

Swedish mountain rescue should work more with drowning and other risks, reveals study

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A new study titled "A retrospective analysis of mission reports in the national Swedish Police Registry on mountain rescue 2018–2022: here be snowmobiles," [published](#) in the *Scandinavian Journal of Trauma*,

Resuscitation and Emergency Medicine, analyzes Swedish Police mountain rescue data and describes all known mountain rescue missions during the past five years—a total of 1,543 mountain rescue operations.

The results show that Jämtland had the highest proportion of missions (38%), followed by Norrbotten county (36%). Two percent of the missions involved ≥ 4 casualties, and 44% involved ≥ 4 mountain rescuers. Foreign nationals were rescued in 12% of missions, and 37% of victims were women, which is a higher proportion than in corresponding international records (17% in France).

Fourteen percent of those affected were ≥ 66 or ≤ 12 years of age, i.e., can be considered vulnerable. The most common cause of [death](#) was cardiac event (14 deaths), followed by trauma (10 deaths) and drowning (8 deaths). Twenty percent of all mountain rescue missions were for snowmobiling incidents, and eight fatalities occurred in connection with snowmobiling. One fatality was an avalanche accident.

"Increased mountain activity and [climate change](#), which among other things may lead to washed away trail bridges, a longer snow-free season and weather that complicates helicopter operations, point to general development needs for Swedish mountain rescue," says one of the authors, Anton Westman.

"The results of the study indicate the need for work with snowmobiling, cardiac events and drowning in the mountains, as well as increased preparedness for multi-casualty incidents with several simultaneously injured people in extremely sparsely populated areas," says co-author Johanna Björnstig.

More information: Anton Westman et al, A retrospective analysis of mission reports in the national Swedish Police Registry on mountain rescue 2018–2022: here be snowmobiles, *Scandinavian Journal of*

Trauma, Resuscitation and Emergency Medicine (2024). [DOI: 10.1186/s13049-024-01210-4](https://doi.org/10.1186/s13049-024-01210-4)

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