 km  
- Berlin: 480 km  
- Copenhagen: 240 km  
- London: 900 km  
- Oslo: 250 km  
- Paris: 1400 km  
- Stavanger: 160 km
Kristiansand has been a green city for decades. The municipality is at the forefront when it comes to waste recycling, public transport, cycling and action on climate change. But the private sector is also stepping up to the immense challenges of creating sustainable development.

The City Council and the city’s industries have spent a significant amount of money cleaning the bay and the river, making Kristiansand’s city bay the cleanest in comparison to other major cities. The City Beach is certified with the Blue Flag and the River Otra is one of the most important salmon rivers in Norway.

The “Eco-Lighthouse” concept was started in Kristiansand in 1996, and is Norway’s most widely used certification scheme for enterprises seeking to document their environmental work and demonstrate social responsibility.

The incineration plant, Returkraft AS, annually converts 130,000 tons of waste from households and businesses into electricity and district heating. Kristiansand municipality is known as one of the best energy-saving municipalities. Energy use for ventilation, heating and lighting in 115 municipal buildings has been reduced by 25 percent over the past six years.

The foundation “Eco-Lighthouse”, the green organisation Grønn hverdag and Kristiansand Municipality cooperate in running Grønt Senter on Odderøya. This is a resource centre and a meeting place for green lifestyle and sustainable social and economic development.

Glencore Nikkelverk AS’s products include the world’s purest nickel and cobalt, and are amongst the best in the world when it comes to energy efficient production. Nickel has a vital role in our modern society and we find it in everything from pots and pans, kitchen utensils and cutlery, to medical equipment, mobile phones, wind turbines, computers, coins, ships and aircraft.

In the emerging market for renewable energy, Elkem Solar has developed a process for the production of silicon metal for the solar cell industry market. Agder Energi, Norway’s third largest energy group and based in Kristiansand, is producing, distributing and selling hydro-electric power, bio-energy and district heating.
FACTS AND FIGURES

MOST IMPORTANT BUSINESS SECTORS:

- Oil/gas engineering
- Energy
- Process industry
- Shipping
- Construction and materials
- Retail and commerce
- Travel and tourism

MAJOR COMPANIES:

- National Oilwell Varco
- Aker Solutions
- Cameron (former Seneca TTS)
- Elkem (Bluestar)
- Glencore Nikkelverk AS (former Xstrata)
- Carpolec Offshore
- Hennig Olsen Is
- Siem Offshore
- Fristad Engineering
- Agder Energi
- QMS Group
- Wisa Smith

TWIN TOWNS AND CITIES:

- Trollhättan, Sweden
- Hjørring, Denmark
- Walvis Bay, Namibia
- Orleans, France
- Rajshahi, Bangladesh
- Gdynia, Poland
- Kerava, Finland
- Reykjavik, Iceland
- Mönster, Germany
- Letchworth, England

FACTS ABOUT THE KRISTIANSAND REGION (2013)

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<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Area, km²</th>
<th>Population</th>
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FLIGHT TIME

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