



## **RFSL Municipal Survey 2006—Summary of Results**

### **Summary**

- Only nine municipalities, which constitutes only 3.1% of all municipalities, received an acceptable total score of 3.0 (on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest score). All nine of these municipalities are among the country's largest. The smallest of them is Skellefteå in ninth place with 71,910 inhabitants.
- The best total score, 3.39, was received by Borås, followed by Gothenburg with 3.33 and Stockholm with 3.30.
- Ten sparsely populated municipalities are at the bottom of the list, all of which are in Kalmar, Jönköping or Norrbotten county. Among these, Oskarshamn has the largest number of inhabitants with 26,247.

### **Conclusions**

#### **The Creative Class**

In his attention-getting research, American researcher Richard Florida, professor of economic development at George Mason University, has used the term “the creative class,” which is defined as being important for creating growth. According to Florida, there are three things that attract the creative class: technology and innovation, talent, and a multicultural society that is open to minority groups such as immigrants and LGBT people. Florida creates a direct correlation between economically successful regions and areas where there, among other things, are positive conditions for LGBT people. From this perspective, it should therefore be important to municipalities that the LGBT people who grow up in them do not move away in greater numbers than other inhabitants and that the municipalities are attractive as areas to which LGBT people want to move. One way for a municipality to try to achieve this is to invest significantly in work in the area of diversity, and to send clear signals to all of the municipality's inhabitants that the municipality is for everyone and that LGBT people and other minority groups are both in demand and welcome.

#### **Population Increase Connected to Diversity Efforts**

In comparing the municipalities that rank at the top of the list in this survey to those that rank at the bottom, nine of the 10 municipalities that received the best scores all had a population increase in 2005, while nine of the 10 municipalities that received the worst scores all had a population decrease in 2005, according to the latest population statistics. The exception was the municipality of Östersund in tenth place, whose population decreased by 31 inhabitants, and Vimmerby in 28<sup>th</sup> place, whose population increased by 17 inhabitants. Of the top 20 municipalities in the survey, only one additional municipality, Gotland, had a population decrease in 2005 (by 173 inhabitants). In looking at the 28 municipalities across the country where there are no RFSL members or anyone living in registered partnership, 25 of them had a population decrease in 2005. The exceptions are Sävsjö with an additional 16

inhabitants, Vårgårda with an additional 76 inhabitants, and Öckerö with an increase of 84 inhabitants. Consequently, there is a clear pattern that the municipalities that are among the worst in the different survey areas also have negative population growth. And those municipalities that are among the best are also those that have positive population growth.

### **Borås in First Place**

That Borås is in first place among all of the country's municipalities can partially be attributed to an active RFSL division that has succeeded in lobbying the municipality's politicians to make decisions that are favorable for LGBT people, and that Borås also has extensive school information activities. There is also a large proportion of RFSL members among the population in Borås. Together with Borås, there is a group of more than 10 municipalities in the country that are at the top of the survey and that taken together do the most to make life easier for their LGBT inhabitants. Unfortunately, Sweden's municipalities do the least in the area of schools, which is regrettable because it is in school that LGBT youth, most of which have yet to come out, are presumably most vulnerable in general.