

Organisation of the education system in

Sweden

2009/2010

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1. POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND AND TRENDS

1.1. Historical Overview

The war of liberation initiated by Gustav Vasa (1523-1560) in the beginning of the 16th century led to the break-up of the 'Kalmar Union' between Sweden, Denmark and Norway. Gustav Vasa became the first Swedish Regent and was, in 1523, crowned King of the united, centralized unitary state of Sweden.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

1.1.1. Religion

It was under Gustav Vasa that, in 1527, a state church was formed, based on Lutheranism and Protestantism, whereby Sweden abandoned the international Catholic Church that had prevailed since the introduction of Christianity in the 11th century. The Protestant ethics have since strongly affected Swedish culture. Already when general elementary school was introduced in 1842, literacy was widespread thanks to efforts by the church.

1.1.2. Territory and language

In the 17th and 18th centuries, Sweden was a major power in northern Europe. A number of wars were fought; during the height of its military power Sweden held control over parts of Germany, Poland, the Baltic States, Finland and Russia. Finland stayed a part of Sweden until conquered by Russia in 1809. A few years later Sweden formed a union with Norway that lasted until 1905. The formation of the Swedish-Norwegian Union in 1814 marks the end of Swedish involvement in military conflict. Danish, Norwegian and Swedish are partially mutually intelligible, and in Finland, there is still a Swedish-speaking minority and Swedish is one of the two official languages of Finland.

1.1.3. Law making and citizens' rights

The Swedish constitution was adopted already in 1734 and its basic structure is still visible in Swedish law, even though its content naturally has evolved.

General elementary school was introduced in Sweden in 1842 by a Royal Decree that stipulated the responsibility of each parish to set up a school (see [4.1](#)). The income and fortune based male voting rights system was abandoned in 1909 with the introduction of voting rights for all men. In 1921 universal suffrage was introduced, giving also women the right to vote. Religious freedom (also encompassing being able to choose not to belong to a religious community) was first enacted in legislation in 1951.

1.1.4. Riksdagen

During the time of Gustav Vasa in the 16th century the first Riksdag was established with representatives from the four estates - the nobility, the clergy, the bourgeoisie and the peasantry. Over the following century stricter rules were adopted for the Riksdag and gradually an administrative apparatus developed. The power of the Riksdag has varied greatly and during certain periods its position in relation to the monarchy has been extremely weak. However, during the Age of Liberty in the 18th century, the Riksdag enhanced its position and a party system gradually emerged. With the adoption of the constitution of 1809 the powers of the monarchy and the Riksdag were separated. At the same time the courts and authorities became independent. In 1865 a dual chamber Riksdag was introduced. A single chamber with 350 representatives replaced the two-chamber system in 1971, when standing committees in different areas were introduced (the number of parliamentarians was later changed to 349 to avoid the risk of a hung Parliament). In 1974 Sweden adopted a new constitution. In 1994 the mandate period of the Riksdag was changed from three to four years with elections for all three levels of government taking place the first Sunday in September. The three levels represent the central powers on state, regional and municipality level.

[Riksdagen \(The Parliament\)](#)

1.1.5. Recent reforms

In recent times full employment, redistribution of income and social security have all been given a prominent place in national policy. Social Democratic governments have dominated the post war era to a large extent. A coalition of center-right parties forms the Government following the 2006 elections. The Prime minister represents the Moderate Party (M) and the Ministers for school and education represent the Liberal Party (FP).

Sweden became a member of the European Union January 1st 1995 and has held the rotating Presidency of the European Council ('EU Presidency') twice, in 2001 and in 2009.

[Regeringen \(The Swedish Government\)](#)

1.2. Main Executive and Legislative Bodies

Sweden is a monarchy and the present King, Carl XVI Gustaf, is Head of State. The Head of State is the foremost representative of the Kingdom. The Head of State does not participate in Government meetings, but is kept informed on issues of national importance. In accordance with Sweden's representative and Parliamentary democracy, the Riksdag enacts the laws and makes the decisions, which the Government and its agencies implement.

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

1.2.1. Central administration

Sweden is a representative democracy, which means that all political parties receiving more than four per cent of votes cast in the general election are allocated seats in the Riksdag. Only Swedish citizens are permitted to vote in the national Parliamentary elections. Swedish residents holding a foreign citizenship are permitted to vote in local elections after having lived in Sweden for a certain period of time.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

1.2.1.1. Riksdagen

The Swedish Riksdag consists of 349 representatives who are elected for a four-year mandate period. The Riksdag has a determining influence when a new Government is to be formed. The task of the Speaker, as the foremost representative of the Riksdag, is to propose a candidate as Prime Minister. The Speaker confers with the leaders of the political parties in the Riksdag and determines who has the best chance of forming a Government i.e. the strongest support in the Riksdag. There are eight political parties represented in the Riksdag.

The Riksdag enacts laws and decides on the levels and allocation of the income and expenditure of the state. The Government first submits proposals to the Riksdag in the form of Governmental bills. Then the Government decides on the rules needed for putting into effect the decisions made by the Riksdag. In addition, the Government in its budget – approved by the Riksdag – earmarks funds for various purposes. It also makes agreements with other states, steers state activities in addition to leading the activities of the administrative authorities, and in certain cases hears appeals against decisions made by the authorities. An important task for the Riksdag is to ensure that the Government and the authorities carry out its decisions.

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)**1.2.1.2. The Government**

The Government consists of the Prime Minister and appointed ministers. The members of the Government and the Prime Minister work to realize a common political programme. Usually the ministers have been elected to the Riksdag. If MPs are appointed as ministers, they are substituted for their Parliamentary work.

The Government has at its disposal a staff of civil servants known as the Government Offices (Regeringskansliet, RK). The staff consists of approximately 4800 people (year 2009), including those stationed abroad at embassies, consulates and international organisations, assigned to different ministries. Some 180 people are politicians who form the leadership and the political advisors at each ministry, while the rest of the employees are civil servants. The number of ministries and the focus of their activities change from time to time, mainly as a result of changes in political priorities.

The Ministries involved in educational matters are the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Employment, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications. The Ministries are in international terms comparatively small. They co-operate to a large extent as preparatory bodies for the Government, while the practical implementation of decisions is delegated to the central administrative authorities. In the field of education there are authorities such as the National Agency for Education, The Schools Inspectorate, the National Agency for Higher Education, The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools. One exception, however, is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which functions both as a part of the Government Office and as the central supervisory authority for Swedish embassies and consulates abroad. For information on Ministers involved in education, see section **2.6.1.**

Some of the issues handled by the Government are more complicated than others. Some matters may affect the whole of Swedish society for a long time to come, while others may be of a complex, technical nature. Before certain decisions are taken, the Government may choose to appoint a commission of inquiry to examine a particular issue in accordance with guidelines, terms of reference, set out by the Government. These commissions are made up of experts, public officials and politicians who are familiar with the matter concerned.

A commission may consist of experts or representatives of different organisations; it may be made up of MPs or a single commissioner with specialist knowledge within the area, and works intensively over a limited period in order to make proposals on how to solve problems in important areas. The Government issues directives for the work of each commission. The commission carries out its task and then submits its proposals to the Government. Usually, approximately 200 commissions are active at the same time, most of them working within a time frame of up to two years. Each year the Government submits to the Riksdag a report on these commissions stating which are in process and how their work is progressing.

On completion of their work, the committees publish their findings in a final report, sometimes preceded by an interim report. These reports are published in the Swedish Government Official Report series. A committee proposal is first circulated for comment before it is drafted as a Government Bill.

This gives stakeholders such as government agencies, interest groups and the general public an opportunity to express their views on the matter.

Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet (Ministry of Employment)

Jordbruksdepartementet (The Ministry of Agriculture)

Justitiedepartementet (Ministry of Justice)

Näringsdepartementet (The Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications)

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Sveriges kommuner och landsting (SKL)/ The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

Utrikesdepartementet (The Ministry for foreign Affairs)

1.2.1.3. General responsibility for education at national level

The Government and Riksdag have overall responsibility for education in Sweden. Nearly all education – pre-school förskola, the pre-school class förskoleklass, the compulsory school grundskola, the Sami school sameskola, education for pupils with intellectual impairments särskola, the special school for pupils with impaired hearing specialskola, the upper secondary school gymnasieskola, municipal adult education kommunal vuxenutbildning, education for adults with intellectual impairments sörvux and Swedish tuition for immigrants svenskundervisning för invandrare, sfi, as well as higher education and research – come under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Research. The Swedish University of Agricultural Science comes under the Ministry of Agriculture. Labour market training comes under the Ministry of Employment. The Ministry of Defense is responsible for training of officers and the Ministry of Justice for training for the police force.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

1.2.1.4. Central administrative authorities

The practical implementation of decisions by the Government and the Riksdag is delegated to the central administrative agencies, which are independent of the ministries but funded by them. These agencies make their own decisions in accordance with the yearly guidelines laid down by the Government. These guidelines come as general instructions to the authority, in the annual government budget appropriation document, and as special tasks. The school system is goal-based with a high degree of local responsibility. The main responsibility for education lies with the municipalities and the authorities responsible for grant-aided independent schools. Main agencies involved in educational matters are:

The Swedish National Agency for Education is the central administrative authority for the Swedish public school system for children, young people and adults, as well as for pre-school, förskola, and school-age childcare, skolbarnomsorg. It is the task of the Swedish National Agency for Education to work actively for the achievement of the goals that are drawn up at different levels within the school system, that is, in school curriculum, course syllabi, etc. The Agency steers, supports, follows up and evaluates the work and the result of municipalities and schools, with the purpose of improving quality ensuring that all pupils have access to equal education. The Swedish National Agency for Education is also responsible for distributing and evaluating government grants for the achievement of goal fulfillment, and for guaranteeing quality in the different activities. The Agency support preschools and schools in their development, and the support provided shall be given national priority.

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate ensures that local authorities and independent schools follow existing laws and regulations. The Schools Inspectorate is the central agency responsible for pre-school, the welfare of schoolchildren, schools management and adult education, kommunal vuxenutbildning, and the aim of the Agency is to ensure the equal right of all children to a good education, in a safe environment. The Schools Inspectorate conducts regular supervision of all schools. The Schools Inspectorate is also responsible for granting licenses to new independent schools. Furthermore, it decides on applications for entitlement to subsidies and also monitors national supervision of upper secondary schools, gymnasieskolor.

- The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is the central authority responsible for matters relating to institutions of higher education. It evaluates them and exercises supervision, to ensure that they comply with laws and regulations. It is also responsible for all centrally produced statistics about higher education institutions and evaluates qualifications awarded on completion of higher education programmes outside Sweden and provides information about studies in higher education for Swedish and foreign students.

Smaller specialised agencies are discussed under the appropriate chapter.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Verket för Högskoleservice, VHS (National Agency for Services to Universities and University Colleges)

1.2.2. The Courts

The freedom and independence of the courts is guaranteed under the Constitution. Neither the Riksdag, nor the Government or any other body may decide how a court shall act or otherwise apply legislation in a particular case. The role of the courts and the authorities is to be objective and unbiased, and to ensure equal treatment under the law.

Domstolsverket (The Swedish Courts)

1.2.3. Regional administration

Sweden is divided into counties (län). The tasks of the county councils are to manage issues of common concern in areas such as health and health care, education, social care as well as agriculture and industrial development. County council councilors are elected in a general election every fourth year according to the same principles that apply to municipal elections. The municipalities and county councils levy taxes on the inhabitants to fulfill their commitments. The highest decision making bodies on the regional level are the boards of the county councils.

Sveriges kommuner och landsting (SKL)/ The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)

1.2.4. Local administration

Sweden consists of 290 municipalities (kommuner). Each municipality is a geographically limited administrative unit or region. The highest decision making bodies on the local level are the local municipal councils. Municipal self-determination is an important part of the Swedish democratic system and is regulated under the Municipal Act. The main responsibilities locally in the educational area are pre-school activities [förskoleverksamhet](#), provision of child care for school age children [skolbarnsomsorg](#), education: pre-school class [förskoleklass](#), compulsory school [grundskola](#), education for pupils with intellectual impairments [särskola](#), upper secondary school [gymnasieskola](#), municipal adult education [kommunal vuxenutbildning](#) and education for adults with intellectual impairments [särsvux](#), Swedish tuition for immigrants [svenskundervisning för invandrare](#), [sfi](#), social services (health care for children and young persons, social assistance, care and support of the elderly etc.), environmental and health protection, equipment and maintenance of streets, roads, parks, town planning and construction, as well as culture and sports.

Elections to local municipal councils are held every fourth year, at the same time as the general election. Entitled to vote are the residents of a municipality, including foreign citizens after residency for three consecutive years. Citizens of EU member countries, as well as those of Iceland and Norway, are also entitled to vote providing they are registered in Sweden. The local municipal council chooses a municipal board as well as other decision-making bodies, which together are responsible for the administration and implementation of decisions made by the municipal council. The municipal board leads and co-ordinates the administrative work, whilst the different bodies and boards are responsible for their own areas of activity.

Sveriges kommuner och landsting (SKL)/ The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)

1.3. Religions

Christianity came to Sweden as early as the 9th century mainly as a result of an expansion in trade. The ancient Nordic religions were slowly replaced. Several centuries later all monarchs were Christian and Christianity became the established official religion. The church belonged to the international Catholic Church until 1527 when the Swedish state church was established as a Protestant church based on Lutheran principles.

In 1951 legislation on religious freedom was enacted, allowing citizens to leave the state church without entering another religious community. Previously, it was allowed to leave the state church, but only to engage in another community. The role of the Swedish church in society has since that changed in character: The majority of its members have nowadays little or no connection with regular worship at church services. Earlier, all children born in Sweden automatically became members of the Swedish state church, but since 1995 only those christened become members. The 1st of January 2000, the Swedish church separated from the state and there is no longer a State church in Sweden.

Recent decades has seen an increase in religious diversity. As a consequence of immigration the Roman Catholic Church, different Orthodox churches as well as non-Christian religions such as Islam and Buddhism have expanded. Jewish communities have existed in Sweden since the end of the 18th century.

1.4. Official and Minority Languages

The official language in Sweden is Swedish. In some parts of northern Sweden, Sami and Tornedal Finnish is spoken. There are five official minority languages: Sami and Tornedal Finnish (autochthonous languages) and Finnish, Romany and Yiddish (non-territorial languages). To a certain extent citizens have the right to use these languages in their dealings with the authorities and courts. In certain areas they have the right to childcare and care of the elderly in Finnish and Sami. Sami speaking children can choose between attending compulsory school [grundskola](#) or Sami School [sameskola](#), (with tuition until

school year six), with teaching in both Swedish and Sami. For more information about Sami schools, see chapter [4](#).

Since the Second World War, increasing immigration to Sweden has led to the emergence of a number of minority groups with languages other than Swedish as their mother tongue. All children who speak a language other than Swedish at home are offered mother tongue tuition in compulsory school and upper secondary school (see further chapter [10](#)).

1.5. Demographic Situation

Sweden's land area is about 450 000 km² with a distance between the extreme northern and southern points of almost 1 600 km. Geographically Sweden is dominated by forests, lakes and rivers, but with a great variation in landscape, temperature and natural resources, affecting conditions for industry, agriculture etc. The border to Norway runs parallel to a range of mountains. There are thousands of islands off the 2 700 km long coast. The cultivated area amounts to around ten per cent of the land surface area.

Mortality rates are more or less constant today, whereas the birth rate shows greater variation. Currently the number of births per woman is increasing (see further [1.7.1](#)). In 2009 the birth rate was 12 per 1000 inhabitants and the mortality rate 9.7. Life expectancy in Sweden was in 2009, 79.4 years for men and 83.4 years for women and is slowly increasing. Sweden is to some extent facing the same problem as most of Europe with an ageing population, although the birth rate is fairly high compared to many other countries.

Immigration has fluctuated greatly during the post-war era, in some years exceeding the number of births. 102 280 people immigrated to Sweden in 2009 and 39 240 people emigrated. 6.5% of Sweden's inhabitants are not Swedish citizens, 14.3% were born in another country.

In Dec 2009 the total population in Sweden amounted to 9 340 682 inhabitants. The population is very unevenly distributed over the country with most of the people aggregated to the southern third of the country. The most densely populated region is the County of Stockholm with 304 inhabitants per km² (figures from 2008), followed by the County of Skåne in the south with 110 inhabitants per km². The Jämtland and Norrbotten counties furthest to the north are the most sparsely populated with only 3 inhabitants per km². The average for Sweden is 23 inhabitants per km².

The number of Swedes living in densely populated areas has increased steadily, and even some of the densely populated areas have experienced difficulties in trying to stem the outflow of people. However, the greatest difficulties are experienced in sparsely populated areas with poor transportations and few employment opportunities. Irrespective of where they live, all children and young people in Sweden must have equal access to the public education system, meaning the municipality must provide daily transportations if compulsory school education cannot be given within a certain distance from where a child lives. In upper secondary school pupils may have to commute to a bigger town (see further [4.5](#) and [5.6](#)).

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

1.6. Economic Situation

During the 20th century, in the space of a few decades, Sweden went from a poor agrarian country to an industrial nation. The foundation for growth was the wealth of northern Sweden's forests, ore and hydroelectric power. The value of these natural resources was enhanced by a series of inventions such as the steam turbine, the telephone, the cream separator and the safety match. The rapid economic expansion during the 1950s and 1960s enabled the public sector to be built up and a number of social reforms were implemented. With an insufficient domestic market, major Swedish companies were forced from the start to invest in exporting. This is regarded as one reason why Sweden today has a relatively large number of multinational corporations in comparison to the size of its population.

In September 2008 the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers in the United States sent a shockwave through the global financial system, the impact of which was also felt by Swedish banks. It led to reduced opportunities for households and companies to obtain loans on reasonable terms. The Government and responsible authorities have taken several measures to maintain financial stability so as to limit the repercussions in the Swedish economy. The Riksbank (the Swedish central bank) and the Swedish National Debt Office, as responsible authorities in the area, acted quickly to restore the functioning of the credit markets. To protect savers' money and restore confidence, the Government decided to raise the deposit guarantee for bank deposit accounts.

Based on the common EU plan, the Government drew up a stability plan for Sweden that was presented to and approved by the Riksdag at the end of October. The plan comprises guarantees for banks' medium-term loans and makes it possible to provide emergency support to banks and other financial institutions. The measures are financed by means of a stability fund that is built up with the help of fees paid by the banks. The National Debt Office is responsible for the fund and for managing guarantees and support. Finansinspektionen (the Swedish Financial Supervisory Authority) has also received additional resources to protect the interests of households and companies.

The problems in the financial markets spread to other parts of the economy. When the opportunities to obtain loans deteriorated, companies and households began to experience difficulties. This led them to reduce their consumption and investments. The reduced demand, in turn, results in companies having difficulty repaying their loans. As this interaction between the different parts of the economy risks exacerbating the situation, the Government has focused on trying to restore confidence in the financial system and stimulating demand for labour, and presented several measures to make it easier for unemployed people to adjust. In the Budget Bill for 2009 the Government presented several vigorous measures in response to the recession. The initiatives relate to jobs and entrepreneurship, research and infrastructure for the future, as well as measures to reinforce welfare provision.

1.6.1 Current situation and recent reforms

In the wake of the financial crisis, there has been a downturn in demand in the global economy - for a small open economy like Sweden, which is financially integrated and deeply dependent on trade with other countries, this has immediate consequences. Unemployment has risen in the wake of the crisis and was in the beginning of 2010, 9.3 % of the total labour force, and it is essential to prevent this number from becoming persistently high. One particular concern is the high unemployment among young people, in the beginning of 2010 amounting 27.8% for people aged 15-24. The Government has implemented a series of measures that aims to make it more worthwhile to work and simpler and less costly to take on employees, and to promote a better match between supply and demand on the labour market. The in-work tax credit, changes in unemployment and sickness insurance, lower social security contributions for employers and self-employed people, and tax credits for household services and for building repairs, maintenance and improvement are a few examples.

Public finances have permitted special programmes and reforms to be carried out in order to promote economic growth. The 1990s were characterised by major investments in the educational area, with increased rights to pre-school, expansion of higher education and the Adult Education Initiative, which aimed at increasing the competence of adults with low levels of education. Investments have also been made in health and health care (see further [2.8](#), [6.1](#), and [7](#)).

Although raw materials and processed raw materials still account for a sizable proportion of Swedish exports, the future of Swedish business is said to lie primarily in knowledge-intensive industries, where advantage can be taken of the country's technological development, infrastructure and high general educational level. Information technology and biomedicine are two such knowledge-intensive sectors in which Sweden has been among the global leaders for years.

Based on the results of the referendum on the EMU held in September 2003, Sweden has chosen to remain outside the EMU. Approximately 56 % of the voters voted against the euro while approximately 42 % voted in favour. The voter turnout in the referendum was over 80 %.

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

1.7. Statistics

See subsections below for information.

1.7.1. Population

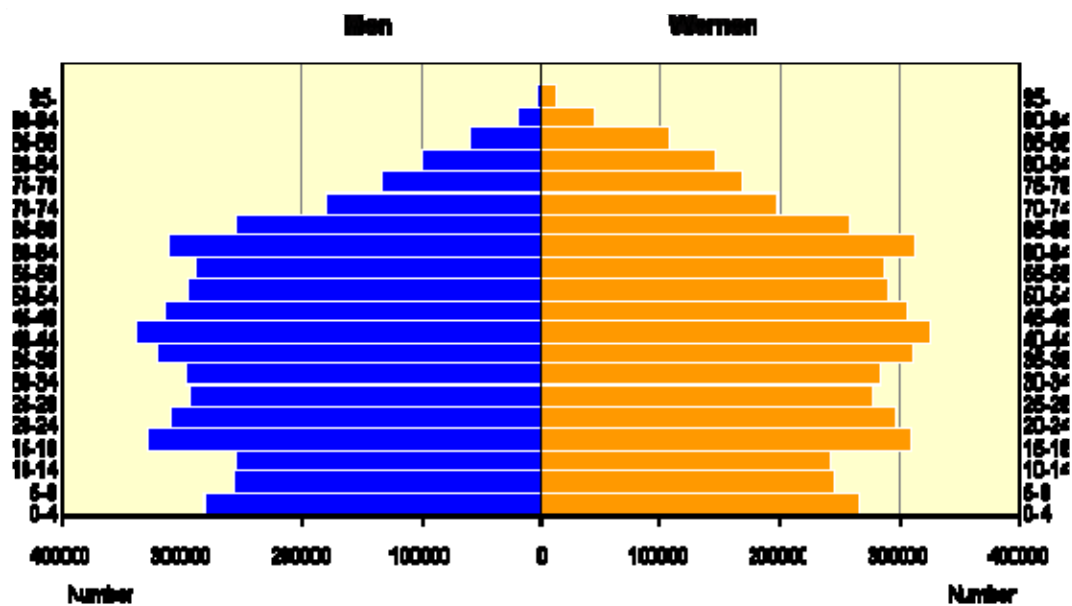
See subsections for information.

1.7.1.1. Population distributed by age and gender

- Population 31 December 2009: 9,340,682,
Whereof: Men: 4,649,014
Women: 4,691,668
- Number of persons, 0-17 years: 1,921,093.
Persons 0-17 years in % of total population: 20.6
- Number of persons, 65 years and above: 1,690,777.
Persons aged 65 years and above in % of total population: 18.1

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

Age and gender distribution of the Swedish population 31 Dec 2009:



Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

1.7.1.2. Birth and mortality

	2009	2007	2006	2005	2000	1990	1980	1970	1960
Number of births per woman	1.94	1.88	1.85	1.77	1.55	2.14	1.68	1.94	2.13
Crude birth rate (per 1000)	12.0	11.7	11.6	11.2	10.2	14.5	11.7	13.7	13.7
Crude death rate (per 1000)	9.7	10.0	10.0	10.1	10.5	11.1	11.0	10.0	10.0

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

Population, newborns and deceased, in 2009

	Total	Women	Men
Population (31 December 2009)	9 340 682	4 691 668	4 649 014
Newborns	111 8012	54 237	57 5642
Deceased	90 080	46 388	43 692

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

1.7.1.3. Immigration and emigration

	2007	2003	2000	1990	1980	1970	1960
Immigration (persons)	99 485	95 750	58 659	60 048	39 426	77 326	26 143
Immigrants per 1000 inhabitants	10.8	10.5	6.6	7.0	4.7	9.6	3.5
Emigration (persons)	45 418	44 908	34 091	25 196	29 839	28 635	15 138
Emigrants per 1000 inhabitants	4.9	4.9	3.8	2.9	3.6	3.6	2.0
Foreign citizens	524 488	491 996	477 312	483 704	421 667	411 280	190 621
- % of total population	5.7	5.4	5.4	5.6	5.1	5.1	2.5
Born outside Sweden	1 227 770	1 175 200	1 003 798	790 445	626 953	537 585	299 879
- % of total population	13.4	12.9	11.3	9.2	7.5	6.7	4.0

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

Population, immigration and emigration in 2009

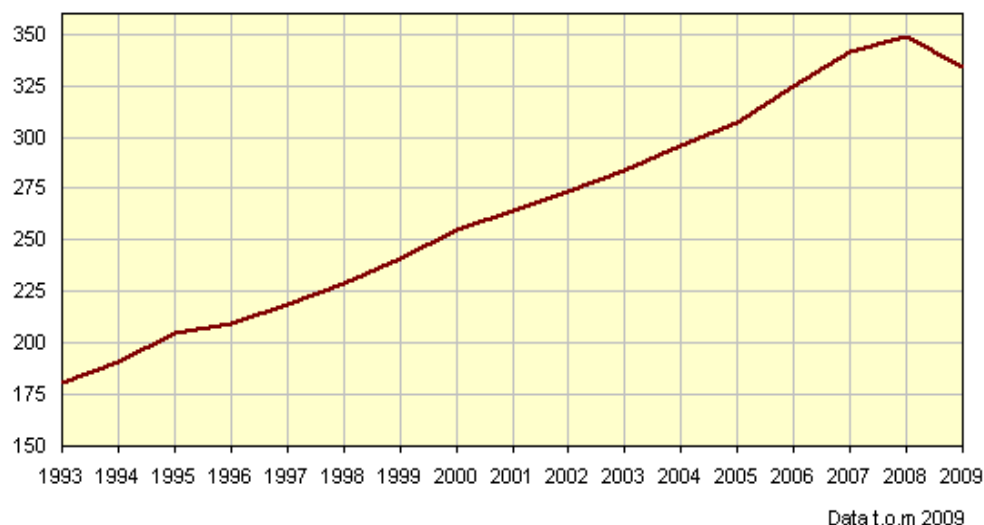
	Total	Women	Men
Population (31 December 2009)	9 340 682	4 691 668	4 649 014
Immigration (persons)	102 280	49 298	52 982
Emigration (persons)	39 240	17 972	21 268
Proportion of foreign citizens in %	6.5	-	-
Proportion foreign-born in %	14.3	-	-
Proportion foreign-born who are Swedish citizens in %	59.8	-	-
Population growth (per 1000 inhabitants)	9.1	-	-

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

1.7.2. Economic Development**GDP, GDP per capita and growth rate**

	GDP (Million SEK)	GDP with index	GDP per capita (Million SEK)	Index GDP per capita	Growth rate
1995	1 909 251	84.9	216.3	85.3	4.0
1996	1 937 136	86.1	219.1	86.4	1.5
1997	1 984 795	88.2	224.4	88.5	2.5
1998	2 060 494	91.6	232.8	91.8	3.8
1999	2 155 182	95.8	243.3	95.9	4.6
2000	2 249 987	100.0	253.6	100.0	4.4
2001	2 273 786	101.1	255.6	100.8	1.1
2002	2 328 614	103.5	260.9	102.9	2.4
2003	2 373 151	105.5	264.9	104.4	1.9
2004	2 471 092	109.8	274.7	108.3	4.1
2005	2 552 597	113.4	282.7	111.5	3.3
2006	2 656 965	118.1	292.6	115.4	4.1
2007	2 729 471	121.3	298.4	117.6	2.7
2009	793 433	-	334.2	-	-1.5

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

GDP per capita 1993-2009

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

1.7.3. Employment

The data from 1990-2004 are annual averages. The labour force is defined as the total number of employed and the number of unemployed. Fulltime students who are looking for job are not included in the labour force. As from April 2005 the Labour Force survey is made according to the EU harmonized method. This means that the figures are not comparable over time.

	1990	1995	2000	2001	2003	2005	2007
Population 16-64 (*1000)	5 397	5 523	5 602	5 632	5 704	5 770	5 876
Employed (*1000)	4 486	3 986	4 158	4 239	4 234	4 263	4 444
- % of men employed	85.2	73.5	76.1	77.0	75.6	75.9	78.0
- % of women employed	81.0	70.8	72.2	73.5	72.8	71.8	73.2
- % of population	83.1	72.2	74.2	75.3	74.2	73.9	75.6
Unemployed (*1000)	75	333	203	175	217	270	216
- % of men unemployed	1.7	8.5	5.0	4.3	5.3	6.2	4.6
- % of women unemployed	1.6	6.9	4.3	3.6	4.4	5.7	4.7
- % of young people unemployed (16-24)	3.7	15.6	8.0	8.0	10.2	14.3	11.7
- % of total labour force	1.6	7.7	4.7	4.0	4.9	6.0	4.6

Not included in the labour force (*1000)	836	1 205	1 241	1 217	1 251	1 237	1 215
- % of the population	15.5	21.8	22.2	21.6	21.9	21.4	20.7
- Proportion men/women	44/56	46/54	46/54	46/54	47/53	45/55	45/55

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

Employment in Sweden during the first three months of 2010	
Population 15-74 (*1000)	7000,7
Employed (*1000)	4433.5
- % of population	64.2
Unemployed (*1000)	445.7
- % of young people unemployed (15-24)	27.8
- % of total labour force	9.3
Not included in the labour force (*1000)	2121,6

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

1.7.4. Population density

The average for Sweden in 2008 was 23 inhabitants per km². The population is very unevenly distributed over the country with most of the people aggregated to the southern third of the country. The most densely populated region is the County of Stockholm with 304 inhabitants per km², followed by the County of Skåne in the south with 110 inhabitants per km². The Jämtland and Norrbotten counties furthest to the north are the most sparsely populated with only 3 inhabitants per km².

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

The public school system for children and young people comprises pre-school [förskolan](#) pre-school class [förskoleklassen](#) compulsory school [grundskolan](#) upper secondary school [gymnasieskolan](#) education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments [särskolan](#), schools for pupils with impaired hearing [specialskolan](#) and Sami school [sameskolan](#). For adults education is provided in the form of municipal adult education [komvux](#), education for adults with intellectual impairments [särvux](#) and Swedish for immigrants [sfi](#). All of these forms of education together make up the public school system. The municipalities are the authorities responsible for preschool classes, compulsory school, upper secondary school, special school, municipal adult education, education for adults with intellectual impairments and Swedish for immigrants. For upper secondary school and adult education, the county council may also be the authority responsible. The state is the authority responsible for special school and Sami school. Alongside the forms of education provided by the state, there are also grant-aided independent schools [friskolor](#) – schools that are run by individual natural or legal persons and who receive public grants.

The Swedish Parliament (Riksdagen) determines the laws and the Government (regeringen) determines regulations for schools. Swedish schools are goal/learning outcomes-directed and the Government steers the education by establishing goals/learning outcomes in the Education Act. These goals/learning outcomes relate to curricula and course syllabi. Within the framework set by the Riksdag and the Government, the municipalities implement the steering documents in order for its pupils to reach the goals/learning outcomes set for a certain school stage.

Most of the municipal funding comes from municipal taxes although the municipalities also receive funds from the state budget for their various services. The municipalities are responsible for the follow up of and evaluation of their work. According to the Education Act, each municipality shall establish a local school plan [skolplan](#) describing the financing, organisation, development and assessment of the activities within each school. This local school plan should indicate how the municipality intends to fulfill the national goals for the school. The school administrator at each school is required to establish a local work plan [lokal arbetsplan](#) based on the national goals and the local school plan. The work plan should define issues that are not determined in the national regulations, i.e. course content, organisation and teaching methods. This should be done in consultation with the teachers and other staff. The school, or in most cases the teacher, decides what teaching material and method to use. The local work plan should also describe, in concrete terms, how the school intends to organise its activities in order to reach the centrally defined goals. The school head has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the national and municipal goals are shaped into concrete educational objectives. The grant-aided independent schools that provide education equivalent to that provided in preschool classes, compulsory school and upper secondary school, and that have been approved by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, are entitled to grants from their pupils' home municipalities. The amount of the grant – which is determined on the basis of the school's undertaking and the pupil's needs – is to be paid according to the same criteria the municipality applies when distributing resources to the schools within its own organization.

Schools at compulsory level are funded by municipal grants from the pupils' home municipalities and by state grants, i.e. are grant-aided, and free of charge. For more information on financing, see [2.8](#).

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

2.1. Historical Overview

During the 11th and 12th centuries each cathedral had a school for the clergy. In 1623 the upper secondary school was introduced and the cathedral schools became a lower secondary school to be followed by 4 years of upper secondary schooling. This was not a school open to all, and the nobility and rich farmers often had private tutors for their children.

From 1623 upper secondary schools were established in regional capitals. In the 1649 Education Act it was defined that lower secondary schools were 4 years and upper secondary schools 4 years as well, and in addition to this there were universities.

The Education Act of 1693 introduced the first matriculation exam to be passed before entering university. The Education Act of 1724 focused more on writing and mathematics (which reflects the development of the economy where higher skills were needed for future trade and manufacturing companies as well as for clerks). Geography teaching (in the form of maps, and the science behind their development) was introduced and the work of the Swedish botanist Linné (Linnaeus) inspired to more natural science teaching. Early in the 19th century Latin lost its position as international language and was replaced by English and French. During that century upper secondary schools mainly focused on the education of priests for the Lutheran state church.

1849 the upper secondary school was divided into two separate 'lines' – one *classical* and one *modern* – both to be followed by a matriculation exam. From 1905 two kinds of upper secondary schools were established: they lasted 6 years and 4 years, respectively. From 1905 girls were accepted to the shorter upper secondary schools and from 1920 to the upper secondary school leading to matriculation exam. In 1918 the first technical upper secondary schools were established.

The first proposals for a general elementary school [folkskola](#) were put forward in Parliament in 1779, and it was introduced in 1842. However, already the church law of 1686 stated that each priest was responsible for education within his parish and in a government resolution of 1723 parents were given the task to teach children to 'read book' and to understand central parts of Christianity. The parishioners' literacy competence was regularly controlled by the priest and these evaluations were registered and reported to central level. Therefore literacy was quite widespread long before the introduction of the general elementary school. In 1895, a decision was taken to make the general elementary school the basis for further schooling and three years in general elementary school led to lower secondary school.

Large groups in society met the general elementary school with reluctance. Farmers were not convinced that it was needed, and the rich families continued having private tutors in their homes. From the start each parish had their own curriculum. The Government provided examples of such texts to function as a basis for the establishment of the local curricula. In 1914, a central board for the general school was established which was by 1920 followed by one single central board for the entire school system. That year saw the decision to start a 4 year teacher education being introduced.

By 1920 the 6 year elementary school was fully established and in 1949 it became 7 years long. In 1941 English was introduced as the first foreign language in the elementary school, replacing German.

In 1949, a general line of study was introduced at upper secondary schools as well and 1964 a new school with five 3 year lines: languages, natural science, social science, economic and technical (with an additional year) were created. In 1962 the Riksdag decided on the new 9 years compulsory school (grundskolan) was introduced as well as a shorter upper secondary school, 2 years of vocational training which lasted only until 1970, when this school form was included into the new upper secondary school (gymnasieskolan).

In 1968 Municipal Adult Education (kommunernas vuxenutbildning) was established.

Liberal adult education

For more than a hundred years adults in Sweden have come together to study on their own conditions, to listen to and take part in cultural projects etc. People meet to learn together as well as to strengthen their possibilities for influencing their life situation. This was the start of the popular non-formal voluntary educational system, 'Liberal Adult Education' (see [7.5.3.](#)).

Universities

The oldest university in Sweden and Scandinavia, Uppsala University, was founded in 1477 with faculties for philosophy, law and theology for those who did not want or could not afford to study at universities abroad. In the 17th century university education expanded to natural sciences as well as education for public officials. Natural sciences expanded further during the 18th century.

Högschoolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Socialstyrelsen (The National Board of Health and Welfare)

Uppsala universitet (Uppsala University)

Högschoolförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

Högschoollagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

2.1.1. Further development of the education system from 1900 to 1990

In 1905, the grammar school statutes were introduced regulating schooling by prescribing a six-year lower secondary school [realskola](#) – preceded by three years of elementary school [folkskola](#) – connected to a three-year upper secondary school [gymnasieskola](#). The lower secondary school certificate [realexamen](#) was introduced and girls gained admission to secondary education, at first only at the lower level. From 1928 lower secondary school comprised five years with four preceding years of elementary school. A four-year lower secondary school with six years of preceding elementary school was also introduced. In 1934, practical lines with focus within trade and industry were developed as complement to the previous 'general' lines. From the 1920s girls were admitted to upper secondary school, and this was codified with the introduction of rules for upper secondary education 1928 (1928 års läroverksstadga). The principle of equal salaries for male and female teachers was introduced in 1937.

In 1962 the Swedish parliament (Riksdagen) decided to establish a nine-year unified compulsory school. Two years later a new upper secondary school and technical-vocational school was introduced. The matriculation certificate [studentexamen](#) was abolished in 1969 and a system was introduced for assessing knowledge by means of central tests with grades relating individual pupils' performance in relation to the national average. In the 1960s pupil influence was incorporated into the Education Act and pupils were encouraged to participate in pupil councils to develop their sense for and experience of democracy.

In 1968, municipal adult education kommunernas vuxenutbildning was established to offer education to adults who lacked the equivalent of compulsory or upper secondary school education. Municipal adult education today includes basic and upper secondary education, as well as post-secondary training programmes (påbyggnadsutbildning).

The reform of 1970 brought the upper secondary school, the technical-vocational schools and vocational education together into a single administrative unit, integrating all forms of education into the upper secondary school (gymnasieskolan).

Higher education was reformed in 1977 with the aim of creating a unified higher education system. A new law and ordinance were introduced. The reform was preceded by a proposal by a committee that started its work in 1968 (U 68). The changes made in 1977 were characterized an increased central steering in details on number of students and educational content. Other aspects of the change were increased access to higher education for new groups of students, increased participation of students in the planning of education and a closer orientation of the education towards the needs of the labour market.

[Riksdagen \(The Parliament\)](#)

[Skollagen \(Education Act\), SFS 1985:1100](#)

2.1.2. Reforms since 1990

The school system has undergone a number of reforms since 1990. New curricula and syllabi and the right to choose grant-aided compulsory school were introduced in the 1990ies. 'Steering by objectives/goals' became the rule for schools as well as for Higher Education Institutions. To support integration between the pre-school, compulsory school and school age childcare, a number of changes

have been implemented. Responsibility for pre-school and school age childcare was transferred from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to the Ministry of Education and Science.

As of 1998 the pre-school has a curriculum and a new school form, the pre-school class, has been introduced as an obligation for all municipalities to provide for all six year-old children. Participation, however, is voluntary. The curriculum for the compulsory school has been amended to incorporate the pre-school class [förskoleklass](#) and the leisure-time centres [fritidshem](#), the most common form of school-age childcare.

By the autumn term 2011 a new Education Act and new curricula will come into force.

State regulation of the municipal appointment of teachers and school heads was abolished in 1991. This was the first step towards giving the municipalities overall responsibility for running the school. Simultaneously, the role of the main authority within the school area, the Swedish National Agency for Education, changed from providing detailed rules into focusing on follow-up and evaluation of activities and a new central authority – the Swedish National Agency for School Improvement – was established in 2003. The responsibilities of that agency has since been moved to the SNAE and the Schools Inspectorate has been established (see [2.6.4.](#)).

A new system for the upper secondary school was introduced in 1992. The old 'lines' [gymnasielinjer](#) were replaced by 16 national programmes [nationella program](#) that became 17 as of autumn 2000. A new curriculum for municipal adult education was introduced in 1994. A new upper secondary school will start at the autumn of 2011 with separate vocational part and one which prepares for further studies (see [2.2.](#)).

The reform of the system for higher education in 1993 was accompanied by a new act and Higher Education Ordinance, whereby detailed prescriptions by the Government were replaced by a system where decisions are made at each higher education institution. The regional level was already abolished and the resources were now given in a lump sum for all undergraduate education within an institution. Grants are allocated on basis of the number of students enrolled in different subject areas and the students' achievements. By linking the allocation of funds to results, the institutions of higher education were given an incentive to make the most effective use of their resources. In the reform the Government and the Riksdag emphasised the need to follow up educational outcomes as well as examine and promote quality enhancement at universities and university colleges. These are now priority tasks for the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education.

Mainly as a result of the Bologna process, legislation for a three-cycle structure of higher education has been applied since 1 July 2007. The new structure is the only structure for all higher education (HEIs). This has improved international comparability of Swedish education in accordance with the Bologna process. A new credit point system in line with ECTS has been introduced.

The degree system has been reformed and restructured to fit the new three-cycle system, see [6.10.](#)

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Socialdepartementet (The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs)

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

2.2. Ongoing debates and future developments

See subsections for information.

2.2.1. Pre-school

The Education Act and curriculum which comes into force in the autumn of 2011 also influences the pre-school. The curriculum for pre-school will be clearer and it will spell out the responsibility of the pre-school head for the mandatory systematic quality work as well as for decisions on special support for individual children. For more information see chapter [4](#). [Skolverket \(The Swedish National Agency for Education\)](#)

2.2.2. Compulsory school

See subsections for information.

The earlier national tests for all pupils in school years 5 and 9 are, since 2009, complemented by national tests for school year 3 in Swedish and mathematics. These tests are to function as an early warning system for schools, pupils and parents and help the schools to detect at an earlier age those pupils who need extra support in one form or another.

A new Education Act and new syllabuses are to come into force by the autumn of 2011. See chapter [4](#).

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2.2.2.4. New grading scale for compulsory school, upper secondary school and municipal adult education

A new grading scale for the compulsory school, the upper secondary school, and municipal adult education will come into force in the autumn of 2011. The new grading scale will contain six levels and a

seventh coding. The five levels A-E will denote pass results and F will denote a non-pass result. If material for the assessment is entirely non-existent due to substantial absenteeism, a grade will not be awarded, and this will be designated by a horizontal line. See [4.2.9](#).

2.2.3. Upper secondary school

A Commission has been appointed to review the future structure of the upper secondary school. According to the directives of the Commission, students in the upper secondary school should be offered three different education pathways: programs preparatory for further studies, vocationally oriented programs, and apprenticeship training. The commission submitted its report (Future Route – Reform of the Upper Secondary School) (Framtidsvägen – en reformerad gymnasieskola SOU 2008:27) in March 2008. This proposed, amongst other things, the introduction of an upper secondary certificate to prepare for higher education, and a vocational certificate which could be done either through vocational education at school, or through an upper secondary apprenticeship programme where at least half of the studies take place through learning located at the workplace. It is also proposed that the current 17 national programmes be replaced by five programmes preparatory for higher education and 14 vocational programmes. The report was circulated to a large number of stakeholders for comments during summer 2008. The Riksdag has decided on the reform in spring 2009 and it will come into effect by autumn 2011. For more information on upper secondary school see chapter [5](#).

2.2.3.1. A pilot project on Apprenticeship Training

A pilot project for upper secondary apprenticeship training has been decided by the Government (SFS 2007:1349). The project, where at least half of vocational education should be made outside of school and at workplaces, covers education starting from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2011. A grant for the pilot object of SEK 25000 per apprenticeship place per year is available. For more information on upper secondary school see chapter [5](#).

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

2.2.4. Higher education

See subsections for information.

2.2.4.1 Abolition of compulsory membership in student unions

As from July 2010 the system with mandatory membership in a student union has been abolished and a new system for government support to the student unions is in place. For more information on higher education, see chapter [6](#).

2.2.4.2 Tutorial fees for students

In June 2010 the Riksdag voted in favour of the proposals and assessments made by the Government in its Bill 'Competing on the basis of quality - tuition fees for foreign students' (Govt. Bill 2009/10:65). This means that higher education will remain free of charge for Swedish citizens and citizens of an EU/EEA state or Switzerland. Citizens of other countries ('third country students'), in contrast, will pay a fee for their higher education as of the autumn term 2011. The change is intended to ensure that Swedish higher education institutions compete internationally on the basis of quality, not on the basis of free tuition. Two scholarship programmes will be put into place.

2.2.5. Adult education

In July 2009 the [Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education](#), YH-myndigheten, was established to develop and oversee a new form of publicly funded vocational education at post upper secondary level.

2.2.5.1. Teachers' qualifications and authorisation

The Riksdag decided on the 28th of April 2010 that teacher education shall be reformed in accordance with the proposals put forward in the governmental proposal 'Bäst i klassen – en ny lärarutbildning (2009/10:89). As from the autumn term in 2011 there will be four lines leading to professional titles for pre-school teachers, compulsory school teachers, subject teachers and vocational subject teachers. An authorization of teachers will be introduced.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

2.2.10. New training for teachers in special needs education

A new training program for teachers in special needs education to provide support in learning reading and writing skills at an early stage has been introduced. For more information on teacher training see chapter ??

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

2.3. Fundamental Principles and Basic Legislation

One fundamental principle of the Swedish education system is that all children and youth must have access to equivalent education, regardless of gender, place of residence and social and financial background. The curricula and timetables are valid nation-wide. State regulations for the education system – including pre-school [förskoleverksamhet](#), school-age childcare [skolbarnsomsorg](#) and the pre-school class [förskoleklassen](#) – are set out in the Education Act, the Higher Education Act and in a number of ordinances.

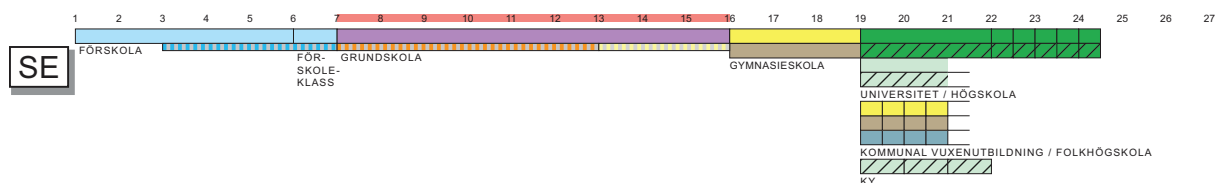
The Education Act is to be changed and come into force as from the autumn of 2011, see [2.2.6.](#)

[Högskolelagen](#) (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

[Skollagen](#) (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

2.4. General Structure and Defining Moments in Educational Guidance

Organisation of the education system in Sweden, 2006/07



Pre-primary education – ISCED 0 (for which the Ministry of Education is not responsible)	Pre-primary – ISCED 0 (for which the Ministry of Education is responsible)
Primary – ISCED 1	Single structure – ISCED 1 + ISCED 2 (no institutional distinction between ISCED 1 and 2)
Lower secondary general – ISCED 2 (including pre-vocational)	Lower secondary vocational – ISCED 2
Upper secondary general – ISCED 3	Upper secondary vocational – ISCED 3
Post-secondary non-tertiary – ISCED 4	
Tertiary education – ISCED 5A	Tertiary education – ISCED 5B
Allocation to the ISCED levels: ISCED 0 ISCED 1 ISCED 2	
Compulsory full-time education	Compulsory part-time education
Part-time or combined school and workplace courses	Additional year
Compulsory work experience + its duration	Study abroad

Source: Eurydice.

(2006-2007)

This description includes all parts of the education system which are under the Ministry for Education and Science, and excludes therefore education for 1) positions within the police 2) armed forces 3) specific education for unemployed 4) competence development for employed since they are not under its auspices, nor does it include 5) educational activities carried out by private institutions outside the public education system.

Pre-school [förskolan](#) for children under the age of six, is the first stage of the educational system. The public school system for children and young people covers pre-school class [förskoleklassen](#), (the year before compulsory school starts), compulsory school [grundskolan](#), upper secondary school [gymnasieskolan](#) education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments [särskolan](#), schools for pupils with impaired hearing [specialskolan](#) and Sami school [sameskolan](#).

The public school system for adults consists of municipal adult education [kommunernas vuxenutbildning](#), education for adults with intellectual impairments [särsvux](#) and Swedish tuition for immigrants [svenskundervisning för invandrare](#), sfi Liberal adult education [folkbildning](#) is provided by folk high schools [folkhögskolor](#) and adult education associations [studieförbund](#).

Higher education is conducted at universities and university colleges, Higher Education Institutions, HEIs, where both types of institutions have equivalent status with regard to undergraduate education.

The current curriculum for the compulsory school system (Läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet, Lpo 94) applies as of 1995. It covers the compulsory school [grundskola](#), schools for pupils with impaired hearing [specialskola](#), education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments [särskola](#), Sami school [sameskola](#), the pre-school class [förskoleklass](#) and leisure-time centres [fritidshem](#). In 1998, the pre-school [förskola](#) received its first national curriculum (Läroplan för förskolan, Lpfö 98). New curricula will come into force in the autumn of 2011.

Schools at compulsory level are funded by municipal grants from the pupils' home municipalities and by state grants, i.e. are grant-aided, and free of charge. This also includes the so called grant-aided independent schools. For more information on financing, see [2.8](#).

Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet (The Swedish University of Agricultural Science)

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

2.4.1. Upper secondary school

The integrated upper secondary school education is organised in 17 different national programmes. All the upper secondary school programmes are designed around the same eight compulsory subjects (called core subjects): Swedish/Swedish as a second language, English, mathematics, civics, religion, science studies, physical education and health, and artistic activities. In addition to these, pupils study programme specific subjects. The curriculum for the non-compulsory school system (Läroplan för de frivilliga skolorna, Lpf 94) covers upper secondary education [gymnasieskola](#), upper secondary education for pupils with intellectual impairments [gymnasiesärskola](#), municipal adult education [kommunernas vuxenutbildning](#) and municipal education for adults with intellectual impairments [särsvux](#). New curricula will come into force by the autumn term of 2011.

2.4.2. Tertiary education

All higher education is pursued in courses and programmes. The courses can be taken separately or as part of a study program to lead to degrees. The scale of a course or study programme is measured in 'credit points' in line with the ECTS. Full-time studies during one year equals 60 credit points. Higher Education Institutions decide about the organisation of their courses.

Mainly as a result of the Bologna process, legislation for a three-cycle structure of higher education was applied from July 2007. The new structure replaces the former system and is the only structure for all HEIs. This new system aims at improving international comparability of Swedish education, as intended by the Bologna process. A credit point system in line with ECTS is now mandatory, see [6.10](#).

2.4.3. Adult education

Adult education provided by municipalities consists of

- Municipal adult education kommunernas vuxenutbildning,
- Municipal adult education for adults with intellectual impairments [sär vux](#)
- Swedish tuition for immigrants [svenskundervisning för invandrare, sfi](#)

In addition there is Advanced Vocational Education and Training, , a post secondary education and training program in which a part of the time often is spent at a workplace. Vocational Education and Training is organised by municipalities, educational companies and university colleges in conjunction with working life. There are also independently organised supplementary education programmes [kompletterande utbildningar](#) supported by the state. These constitute a complementary education at upper secondary level within certain subjects and vocational fields.

The Swedish Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen) is responsible for the labour market training arbetsmarknadsutbildning intended primarily for unemployed adults in need of retraining or further training and education.

In July 2009 the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, YH-myndigheten, was established to develop and oversee a new form of publicly funded vocational education at post upper secondary level.

Higher Vocational Education Courses, HVECs, cover a wide range of vocational areas with one common goal, namely the provision of advanced vocational education, tailored to the needs of the labour market. In HVECs a modern approach is taken where theoretical learning is integrated and blended with vocational practice at the workplace.

HVECs are needed as they are intended to serve the needs of job seekers and industries where competence and labour are in demand. For this reason companies and the business sector partner in the design and construction right from the very start. Content is jointly determined. HVECs last for at least six months and participant progress and outcomes are assessed and recognised by a certificate/diploma that validates their skills for employment.

The role of the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is to set up a common framework agreed on and followed by vocational education and training providers

The liberal adult education sector [folkbildning](#) also provides adult education through folk high schools folkhögskolor and adult education associations [studieförbund](#). Some folk high school courses and some of the education within the supplementary education programmes and labour market training programmes are comparable to Advanced Vocational Education and Training, in terms of content. A large part of higher education is also directed towards competence development and further training of adults.

[Arbetsförmedlingen \(The Swedish Public Employment Service\)](#)

Swedish National Agency for Advanced Vocational Education (YH-myndigheten)

2.5. Compulsory Education

The compulsory school system comprises compulsory school [grundskolan](#), the Sami school [sameskolan](#) for Sami-speaking children who live in the north of the country, schools for pupils with impaired hearing [specialskolan](#), and education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments [särskolan](#).

Municipalities are obliged to arrange pre-school classes [förskoleklass](#) for all children six years of age. Participation is optional but 95 % of all six year olds attend the pre-school class.

Under the Education Act nine years of compulsory schooling is obligatory for all children aged 7 to 16, i.e. school attendance is compulsory. The Education Act also states that children and young people have a right to receive education in the national school system. Although most children start school in the year they turn seven, the start of compulsory schooling is flexible and the starting age can vary from six to eight according to the wish of the parents or guardian. Compulsory attendance at school lasts for nine years, regardless of starting age.

As of January 2002, the right to education includes children seeking asylum and children in similar circumstances. They are to have access to pre-school activities, school-age childcare and education in the public education system on essentially the same conditions as children resident in Sweden.

A new Education Act will come into force by the autumn term of 2011, see [2.2.6](#).

Schools at compulsory level are funded by municipal grants from the pupils' home municipalities and by state grants, i.e. are grant-aided, and free of charge, and this also includes school meals, tools and equipment and (when needed) transport. For more information on financing, see [2.8](#).

[Skollagen \(Education Act\), SFS 1985:1100](#)

2.6. General Administration

The administration of the Swedish educational system is decentralised to municipal level and there is no regional administrative level for education, although some national agencies have a regional field organisation. The municipalities are responsible for the organisation of practically all public education below university level.

Schools at compulsory level are funded by municipal grants from the pupils' home municipalities and by state grants, i.e. are grant-aided, and free of charge. For more information on financing, see [2.8](#).

2.6.1. General Administration at National Level

The Ministry of Education and Research and the central authorities connected to it (the Swedish National Agency for Education, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education etc.), have the overall responsibility for central administration of the Swedish educational system. The Ministry sets the frames for the education system and the agencies have the

task to implement the law and ordinances, which means that the majority of those who work in the administration of the educational level are not employed at the ministerial level.

Education administrated at national level includes Sami schools [sameskola](#) and schools for pupils with impaired hearing [specialskolor](#), as well as higher education institutions; universities and university colleges. All other education is organised at the local level.

There are two ministers at the Ministry of Education and Research:

Mr, Jan Björklund, head of the ministry, deputy prime minister, responsible for the compulsory school and other compulsory school forms, for school age child care (which caters for younger pupils before and after the school day and on holidays), the upper secondary school, higher education and research

Ms Nyamko Sabuni is responsible for matters concerning liberal arts education, pre-school, student aid, adult education and has the over-all coordinating responsibility for the Government's work for gender equality, for the development of the role of civil society as well as for youth policy.

Immediately under the Ministers there are politically appointed State secretaries, with overall responsibility for managing the work of the Ministry. In addition, the ministers have a number of political advisers and information staff. These four categories are the only politically employed staff members at the Ministries and they all follow their minister when/if he/she leaves the ministry..

The Director-General for Administrative and Legal Affairs is the most senior ranked non-political position in the Ministry, and as such is principally responsible for ensuring that all tasks and routines are carried out in accordance with the law. The Director-General for Administrative and Legal Affairs is also responsible for drafting proposals for laws and ordinances.

The Ministry of Education and Research is divided into the following operational divisions:

- Division for Schools (also responsible for the pre-school, pre-school class and school-age childcare)
- Division for Upper Secondary Education
- Division for Student Financial Support and Adult Education
- Division for Higher Education
- Division for Research Policy

The Division for Budget Co-ordination and Administration, the Secretariat for International Affairs and the Legal Secretariat are responsible for overall co-ordination.

For more information on educational institutions, administrative authorities and management, see [2.6.4.](#)

[Utbildningsdepartementet \(The Ministry of Education and Research\)](#)

2.6.2. General Administration at Regional Level

There is no regional level in the Swedish education system; however, some central authorities have a regional field organisation.

2.6.3. General Administration at Local Level

The municipalities (kommuner) have great autonomy to administer the education system within the legislative framework set up by the Government. The municipal council is the highest decision making body in the municipality. In the municipalities school responsibility has been delegated to a board. The state higher education institutions are each separate state agencies directly accountable to the Government and the Riksdag.

The municipalities are bound by law to provide to their inhabitants a number of basic services for which they receive state subsidies. In addition, they have the right to levy income taxes and in some cases also to charge fees to finance their activities. State grants constitute around one sixth of the municipalities' income. Municipalities are the principal organisers of pre primary education and care, the compulsory school [grundskolan](#) and education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments [särskolan](#) as well as upper secondary school [gymnasieskolan](#). The municipality is also the employer of school personnel and hence responsible for their competence development.

Each municipal council appoints one or more committees responsible for ensuring that educational activities are provided in accordance with the law and state regulations and guidelines and that the best possible conditions for education are created. The committee or committees responsible for schools are obliged to ensure that:

- Goals of the curricula are achieved and general regulations are followed
- Municipal funds are allocated for school activities
- Qualified teaching and non-teaching staff is recruited and that staff members are offered competence development, CPD
- The provision of appropriate facilities for schools

In practice, it is the responsibility of the municipalities to ensure that schools throughout the country maintain good standards. The municipalities should follow-up and evaluate the school plan on a regular basis, as well as take part in national evaluation. According to the Ordinance on quality reporting each school must monitor and evaluate its own activities.

Municipalities are the main organisers of pre primary education and care for children aged one to five. Pre-school and school-age childcare should be provided to the extent needed. All four- and five-year-olds shall have access to a place in pre-school corresponding to three hours a day. Children of unemployed parents and children whose parents are on parental leave also have right to a place in pre-school. The municipalities are also the main organisers of the education system for adults' i.e. municipal adult education *kommunernas vuxenutbildning*, adult education for adults with intellectual impairments [särsvux](#) and Swedish tuition for immigrants [svenskundervisning för invandrare](#), [sfi](#)

[Riksdagen](#) (The Parliament)

2.6.4. Educational Institutions, Administration, Management

The central administrative authorities work independently of the Ministries and decide within their own field of responsibility in accordance with guidelines drawn by the Government, in general instructions and in the annual government appropriation directions. In all fields of state activity there are state central authorities who are allocated funds annually through the government budget appropriation document based on a decision by the Swedish Parliament (Riksdagen), and present each year a report of their activities to the responsible Ministry. The following agencies and organisations, amongst others, come under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Research.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

2.6.4.1. Educational administration

The Swedish National Agency for Education

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) is the largest central authority in the school area. The authority is responsible for pre-school activities förskoleverksamhet, school-age childcare skolbarnsomsorg, compulsory school grundskola, upper secondary school gymnasieskola and the municipal adult education kommunernas vuxenutbildning. The Agency puts forward proposals and monitors education. One of the main tasks of the Swedish National Agency for Education is to examine the quality and outcome of education in municipalities and grant-aided independent schools, as well as to supervise their activities. The Swedish National Agency for Education develops steering documents, e.g. syllabuses and grading criteria, and is responsible for examination issues concerning grant-aided independent schools. It also allocates funds to universities and university colleges for research into the school system, for the training programme for school heads, for competence development of teachers and personnel within the school on topics such as reforms, as well as for awarding teaching scholarships for competence development of individual teachers.

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate ensures that local authorities and independent schools follow existing laws and regulations. The Schools Inspectorate is the central agency responsible for pre-school, the welfare of schoolchildren, schools management and adult education, kommunal vuxenutbildning, and the aim of the Agency is to ensure the equal right of all children to a good education, in a safe environment. The Schools Inspectorate conducts regular supervision of all schools. The Schools Inspectorate is also responsible for granting licenses to new independent schools. Furthermore, it decides on applications for entitlement to subsidies and also monitors national supervision of upper secondary schools, gymnasieskolor.

Specialpedagogiska Skolmyndigheten

The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten), is the central authority responsible for allocating public funds for special pedagogical issues. The institute creates and provides support to school organisers on special pedagogical issues related to disabilities.

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket) is a central authority responsible for common tasks within higher education, i.e. the state universities and university colleges, as well as independent university colleges at the higher education level that are grant-aided or that may award degrees. The authority is responsible for evaluation, follow-up and supervision of higher education as well as the provision of information and international contacts. The authority also evaluates foreign education and provides information on the recognition of foreign education programmes.

The National Agency for Services to Universities and University Colleges

The National Agency for Services to Universities and University Colleges (Verket för Högskoleservice, VHS) is a contracting agency which main task is to provide services and support to universities and other institutes of higher education. It conducts coordinated admissions to educational programmes at universities and university colleges, offers procurement services in the form of consultation support and manages education administration systems. All services are performed at request from universities and university colleges.

The International Programme Office for Education and Training

The International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK) is a central authority supporting schools, universities, companies, organisations and independent individuals who wish to take part in international co-operation. Activities range from international co-operation projects in education and competence development to placements and studies abroad. The office is responsible for the Swedish participation in the Programme for Lifelong Learning, as well as a number of other international programmes and activities financed by for example Sida (the Swedish Development Cooperation Agency) or the Nordic Council of Ministers. See [2.2.12.](#) and [11.](#) for more information.

The Swedish Board for Study Support

The central administrative authority for student's social questions, the Swedish Board for Study Support (Centrala studiestödsnämnden, CSN), is responsible for the allocation and repayment of financial support for studies, as well as following up and evaluating different systems for financing studies.

The Swedish National Council of Adult Education

The Swedish National Council of Adult Education (Folkbildningsrådet) is a non-commercial organisation with three members: The Swedish National Federation of Study Associations (Folkbildningsförbundet), the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (Sveriges kommuner och landsting, SALAR) and the Interest Organisation of Popular Movement Folk High Schools (Rörelsefolkhögskolornas intresseorganisation, RIO). Commissioned by the Government and the Riksdag, the Council allocates state appropriations to adult education associations and folk high schools, provides financial records and annual reports to the Government, follows up and evaluates liberal adult education activities. The Swedish National Council of Adult Education also works on behalf of its members by monitoring liberal adult education policy, providing information and co-ordinating international work.

The Folk High Schools' information service (Folkhögskolornas informationstjänst, FIN)

The Folk High Schools' information service (Folkhögskolornas informationstjänst, FIN) is a part of the Swedish National Council of Adult Education and acts as an information centre for folk high schools and is responsible for providing general information on the 148 folk high schools in the country, producing and distributing information on courses and other material including information and guidance on studying at folk high schools.

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education

In July 2009 the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education was established to develop and oversee a new form of publicly funded vocational education at post upper secondary level.

Higher Vocational Education Courses, HVECs, cover a wide range of vocational areas and have one goal in common, namely the provision of advanced vocational education, tailored to the needs of the labour market.

HVECs are intended to serve the needs of job seekers and industries where competence and labour are in demand. Companies and the business sector are partners in the design and construction and content is jointly determined. HVECs last for at least six months and participant progress and outcomes are assessed and recognised by a certificate/diploma that validates their skills for employment.

The role of the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is to set up a common framework agreed on and followed by vocational education and training providers. Content is based on the knowledge and experience of what is needed in working life.

As the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is responsible for all publicly funded courses in vocational higher education throughout the country, the principal missions of the Agency are to:

- determine what courses are to be provided
- make decisions on public funding to be allocated to education providers
- assess and audit quality and outcomes of courses
- analyse and assess needs for skilled competence and the development of the labour market
- coordinate and support a national framework for validation
- serve as the national coordinator for EQF –the European Qualifications Framework in Lifelong Learning

Statistics Sweden

Statistics Sweden (Statistiska centralbyrån, SCB) is the official statistics provider. It is commissioned by the Swedish National Agency for Education and the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education to collect data in the education area.

Centrala studiestödsnämnden (The National Board of Student Aid)

Folkbildningsförbundet (The Swedish National Federation of Study Associations)

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

Folkhögskolornas informationstjänst (The Folk High School's Information Service)

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (The International Programme Office for Education and Training)

Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Rörelsefolkhögskolornas intresseorganisation (The Interest Organization of Popular Movement Folk High Schools)

Skolinspektionen (The Swedish Schools Inspectorate)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Specialpedagogiska Skolmyndigheten (Swedish National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools)

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

Sveriges kommuner och landsting (SKL)/ The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)

Verket för Högskoleservice, VHS (National Agency for Services to Universities and University Colleges)

2.6.4.2. Educational Management

The administrative organisation within pre-school, compulsory school, upper secondary school, adult education and higher education is undertaken locally at each institution. Laws are decided by the Riksdag and ordinances by the Government and these set the frame for educational management. The municipalities usually delegate administrative responsibilities for pre-schools and schools to the local institutions who decide on how to organise their work.

In the area of higher education, the higher education institutions decide on their administrative organisation on the basis of the framework set out in the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance.

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

2.6.4.2.1. Educational Management at Pre-school Level

In pre-school, day-to-day administration is usually carried out by the head of the pre-school or by one teacher who supervises the work of the rest of the pre-school staff. Normally the staff works in teams with a group of children.

2.6.4.2.2. Educational Management at School Level

Compulsory school, upper secondary school and municipal adult education can be organised in a variety of ways as decided by the principal organiser, the municipality, or in some cases of upper secondary education, the county councils. In pre-school class and at compulsory and upper secondary school level, the school head is referred to in Swedish as the 'rektor'. The school head shall keep abreast of the daily work of the school and focus particularly on developing the education.

2.6.4.2.3. Educational Management at Higher Education Level

When recruiting staff is it the higher education institution itself that decides to what extent an appointment should focus on education, research (or development work in the arts for staff in the arts field) and/or administration. Teaching staff from all categories should have teaching duties in undergraduate education. Post-doctoral fellows should mainly carry out research.

2.7. Internal and External Consultation

Compulsory schools arrange some form of what is referred to as 'practical working life orientation', where pupils get practical experience at a workplace for a week or two. Study visits and information about the labour market and different professions and career options are included in the teaching of various subjects in compulsory school. At the local level, as prescribed in the curriculum, the school co-operates with industry, the social partners and industrial organisations, as well as with universities and university colleges to provide students with educational guidance for their future studies. This is not regulated centrally but a web portal for career guidance is provided by the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket). The portal Utbildningsinfo.se includes information about educational programmes and a study-route planning tool. It also functions as a meeting place for professional career and study counselors. To become a professional career and study counselor you can take a three year university course.

At all higher education institutions there are course counselors. At universities and the larger university colleges there is educational guidance at central and at departmental level. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education and the National Agency for Services to Universities and University colleges issue guidance material where the basic information is presented in 21 languages. The Swedish Portal for Higher Education (in Swedish and English), includes a database containing descriptions of courses and education programmes available at Swedish higher education institutions.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Studera.nu (The Swedish Portal for Higher Education)

Utbildningsinfo.se (A portal for education information and guidance)

Verket för Högskoleservice, VHS (National Agency for Services to Universities and University Colleges)

2.7.1. Internal Consultation

The compulsory school [grundskola](#) shall co-operate with pre-schools [förskolorna](#) to facilitate transfer from pre-school to school. They should also co-operate with various actors in order to promote the long-term learning and development of pupils. According to the curriculum, the school head has particular responsibility for developing co-operation between the pre-school, compulsory school and leisure-time centres [fritidshem](#). Since 1998 there is a common curriculum for the pre-school class, compulsory school and leisure-time centres, with the aim to bring about a long-term development of pedagogical activities based on a common view of children and their way of learning.

The school head of each school has the over-all responsibility for ensuring the co-operation between compulsory school and the upper secondary school [gymnasieskola](#). The curriculum states that all those working in school shall develop contacts with working, cultural and organisational life as well as with other sections of society outside school, all of which can enrich learning environment of the school. Teachers also have a responsibility for contributing to the development of contacts with receiving schools, as well as with organisations, companies and other bodies that can help enrich the school's activities, further its identity and enhance its links to the surrounding society. For upper secondary schools co-operation with working life, higher education institutions is of pivotal importance in order to provide the students with a basis for their choice of courses, further studies or vocational training. Co-operation with working life is especially important for vocationally oriented education (see [2.7.2.2.](#)).

Higher education institutions have three tasks as spelled out by the State: education, research and co-operation with each institution's surrounding community and co-operation they are to inform about their activities for example in their contacts with the upper secondary schools and other parts of the school system located in their vicinity.

2.7.1.1. Pupils

The Education Act states that all pupils in school shall be able to influence the design and content of their education. The influence they exercise shall be related to their age and maturity. How pupils' influence should be organised is not centrally regulated, however almost all compulsory and upper secondary schools have a pupils' council [elevråd](#) which aims of safeguarding pupils' interests. According to the curriculum all who work in the school should support the pupils' ability and willingness to

influence and take responsibility for the social, cultural and physical environment that, taken all together, constitutes a school. Teachers are responsible for the pupils' influence over methods of working, organisational structures and the content of education. The school head has particular responsibility for developing mechanisms to promote the exercise of pupil influence.

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

2.7.1.2. Parents

The school shall work together with the pupils' parents to develop the content of education and the activity in the school. The school is obliged to continuously inform parents on what is happening at school and the progress and development of their children. A development dialogue meeting between the school and the parents is to be held at regular intervals.

Written development assessments are to be made for each subject and the school head decides in which format they are to be made. Each pupil has an individual development plan which contains assessments and includes documents on agreements made between the school, the pupil and the parents. This development plan can also reflect other aspects of the pupil's work in school, as attitudes and the ability to take responsibility. The plan is also to contain what efforts need to be made to ensure that the pupil reaches the national goals for each subject and each level of the school.

2.7.2. Consultation involving Players in Society at large

Consultation is carried out mainly through different associations with parents and pupils. In recent years the Government has strengthened the influence of parents and pupils in compulsory as well as pupils' influence in upper secondary schools. The personnel are also represented in different bodies. At higher education institutions the students, staff, industry as well as the public sector have a wide range of opportunities to influence the work of the institution in question.

2.7.2.1. Consultation Involving Players in Society at Large at Pre-school Level

Participation of parents in pre-school [förskola](#) is not embodied in the Education Act. However, the pre-school curriculum gives parents the opportunity to influence activities, particularly planning of the work. Parental influence is an important element in the approach of the pre-school and daily contact with parents is therefore of strategic importance. There are also more formal contacts in parent-teacher meetings and parents' associations where parents may influence pre-school activities. The parent-teacher meetings usually take place twice a year or at the request of the parents/guardians.

In the open pre-school [öppen förskola](#), parents stay with their children throughout the activities so they constantly meet the staff and can thus be involved in the planning and those who work with children in their own homes as family child minders also regularly meet the parents of the children in their care.

[Skollagen \(Education Act\), SFS 1985:1100](#)

2.7.2.2. Vocational education

Reviews of national programmes on vocational education and training in the upper secondary school are made in cooperation with the social partners and representative organisations from industry and the Swedish National Agency for Education. The goals of the education are decided in conjunction with a special programme advisory group for each national programme. There are representatives from the Swedish National Agency for Education as well as from organisations involved in the programme advisory groups. There are also different types of programme advisory groups at the local level whose activities are not regulated in acts or ordinances.

[Skolverket \(The Swedish National Agency for Education\)](#)

2.7.2.2.1. Pupil's associations

The Swedish Pupils' Council (Sveriges elevråd, SVEA) and the Pupils' Organisation (Elevorganisationen) are co-operating organisations of and for the pupil councils (see [2.7.1.1.](#)). Proposals for the school system which affect pupils and are made at the central governmental level are circulated for comment to these organizations (as well as to many others).

[Sveriges Elevråd, SVEA \(The Swedish Pupils' Council\)](#)

[Sveriges elevråds centralorganisationen, SECO \(The Pupils' Organisation\)](#)

2.7.2.3. Consultation Involving Players in Society at Large at Higher Education Level

Apart from the two obvious tasks – education and research or development work in the arts – higher education institutions are required under the Higher Education Act to co-operate with the surrounding society.

Partners from different parts of society are involved in higher education, as participants or advisors. The majority of the members of higher education boards, including the Chair, represent the surrounding society (e.g. industry and municipalities). This cooperation involves information about scientific results and they can cover agreements on sponsoring from companies connected to the education, as well programmes where education is 'sandwiched' with work.

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

2.8. Methods of Financing Education

School funding is shared between state and municipalities. State funds are paid as what is called 'the general state grant' to the 290 municipalities. Each municipality then allocates resources to individual schools. The pre-school [förskolan](#) is financed partly in the same way, but also charges fees to cover part of its costs. The amount for these fees is regulated and a maximum fee determined centrally. The municipalities may receive revenues from municipal taxes to finance municipal activities. Sami schools [sameskola](#) and schools for pupils with impaired hearing [specialskola](#) are financed directly by the state. Higher education at universities and university colleges is also financed directly from the state budget.

Schools at compulsory level, municipal as well as grant-aided independent, are funded by municipal grants from the pupils' home municipalities and by state grants, i.e. are grant-aided and free of charge (and this includes school meals, tools and equipment as well).

2.8.1. Methods of Financing Education in Pre-school and School-age Childcare

Pre-school [förskoleverksamhet](#) takes various forms, pre-school [förskola](#), pedagogical care ('family day care homes') [familjedaghem](#) and open pre-school [öppen förskola](#). Pre-school and school-age childcare are financed by state grants, municipal grants and fees. The state grant provided to the municipalities takes account of additional resources needed for children with special needs. The state grants are then distributed by the municipalities. For more information on the municipalities' incomes and allocation of resources, see [2.8.2.](#)

Pre-school fees used to vary between municipalities. They were mostly related to family income, the number of children in the family attending pre-school or school age childcare [skolbarnsomsorg](#). The municipalities who choose to apply the maximum fee undertake not to charge fees above a certain threshold level, for which they receive a special state grant to compensate for the loss of revenue. All municipalities have introduced maximum fees. The maximum fee for pre-school activities and school-age childcare is based on a fixed per cent of the parents' income. It starts at three per cent (maximum SEK 1260 per month) for one child in pre-school activities decreasing by one percent per additional child to no fee for the fourth child. For school-age childcare the fee is two per cent of the income (maximum SEK 840 per month) for one child, 1 per cent for the second and third child and no fee for the fourth child. The Swedish National Agency for Education presented an evaluation of the reform in 2007 which showed that the maximum fee has increased the number of children enrolled in pre primary care and education and thus it has leveled some of the socio-economic differences between children from different socio-economic strata. This goes especially for children whose parents are on parental leave from work with a younger child and those who are unemployed. In some municipalities the

organization experienced problems catering for all the so called '15-hour children' who attend the pre-school three hours every working day.

The majority of pre-school teachers, leisure-time pedagogues, teachers and school heads are employed by the municipality and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, SALAR (Sveriges kommuner och landsting, SKL), negotiates with the teacher's central trade unions over principal agreements on salaries and working conditions. The responsibility for setting pre-school teachers' salaries is usually decentralised to the individual pre-school where negotiations take place between the employer and the teacher and one of the teacher trade unions based on the central agreements.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Sveriges kommuner och landsting (SKL)/ The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)

2.8.2. Methods of Financing Education at School Level

Schools at compulsory level, municipal as well as grant-aided independent, are funded by municipal grants from the pupils' home municipalities and by state grants, i.e. are grant-aided and free of charge.

Municipal upper secondary schools are grant-aided and free of charge. Independent schools at upper secondary level are generally grant-aided. Grant-aided schools as a general rule are not allowed to charge fees.

Municipal tax revenues are the municipality's main source of income. Apart from the income taxes which finance the majority of municipal education the municipalities also receive a state grant which is not earmarked for a specific activity. The structural element of the grant is determined by several underlying factors such as the size of the population in the municipality, its age structure, population density, social structure and number of immigrants. In the decentralised Swedish system, each municipality determines how it allocates resources and organises its activities and uses the budget. The municipalities are obliged to provide their inhabitants with certain services and often supply additional non-compulsory services such as cultural and leisure activities.

In the area of education, the municipality must fulfill its obligations regarding activities and quality in accordance with the Education Act. The municipality usually has its own local board of education or similar, which decides on the allocation of funds between different schools in the municipality. This local body also decides on the funds to be allocated to grant-aided independent schools in the municipality. There are no national regulations on how resources should be allocated between schools; each municipality develops its own allocation system, however the systems are quite similar. Often a basic amount is determined for each pupil and on top of that additional resources are added for pupils with special needs etc. The costs vary between the municipalities (for example the need to provide school transport varies between the vast regions which are sparsely populated and the bigger cities etc.).

The responsibility for determining teachers' salaries is usually decentralised to the individual school in cooperation with the teacher concerned and one of the teacher trade unions. These negotiations are

based on the central agreement between the SKL and the unions. Most leisure-time pedagogues, teachers and school heads are employed by the municipality and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, SALAR (Sveriges kommuner och landsting, SKL), negotiates with the teacher trade unions over salaries and working conditions.

When it comes to capital expenditures such as school buildings, the municipalities show a less uniform pattern. Some municipalities prefer to decentralise responsibilities for such expenditures to each individual school, while others keep responsibility for local costs at the municipal level. Additionally, some municipalities choose to handle capital expenditures within other areas, for instance within their own administration for planning and buildings.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Sveriges kommuner och landsting (SKL)/ The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

2.8.3. Methods of Financing Education at Higher Education Level

Higher education is free of charge; no tuition fees are levied on Swedish students (as from the start of the autumn term 2011 there will be fees for students from so called third party countries). When higher education institutions receive allocations from the Ministry of Education and Science for undergraduate education they receive the goals and framework for the coming budget/ calendar year. The goals stipulate:

- Targets for certain courses in terms of number of degrees over a four-year period, as well as planning forecasts for a four-year period
- Targets for the number of full time students in certain subject areas which are a national priority (at present in science and technology)
- Maximum total remuneration, i.e. the maximum amount that may be generated by the number of full-time students and their performance for the budget year
- Possible specific commitments that may require additional compensation

Final allocation of resources is dependent on the results achieved at each institution in terms of student numbers (converted to full-time annual student equivalents) as well as study performance (converted to annual performance). Higher education institutions are obliged to consider the special needs of students with physical disabilities. Each university and university college must set aside 0.3 per cent of its undergraduate grant for measures to assist students with physical disabilities. If the 0.3 percent is insufficient the institutions may apply for extra state subsidies.

Teachers at state universities and university colleges are appointed by the institutions and are state employees. Salaries at all institutions are individually negotiated between the staff member, the employer and a trade union.

Parallel with the state-funded institutions for higher education there are a number of independent institutions, of which some charge fees and have no grant-aid.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

2.8.3.1. Remuneration Amount

Prior to each budget year each higher education institution receives an appropriation with a maximum amount as well as compensation for specific extra commitments undertaken. The appropriation is preliminary since the final amount can be determined first at the end of the budget year when the actual achievements are presented to the Ministry of Education and Science in an annual report. An underachievement (too few students to reach the maximum remuneration) or an overachievement (more students than can be paid for within the maximum remuneration) up to +/- ten per cent of the maximum remuneration may be moved over to the next fiscal year.

The remuneration amount for annual students and for annual performance achievements is determined each year in a governmental approval document. The amount varies depending on education area, but within the same area of education the amount is the same irrespective of institution. The remuneration amount includes all costs for undergraduate higher education, including cost for premises, equipment and furnishings. 2004 year's remuneration amounts are given in the statistical chapter below 2.9.

2.8.3.2. Reporting

The higher education institutions an annual report of their results as activities and financial outcomes for the budget year. Annual reports contain a profit and loss account, balance sheet, report on allocations and financial analysis, as well as results on the attainment of educational goals.

2.8.3.3. Contract education

Higher education institutions can tailor special education programmes commissioned by companies and organisations, i.e. contract education. This kind of training is offered in various forms and participants may be awarded credits and certificates. Contract education accounts for a relatively small part of higher education, however the demand is growing and many institutions are establishing special units for this purpose. Foreign government authorities, companies and organisations may sign education contracts with Swedish universities and university colleges. Such agreements are the responsibility of the respective institution.

2.9. Statistics

See subsections for information.

2.9.1. Costs for education at all levels in 2006

Figures include costs outside teaching, such as school transports, meals etc.

	Costs 2006 (million SEK)
Pre-school and childcare	54 603
- Pre-school	40 948
- Pedagogical care ('Family day care homes')	2 697
- Leisure-time centres	10 536
School system	122 462
- Pre-school class	4 165
- Compulsory school*	74 056
- Education for pupils with intellectual impairments	6 152
- Schools for pupils with impaired hearing	456
- Upper secondary school	31 789
- Municipal adult education	4 289
- Municipal education for adults with intellectual impairments	29
- Swedish Agency for Flexible Learning	168
- Swedish tuition for immigrants	1 023

Higher education	45 833
- Undergraduate education**	21 552
- Doctoral studies and research**	24 097
Total cost for education at all levels	222 898

* including Sami school

** First and second cycle education --

Sources:

Skolverket: Beskrivande data om barnomsorg och skola 2007 (Swedish National Agency for Education: 2007 Statistical data on compulsory education, upper secondary education, special education and adult education.)

Universitet & högskolor, Högskoleverkets årsrapport 2007 (Universities & University colleges, annual report by The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education 2007)

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

2.9.2. Costs for education (higher education excepted) distributed per school organiser 2006

School organizer	Cost 2006 (million SEK)
Municipalities (kommuner)	110 513
County councils (landsting)	715
State (staten)	515
Independent organizer	10 719

Source: Skolverket: Beskrivande data om barnomsorg och skola 2007 (Swedish National Agency for Education: 2007 Statistical data on compulsory education, upper secondary education, special education and adult education).

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

2.9.3. Costs for higher education

Cost of the higher education sector cover in addition to the costs of activities at universities and university colleges a number of central authorities, as well as study support for students. Costs of study support amounted in 2006 to SEK 10,5 billion and the costs of the central authorities were slightly more than SEK 700 million. Total costs in the higher education sector amounted to 2.0 per cent of GDP.

Item	Costs in 2006 (billion SEK)
State universities and university colleges	45.8
National Agencies etc.	0.7
Study aid etc. to higher education students	10.5
Total	57.0

Source: Universitet & högskolor, Högskoleverkets årsrapport 2007 (Universities & University colleges, annual report by The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education 2007)

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

2.9.3.1. Study support

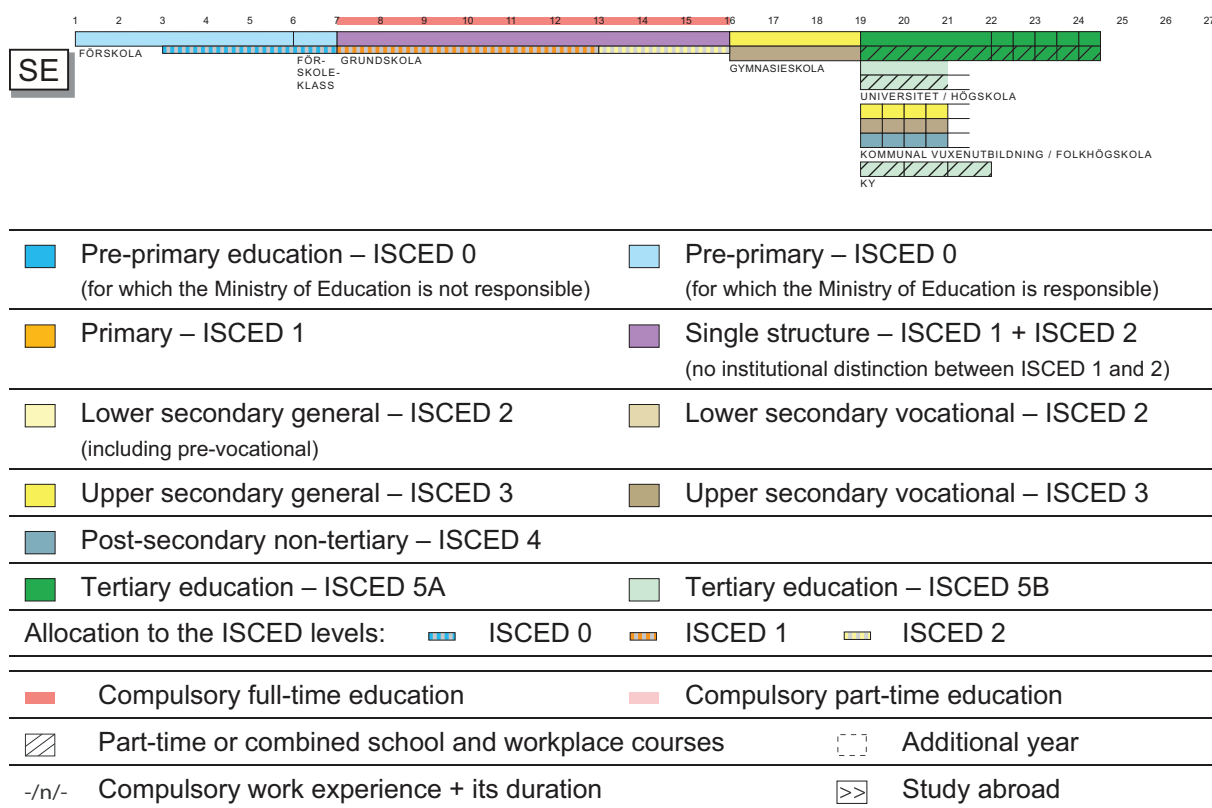
Study support in the form of grants and loans for higher education and grants for upper secondary education was given to around 935 000 people in 2009. The total cost for study support at all educational levels was SEK 25 billion in 2009. Study support is dealt with by a separate state agency and not by the individual higher education institutions themselves, this agency also handles repayment of loans etc. They are also responsible for some of the aid given to new arrivals in Sweden.

Source: Centrala studienämndens, CSN, årsredovisning 2009 (Annual report by The Board for Study Support, CSN 2009)

Centrala studiestödsnämnden (The Swedish Board for Study Support)

3. PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

Organisation of the education system in Sweden, 2006/07



Source: Eurydice.

(2006-2007)

Pre-school for children from the age of one to the year they start pre-school class, [förskoleklass](#) or compulsory school, [grundskola](#) is organised in pre-school institutions [förskola](#), pedagogical care [pedagogisk omsorg](#) in for exempel family day care homes [familjedaghem](#) and open pre-schools [öppen förskola](#). All six year olds are offered a place in the pre-schoolclass ,but attendance is voluntary. Pre-school class and universal pre-school from the age of three are free of charge corresponding to 525 hours a year. School-age childcare [skolbarnsomsorg](#) is provided up to the age of 12 years in leisure-time centres [fritidshem](#), pedagogical care, [pedagogisk omsorg](#) in for example family day care homes and open leisure-time activities [öppen fritidsverksamhet](#). School-age childcare caters for children during the part of the day when they are not in school and during holidays. Pedagogical care/Family day care homes and open pre-school are described in section [3.15.](#)

Pre-school and school-age childcare is regulated in the Education Act. The pre-school class is incorporated in the school system. The compulsory school and the pre-school class, as well as the leisure-time centres (where school-age childcare is given before and after school days and during

holidays), share a common curriculum, why municipalities usually organise years one to nine and the pre-school class together. Around 95 per cent of all six year-olds participate in the non compulsory pre-school class.

Under the Education Act municipalities are obliged to provide pre-school for children, from the age of one to the year they start pre-school class or compulsory school, whose parents are employed or pursue studies or for children who need pre-school. Those with parents that are unemployed or on parental leave with a younger sibling have the right to pre-schooling for at least three hours a day or 15 hours a week. For children between the ages three and five universal pre-school applies. Universal pre-school is free of charge. Children with special needs have the right to a place in pre-school and the municipality is required to find the children who are in need of such support.

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education) (Sveriges officiella statistik. Elever i förskoleklass 2009/10. Tabell 2 C)

3.1. Historical Overview

'Day nurseries' and 'kindergartens' have existed in Sweden since the 19th century but it was not until the 1970s that pre-school förskola became widespread. The first law on pre-school was adopted in 1975.

A childcare guarantee was introduced in the Social Services Act in 1995. This obliges municipalities to provide childcare (publicly or independently organised) for all children between the ages one and twelve, with working or studying parents or because of the child's own needs. All children whose parents have applied for pre-school and school-age childcare skolbarnomsorg should be offered a place without unreasonable delay (i.e. within three to four months). In January 2003 universal pre-school was introduced, entitling all four- and five-year-old children to free of charge pre-school provided by the municipality. From July 2010 the free of charge pre-school also applies to three-year-old children.

Pre-school and childcare for school-aged children have since 1996 been the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Research. The Swedish National Agency for Education has been the central authority responsible for pre-school and school-age childcare since 1998, and the agency is since 2008 also responsible for, quality enhancement work in pre-primary and primary education. In order to increase integration between the compulsory school, grundskolan pre-school and school-age childcare, the provisions concerning pre-school and school-age childcare are, since 1998, incorporated in the Education Act.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

3.2. Ongoing Debates and Future Developments

See subsections for information.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

3.3. Specific Legislative Framework

The general regulations of the Education Act apply to pre-school classes förskoleklasser as well as to schools, and there are special regulations on pre-school class in Chapter 2 b. The national curriculum for compulsory school (Lpo94) has been adapted to include the pre-school class. Pre-school förskola and school-age childcare [skolbarnsomsorg](#) are regulated in chapter 2 of the Education Act, as well as in the national curriculum, Lpfö98. A new Education Act and curricula will come into force by the start of the autumn term in 2011.

[Skollagen \(Education Act\), SFS 1985:1100](#)

[Lpo94 \(Curriculum for compulsory school\) SFS 1998:15](#)

[Lpfö98 \(Curriculum for the pre-school\) SKOLFS 1998:16](#)

3.4. General Objectives

See subsections below for information.

3.4.1. General Objectives in Pre-school

Pre-school förskola and school-age childcare [skolbarnsomsorg](#) should be a part of the platform for lifelong learning. The objective is to stimulate the child's development and contribute to creating favourable conditions for their growth and learning through pedagogical group activities. Children should receive the special support they may need. Activities should be organised in conjunction with parents and should make it easier for parents to combine work or studying with parenthood.

The pre-school is regulated through general goals in the Education Act and through a curriculum containing national goals. The curriculum is decided by the Government according to guidelines from the Parliament, Riksdagen. The current curriculum (Läroplan för förskola, Lpfö 98) was preceded by a

long investigation carried out by experts. This investigation was circulated to stakeholders and to all authorities involved for comments. The principal organiser, usually the municipality, is responsible for following the goals of the curriculum. The curriculum sets out the foundation values of the pre-school, but it does not lay down the specific means by which those goals are to be attained. Goals and guidelines are given for the following areas:

- Norms and values
- Development and learning
- Influence of the child
- Pre-school and home
- Co-operation between the pre-school class, the school and the leisure-time centre

The goals stipulate what the focus of the pre-school should be and what it should aim at in terms of the individual development and learning of the child.

The curriculum is also applicable to pedagogical care pedagogisk omsorg in for example family day care homes familjedaghem. The Swedish National Agency for Education has formulated general guidelines for pedagogical care, as well as leisure-time centres fritidshem and open pre-school öppen förskola.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Curriculum for the pre-school Lpfö98

3.4.2. General Objectives in the Pre-school Class

The general goals of the pre-school class [förskoleklass](#) are stipulated in the Education Act. One fundamental principle of the education system is that all children and youth must have access to equivalent education, regardless of sex, place of residence and individual social and financial circumstances. Each type of school must offer equivalent education irrespective of where it is provided. The education should provide pupils with knowledge and skills and, in co-operation with the home, promote their harmonious development into responsible persons and members of society. The education shall take account of pupils with special needs.

All school activity shall be carried out in accordance with fundamental democratic values. Everyone working in the school shall encourage respect for the intrinsic value of each person as well as for the environment we all share. In particular, everyone working in schools shall promote equality between the sexes as well as actively counteract all forms of abusive treatment such as bullying and racist behaviour.

The pre-school-class is designed to stimulate each child's development and learning, and provide a platform for their future schooling. The pre-school class combines the pedagogical methods of the pre-school, förskolan with those of compulsory school, grundskolan. An important objective is that the pre-school class, compulsory school and leisure-time centre, fritidshem are to be more closely linked. The

activities are held of higher quality thanks to the encounter between different pedagogical traditions in the various organizational structures.

Local planning must seek to give practical expression to the goals and guidelines for the education as set out in the Education Act and the curriculum. The curriculum (Läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet, Lpo 94) is common for compulsory school, pre-school class and leisure-time centres and starts with a section on the fundamental values of the school. The pre-school class is part of the school, and is the first stage in implementing and fulfilling the objectives of the curriculum. The aim is that all schools should base their work on the same fundamental values and strive to ensure that all pupils embrace these values. Curricula are decided by the Government according to guidelines from the Parliament, Riksdagen, and contain national goals.

A new Education Act and curricula will come into force by the start of the autumn term 2011.

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Curriculum for compulsory school (Lpo94)

3.5. Geographical Accessibility

Irrespective of where they live, all children must have equal access to the public education system. Each type of school must offer equivalent education irrespective of where it is provided. There are pre-school classes förskoleklasser in all municipalities. The municipality is responsible for offering a place in pre-school förskola or pre-school class förskoleklass as close to the child's home or school as possible. Reasonable regard shall also be paid to guardian's wishes. The municipalities are not legally obligated to provide transportation to pre-school or pre-school class. However, some municipalities provide transportation free of charge for children in pre-school class.

Skollagen (Education Act) SFS 1985:1100

3.6. Admission Requirements and Choice of Institution/Centre

See subsections below for information.

3.6.1. Admission Requirements and Choice of Institution/Centre in Pre-school and School-age Childcare

Pre-school förskola and school-age childcare [skolbarnsomsorg](#) are open to all children, also those with disabilities or other special needs. All children with parents that are working, studying, unemployed or on parental leave with a younger child, which constitutes the major part, are guaranteed a place in pre-school or school-age childcare hence there is no need for priority access. Pre-schools take in children from the age of one to the year they start in the pre-school class [förskoleklass](#) or compulsory school grundskola. Children who need a place in a pre-school can begin before the age of one, but this is very uncommon, usually the parent of the child is on parental leave during the child's first year. School-age childcare cater for children from the year they start the pre-school class or compulsory school up to and including the age of 12. From the age of three all children are entitled to a place in the universal pre-school. The universal pre-school is to be provided by the municipality, is free of charge and covers at least 525 hours a year, which corresponds to three hours a day during school term. Children of parents on parental leave or who are unemployed have the right to 15h/week. For childcare during other times, the same rules apply as for pre-school before the age of three, i.e. the parents working situation and the child's need is taken into account when distributing the places available.

The municipality shall take reasonable account of the wishes of the parent or guardian as regards provision of childcare, both concerning the type of care and the choice of organiser.

[Riksdagen \(The Parliament\)](#)

[Skolverket \(The Swedish National Agency for Education\)](#)

3.6.2. Admission Requirements and Choice of Institution/Centre in the Pre-school Class

The municipalities are obliged to offer all children six years of age 525 hours per year in the pre-school class [förskoleklass](#), however, children are not obliged to attend. The pre-school class is one year and takes place the year before a child starts compulsory school, however, a child may be admitted to pre-school class before the autumn term of the year when the child is six years old. Parents choose which pre-school class the child shall attend in the same way as they choose compulsory school [grundskola](#). If

a place in a chosen school is not available and the municipality places the pupil elsewhere that decision cannot be appealed.

3.7. Financial Support for Pupils' Families

All children receive a child allowance irrespective of whether they attend pre-school *förskola* or not. The pre-school fees are generally related to family income, but vary somewhat between municipalities. The maximum fee *maxtaxan* takes into account the number of children from one family that are attending pre-school *förskola* or school-age childcare *skolbarnsomsorg*, thus regulating families' maximum cost for childcare. For further information on the maximum fee, see [2.8.1.](#)

Municipalities can choose whether to apply a so called child-raising allowance for parents who choose not to have their children in pre-school can get an allowance per month and child, for children over the age of 1 but younger than 3. Child-raising allowance can be combined with paid employment, in this way parents can spend more time with their children.

3.8. Age Levels and Grouping of Children

See subsections below for information.

3.8.1. Age Levels and Grouping of Children in Pre-schools and Leisure-time Centres

A pre-school *förskola* normally consists of two to five groups or sections. The number of children per section varies. Mixed age groups are most common: there are 'toddler groups' for children up to the age of three and mixed groups usually for three- to five-year-olds, or 'sibling groups' for one- to five-year-olds. In some pre-schools there are also groups for children of the same age.

Leisure-time centres *fritidshem* provide activities outside school hours for pupils from different classes and ages, from pre-school class up to the age of 12. Open leisure-time activities often provide activities for pupils from all classes in school years 4 to 6

There is no national regulation determining the number of children per employee or the number of children in a group. However, the Swedish National Agency for Education has drawn up general guidelines regarding quality in pre-schools and leisure-time centres, which includes texts on appropriate composition and size of groups of children. The guiding principle used in grouping children is the child's need for continuity and consistency in their daily activities. The aim is to satisfy the child's needs to be together with others, to play and work with their peers as well as with older and younger

friends, regardless what form of grouping is used. In order to develop a sense of group identity, great emphasis is placed on establishing continuity in both the children's groups and amongst the staff.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

3.8.2. Age Levels and Grouping of Children in the Pre-school Class

There are no national regulations as regards size of classes etc. Almost all pupils in the pre-school class [förskoleklass](#) are enrolled from the autumn term the calendar year they turn six. They are enrolled for one school year. 1.0 per cent of the pupils that started pre-school class in 2009 were five-year-olds, and 1.0 per cent started in the year they turned seven.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

3.9. Organisation of Time

There is no syllabus for pre-school förskola and pre-school class förskoleklass, and neither is there any regulation as to how time should be allocated to various activities. The distribution of the daily workload is decided locally in each pre-school and pre-school class.

3.9.1. Organisation of the Year

Pre-school förskola and childcare for school-age children [skolbarnsomsorg](#) are open throughout the year subject to need. School-age childcare caters for children during the part of the day when they are not in school and during holidays. Pre-school class förskoleklass follows the same structure of the school year as the compulsory school, grundskolan. For more information on the organisation of the year for compulsory school see [4.9.1.](#).

3.9.2. Weekly and Daily Timetable

An agreement is made between parents and the municipality that the municipality shall be responsible for the care of children during a given part of the day. The municipality documents this agreement. Pre-schools [förskolan](#), are usually open between 6.30 a.m. and 18.30 p.m. Monday to Friday. There is no timetable for pre-school or pre-school class, förskoleklass; the daily workload distribution is decided at each school or institution.

School-age childcare skolbarnsomsorg caters for children during the part of the day when they are not at school and during holidays. Usually leisure-time centres, fritidshem are open 7.30 – 17.30 Monday to Friday. During school hours the leisure-time centre staff often works in the class room.

3.10. Curriculum, Types of Activity, Number of Hours

Curricula are decided by the Government in accordance with guidelines set out by the Riksdag. This decision is preceded by an expert investigation whose proposals are circulated to concerned parties for comments. The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) is the authority responsible for monitoring the activities of pre-schools förskolor, pre-schools classes förskoleklasser and leisure-time centres fritidshem, including the implementation of the curricula.

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

3.10.1. Curriculum, Types of Activity, Number of Hours in Pre-school

The pre-school [förskola](#) has no syllabi and neither is there any regulation as to how hours should be allocated to its various activities.

The curriculum (Läroplan för förskola, Lpfö 98) was adopted in 1998. It places great emphasis on the child's language development. Creating and communicating by means of pictures, song and music, drama, rhythm, dance and movement, as well as spoken and written language shape the contents and methods used in pre-school. Shaping, designing and using various materials and techniques are also parts of this. The pre-school should put great emphasis on issues concerning the environment and nature conservation.

Around one third of the municipalities offer mother tongue tuition to children who speak a language other than Swedish at home. In 2009 there were around 18000 pre-school children with another mother language than Swedish and around 8000 of these children opted to have mother tongue tuition in the pre-school class.

Skolverket (Swedish National Agency for Education) - Sveriges officiella statistik: Elever i förskoleklass läsåret 2009/10 Tabell 3

3.10.2. Curriculum, Types of Activity, Number of Hours in the Pre-school Class

The curriculum (Läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet, Lpo94) was adopted in 1995 and is common for compulsory schooling [grundskola](#), pre-school class [förskoleklass](#) and leisure-time centres [fritidshem](#). It sets out general principles and goals of two kinds: a) goals to aim for and b) goals to be attained. The goals to aim for state the direction of the school's work and thus the desired quality development. The goals to be attained are an expression of the minimum pupil attainment required when leaving school. It is the responsibility of the school and the school organisers to ensure that pupils are given the necessary opportunities to attain these goals. There is no syllabus or timetable for the pre-school class.

3.11. Teaching Methods and Materials

See subsections for information.

3.11.1. Teaching Methods and Materials in Pre-school

Staff in pre-school [förskola](#) determine *how* the goals of the curriculum are to be achieved. The curriculum is based on the notion that children of pre-school age learn mainly through their own activities in contexts that are natural and meaningful to them. By using a topic-based method, children are given the opportunity to explore, investigate and experiment and through music, drama, art and craft, playing, conversing, singing etc., they can digest their experiences, step by step gaining new insights and building knowledge. Children can also learn more about a particular area through books and listening to stories.

Day-to-day teaching should include the whole group of children, as well as take place in the form of organised and/or spontaneously formed smaller groups for various activities. The development and learning of the individual child should be supported in close co-operation between pre-school and home.

A few pre-schools use alternative pedagogical methods, e.g. Montessori, Waldorf etc., some specialise in areas such as sport, science, arts and craft, computers, nature and ecology and some spend most hours outdoors in so called 'Rain and Shine pre-schools' ('Ur och skur') where such activities as artistic and pedagogical work as well as meals etc. take place outdoors, either in the vicinity of the pre-school or in nature.

3.11.2. Teaching Methods and Materials in the Pre-school Class

The pre-school class förskoleklass combines the pedagogical methods of the pre-school förskolan with those of compulsory school, grundskolan. An important objective is that the pre-school class, compulsory school and leisure-time centre fritidshem, are to be more closely linked. The activities are to be stimulated by the meeting of different pedagogical traditions.

Creative activities and play are essential components of active learning. By providing a wealth of opportunities for discussion, reading and writing, all pupils should be able to develop their ability to communicate and thus enhance confidence in their own language abilities. Pupils should have the opportunity of experiencing the expression of their knowledge in different ways. Drama, movement, dance, music and creativity in art, writing and design should all form part of the school's activity. A sense of exploration, curiosity and desire to learn should provide a foundation for education.

The municipalities distribute resources and organise education and goals and guidelines for pre-school class are set out in the steering documents, On these basis the schoolhead and the teachers in individual pre-schools and leisure-time centres can then choose work methods suited to their activities and local conditions. Teachers should endeavour to balance and integrate knowledge in its various forms. The school head has overall responsibility for drawing up a local work plan as well as following up and evaluating the results achieved by the school in relation to the national goals, the goals set out in the school plan as well as the local work plan. A few pre-school classes follow alternative pedagogical methods, e.g. Montessori, Waldorf etc.

Pupils have access to teaching material such as books free of charge. Books are not free of charge for pre-schools. All pre-schools do not use the same teaching material, and there is no central organ that prepares books for all pre-schools. Schools or institutions have their own budget that regulates the costs of teaching materials. School heads and teachers choose which teaching materials to use. Not all pre-schools use books,

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

3.12. Evaluation of Children

See subsections for information.

3.12.1. Evaluation of Children in Pre-school

In the pre-school [förskola](#) the outcome of the individual child is not evaluated. Grades and assessments are not used. The pre-school provides pedagogical activities in which children can start participating at

different ages and over varying periods of time. Children participate on basis of their individual conditions. All who work in the pre-school should pay particular attention to and help those children who for different reasons need support in their development. The pre-school should ensure a regular dialogue between the child's home and the pre-school on the well-being, development and learning of the child. In addition to daily contact between staff and parents it is common to hold a dialogue held twice a year between staff and parents to discuss the child's development and progress at the pre-school. Parents may also take the initiative for such dialogues at other times.

Curriculum for the pre-school (Lpfö98)

3.12.2. Evaluation of Children in the Pre-school Class

Teachers regularly monitor pupil's progress, but there are no formal regulations on how this is done. In addition to daily contact between staff and parents, it is common that a special dialogue is held twice a year between staff and parents to discuss the child's development and progress. Parents may also take the initiative for such dialogues. It is decided at school level whether children participate in these dialogues or not.

Education in the pre-school class *förskoleklass* is one year and ends in the summer the year the child turns seven. In the autumn term the same year most children start compulsory schooling, without assessment procedures.

Curriculum for compulsory school (Lpo94)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

3.13. Support Facilities

School management under state supervision can seek support from The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten) in matters relating to special needs education. The Agency promotes access to teaching materials, runs special needs schools and allocates government funding to pupils with disabilities in education and to education providers. It also offer advice and support to teaching staff in schools under state supervision in matters related to the impact of disabilities on education.

If a child is hospitalised or placed in any other institution, the school organiser must ensure that the child has the opportunity to take part in activities equivalent to those offered by pre-school *förskola*, leisure-time centres *fritidshem* or pre-school class *förskoleklass*. Under the Act on Support and Services to Disabled Persons (Lag om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade, LSS) children with severe disabilities are entitled to personal assistance and a number of other forms of support and service.

Lag om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade (Law on service and support to certain people with disabilities), SFS 1993:387

See subsections below for more information.

3.13.1. Support Facilities in Pre-school

Most municipalities have drawn up guidelines for children with special needs. The pre-school has a special responsibility for these children who, under the Education Act, are entitled to a place in a pre-school and where they, in most cases, participate in the regular groups. There are also special groups for children with disabilities, with fewer children and specially trained or experienced staff. Children with hearing impediments and deaf children also have special groups with staff who know sign language. The basic principle, however, is that children in need of special support participate in the regular groups and receive extra support there. Special support in regular groups and special groups is free of charge.

The municipality provides the pre-school förskolan with support such as consultations with a psychologist, speech therapist, support for pedagogical issues, supervision and competence development of the staff or guidance on social issues.

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

3.13.2. Support Facilities in the Pre-school Class

The basic principle is that the children in need of special support participate in the ordinary groups in the pre-school class *förskoleklass* and receive extra support there. Under provisions laid down in the Education Act and the curriculum, schools have a special responsibility for providing pupils with the help and support they need to overcome difficulties they may be facing. The support can be provided in various ways based on pupils' needs and covers technical aids and additional staff resources. The state does not determine what form such support should take, only that it must be provided and that it is to be free of charge for the child. The school head is responsible for ensuring that an action programme is worked out if it is apparent that pupils have special needs.

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Curriculum for compulsory school (Lpo94)

3.14. Private Sector Provision

See subsections below for information.

3.14.1 Pre-school and school-age childcare

Alongside the municipal pre-schools *förskolor* and schools there are grant-aided independent pre-schools and schools. They have a different principal organiser/owner than the municipality or county council. Pre-school from the age of three is free of charge for 15 h/week. Most pre-school and school-age childcare *skolbarnomsorg* is run by municipalities. The proportion independently run has increased steadily in recent years. In 2009 19 per cent of all children in pre-school and 10 per cent of all children in school-age childcare were enrolled in grant-aided independent schools or institutions. The municipalities decide whether to approve applications from prospective grant-aided independent pre-schools and leisure-time centres *fritidshem*.

3.14.2 Pre-school class

Alongside the municipal pre-schools *förskolor* and schools there are grant-aided independent (*fristående*) pre-schools and schools. They have a different principal organiser/owner than municipality or county council. Pre-school class *förskoleklass*, is free of charge 15 h/week. Municipal and independent schools at compulsory level are grant-aided and free of charge, see [2.8.](#) and [4.16.](#)

Approval of grant-aided independent pre-school class operated by a company, association, foundation or private individual should be dealt with by the municipality where the education is to be provided. A pre-school class arranged by a grant-aided independent school *friskola* is subject to the approval of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate. If a school charges fees from its pupils or infer negative consequences for the school system in the municipality, the authority can deny entitlement to municipal resources. An approved grant-aided independent school is allocated resources from the municipality for the children that participate in its activities. The Inspectorate monitors the quality of the education and makes sure that regulations are followed. For information on grant-aided independent compulsory education see section [4.16.](#)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Skolverket: Svensk officiell statistik. Barn och grupper i förskolan 15 oktober 2009 Tabell 1A, Tabell 4.

3.15. Organisational Variations and Alternative Structures

Pedagogical care pedagogisk omsorg in family day care homes familjedaghem are run by registered child minders in their own homes, looking after children aged one to twelve while their parents work or study. Pedagogical care is governed by Chapter 2 of the Education Act. family day care homes are under the same regulatory control and evaluation as the pre-school förskola, the curriculum for the pre-school does not apply, but it can nevertheless be used as a guidance document for pre school children in pedagogical care. General guidelines for family day care home activities are issued by the Swedish National Agency for Education. In many municipalities, family day-care homes co-operate closely with pre-school and the open pre-school (where parents or child minders take part in pre-school activities together with the children). Family day-care homes are most common in the countryside.

The open pre-school öppna förskolan is basically intended for children who do not participate in other forms of pre-school förskola.. Parents and child minders come along to the open pre-school with their children whenever they wish. Children are given the opportunity to participate in pedagogical group activities, often under the supervision of a pre-school teacher. The focus of open pre-school varies and sometimes its activities are part of social support for the children and/or their families.

The number of immigrant and refugee children in pre-school has increased. Many municipalities are able to help children whose first language is not Swedish in learning their mother tongue. The aim is to develop active bilingualism and support the creation of the child's dual cultural identity.

Curriculum for the pre-school (Lpfö98)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

3.16. Statistics

There is no data on size of groups in pre-school class förskoleklass. See subsections for other statistical information.

3.16.1. Number of pre- school/school-age childcare and pre-school class institutions in 2009 including number of independently organised institutions.

		Number of institutions	Whereof independently organised
Pre-school	Pre-school institutions	9 866	2 586
	Family day care homes	-	-
	Open pre-school	472	69
School-age childcare	Leisure-time centres	4328	610
	Family day care homes	-	-
	Open leisure-time centres	640	97
Totalt		19 651	4 151
Pre-school class 2009/10		3 270	503

Independently organised and grant-aided childcare is most common in the bigger cities and their suburbs. Of 290 Swedish municipalities 244 had grant-aided independent childcare in 2009.

Skolverket: Sveriges officiella statistik 2009/10 Elever i förskoleklass 2009/10 tabell 1 A, 2A.

Skolverket: Sveriges officiella statistik . Barn och grupper i förskolan 15 Oktober 2009 Tabell 1A

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

3.16.2. Number of children enrolled in pre-school, school-age childcare and pre-school class in 2009

		Number of children enrolled in pre-school and school-age childcare 2009
Pre-school	Pre-school Institutions	446 080
	Pedagogical care	20 390
School-age childcare	Pedagogical care	1 724
	Leisure-time centres	357 622
Total		825 816
Number of children enrolled in Pre-school class 2009/10		100 283

Skolverket: Sveriges officiella statistik 2009/10 Elever i förskoleklass 2009/10 tabell 2A

Skolverket: Sveriges officiella statistik . Barn och grupper i förskolan 15 Oktober 2009 Tabell 1A

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

3.16.3. Share of children enrolled in pre-school, school-age childcare and pre-school class 2009, as percentage of all children in the population, divided into age groups.

Share of all children in the age group enrolled in Pre-school 2009 (%)								
	0 year	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years	7 years
Pre-school institutions	0	47,7	86,5	90,6	93,8	93,8	1,6	0,4
Family day	0,0	2,5	4,4	4,4	4,0	3,6	-	-

care								
Total	0.0	49,5	90,9	95,0	97,7	97,4	1,6	0,4
Share of all children in the age group enrolled in School-age childcare in 2009 (%)								
	5 years	6 years	7 years	8 years	9 years	10 years	11 years	12 years
- Leisure-time centres	0.6	82,8	84,2	81,4	70,6	27,2	10,1	4,2
- family day care homes	-	0,5	0,4	0,3	-	-	-	-
Total	0,6	83,3	84,5	81,7	-	-	-	-
Share of all children in the age group enrolled in Pre-school class in 2009 (%)								
	5 years	6 years		7 years				
	0.9%	94.6%		1.1%				

Skolverket: Sveriges officiella statistik . Elever i förskoleklass 2009/10 Tabell 2C

Skolverket: Sveriges officiella statistik . Barn och grupper i fritidshem 15 oktober 2009 Tabell 1B, Tabell 3B,

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

3.16.4. Number of, employees, children per annual employee and percentage of the total number of annual employees by training

3.16.4.1 Pre-school and leisure-time centres

In 2009 there were 127 605 employees working with children in pre-schools förskolor and leisure-time centres fritidshem. Slightly more than 700 were employed at open pre-schools öppna förskolor. Transformed into annual workers (full-time employees), this corresponds to 83 207 in the pre-school and 17 100 in leisure-time centres.

The number of children per annual worker in pre-schools increased over the period 1990-1998 from 4.4 to 5.7 children. In autumn 2009 the number amounted to 5.4 children per annual worker in the pre-school, and 20.9 in the leisure-time centres..whereas in 1990 there were 8.3 children per annual worker. In 2009 the average staff ratio in pedagogical care was 4.9 children per employee. In the middle of the 1990s the figure was 5.8.

3.16.4.2 Pre-school class

In school year 2009/10 there were a total of 6329 annual workers (staff numbers converted in to full time equivalents) in the pre-school class förskoleklass, and 650 of these were employed either at an

independent provider or at an international school. In the municipal sphere the proportion with a pre-school teacher degree was 63 per cent whilst the corresponding proportion in grant-aided independent schools was 35 per cent in 2009. The proportion of annual workers with a pedagogical university degree was 86 per cent in the municipal pre-school classes compared with 66 per cent in grant-aided independent schools in 2009.

Staffing ratios have decreased, from 7,1 employees in 2005/06 to 6,3 employees per 100 children in 2009/10.

3.16.4.3 Number of annual employees and percentage by training in Pre-school, Leisure-time centres and Pre-school class in 2009

	Percentage of total number of annual employees by training in Pre-school, Leisure-time centre and Pre-school class in 2009 (%)		
	Pre-school	Leisure-time centre	Pre-school class
Pre-school teacher training	49,6	19,5	60,4
Teacher training	3,2	9,9	16,3
Youth recreation leader training/ Leisure-time instructor training	1,2	33,4	7,6
Child minder training	38,9	-	-
Other pedagogical training or training in social care	2,6	14,1	-
No training for work with children	4,4	23,2	-
Total number of annual employees	83 207	17 126	6 329

Skolverket: Sveriges officiella statistik. Personal i förskolan 15 oktober 2009. Tabell 2A, 2B, Personal i fritidshem 15 oktober 2009. Tabell 2, Personal i förskoleklass läsåret 2009/10. Tabell 2B

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

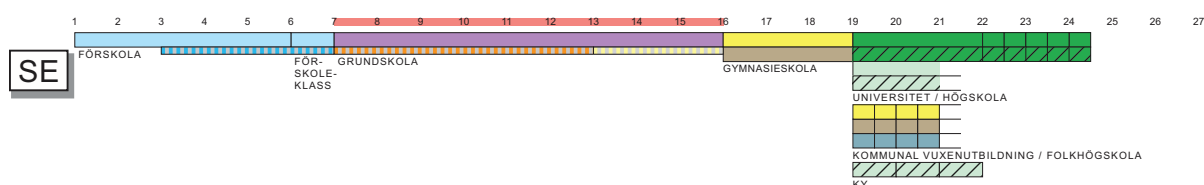
3.16.5. Size of groups

Autumn 2009, the average number of children per group in the pre-school förskolan was 16,8, a higher number than the two previous years but a reduction from 17.0 in autumn 2005. .

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

4. SINGLE STRUCTURE EDUCATION

Organisation of the education system in Sweden, 2006/07



Pre-primary education – ISCED 0 (for which the Ministry of Education is not responsible)	Pre-primary – ISCED 0 (for which the Ministry of Education is responsible)
Primary – ISCED 1	Single structure – ISCED 1 + ISCED 2 (no institutional distinction between ISCED 1 and 2)
Lower secondary general – ISCED 2 (including pre-vocational)	Lower secondary vocational – ISCED 2
Upper secondary general – ISCED 3	Upper secondary vocational – ISCED 3
Post-secondary non-tertiary – ISCED 4	
Tertiary education – ISCED 5A	Tertiary education – ISCED 5B
Allocation to the ISCED levels: ISCED 0 ISCED 1 ISCED 2	
Compulsory full-time education	Compulsory part-time education
Part-time or combined school and workplace courses	Additional year
Compulsory work experience + its duration	Study abroad

Source: Eurydice.

(2006-2007)

Swedish compulsory education has a single structure that corresponds to primary and lower secondary education for children (ISCED levels 1 and 2). Teaching methods and the number of teachers involved in each class and their degree of specialization vary somewhat between the years, but the curriculum is common for year one to nine, including pre-school class *förskoleklass* and leisure-time centres *fridshem* who cater for pupils outside of school hours. The pre-school class, which usually is integrated in the compulsory schools, is described in chapter [3](#).

Compulsory schools *grundskolor* can be run either by municipalities or in so called 'grant-aided independent schools'. Schools at compulsory level - municipal as well as independent-, are funded by municipal grants from the pupils' home municipality and by state grants, i.e. are grant-aided and free of charge. There are no private, fee charging, schools at compulsory level. Grant-aided schools are, as a rule, not allowed to charge fees.

A school usually comprises either school year one to five or six (including pre-school class), or years five or six to nine. An increasing number of municipalities organise the whole of compulsory school (years

one to nine) on the same premises to increase integration between the stages and to promote an overall approach to compulsory education.

The size of schools varies greatly – in rural areas there are parts of the country with very few inhabitants. One third of municipal schools and more than half of grant-aided independent schools have less than 100 pupils each. Some schools work with integrated age levels where children of different ages are taught together in the same class. This can be done as a pedagogical method or just in order to be able to keep a local school from closing.

A large proportion of the children in the earlier school years attend school age childcare before and after school hours, as well as during holidays. The youngest children usually attend 'leisure-time centres' while older children attend open leisure-time activities. It is common that personnel from the leisure-time centres work in school classes during school hours and leisure-time activities often take place in school after class. For more information on school-age childcare see chapter [3](#).

The Education Act lays down that all children and young people in Sweden have the right to equal access to the state education system regardless of gender, place of residence or social and economic circumstances. It also states that the education must be equivalent regardless of type of school and irrespective of its location.

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Skolverket (Swedish National Agency for Education) - Skolor och elever i grundskolan läsåret 2009/10. Tabell 3B, 3C.

4.1. Historical Overview

General elementary school [folkskola](#) was introduced in Sweden in 1842 with a decree stipulating the responsibility of each parish to set up a school. The elementary school was for a long time a poor man's school with no connection to further or higher education. It was chiefly in the towns that state grammar schools were established. State grammar school tuition led to the matriculation, which allowed access to municipal 'intermediate' schools and lower secondary schools. For more information on the development of the Swedish school system, see [2.1](#).

In 1962 nine-year compulsory comprehensive education was introduced throughout the country by combining the seven-year elementary school [sjuårig folkskola](#) and the four-year lower secondary school [realskola](#) into the compulsory school [grundskola](#). At the same time schools were given their first modern curriculum.

In 1991 the division of responsibility between the state and municipalities was changed so that the municipalities have primary responsibility for schooling, whilst the Riksdag and the Government set up goals for schooling through the Education Act, curricula and ordinances. The current curriculum for the compulsory school (Läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet, Lpo94) was adopted in 1994, and since 1998 includes the pre-school class and leisure-time centres. A new Education Act comes into force in July 2011.

Between 1991 and 2008, the National Agency for Education (Skolverket) was responsible for approval of grant-aided independent compulsory and special schools. In 2008 the Swedish Schools Inspectorate took over the responsibility for granting licenses to operate grant-aided independent compulsory schools. In the case of approvals of independent schools corresponding to *specialskolan* the boards of existing schools have a say and can stop the establishment of a grant-aided independent school if such a new school would lead to the closure of the existing school. Since 1993 pupils' home municipalities are required to provide the funds for those attending a grant-aided independent school. These funds are to be equal to the funds used by the municipality for its own schools.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Skolinspektionen (The Swedish Schools Inspectorate)

4.2. Ongoing Debates and future developments

See subsections for information

4.2.1. New Education Act

- In March 2010, the Government presented the bill "The new Education Act - for knowledge, choice and security" (Govt. Bill 2009/10:165) to the Riksdag. and the new Education Act will apply as of 1 July 2011 Some of the changes proposed are: Clearer basic values for all types of schools will be laid down in the Act. The responsibility of education to communicate and gain acceptance for respect for human rights and fundamental democratic values will be clarified. By establishing clear links to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is emphasised that the best interests of the child are the basis for all education.
- The proposal requires that school health and welfare services, apart from a school doctor and nurse, also include access to a psychologist and school welfare officer.
- The new Education Act includes increased and more clearly defined powers for responsible bodies, school heads and teachers to take measures to guarantee pupils security and peace in the school. These changes mean, for example, that it will be possible to suspend pupils in compulsory school (with the exception of pupils in compulsory school for children with learning difficulties), for a limited period of time.
- The legal rights of pupils and their parents/custodians will be strengthened by making it possible to appeal against a larger number of decisions taken by the school. Decisions on remedial programs and decisions to deny a pupil a place in a municipal school on the grounds that this would lead to considerable organisational and financial difficulties for the municipality can be mentioned as examples. It will also be possible to appeal against decisions on school

- transport by means of an administrative appeal, which in total means the introduction of a broader review of decisions compared with that which is possible under the Local Government Act.
- The Education Act will give the Swedish Schools Inspectorate a clear legal basis for its supervision. A scale of sanctions will be introduced, in order to, as far as possible, have equal sanctions for municipal and independent schools. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate will be able to impose fines on public and private responsible bodies and to use other sanctions as well.
 - As far as possible municipal and independent schools are to have a common regulatory system - the same rules will apply regardless of which is the responsible body. At present the same rules apply - in principle - only when this is specifically stated in the law. In order to make it possible for independent schools to continue to have for example special 'educational profiles' certain limited exceptions from this rule will be possible. As far as possible all types of school are to be governed by common regulations where appropriate. The creation of a more uniform structure will make it easier for those interpreting and applying the Act. New provisions on systematic quality enhancement procedures, which are to be documented, are introduced. This means that each body responsible for schools is to systematically and continuously plan, monitor and develop its educational services. The focus will be on achieving the national objectives for education.
 - There will be a permanent option of establishing local boards in municipal schools. A local board will be able to take decisions on certain matters that are otherwise the school heads responsibility. Pupils, their parents/custodians and staff will be represented in the local boards. It will not be possible, however, for pupils or their parents/custodians to make up the majority in the boards.
 - Support for teaching of mother tongue and mother tongue instruction will become regulated in the Education Act. A new regulation on mother tongue support for the pre-school class will be introduced. All pupils, regardless of whether they attend a municipal or independent school, are to have access to a school library.
 - There are no changes in the timetable, and the minimum number of guaranteed teacher lead instruction hours for subjects in the compulsory school will remain. For more information about the current timetable for compulsory school see [4.10](#). It will be possible for a school to be exempt from the time table, in such a case the Swedish Schools Inspectorate will specially monitor the quality of the school.
 - The possibility of being excused from compulsory elements of teaching in compulsory school will be drastically limited.
 - The obligation to attend compulsory school, which now ends after 9 school years, will be extended for one year, for example for children who have repeated a year or started school one year later.
 - Provided that the Swedish Schools Inspectorate gives its approval to the school, tests of skills and entrance examinations may be used, normally from year 7 and when there are special reasons from school year 4 in compulsory school.

4.2.2 New Curriculum for the compulsory school

The Government has proposed and the Riksdag has approved to the Bill "Clearer goals and knowledge requirements - new school curricula" (Govt. Bill 2008/09:87). The bill includes proposals for a new syllabus structure for compulsory school; compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities, special needs school and Sami school. The Bill also proposes integrated curricula for all types of schools, which are to include the schools fundamental values and tasks, overall goals and guidelines and syllabuses. The syllabuses are to be supplemented by special regulations on knowledge requirements for acceptable knowledge levels in school year 3 and 6 of compulsory school and knowledge requirements for the three pass grade levels (A, C and E) in school year 9 of compulsory school. There will also be knowledge requirements in compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities, special needs schools and Sami schools. New syllabuses and knowledge requirements can be successively introduced in the 2011/12 school year.

4.2.3. New grading scale

The Government has proposed and the Riksdag has approved to a new grading scale for the compulsory school, the upper secondary school, and municipal adult education. The new grading scale will contain six levels and a seventh coding to indicate that a grade cannot be awarded. The five levels A-E will denote pass results and F a non-pass result. If material for the assessment is entirely non-existent due to substantial absenteeism, a grade will not be awarded, and this will be designated by a horizontal line. The grading scale will be related to goals and national grading criteria will exist for the highest, middle and lowest grading scales for pass results i.e. A, C and E. The new grading scale will cover all school forms for children and youth, as well as municipal adult education. However in schools for children with learning disabilities and in adult education for people with learning disabilities, grades will not be set for results that do not merit a pass, and the grading level F will thus not be used. Nor will the dash apply to these types of schools.

4.2.4. Registered pre-school teachers/teachers and stricter qualifying rules

A memorandum prepared by the Ministry of Education and Research proposes a system of teacher and preschool teacher registration, which can enter into force in July 2012. To be qualified to teach at a school, a teacher should be registered and also qualified for subjects and grades where he or she should teach. Registration will be required for a teacher to be able to independently set grades and to be a mentor to new teachers during their introduction year. Further, only registered teachers will be qualified for permanent employment. A teacher or preschool teacher will be able to apply to be registered after a degree in initial teacher training or initial preschool teacher training and a successfully completed introduction year. The introduction year will give the future teacher/preschool teacher introduction to the profession and make it possible to assess whether he or she is suitable for the profession. During their introduction year, new teachers are to have the support and assistance of a mentor. If a teacher or preschool teacher seriously neglects their work, their registration may be withdrawn. Under the ministry's proposals, such decisions will be taken by a special committee - the

Teachers' Disciplinary Board - under the Swedish National Agency for Education. This proposal has not yet been put as a Bill before the Riksdag.

(Memorandum, U2010/2818/S)

4.2.5 The Ministry of Education and Research proposes that grades shall be awarded starting from school year six

A Bill from the Ministry of Education and Research proposes that pupils in compulsory school shall be awarded grades/marks starting from school year six, instead of from school year eight. The proposal also covers the Sami school, sameskolan, the school for children with intellectual disabilities (when grades are awarded), särskolan, and (from school year seven) the special school, specialskolan (for children with several disabilities. These changes can come into force from the school year 2012/13.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

4.3. Specific Legislative Framework

The national school system is governed by the Education Act (decided by the Riksdag). In addition to the general provisions of the Education Act, there are ordinances for compulsory schooling laid down by the Government.

In 1995, a common curriculum was applied for the entire compulsory education system and new syllabi and timetables were introduced. As of 1 August 1998, the pre-school class [förskoleklass](#) and the leisure-time centres [fritidshem](#) are included in the compulsory school curriculum.

A new Education Act will come into force in 2011, for further information see section [4.2.1.](#)

[Riksdagen \(The Parliament\)](#)

[Skollagen \(Education Act\), SFS 1985:1100](#)

[Curriculum for the compulsory school system, the pre-school class, and the leisure-time centre Lpo 94](#)

4.4. General Objectives

The general goals for the compulsory school are laid down in the first chapter of the Education Act. The curriculum, timetable and syllabi are valid nation-wide. All schools should base their work on the same fundamental values and ensure that all pupils embrace these values. Local planning must seek to give practical expression to the goals and guidelines for the education as set out in the Education Act, the curriculum and syllabi. The over-all goals for the education are expressed as knowledge, skills and attitudes that the pupils are to get during their compulsory school. The choice of tools and methods are

not regulated, but are a part of the decentralized steering of the school system and left to the individual school organizer to decide upon. For more information see sub-sections.

4.4.1 Motivation for continuation of learning and preparation for a changing world

The education should promote learning by stimulating the individual into acquiring knowledge and skills and, in co-operation with the home, promote their harmonious development into responsible adults and members of society. The education shall provide the pupils with a number of very broad perspectives; an historical perspective shall enable pupils to prepare for the future and develop their ability to think in dynamic terms, an environmental perspective provides them with the possibility to take responsibility for the environment and to form a personal position with respect to global environment issues. The educational shall also have an international perspective and the pupils shall learn to see their own reality in a global context in order to further international solidarity, and prepare pupils for a society that will have closer cross-cultural and cross-border contacts. The education shall also include an ethical perspective.

4.4.2 Equality in education and well-being of pupils

One fundamental principle of the Swedish education system is that all children and youth must have access to equivalent education, regardless of sex, place of residence or social and financial circumstances. Each type of school must offer equivalent education irrespective of where it is located. The education shall take account of pupils with special needs and find ways to ensure that the pupils can reach the goals set. All school activity shall be based on fundamental democratic values. All those working in school shall encourage respect for the intrinsic value of each person as well as for the environment we all share. In particular, everyone working in schools shall promote equality between the sexes as well as actively counteract all forms of abusive treatment such as bullying and racist behavior. No one should be subjective to discrimination at school based on gender, ethnic belonging, religion or other belief, sexual orientation or disability, or subjected to other degrading treatment.

4.4.3 Preparation of pupils for adulthood and working life.

The curriculum states that the head teacher is responsible for ensuring that pupils through co-operation with other schools and working life obtain concrete experiences that can help them making choices for future education and vocational orientation. It is up to the school and school management to determine the means by which the requirements and goals of the curriculum are to be attained. The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that pupils receive guidance and counseling prior to choosing courses and further education. It is common that schools have a career and guidance counselor studie-

och yrkesvägledare, who guides pupils in the last years of compulsory schooling. For further information about educational guidance see [4.15](#)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Curriculum for the Compulsory school system, the pre-school class and the leisure-time centre Lpo 94.

4.5. Geographical Accessibility

Irrespective of where they live, all children and young people in Sweden must have equal access to the public education system. In all of the 290 municipalities there are schools that provide compulsory education. However the distance from the pupils' home to the school the pupil attends varies greatly between and within municipalities. The municipality must thus provide daily transportations if compulsory school education cannot be given within a certain distance from where a child lives, or due to traffic conditions or other circumstances. In places outside Sweden where a relatively large numbers of Swedes live there are Swedish schools, or instruction in Swedish in for example so called international schools, funded by special state grants.

4.6. Admission Requirements and Choice of School

Under the Education Act all children between the ages of 7 and 16 have a right to education in the public school system and compulsory school attendance applies. As a rule, compulsory schooling starts in the autumn term of the calendar year the child turns 7 and ends at the close of the spring term the year it turns 16. However, children may enroll at the age of six or, under certain circumstances, at eight if the parents so wish. Such decisions are made by the school head. Municipalities are required to accommodate all six-year olds wishing to start school. Compulsory schooling may finish earlier if the child demonstrates possession of a level of knowledge corresponding to a completed compulsory schooling. Compulsory schooling is nine years, irrespective of when the child starts school. In the new Education Act, which is approved by the Riksdag and can be implemented from the school year 2011/12; the Government has proposed that the obligation to attend school will be extended by one year in some cases. For example, for children who have repeated a year or started school one year later. For more information about future reforms see [4.2](#).

Children who are not able to attain the knowledge goals of the compulsory school can attend education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments [särskola](#). Pupils who are unable to attend compulsory school or school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments due to impaired hearing, deafness or severe language disturbance or visual impairment in combination with additional functional disorders, are accommodated in special school [specialskola](#). For more information on special educational support, see [10.](#)

Normally, children are placed in the school nearest their home; however parents may choose another school, either municipal or a grant-aided independently organised school. The home municipality bears

the cost of the pupil's schooling regardless which school the parents choose, but it has no obligation to pay for transportations to another school than the one proposed by the municipality. The extent to which parents can choose schools, as well as the administration of these choices, differs between municipalities. In some municipalities all parents must actively choose school, before the child starts, in other municipalities the child is placed in a school and parents can then apply for a place in a different school if they so wish. The right to choose school does not guarantee that there will be places available in the chosen school; the school may be full and the municipality may also have other restrictions, such as priority for children who live closer to the school or for siblings of pupils. If the choice of school creates major financial or organisational problems for the municipality it can be denied.

Decisions on placement cannot be appealed against, providing the grounds on which the decision is based are not incorrect, e.g. if the proximity principle has not been applied correctly. Pupils cannot be excluded from the compulsory school – attendance is obligatory and a right by law.

Pupils with parents who work or study also have the right to school age childcare, in a leisure-time centre [fritidshem](#), family day care home [familjedaghem](#) or open leisure-time activities [öppen fritidsverksamhet](#). For more information, see [3](#).

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

The new Education Act - for knowledge, choice and security. (Govt. Bill 2009/10:165)

4.7. Financial Support for Pupils' Families

Compulsory schooling is free of charge and pupils have free access to books, tools and other aids needed for education. However, certain activities may involve additional accessories that pupils may purchase at low cost. Pupils in compulsory school *grundskola*, have a legal right to free meals during the school day. The municipality is by law obliged to provide free school transport for those pupils who need it due to distance, traffic conditions or other circumstances. This obligation does not apply to pupils who choose to attend a another school than that proposed by the municipality.

All children in Sweden are entitled to a general child allowance up to and including the quarter of a year they become 16 years of age. Thereafter the extended child allowance covers the months remaining in compulsory school after the pupil turned 16.

4.8. Age Levels and Grouping of Pupils

Normally children receive the major part of their compulsory education in the same school. Children are usually grouped by age. Integrated classes (1-2, 1-3, 2-3, 4-5 etc.) are common where there are few children and can be used as a pedagogical tool. The number of pupils per teacher or pupils per class is not nationally regulated.

Teachers are trained to teach in pre-school förskola, the pre-school class förskoleklass, the lower years of the compulsory school grundskolan, the higher years of the compulsory school or at upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan. Subjects can be combined in various ways. A new teacher training with four new pathways to different teacher specializations will come into force in the autumn of 2011.. For further information on teacher training, see [8.1.6.](#)

It is most common that the class teacher teaches all subjects in years 1-3, but there may be teachers specialised in some subjects such as music and physical education. In classes 4-5 pupils often meet new teachers and specialist teachers often teach languages (Swedish and English) and mathematics, as well as craft, sport and health, art and music. Starting with class 6-7 pupils often change to (a bigger) school. Teachers who are oriented towards the higher years of the compulsory school are also specialised in two or three subjects.

4.9. Organisation of School Time

The municipalities and the schools, decide themselves how education hours should be allocated in weekly and daily timetables; however there are regulations on the maximum length of the school day and the minimum number of teacher led instruction time for different subjects set up by the Swedish Parliament (Riksdagen). These regulations are not specified for each school year but given as a minimum number of hours which the pupil has the right to receive through all 9 years of compulsory schooling and gives the school the possibility to be flexible on for example when to introduce a certain subject.

4.9.1. Organisation of the School Year

For compulsory school [grundskola](#) and upper secondary school [gymnasieskola](#) the school year is divided into two terms, spring and autumn, with a minimum of 178 school days and a minimum of 12 days of holidays. The school can choose to let the pupils have days off when the teachers get professional competence development or work with administrative tasks such as setting the schedule. This right is extended to five days per school year. The school year starts in the end of August and finishes in June. The education committee within the municipality decides the exact dates for the beginning and end of terms. The teachers' term often begins 1 week prior to the start of school and ends 1 week later. During such weeks teachers work on planning, administration and/or take part in competence development. It is the employer who offers teachers professional competence development as the employer sees fit. The leisure-time centres fritidshem are open during holidays as well as before and after the school day.

One-day holidays occur during both autumn and spring terms and usually there are two one-week holidays in the spring term: A winter sports holiday in February/March and the Easter holiday. In many municipalities, the autumn term contains a week's holiday for pupils in connection with All Saints' Day when teachers can take part in professional competence development.

4.9.2. Weekly and Daily Timetable

In compulsory and upper secondary education there is a five-day week from Monday to Friday. The weekly workload should be distributed as evenly as possible over the whole week. Each school decides the length of the school day and the school's opening and closing hours. Normal hours are from 8 – 13.30 in the lower years of compulsory school, grundskolan; the length of the school day increases with the pupils' age. The Education act restricts the school day to six hours in years one and two and eight hours thereafter. Usually pupils have lessons both in the morning and in the afternoon, with 40 – 60 minutes break for lunch. Each school decides how the workload is distributed over the day. There are no regulations regarding out-of-school school-work, except that all mandatory school-work is added and can not exceed the restricted maximum amount of hours allowed in a school day.

The leisure-time centres fritidshemmen are open before and after school, normally from 7 – 17.30, for more information about school-age childcare, skolbarnomsorg see chapter 3

4.10. Curriculum, Subjects, Number of Hours

The current curriculum for compulsory schooling, including the pre-school class [förskoleklassen](#) and the leisure-time centres [fritidshemmet](#) was adopted in 1998 (Läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet, Lpo94). The new curriculum will come into force in 2012.

The curriculum sets out the goals and general principles. The goals are of two kinds: a) goals to aim for and b) goals to attain. The goals to aim for state the direction of the school's work and thus the desired quality development. The goals to be attained are an expression of the minimum pupil attainment required when leaving school. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that pupils are given the necessary support to attain these goals. For information on the new curriculum as from 2012, see [4.2.](#)

The syllabi is written by the Swedish National Agency for Education, and decided upon by the Government. The syllabus gives each subject its general orientation and nature, and sets out the goals to aim for in the subject and the goals to be attained by years three, five and nine. There is no regulation on teaching methods or on which kind of pedagogical tools (books, computers etc) to be used.

The timetable, which forms part of the Education Act, states the guaranteed total number of hours of tuition (6 665 hours) for the nine years of compulsory schooling - [garanterad undervisningstid](#). The schools themselves decide how the teaching time is allocated over the nine years of schooling and also when a subject is introduced.

The timetable also provides scope for the pupil's own options and those of the school. Around 13 per cent of the total time available is set aside for such options. Decisions on the distribution of the number of hours between subjects, groups of subjects, choice of languages and the pupil's own options are made by the school board on suggestions from the school head. The school head makes decisions on the school's choices, which may cover a maximum of 20 per cent of a subject or group of subjects, and establishes the local timetable.

Timetable for the Compulsory School, grundskolan – Guaranteed minimum number of teaching hours (= 60 minutes) for subjects and subject groups::

Art	230
Craft	330
English	480
Home and Consumer studies	118
Language options	320
Mathematics	900
Music	230
Physical Education and Health	500
Swedish/Swedish as a second language	1 490
Geography, History, Religion, Social studies; Together:	885

Biology, Chemistry, Technology, Physics; Together:	800
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Skolverket (the Swedish National Agency for Education) 2009/10

Pupils' options cover 382 hours. Pupil options enable pupils to deepen and broaden their knowledge in one or more subjects.

Of the total guaranteed number of hours (6 665), 600 hours may be used for school specific options. The school can decide to use hours from all subjects in the compulsory school in order to develop its own specific 'profile'. However, no subject or group of subjects may be reduced by more than 20 per cent. Common school profiles are to focus on music, culture, sport, science and languages.

Swedish, English and mathematics occupy a prominent position in the compulsory school. National tests in these subjects are obligatory in the fifth and ninth year of schooling and for Swedish and mathematics there are obligatory national tests in the third school year.

Swedish as a second language' is regarded as a subject in its own right at all levels of school. Pupils with immigrant background can, if they need and wish so, study 'Swedish as a second language' instead of regular Swedish.

English is the first compulsory foreign language. Each municipality determines when to start teaching English, but is governed by the goals to be achieved by the fifth year. Consequently many pupils start English tuition in the first school year.

All pupils must choose another second language in addition to English; German, French and Spanish are the most common. Municipalities must offer the choice of at least two of these languages. In addition, other languages may be offered. As an alternative to foreign languages, pupils may choose sign language, the language spoken at home, a deepening of their knowledge of Swedish/Swedish as a second language or English. The schools decide when to begin instruction in a second foreign language. Around 70 per cent of the pupils took a second foreign language in school year six in 2009/10. A third foreign language may be offered as a pupil option or as a school option.

The syllabi link the core values of the curriculum with the contents of subjects and knowledge to be acquired. Teachers and pupils choose materials and methods. It is crucial that syllabi are interpreted in the school and that pupils are involved in this work. The syllabi also contain goals that describe how pupils can exercise influence over the work at school.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Skolverket: Skolor och elever i grundskolan läsåret 2009/10. Tabell 7A.

4.11. Teaching Methods and Materials

There is no regulation on teaching methods, but the curriculum recommends learning by discovery approaches and the trend is towards more pupil-centred methods, topic-based and interdisciplinary teaching. An example of the current trend is that pupils choose their own tasks and methods within their own individual study plan. In some schools alternative methods such as Montessori and Waldorf are used for example, there were 39 Waldorf compulsory schools in 2009/10.

There is no regulations on the amount of, or the frequency of homework, this is decided locally at each school, or by the teachers.

Pupils may be taught in groups of the same age or as mixed-age groups. Under the Education Act teachers must be properly qualified to teach their main subjects. Exceptions can be made if qualified staff is not available. The curriculum underlines that interaction between different subjects is important but this regulation is not detailed.

At compulsory level the teachers are free to make their own decisions and choices of teaching material such as books, audio-visual materials, ICT etc. There is no list of compulsory reading materials. There is no authority that makes teaching material for the regular compulsory school system, but The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten) develops and produces special needs education teaching materials, primarily for pupils with functional disabilities who require pedagogical materials based upon capabilities and needs. They also adapt regular commercial publishers' products to give students with different forms of reading disabilities the possibility to use the materials. The Agency also has the responsibility for coordinating state support to teaching materials for Special Needs Education.

The schools purchase teaching material from various publishers and distribute it to pupils free of charge. ICT is used as a tool for all learning and as an aid to develop teaching. Several on-line tools for teachers are made available free of charge at the website of the Swedish National Agency for Education for those teachers who wish to use them. This includes tools for on-going short-time programmes when the Agency has received ear-marked funds for for example mathematics teaching or for the professional development programme Lärarlyftet (The Teacher's Lift).

Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten (The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools)

[Skollagen \(Education Act\), SFS 1985:1100](#)

[Skolverkets officiella statistik: Skolor och elever i grundskolan läsåret 2009/10. Tabell 2A.](#)

4.12. Pupil Assessment

Throughout a pupil's compulsory schooling, the school must keep pupils and parents/guardians regularly informed of progress at school. The basic form of contact between school and home is in the form of a verbal personal development dialogue focusing on the pupil's progress, knowledge and social skills. The dialogue, that should be held at least once every term, results in an 'individual development plan' for each pupil. Teachers monitor pupils' progress through continuous assessment.

The grading system is related to goal and attainment. The goals are expressed in the steering documents. Grades are awarded on a three-point scale: Pass (Godkänd, G), Pass with Distinction (Väl Godkänd, VG) and Pass with Special Distinction (Mycket Väl Godkänd, MVG). The grade Pass (G) is equivalent to what is expressed as 'goals to attain' in the syllabi. The grade criteria for Pass with Distinction (VG) and Pass with Special Distinction (MVG) are set up by the Swedish National Agency for Education. If a pupil does not fulfill the requirement for a passing grade no grade is awarded in the subject.

Grades/marks are first given at the end of the autumn term in the 8th year and thereafter at the end of each term. The teachers award grades. The curriculum states that when awarding grades, teachers should make use of all available information on the pupil's knowledge in relation to the requirements of the syllabus and make a comprehensive assessment of this knowledge. i.e. evaluation is continuous. Grades cannot be appealed.

The grading scale is being reviewed and there is a proposal for marks from grade six, for more information on this proposal, see 4.2.3

The grades given in the school-leaving certificate awarded in the ninth year are determined with the aid of nationally devised grading criteria in conjunction with the course syllabus for each subject. Obligatory national tests in Swedish, English and mathematics in school year five and nine, as well as in Swedish and English in school year three, ensure that grading is comparable between schools. The results of the tests are used to evaluate the pupil's knowledge in relation to the knowledge, skills and attitude goals expressed in the syllabus. In school year nine the results are also used as a reference by teachers when grades are awarded.

If the school is concerned that a pupil might not reach the goals in the syllabus for school years three, five and nine it is the responsibility of the school to develop a program with measures to be taken. The pupil and the pupil's parents/guardians should have the opportunity to participate in the development of the program.

Pupils who do not attain a pass level in a particular subject are not awarded a grade in that subject. Instead, a written assessment is made that identifies a pupil's aptitude for further studies.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Riksdagen (the Parliament)

4.13. Progression of Pupils

Pupils automatically move to a higher class each year. After consulting a pupil's parents, or if requested by a pupils parents/guardians the school head may decide not to move a pupil to the next class, however this is unusual. The school has to adapt its teaching and organisational methods to ensure that the pupils reach the goals, and usually employs several other support tools before grade retention is proposed. During the school year the school head may also decide to transfer a pupil to a higher class if the pupil is deemed able and the pupil's parents consent.

4.14. Certification

A school-leaving certificate is issued at the end of compulsory schooling. The school-leaving certificate from the compulsory school grundskolan, contains the pupil's final grades in subjects, groups of subjects and optional courses (see [4.10.](#) for courses and [4.12.](#) for grading system). All subjects are taught as courses which can last from a few months to several years. School-leaving certificates are set by the teacher and signed by the school head. Pupils who complete the ninth school year after compulsory schooling has ended can also obtain a school-leaving certificate. It is possible to add further grades to the certificate after it has been awarded.

4.15. Educational Guidance

There are no formal special institutions for guidance. All educational and vocational guidance is given within the schools. It is the responsibility of the school head to ensure that all pupils receive educational and vocational guidance in preparation for choosing the continuation of their educational route. Career education and guidance are provided in the class room and in various forms of guidance counseling, in conjunction with the general information. It is also common that pupils undergo so called 'work practice' at different work places a couple of weeks towards the end of their compulsory schooling.

Most schools have specially trained career and guidance counselors studie- och yrkesvägledare. Although career education and guidance is the responsibility of all school personnel, the career and guidance counselors have specialist knowledge that plays a central role in career education and guidance. In order to be employed as a career counselor in the public school system the applicant must have an education that is intended for such work. Career and guidance counselor education is offered at Higher Education Institutions and lasts for three years.

Every pupil in compulsory school is entitled to at least three general health examinations evenly distributed during the period of schooling. The first examination should take place during the first school year. In between the general health examinations the pupils should be offered sight and hearing tests and other special health examinations. There should be a school medical officer and school nurse for health care. The entitled school healthcare is free of charge.

The Education Act (1985:100)

Skolverket: General guidelines and comments on career education and guidance 2009.

4.16. Independent schools and Private Education

Compulsory schools

Compulsory schools [grundskolor](#) can be run either by municipalities or independently in so called grant-aided independent schools [friskolor](#). Independent schools at compulsory level are funded by municipal grants from the pupils' home municipalities and by state grants, i.e. are grant-aided and free of charge. Grant-aided schools as a general rule are not allowed to charge fees.

International schools

There are seven international schools at compulsory level. The international schools have pupils who are resident in Sweden for shorter periods (children of diplomats, researchers etc), but can also admit other pupils. The international schools may apply for grants from the National Schools Inspectorate, and are permitted to charge reasonable fees.

Boarding schools

There are 3 boarding schools with national admissions which offer education primarily for children of foreign-based Swedish parents. Municipalities and private organisers can provide nation-wide boarding education. State grants are provided for pupils of foreign-based Swedish parents whilst home municipalities pay for other pupils using the same criteria as when allocating resources to the municipalities' own schools. Costs that are not covered by the state grant or by funds from municipalities may be covered by fees charged to pupils.

Friskolor

Eleven percent of compulsory school pupils in school year 2009/2010 attended grant-aided independent schools. Some grant-aided independent schools have specific orientation, including special teaching methods (Montessori or Waldorf/Steiner), a linguistic/ethnic orientation, or are schools with a certain religious denomination or schools run by parents/guardians organizations or private companies.

Grant-aided independent schools have to be approved by the National Schools Inspectorate. If the school does not comply with current regulations, the National Schools Inspectorate can withdraw its permit. Conditions for approval include that the education provided fulfils the general goals of the compulsory school, that the school has at least 20 pupils (unless there are specific reasons why there should be fewer) and do not charge fees.

When approved the school is declared entitled to financial support; approved schools receive a grant from the home municipality of the pupils attending. Each municipality determines the amount to be granted for each pupil, taking into account the schools' commitments and pupils' needs. The decisions

should be based on the principles the municipality applies when allocating resources to municipal compulsory schools. If the establishment of an independently run school creates severe problems for the municipal schools in the municipality, the National Schools Inspectorate can deny its right to financial support. Grant-aided independent schools are obliged to grant their municipality to insight into the school's activities.

Under the Education Act grant-aided independent schools should, in principle, be open to all pupils who are entitled to equivalent education within the public education system. Independently run schools should - as municipal schools - be based on democratic values and their activities should be governed by openness, tolerance and objectivity and be all-round in character. Within the framework of these requirements, an independently run school may have a denominational orientation.

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Skolinspektionen: (The National Schools Inspectorate)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education) - Skolor och elever i grundskolan 2009/10. Tabell 5.

4.17. Organisational Variations and Alternative Structures

Municipal schools as well as grant-aided independent schools friskolor can use alternative educational models, e.g. based on Montessori, Waldorf/Steiner or Freinet.

The state-run International schools are a special type of grant-aided independent school for children who temporarily reside in Sweden or who for other reasons wish to have an education with an international dimension. Teaching in these schools is often in a foreign language and usually follows the curriculum of another country.

Boarding schools with national admissions organise education primarily for children of foreign-based Swedish parents. Municipalities and private organisers can provide nation-wide boarding school education. State grants are provided for pupils of foreign-based Swedish parents whilst home municipalities pay for other pupils using the same criteria as when allocating resources to the municipalities' own schools. Costs that are not covered by the state grant or by funds from municipalities may be covered by fees charged to pupils.

Since 1962, the national minority the Sami have three choices of education - the compulsory school [grundskola](#), integrated Sami teaching in a compulsory school or Sami school [sameskola](#). Integrated Sami teaching is provided at a number of compulsory schools in the north of Sweden. Integrated Sami teaching may take place throughout the nine years of compulsory education. The national curriculum for the Sami school is the same as for all compulsory schools. The Sami school has the same syllabi, and a syllabus for the Sami language and culture.

There are five state-run Sami schools in different parts of northern Sweden. The Sami children's home municipalities cover the costs involved in running these schools, such as teachers' salaries, pupils' board and lodging, school transport and premises. The state meets the additional costs associated with

teaching in Sami (smaller groups, more language options etc.) Sami schools are run by a board of governors whose secretariat is located in Jokkmokk in northern Sweden. A director of education heads the secretariat. Teaching is in Swedish and Sami. After six years in the Sami school, pupils complete their compulsory education (school years seven to nine) in the compulsory school [grundskola](#). The Swedish National Agency for Education is the supervisory authority for the Sami school.

In rare occasions, homeschooling can be an option.

Sameskolstyrelsen (Samic School Board)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education) - [Skolor och elever i grundskolan 2009/10. Tabell 2A.](#)

4.18. Statistics

Figures for school attendance rates, repeat rates and pupils per class are not collected to central level. See subsections for other statistical information.

4.18.1. Number of pupils, number of institutions and their sizes

Data for school year 2009/2010

Type of compulsory school	Number of pupils	Number of institutions	Number of pupils per school
Municipal schools	795 648	3 946	202
Sami schools	131	5	26
Grant-aided independent schools	95 948	709	135
International schools	1 950	7	279
National boarding schools	248	3	83
Total	891 727	4660	191

Skolverket: Skolor och elever i grundskolan läsåret 2009/10. Tabell 2A.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

4.18.2. Certification rate and number of pupils exiting compulsory school

119042 pupils left compulsory school in 2008/09. For certification rates, knowledge goal fulfillment and eligibility for upper secondary education, see below:

Share without school-leaving certificate	1.2%
Share not meeting one or more goals of knowledge	23.0%
Share eligible for national programmes in upper secondary education	88.8%
- girls	90.0%
- boys	88.7%

Skolverket: Betyg i grundskolan läsår 2008/09. Tabell 1, 6A.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

4.18.3. Number of teachers, pupil/teacher ratio

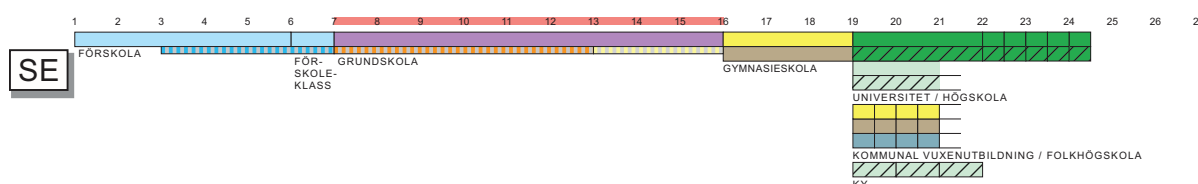
There were 85750 teachers (73 255 converted to fulltime positions) in compulsory school in October 2009, which is 3074 less than the year before. There were 8.2 teachers per 100 pupils. In municipal schools there were 8.3 teachers per 100 pupils, whereas in grant-aided independent schools there were 7.6 teachers per 100 pupils.

Skolverket: Personal i grundskolan läsår 2009/10. Tabell 4A.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

5. UPPER SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION

Organisation of the education system in Sweden, 2006/07



Pre-primary education – ISCED 0 (for which the Ministry of Education is not responsible)	Pre-primary – ISCED 0 (for which the Ministry of Education is responsible)
Primary – ISCED 1	Single structure – ISCED 1 + ISCED 2 (no institutional distinction between ISCED 1 and 2)
Lower secondary general – ISCED 2 (including pre-vocational)	Lower secondary vocational – ISCED 2
Upper secondary general – ISCED 3	Upper secondary vocational – ISCED 3
Post-secondary non-tertiary – ISCED 4	
Tertiary education – ISCED 5A	Tertiary education – ISCED 5B
Allocation to the ISCED levels: ISCED 0 ISCED 1 ISCED 2	
Compulsory full-time education	Compulsory part-time education
Part-time or combined school and workplace courses	Additional year
Compulsory work experience + its duration	Study abroad

Source: Eurydice.

(2006-2007)

Sweden has a single structure compulsory education, of which lower secondary education is a part, so this chapter contains information solely about upper secondary education, i.e. for pupils between the ages 16 to 19. For information on adult education, see [7](#). For information on pupils with intellectual impairments, see [10](#).

There are 17 national programmes in the upper secondary school [gymnasieskolan](#). All upper secondary programmes are based on courses for each subject. All upper secondary school programmes include the same eight compulsory courses in : Swedish /Swedish as a second language, English, civics, religion, mathematics, science studies, physical education and health and artistic subjects. In addition to the compulsory courses pupils study what is nationally referred to as 'core subjects' (kärnämnen), which are specific to their chosen programme and compulsory as part of that programme, and chosen from a

number of subjects. General and vocational branches are provided within the same institutions. Education is given on a full-time basis.

Upper secondary schools gymnasieskolor may be run by municipalities, or by independent organizers as grant-aided independent schools, friskolor. There is one national programme run by county councils (the national programme for Natural Resource Use, 'naturbruksutbildning'). In municipalities and county councils there are one or more committees responsible for the local schools. The school head is responsible for the daily management; sometimes there are one or more deputy heads. Each municipality has the right to establish its own upper secondary school.

For information on the national upper secondary school for pupils with impaired hearing (riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade), national upper secondary schools for pupils with severe physical disabilities (riksgymnasium för svårt rörelsehindrade) and upper secondary schools for pupils with severe intellectual impairments [gymnasiesärskolor](#) see [10](#).

Municipal upper secondary schools are free of charge and the pupils shall have access to books, tools and other equipment. Upper secondary schools may charge an insignificant fee for occasional activities, and in some cases the pupils have to purchase materials to be used. Upper secondary schools are also allowed to charge a fee for the school lunch. Grant-aided independent schools friskolor at upper secondary level have to be approved by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, (Skolinspektionen) . Grant-aided schools are not allowed to charge tuition fees.

Lag om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade (Law on service and support to certain people with disabilities), SFS 1993:387

Riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade, RGD-RGH (Swedish Upper Secondary School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing)

Riksgymnasiet för svårt rörelsehindrade (The National Upper Secondary School for students with Physical Disabilities)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Swedish Schools Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen)

5.1. Historical Overview

The first upper secondary schools, which were a bridge between schools and universities, were established following legislation in 1649. The first independent girls' schools were established in the 18th century. During the 19th century upper secondary schools were integrated with the more practically oriented schools into a single integrated grammar school, and the matriculation certificate was introduced.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the grammar school was divided into a lower secondary school, focusing on general civic education, and an upper part where students were prepared for further studies at university. Lower secondary schooling finished with a lower school-leaving certificate. In

many places co-educational lower secondary schools were set up for girls and boys. As a result of the school reform of 1927 girls could attend general grammar school.

Vocational education (primary grammar and technical-vocational schools) received different kinds of state and municipal support at the end of the 19th century. Lower technical vocational education was introduced after a decision in 1918 to integrate apprenticeship schools, vocational schools and technical-vocational schools. Vocational education was also expanded through colleges of commerce and home economics colleges. State steering was fairly limited and there were many local variations on offer.

The 1970 reform brought the earlier form of upper secondary schools, 'the lower technical-vocational schools' and 'vocational education' together into a single administrative unit – the upper secondary school [gymnasieskolan](#). Throughout the 1970s, upper secondary education was geared towards the needs of the labour market.

Since the end of the 1980s, schools have undergone a process of intensive change. In upper secondary schools, as in the rest of the education system, the state has gradually moved from steering schools through rules to an approach based on *goals and learning outcomes*. In 1994 upper secondary education was further re-structured and the upper secondary school's 'lines and special courses' were integrated into 16 national programmes, all of which are three years in length. As of the school year 2000/01 there is a 17th national programme, the Technology Programme. There are also 'Specially designed programmes' and 'Individual programmes'. See [5.11](#).

Changes in the structure of the upper secondary school will be introduced in the autumn of 2011. See [5.2](#).

The Swedish grading system has been changed from an absolute system with letter grades, whose origins can be traced back to the 1820 school ordinance, via 'the group related relative grading system' to the current 'goal and knowledge related grading system' with four-level grading. In July 1994 the current provisions on grades came into force. For more information about the current grading system of the upper secondary school, see 5.15. The grading scale is to be changed, see [5.2](#)

5.2. Ongoing Debates and future developments

See subsections for information on ongoing debates and reforms.

5.2.1 The new Upper secondary School

The Government appointed an Upper Secondary School Inquiry in 2007. The remit of the Inquiry essentially covered all upper secondary school issues, from eligibility rules to how the qualifications and results from upper secondary school are to be designed. Issues concerning upper secondary adult education were also included. The main task in the remit was to propose a new structure for upper secondary school. Vocational programmes were given particular emphasis in the Inquiry. The proposals were to lead to higher standards in both vocational programmes and preparatory programmes for higher education. The Inquiry Chair presented the Inquiry's proposals in March 2008 in the report "Path

to the future - a reformed upper secondary school" (SOU 2008:27). On the basis of the Inquiry's proposals, the Government submitted the Bill "Tougher requirements and higher standards in the new upper secondary school" (2008/09:199) to the Riksdag. The Riksdag decided to adopt the Government's proposal on 21 October 2009. The first classes of the new upper secondary school will start in the autumn of 2011. The reform involves several major changes:

- The time allocated to general theory in vocational programmes will be reduced and the time allocated to vocational subjects will increase.
- The local scope for adjusting the content of national upper secondary programmes will be subject to stricter conditions.
- Entrance requirements for upper secondary education will be changed; pupils must have achieved a minimum of a pass grade in Swedish, English and mathematics and at least nine other subjects to be eligible for general upper secondary education ('higher education preparatory programmes'). In the Education Act Bill, the Government has proposed new eligibility requirements for VET programmes: pupils must have achieved a pass grade in Swedish, English and mathematics and in five other subjects.
- Two new upper secondary diplomas will be introduced: one for general upper secondary education and one for VET programmes.
- The programme structure will be changed. The humanities and economics programmes will be reinstated. At the same time, the media programme will be merged with other programmes.
- Under the Government's Education Act Bill, five new introductory programmes will replace the current individual programme (aiming at providing pathways into the regular programmes for those who need extra time to obtain qualifications needed).

The Government has issued regulations concerning:

- the contents of each national programme;
- examination goals;
- supplementary eligibility requirements for certain upper secondary programmes;
- supplementary requirements for upper secondary diplomas for VET programmes;
- special variations of a national programme; and
- upper secondary programmes that recruit students nationwide.

5.2.2. New Education Act

In March 2010, the Government presented the bill 'The new Education Act - for knowledge, choice and security' (Govt. Bill 2009/10:165) to the Riksdag. The Riksdag approved the bill in June 2010, the new Education Act will apply as of 1 July 2011.

Chapters 15-16 in the new Education Act contain general provisions for the upper secondary school and national programmes. These chapters have been designed in accordance with the proposals in the bill 'Tougher requirements and higher standards in the new upper secondary school' (Govt. Bill 2008/09:199), which has been approved by the Riksdag, see 5.2.1. Chapter 16 contains new eligibility requirements for vocational programmes at upper secondary schools. Chapter 17 contains provisions on the introductory programmes that will replace the 'individual programmes'. The proposed reforms in the new Education Act are:

General changes

The law will lay down clearer basic values for all types of schools. The responsibility of all education to communicate and gain acceptance for respect for human rights and fundamental democratic values will be clarified. By establishing clear links to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is emphasised that the best interests of the child are the basis for all education.

As far as possible, municipal and grant-aided independent schools are to have a common regulatory system. The point of departure is for the same rules to apply regardless of the responsible body. At present, the same rules apply in principle only when this is specifically stated. In order that grant-aided independent schools can continue to have special educational profiles, certain limited exceptions will be possible.

As far as possible, all types of schools are to be governed by common regulations where appropriate. The creation of a more uniform structure will make it easier for those interpreting and applying the Act.

The legal rights of pupils and their parents/guardians will be strengthened by making it possible to appeal against considerably more decisions. Decisions on remedial programmes and decisions to deny a pupil a place in a municipal school on the grounds that this would lead to considerable organisational and financial difficulties for the municipality can be mentioned as examples. It will also be possible to appeal against decisions on school transport by means of an administrative appeal, which means a broader review of the decision compared with the legality review that is possible today under the Local Government Act.

The right to adult education at upper secondary level in order to achieve basic eligibility for higher education will be introduced for pupils who have attended a vocational programme at upper secondary level.

All pupils, regardless of whether they attend a municipal or independent school, are to have access to a school library.

The proposal requires that school health and welfare services, apart from a school doctor and nurse, also include access to a psychologist and school welfare officer.

Division of responsibilities

The new Education Act gives the Swedish Schools Inspectorate a clear legal basis for its supervision. A scale of sanctions will be introduced, where the ambition, as far as possible, is to have the same sanctions against municipal and grant-aided independent schools. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate will be able to perform effective supervision by allowing them to impose fines on public and private responsible bodies and to use other sanctions as well.

Responsible bodies, school heads and teachers will get increased and clearer powers to take measures to guarantee pupil's security and secure good working conditions in school.

Administrative changes

New provisions are introduced on systematic and documented quality enhancement procedures, while the requirements for quality assessment reports and municipal school plans are abolished. This means that each body responsible for schools has to - systematically and continuously - plan, monitor and develop its educational services. The focus is to be on achieving the national objectives for education.

The option of establishing local boards in municipal schools will be made permanent. A local board will be able to take decisions on certain matters that are otherwise the school head is responsibility. Members of a local board are to include representatives of pupils, their parents/custodians and staff. Pupils or their parents/custodians will not be allowed to make up the majority.

Mother tongue support and mother tongue instruction will be regulated in the Education Act, instead of by an ordinance, as was previously the case.

New introductory programmes for pupils who are not eligible for national programmes at upper secondary schools will be introduced.

Teachers

Senior subject teachers will be re-introduced into the entire school system. A teacher who has a Licentiate or doctoral degree and has demonstrated excellent teaching over a period of service of at least four years is to be appointed a senior subject teacher.

Clearer and more stringent rules will be introduced on the necessary requirements for teachers to be permanently employed to teach.

Teacher and preschool teacher registration will enter into force in July 2012. To be qualified to teach at a school, a teacher should be registered and also qualified for relevant subjects and grades.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

5.2.2. A pilot project on Apprenticeship Training

The Government has introduced a pilot project for upper secondary apprenticeship training (SFS 2007:1349). The project, where at least half of the time at upper secondary vocational education is located at a workplace will run for programmes started July 2008 to June 2011. A grant of SEK 25 000 per apprenticeship place per year is available. According to the Riksdag decision in October 2009 on the reformed upper secondary school, see [5.2.1](#), upper secondary apprenticeship training will be introduced as an alternative to vocational qualifications within the vocational programmes of upper secondary school, starting from the school year 2011/2012.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

5.2.3. Changes in the admission requirements for the upper secondary school

The requirement for eligibility to a national or specially designed programme (see **5.11**) will be stricter as from the autumn of 2011. (For the current admission requirements, see 5.7.) To be eligible to a general national programme, pupils must have a passing grade in Swedish, English, mathematics, and a passing grade in at least nine other subjects. To be eligible to attend the Economy, Humanistic, Social science programmes four of these nine subjects shall be geography, history, civics and religion. To be eligible to the Natural science programme and the Technology programme, a passing grade is required in biology, physics and chemistry. To be eligible to a vocational programme, pupils must have a passing grade in Swedish, English, mathematics, and a passing grade in at least five other subjects

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

5.2.4. New grading scale for compulsory school, upper secondary school and municipal adult education

The Government has proposed a new grading scale for the compulsory school, the upper secondary school and municipal adult education (Government Bill 2008/09:66). The Riksdag approved the bill in February 2009. The new grading scale will contain six levels and a seventh coding to indicate that a grade cannot be awarded. The five levels A-E will denote pass results and F a non-pass result. If material for the assessment is entirely non-existent due to substantial absenteeism, no grade will be awarded and replaced by a horizontal line. This will be implemented from the school year 2011/12. See 4.2.9.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

5.2.5. Cutting-edge programmes

A total of 20 cutting-edge programmes are part of an experimental period until June 2014. (Förordning 2008:793 om försöksverksamhet med riksrekryterande gymnasial spetsutbildning). These will give students the possibility to deepen or widen their knowledge in mathematics or natural science, social science and the humanities. Parallel to their upper secondary schooling the students will have the possibility to follow courses at higher education institutions, if the student is accepted by the institution. The cutting-edge programmes will be open without geographical limits and the home municipalities of those accepted will have to contribute with the same amount that the municipality would have spent had the student remained a student in the municipality.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

5.2.6. Registered teachers and stricter qualifying rules

A system of teacher and preschool teacher registration will enter into force in July 2012. To be qualified to teach at a school, a teacher needs to be registered and qualified for subjects and grades where he or she should teach. Registration will be required for a teacher to independently set grades and to mentor new teachers during their introduction year. Only registered teachers will be qualified for permanent employment. A teacher or preschool teacher can apply to be registered after a degree in initial teacher training or initial preschool teacher training and a successfully completed introduction year. The introduction year will give the future teacher/preschool teacher introduction to the profession and make it possible to assess whether he or she is suitable for the profession. During their introduction year, new teachers are to have the support and assistance of a mentor. If a teacher or preschool teacher seriously neglects their work, their registration may be withdrawn by a special committee the Teachers' Disciplinary Board - under the Swedish National Agency for Education.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

5.3. Specific Legislative Framework

The national school system is governed by the Education Act, decided by the Riksdag. The Education Act contains general regulations for all types of schools and pupils' right to education. The national curriculum, adopted by the government, sets out the tasks and overall objectives of upper secondary education, as well as the values that are to form the basis of teaching. The Riksdag decides on the number and contents of programmes and compulsory subjects and on which subjects are to be course specific 'core subjects'. The government sets out the programme goals of each national programme at upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan. The programme goals describe the purpose and objective of the course. The National Agency for Education adopts syllabi. The syllabi set out the goals of the teaching of each individual subject and course.

A new Education Act will enter into force in the autumn of 2011, see [5.2](#)

Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna Lpf94 (Curriculum for the non-compulsory school system Lpf 94)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Skolverket (The National Agency for Education)

5.4. General Objectives

The general goals and guidelines are set out in the curriculum for non-compulsory schools (Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna, Lpf 94), applies to the upper secondary school [gymnasieskolan](#), upper secondary education for pupils with intellectual impairments [gymnasiesärskola](#), the national upper secondary school for pupils with impaired hearing (riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade), national upper secondary schools for pupils with severe physical disabilities (riksgymnasium för svårt rörelsehindrade), municipal adult education kommunernas vuxenutbildning and adult education for individuals with learning disabilities, [särvox](#). The curriculum for non-compulsory schools sets out the tasks and goals for youth and adult education separately, see [5.13.1](#).

For more information see sub-sections.

5.4.1 Fundamental values

The opening text of the curriculum states the school's fundamental values. At the core lies the democratic principles of the individual's right of being able to influence, take responsibility and be involved, and these values shall embrace all pupils. The pupils' responsibility for planning and managing their studies as well as their influence on the contents and structures shall be important principles in education. According to the Education Act (1985:1100), it is incumbent on all in school to work for democratic working structures. The inviolability of human life, individual freedom and integrity, the equal value of all people, equality between women and men and solidarity with the weak and vulnerable are values that the school shall represent and impart. In accordance with the ethics borne by Christian tradition and Western humanism, this is achieved by fostering a sense of justice, generosity of spirit, tolerance and responsibility in the individual person. School education shall be non-denominational. The task of the school is to encourage all pupils to discover their own uniqueness as individuals and thereby actively participate in social life by giving of their best in responsible freedom.

5.4.2 Well-being of students while they are at school

The Act that prohibits discrimination and other degrading treatment of children and school students was introduced in 2005 (Trygghet, respekt och ansvar – om förbud mot diskriminering och annan kränkande behandling av barn och elever, 2005/06:38) It regulates the right of children and pupils/students to equal treatment in pre-school, compulsory school, upper secondary school and adult education. The principal organiser of the school shall ensure that there is an action plan for equivalent treatment in order to prevent and counteract harassment and other offensive forms of treatment. The Act is intended to counteract discrimination on the grounds of sex, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief systems, sexual orientation or disabilities There is a 'Child and Pupil representative' (BEO) (Ombudsman), established by the National Agency for Education to represent children and pupils in cases concerning offensive treatment.

5.4.3 Preparation for adult and working life and motivation for continuation of learning

The upper secondary school, based on the compulsory school grundskolan, shall deepen and develop pupil's knowledge as preparation for working life or studies at Higher Education Institutions, HEIs. It shall also be a preparation for adult life as a member of society taking responsibility for one's own life. The upper secondary education for pupils with learning disabilities shall, on the basis of each pupil's abilities, deepen and develop the pupil's knowledge as part of the preparation for a meaningful life as an adult at work, in daily life and in leisure activities

The non-compulsory schools shall co-operate closely with the compulsory school, with working life, with higher education institutions and society in general. This is needed in order for the pupils to receive education of high quality and provides a basis for choosing their course, further studies or vocational activity. It is especially important that the school co-operates with working life on vocationally oriented education. Working life competence requirements and the labor market are constantly changing, so educational and vocational counseling is of great importance. For more information on educational and vocational guidance in upper secondary school, see [5.18](#).

13 of the 17 national programmes in upper secondary school include at least 15 weeks of work place training. In the arts, natural science, social science and technical programmes, work practice is not obligatory but it is possible to obtain parts of the education at a work place. Encouragement is given to relating the teaching of compulsory subjects in the national programmes to pupils' study options in order to increase interest, motivation and understanding of compulsory subjects in vocationally oriented upper secondary programmes.

The structure of the upper secondary school will change as from the autumn of 2011, see [5.2](#).

Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna Lpf94 (Curriculum for the non-compulsory school system Lpf 94)

Riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade, RGD-RGH (Swedish Upper Secondary School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing)

Riksgymnasiet för svårt rörelsehindrade (The National Upper Secondary School for students with Physical Disabilities)

Skollagen 1985:1100 (The Education Act)

5.5. Types of Institution

Vocational and general upper secondary education is provided within the same institutions run by municipalities, county councils or independent organizers in grant-aided independent schools, friskolor. Schools have different profiles and run different national programmes. The school year 2009/10, 89% of the students in upper secondary school gymnasieskolan, attended national programmes. 43 % participated in vocational education and 46 % attended general programmes.

Municipal upper secondary schools are free of charge. Independent schools friskolor at upper secondary level are generally grant-aided and as a rule upper secondary schools are not allowed to charge fees.

Skolverket (Swedish National Agency for Education)

5.6. Geographical Accessibility

There are 976 upper secondary schools, gymnasieskolor in Sweden, located in 277 of the 290 municipalities (school year 2009/10). Irrespective of place of residence all children and young people in Sweden shall have equal access to the public education system. In upper secondary school pupils may have to commute to a school in a bigger town, or stay accommodated during the school week. For information on financial aid for commuting and accommodation, see [5.9](#).

5.7. Admission Requirements and Choice of School

Under the Education Act all municipalities are obliged to offer upper secondary education to young people who have completed compulsory school [grundskolan](#) or who has acquired equivalent qualifications for example in another country. The right to upper secondary education is restricted by that the course of study must be started no later than the first half of the calendar year in which the pupil reaches the age of 20. Upper secondary education above 20 years of age is offered within the public adult education system through municipal adult education kommunernas vuxenutbildning (see [7.](#)). To be admitted to a national or specially designed programme (see [5.11.1.](#) and [5.11.2.](#)) pupils must have a passing grade in Swedish, English and mathematics from compulsory school or have acquired equivalent knowledge. The admission requirements will change as from the autumn of 2011, see [5.2](#)

11 % of the pupils finishing compulsory school in spring 2009 were not eligible to attend a national or specially designed programme. Pupils without the required grades can follow the individual programme (see [5.11.3.](#)). Nearly all pupils continue to upper secondary school after finishing the compulsory school.

See sub-sections for information about pupils' right to choose school and qualification rating.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

5.7.1. Pupils' right to choose school

In the ninth year of compulsory school [grundskola](#), pupils choose which programme they wish to follow at the upper secondary school [gymnasieskola](#). The municipalities provide a broad range of education and match the number of places in different programmes to pupils' choices as far as possible. If the number of applicants is higher than the number of places available, selection is made on the basis of the pupil's final marks/grades from the courses finished during compulsory school, since there is no end-of-school exam. Pupils from another municipality can apply to a municipal upper secondary school if there are places available in an upper secondary programme. Those given the priority are the pupils from the municipality itself, or pupils living in another municipality if their home municipality does not provide the chosen programme. A pupil can apply to and be admitted to an upper secondary national programme in a different municipality, even if corresponding programmes exist in the home municipality. If accepted, their home municipality must pay the same cost as if the pupil had remained in the municipality. Pupils from the Nordic countries can attend upper secondary school in any Nordic country.

5.7.2. Qualification rating

The qualification rating is the sum total of the 16 best grades in the pupil's school-leaving certificate from compulsory school (for further information on pupil assessment in compulsory school, see [4.12.](#)). Grades are Pass (Godkänd, G) = 10, Pass with Distinction (Väl Godkänd, VG) = 15 and Pass with Special Distinction (Mycket Väl Godkänd, MVG) = 20. The same numerical values are used for admission to higher education. For admission to arts subjects proficiency tests or certificates evidencing special skills may be taken into account besides compulsory school grades/marks. The governing board of an upper secondary school may decide whether to take into consideration a recurring application, special knowledge or skills of importance for the courses concerned. In such cases, the merit rating may be raised by a maximum of 10 points.

The grading system will change as from the autumn of 2011, see 5.2.

A limited number of places at upper secondary school are set aside for pupils from schools where grades cannot be compared with those obtained from the compulsory school, for example pupils from grant-aided schools with a Waldorf/Steiner profile where no grades are given, or for pupils who should be given preferential access for social or personal reasons.

An appeal may be made at the Education Appeals Board if a school organiser decides not to admit an applicant to a national, specially designed or individual programme (designed for a group of pupils), on the grounds of eligibility.

5.8. Registration and/or Tuition Fees

Municipal upper secondary schools, gymnasieskolor, are free of charge. Independent schools at upper secondary level are generally grant-aided. As a general rule upper secondary schools are not allowed to charge fees but they can charge insignificant fees for extra activities and can charge fees for school lunches, but not for books, tools and equipment.

5.9. Financial Support for Pupils

5.9.1. Study grant

Full-time studying pupils in upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan, over the age of 16 receive a general non-refundable study grant, currently SEK 1050 per month (before the age of 16 a child allowance of the same amount is granted to the pupil's parents/guardians) if present when not sick or given the permission to be absent. The school is responsible for reporting pupil's absence to The Swedish Board for Student Support (Centrala studiestödsnämnden, CSN) in order for study grants to be distributed only those who meet these presence criteria. In addition to the general study grant, there is a needs-related supplement based on the total income per year of the pupil and the parents/guardians, introduced to broaden the intake to upper secondary education. There is also a board and lodging allowance to counteract geographic obstacles for those pupils who cannot live with their families during upper-secondary school, see 5.6.

Centrala studiestödsnämnden, CSN (Swedish Board for Student Support)

5.9.2. Travels and lodging

The law states that the home municipality of the pupil is responsible for the pupil's daily travelling costs between home and school if the distance is at least six kilometers. This responsibility applies to pupils attending upper secondary schools. If a pupil chooses a different kind of transport the municipality is not obliged to meet the additional costs. A municipality can choose to provide financial support for board and lodging, instead of covering costs of transport between a pupil's home and school.

5.9.3. Teaching material and meals

Upper Secondary School education shall be free of charge to pupils. Students shall without payment have access to books, tools and other aids that are needed for a modern education. The entity responsible for the education may however decide that pupils shall, occasionally, pay for personal aids.

There may be parts of the education that cause pupils negligible expense. The school organiser decides whether school meals are free or not.

5.10. Age Levels and Grouping of Pupils

The course-based system together with the absence of a nationally decided timetable gives the upper secondary schools, *gymnasieskolorna*, great freedom to organise the education. The groups of students studying a course may be put together from different classes and programmes, thus students of different ages can study together. There are no national regulations concerning the pupils/teacher ratio. It is decided locally whether a teacher stays with the same class for several years, however it is common that one teacher teaches a specific subject to a class throughout their upper secondary education.

5.11. Specialisation of Studies

Education in the upper secondary school *gymnasieskola*, is organised in 17 national programmes. There are also specially designed programmes and individual programmes. All national and specially designed programmes consist of the same eight compulsory subjects (*kärnämnen* – in Swedish), Swedish/Swedish as a second language, mathematics, English, civics, science studies, religion, artistic subjects as well as physical education and health. In addition, pupils study course specific subjects and also in a project.

Most three-year national programmes start with a common first year and are divided into orientations from the second year. If a student wants to change to another program or orientation in municipal schools, this is decided by the municipality's educational board. Pupils may take part in one or more courses outside their programme as well, so called expanded programme. Pupils experiencing significant study-related difficulties may be allowed to opt out of one or more courses to follow a reduced programme. The reduction can cover a maximum of 10 percent of the upper secondary credits for a complete programme. Pupils can also retake one or more courses where they have not received a passing grade, and it is also possible to retake a whole year. In all cases, it is the school head who decides.

The structure of the upper secondary school will change in the autumn of 2011, see [5.2.](#)

5.11.1. National Programmes

The national programmes, covering 2500 upper secondary credits, are structures within which pupils have the opportunity to choose various subjects. The eight compulsory (so called *kärnämnen*) subjects are included in all national programmes. Some programmes allow specialisation in the second and third

years in the form of national orientations and municipalities can set up a local orientation i.e. a course of study geared towards local settings and educational requirements. By choosing different optional courses specialisation is possible within all programmes. These options provide an all-round selection of courses, which broaden or deepen pupils' knowledge. The number of courses to be provided is decided by the principal organiser. In all programmes, pupils can use 300 credits for individual options.

All national programmes provide a basis for further studies and basic eligibility for higher education. A course-based upper secondary school provides opportunities to ensure that education is relevant by the possibility to alter the courses that the programmes consist of and by the flexible education routes with individual choices of pupils.

The Child and Recreation Programme (Barn och fritidsprogrammet)

For work with taking care of people of all ages in pedagogical vocational areas as well as in the culture and leisure sectors. Examples are child care, leisure activities, health care, sports and librarianship.

Orientations: Recreation or Pedagogical and social activities.

The Construction Programme (Byggprogrammet)

For work in building and renovating houses and building installations.

Orientations: Building, House construction, Painting or Plate working.

The Electrical Engineering Programme (Elprogrammet)

For work with electrical installations, repairs and maintenance of electrical, telecommunications and electronic systems.

Orientations: Automation, Electronics, Electrical engineering or Computer technology.

The Energy Programme (Energiprogrammet)

For work in the repair and maintenance of energy technology plants, technical systems in the power industry, property and shipping as well as the installation and service of heating, ventilation, sanitation, refrigeration and heat pump systems.

Orientations: Operations and maintenance, Marine technology or Heating, ventilation, sanitation and refrigeration.

The Arts Programme (Estetiska programmet)

Aims at giving fundamental knowledge in culture and aesthetics, as well as preparing for further studies and learning in working life in arts and other areas of work.

Orientations: Art and design, Dance, Music or Theatre.

The Vehicle Engineering Programme (Fordonsprogrammet)

For work with transports and the repair and maintenance of vehicles and aircraft. Orientations: Aircraft, Coach work, Machine and lorry technology, Car technology or Transport.

The Business and Administration Programme (Handels- och administrationsprogrammet)

For work in retailing and commercial, or administrative tasks in industry and administration.
Orientations: Commerce and service or Tourism and travel.

The Handicraft Programme (Hantverksprogrammet)

For work in a large number of trade areas in production, repairs and service.

Orientations: Handicraft

The Hotel, Restaurant and Catering Programme (Hotell- och restaurangprogrammet)

For work in hotels and restaurants as e.g. receptionist, conference organiser, waiter or chef.
Orientations: Hotels or Restaurant and meal services.

The Industry Programme (Industriprogrammet)

For work in industrial manufacturing, and other areas where competence in manufacturing, maintenance and services is required.

No national orientations.

The Food Programme (Livsmedelsprogrammet)

For work in the food industry, retailing and closely related areas such as processing and sales of foodstuff.

No national orientations.

The Media Programme (Medieprogrammet)

For work with communications e.g. advertising, various forms of design as well as the production of print media.

Orientations: Media production or Printing.

The Natural Resource Use Programme (Naturbruksprogrammet)

For work in agriculture, forestry, horticulture and horticultural complexes, or with horses, veterinary care, fishing, aqua culture, hunting, wildlife conservation, tourism or environmental and nature preservation.

No national orientations.

The Natural Science Programme (Naturvetenskapsprogrammet)

Orientation mainly for further studies in i.e. mathematics, natural science and technology. Orientations: Natural sciences, mathematics and computing sciences, Environmental sciences.

The Health and Nursing programme (Omvårdnadsprogrammet)

For work caring for people of all ages in health and medical care.

No national orientations.

The Social Science Programme (Samhällsvetenskapsprogrammet)

Orientation mainly for further studies in social issues, economics and languages.

Orientations: Economics, Culture, Social sciences or Languages.

The Technology Programme (Teknikprogrammet)

To develop and stimulate interest in technology and technological development in a broad sense and to develop knowledge within the area of technology as a basis for future learning in working life and for further studies.

No national orientations.

The structure of the upper secondary school is to be changed, see [5.2.](#)

5.11.2. Specially Designed Programme

Specially designed programmes aim to meet local or regional demands, or the needs of an individual pupil. It provides freedom of choice and flexibility to municipalities and individual pupils. These programmes are normally three years long and equivalent to the national programmes with 2500 upper secondary credits and an equal guaranteed teaching time. The specially designed programmes also include eight so called core subjects (course specific subjects) kärnämnen, and project work as other courses given in national programmes or locally designed courses. The specially designed programmes are sometimes set up in conjunction with local working life. Application to a specially designed programme is the same as for national programmes.

A specially designed programme can be put together for an individual pupil with special study needs. The school and the pupil together draw up an individual study programme for the whole of the education period. Since the late 1990s interest in developing specially designed programmes has increased and more pupils are admitted to such programmes. Eleven per cent of all pupils in upper secondary school attended a specially designed program in school year 2009/10.

The structure of the upper secondary school will change in the autumn of 2011, see [5.2.](#)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Skolverkets officiella statistik. (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education 2009/10). Skolor och elever i gymnasieskolan läsår 2009/10. Tabell 4 A.

5.11.3. Individual Programme

The individual programme aims mainly at helping pupils who are not eligible to apply to a national or specially designed programme. Individual programmes are based on pupils' needs and can vary greatly in terms of length and contents. Each pupil has an individual study plan. A municipality can establish an individual programme directed towards giving the student the tools to later join a national programme,

[programinriktat individuellt program \(priv\)](#). The main goal of the individual programme is to make it possible for the students to proceed to general upper secondary education after completing the subjects and getting the grades he or she lacks from the compulsory school. The pupil is always credited with the courses completed in the individual programme, which means that the pupil does not have to study them again, if later attending a national upper secondary program, or municipal adult education.

The individual programme can also be customised for young persons who have recently arrived in Sweden e.g. to include special introductory courses in 'Swedish as a second language' and social studies. A pupil at the individual programme can also combine employment, aiming at vocational education with studies of certain subjects in the upper secondary school. Courses catering for pupils with special needs can also be accommodated within the framework of the individual programme.

The structure of the upper secondary school will change as from the autumn of 2011, see [5.2](#).

5.11.4. Apprenticeship training

In 2008 the Government decided to introduce a pilot project for upper secondary apprenticeship training (SFS 2007:1349). In the project at least half of vocational education should be located at workplaces will run until June 2011 A grant of SEK 25 000 per apprenticeship place per year is available.

Representatives of trades and employers take part in local apprentice councils, which in co-operation with the school participates in the planning and implementation of the education. The aim of apprenticeship training is to provide competence needed at the labour market, give working life the opportunity to be involved in influencing the content and implementation of the education. It also gives pupils the opportunity to carry out a larger part of their education within a national programme at a workplace.

The structure of the upper secondary school will change as from the autumn of 2011, see [5.2](#).

Regeringen (The Government)

5.11.5. International Baccalaureate

The international upper secondary education covers three years and leads to the International Baccalaureate (IB) with a Diploma from the International Baccalaureate Office (IBO) in Geneva. The initial year is preparatory during which the students mainly study mathematics, English and Swedish. In order to obtain state grants for the fee to IBO, the IBO must approve the education and the programme must, prior to its start, have been notified to the Swedish Schools Inspectorate Skolinspektionen. Grant-aided independent schools must also keep IB education separate from other programmes receiving public grants. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate is the supervisory authority and English is the language of instruction, 31 schools provided this education in school year 2009/10.

Skolinspektionen (The Swedish Schools Inspectorate)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Skolverkets officiella statistik. (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education 2009/10). Skolor och elever i gymnasieskolan läsår 2009/10. Tabell 2D.

5.12. Organisation of School Time

Upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan, is not divided into courses for specific years and is regulated by a national schedule of points for the whole three year programme (Appendix 2, Education Act), see **5.13.2**. The education system is decentralised and the education is governed by the Education Act decided by the Riksdag, by the national goals for education – set in the curriculum (Lpf 94), by the programme goals – specific for each programme, and by each subject's syllabus. This gives upper secondary schools great freedom to organise the education and the schools decide themselves how lessons are allocated in weekly and daily timetables. However there are regulations on the number of weeks and the minimum number of days and hours to constitute a school year. All pupils have the right to a minimum guaranteed number of teaching hours (calculated as 60 minutes), for the whole of the three-year education, of at least 2180 hours for general programmes, and 2430 hours for vocational programmes.

For more information, see sub-sections.

Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna Lpf94 (Curriculum for the non-compulsory school system Lpf 94)

Skollagen (Education Act) SFS 1985:1100

5.12.1. Organisation of the School Year

The municipalities and the schools themselves decide how the school year is organised. The school year is divided in two terms, spring and autumn, and consists of a minimum of 178 school days and at least 12 days of holidays, distributed over 40 weeks. The school year in the compulsory, grundskolan, and upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan, starts in the end of August and finishes in June. Each municipality decides the exact dates for starting and finishing school. Pupils are free from school when teachers participate in in-house training (CPD) and planning activities. Teachers start the work earlier each semester and finish later.

5.12.2. Weekly and Daily Timetable

A five-day week from Monday to Friday is applied. The weekly workload should be distributed as evenly as possible over the five days. The schools themselves decide how long the school day shall be and the school's opening and closing hours. The school head is responsible for making a timetable, for one whole semester or for a shorter period, which states the teaching hours in different subjects and the names of the teachers. There is no regulation in educational statutes on maximum number of daily school hours.

5.12.3. Part-time studies

If the pupil has obvious difficulties which cannot be overcome in any other way it is possible to follow a reduced programme (see [5.11.](#)). Pupils may, after a decision from the school head, be exempted from courses corresponding to a maximum of 10 per cent of the upper secondary school credits. It is also possible to receive instruction in a national programme over a period of more than three years; for pupils in municipal schools the educational board of the municipality makes such decisions.

The structure of the upper secondary school will change as from the autumn of 2011, see [5.2.](#)

5.13. Curriculum, Subjects, Number of Hours

Pupils in Arts, Natural Sciences, Technology and Social Sciences programmes have the right to at least 2180 teaching hours of 60 minutes and pupils in vocational programmes have the right to at least 2430 teacher led lessons of 60 minutes. Subjects are taught in courses and the education is completed when a pupil has obtained and been graded in courses corresponding to the total number of upper secondary school credits required for one programme (see [5.11.](#)). The normal period of study is three years, but in the system of courses and credits, pupils can complete upper secondary schooling over a shorter or longer period of time.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

5.13.1. Curriculum

The Government lays down the curriculum after a proposal by the National Agency for Education which has been circulated for official comment to a large number of stakeholders. The curriculum for the Non-Compulsory School forms (Lpf 94) steers the upper secondary school together with the Education Act and the Upper Secondary School Ordinance. The tasks of the school and the values on which the teaching should be based are laid down in the curriculum, which also sets out 'the goals to strive towards' and 'the goals to attain'. These goals steer the quality work in schools and describe what pupils

should have attained by the time they complete their schooling. It is the responsibility of the school and principal organiser to ensure that pupils are given the opportunity of attaining these goals.

Gymnasieförordningen, SFS 1992:394 (The Upper Secondary School Ordinance)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna Lpf94 (Curriculum for the non-compulsory school forms Lpf 94)

5.13.2. Subjects and courses

All subjects consist of one or more courses. The courses cover 50, 100, 150 or 200 upper secondary school credits. All courses have a national syllabus determined by the Swedish National Agency for Education. The school organiser makes decisions on local courses. Upper secondary school credits indicate the scope of the course and work expected and correlates to the number of teaching hours per subject for the three years of education. The syllabus for each course states how many upper secondary school credits the course comprises. The Education Act contains a schedule stating how many credits a completed upper secondary education should comprise and how these are allocated between core subjects that all upper secondary students that attend a general program must study (kärnämnen), programme specific subjects and individual options:

Subject	Scope of upper secondary credits
Swedish/Swedish as a second language	200
Mathematics	100
English	100
Civics	100
Science studies	50
Religion	50
Artistic activities	50
Physical education and health	100
Programme specific subjects including project work of 100 upper secondary school credits	1 450
Individual options	300
Total of upper secondary school credits	2 500

Each programme is typified by subjects specific to the programme (karaktärsämnen) covering 1450 of 2500 credits including a project work of 100 credits. The Government determines which subjects should be specific to a programme. Examples of programme specific subjects are child study, cultural and recreational activities, construction methods, energy technology, arts orientation, vehicle technology, food science, business economics, media production, working life, physics, chemistry, biology, philosophy, geography and modern languages.

As individual options pupils can choose courses from the national programmes that are provided in the municipality. Mother tongue tuition and Swedish as a second language can also be chosen as individual options.

The structure of the upper secondary school will change as from the autumn of 2011, see

5.2.

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

5.13.3. Language teaching

English has long enjoyed a special position amongst foreign languages in education and society. A pass grade in English from the compulsory school, grundskolan, is a requirement for entering a national or specially designed programme in the upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan. In the upper secondary school English is one of the compulsory (so called kärnämnen) subjects, which means that all pupils study English extensively irrespective of their study programme. At certain schools, international upper secondary education in English is also provided for the International Baccalaureate, see **5.11.5**. Some Swedish-speaking pupils study entire upper secondary programmes in English. Providing the whole of an upper secondary education in a language other than Swedish normally requires the consent of the Government.

In the upper secondary school, German, French and Spanish are offered in addition to English. If at least five pupils in a municipality wish to study a different language, this should be provided.

Swedish as a second language' is a subject in its own right at all levels of school. Instead of studying the topic 'Swedish', pupils with immigrant background have the right to study Swedish as a second language. All pupils in the upper secondary school whose parents have a mother tongue other than Swedish and where this language is the daily means of communication in the family are entitled to receive mother tongue tuition, providing they have good knowledge in the mother tongue. Municipalities, however, are not obliged to arrange mother tongue tuition if suitable teachers are unavailable, or if there are less than five pupils in the municipality wishing to participate. (For more information about Swedish tuition and mother tongue classes for pupils from migrant families see **10**) However, for the recognised national minority languages, there is no requirement that the language

has to be used as a daily means of communication in the home, and the municipality is obliged to provide this tuition even if the number wishing to receive this is less than five.

In order to encourage pupils to study more mathematics and languages pupils who study these subjects on a certain level, and to a greater extent than what is required for eligibility to a certain university program are given extra points in the admission process. For more information about university studies, see **6**.

The structure of the upper secondary school will be changed as from the autumn of 2011, see **5.2**.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

5.13.4. ICT

Information and communication technology, ICT is used as a tool for teaching other subjects and taught as a subject in its own right. Methods and tools for teaching are not regulated in the Swedish school system, thus the ways in which ICT is used as a tool differs between different schools and teachers. Use of computers is included as a separate subject in 15 of the 17 national programmes (the exception being the natural science and social science programmes).

The Technology Delegation (2010:28) was appointed in 2008 by the Swedish Government to promote greater interest among children and young people in mathematics, science, engineering and ICT. The Delegation consisted of representatives from the business community, higher education institutions and other stakeholders. Its final report was presented to the Minister for Higher Education and Research in April 2010. It states that interest in science and technology is too low, especially among girls, to meet future needs; The Technology Delegation proposes that the Swedish government establish a national skills strategy for mathematics, natural sciences, technology and ICT, and that the strategy is to be monitored by a high level commission and implemented by a new specialist body. The proposal is under consideration by the Government.

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

5.14. Teaching Methods and Materials

Teaching is divided into subjects but inter-disciplinary teaching is encouraged by the Government, e.g. by adapting compulsory core subjects – common to all pupils at upper secondary national programmes – to the pupils' own study programme. Working methods that lead to collaboration, independence and critical thought are encouraged in the curriculum. Governed by the curriculum guidelines the teacher decides which working methods should be used in order for pupils to attain the goals of the education. There are schools that employ specific teaching methods, e.g. 15 Waldorf/Steiner grant-aided independent schools provided upper secondary education in 2009/10.

There are no national guidelines regarding homework. Teaching material is purchased by the school from various publishers and producers and distributed to pupils free of charge. ICT is used as a tool for learning and an aid to develop teaching.

5.15. Pupil Assessment

The grading system of the upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan, is related to the goals of each course as laid down in the syllabi. Grading criteria stipulate the knowledge required for each grade. There are four grade levels in the upper secondary school:

Pass with Special Distinction (Mycket Väl Godkänt, MVG),

Pass with Distinction (Väl Godkänt, VG)

Pass (Godkänt, G)

Not passed (Icke Godkänt, IG)

Pupils are awarded grades when a course is completed, i.e. assessment is continuous. If a pupil does not achieve the objectives of the Pass grade in a course, the pupil will be given the grade Not passed. Teachers award grades to pupils, and the school head is responsible for the official documentation of pupils' grades. Pupils will receive a school-leaving certificate after completion of a national or specially designed programme, and have received grades for all courses and the project work that is a part of their programme. A pupil who has studied an individual programme will receive a school-leaving certificate after completing the study plan drawn up for the pupil.

See sub-sections for more information.

The grading in the upper secondary school will change as from the autumn of 2011, see 5.2.

5.15.1. National tests

When awarding grades in Swedish/Swedish as a second language, English or mathematics, teachers should consult national tests for each subject provided by the Swedish National Agency for Education. They should also consider other work made by the student during the course before deciding on a grade. In addition to the compulsory national tests, the National Agency for Education is responsible for a test bank of national tests in different subjects and courses, including modern languages, biology, physics and certain vocational subjects.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

5.15.2. Development dialogues

Pupils and their parents/guardians are informed of the pupil's progress through compulsory personal development dialogues. These dialogues are based on the pupil's individual study plan which contains information on the pupil's choice of programme and courses. The school is obliged to arrange such meetings at least once every term.

5.15.3. Resits

At upper secondary school pupils are entitled to resit tests free of charge if they have failed a course. After completing their upper secondary education pupils are entitled to resit examinations to improve their grades at a maximum fee of SEK 500 for one examination.

5.16. Progression of Pupils

There are no criteria for a pupil to proceed to the next level. If there is a risk of a pupil failing to attain the learning outcomes/goals in the syllabi, remedial support shall be provided. For instance, the pupils' study plan can be modified.

If a pass grade has not been achieved, a pupil has the right to retake the course. If a pupil has taken a course twice without achieving a passing grade, and there are special circumstances, the school head can decide to allow the pupil to take the course a third time. It is also possible to re-take a whole year if the school head, pupil and guardians/parents are in agreement. If a pupil needs to re-take a course or if a reduced programme is an option (see [5.11.](#)), a decision is made by the school head in consultation with the pupil and teachers involved. If the pupil has not yet reached the age of 18 a consultation takes place with the pupil's guardians or parents. A pupil who has difficulties in Swedish, English or mathematics has the right to study courses in stages, where the contents of a stage are individually designed for each pupil.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

Gymnasieförordningen SFS 1992:394 (The upper secondary school ordinance)

5.17. Certification

The upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan, does not have a final examination. Each pupil receives a school-leaving certificate consisting of a summary of the courses in the pupil's study plan and the

grades received in these courses. To receive a school-leaving certificate [slutbetyg från gymnasieskolan](#), from a national or specially designed programme the pupil must have received grades for all courses as well as for the project work. Students on the Individual Programmes receive the school-leaving certificate if they have followed the study plan for their individual program. The school head signs the certificate.

If pupils have taken more courses than their programme requires, by following an expanded programme, (see [5.11.](#)), these courses are included in their school leaving certificate. All upper secondary school programmes fulfill the basic eligibility requirements for access to higher education. However, nearly all higher education requires special qualifications in one or more subjects.

The certification will change as from the autumn of 2011, see [5.2.](#)

5.18. Educational/Vocational Guidance, Education/Employment Links

The curriculum (Curriculum for the Non-compulsory School System, Lpf 94) states that the school should co-operate with working life and Higher Education Institutions, HEIs, employment exchange offices, the industry as well as the labor market partners and industrial representative organisations thus have important roles in providing information to pupils. The school shall strive to ensure that each pupil can make reasoned choices regarding further studies and vocational orientation and that they become familiar with the conditions of working life, especially within their study area. Educational and vocational guidance is generally given within the schools. It is the responsibility of the school head to ensure that all pupils receive educational and vocational guidance.

Most schools have specially trained career and guidance counselors *studie- och yrkesvägledare*. Although career education and guidance is the responsibility of all school personnel, the career and guidance counselors have specialist knowledge that plays a central role in career education and guidance. In order to be employed as a career counselor in the public school system, the applicant must have an education that is intended for such work. There is a 3 year university programme for career and guidance counselors.

All programmes may include workplace training, i.e. part of the course of studies can take place outside the school [arbetsplatsförlagd utbildning \(apu\)](#). Within the Natural Science, Social Science and Technology and Arts programmes decisions on workplace training can be made locally, whereas in vocationally orientated programmes at least 15 weeks of workplace training in total during the three years is compulsory. On rare occasions the work places may require financial compensation for receiving pupils. For further information on apprenticeship training and learning in working life, see [5.11.4.](#)

There shall be a school medical officer and school nurse available in upper secondary school. Pupils in upper secondary school, as well as in upper secondary school for mentally disabled, shall get at least one general health examination. Pupils in upper secondary school for mentally disabled shall also be

offered special examinations occasioned by their functional impairments. The school healthcare to which the pupils are entitled shall be free of charge

The structure of the upper secondary school will change as from the autumn of 2011, see 5.2

Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna Lpf94 (Curriculum for the non-compulsory school system Lpf 94)

5.19. Private Education

Parallel with the municipal upper secondary schools, gymnasieskolor, there are grant-aided independent upper secondary schools, see [5.19.1](#). Independent upper secondary schools friskolor are generally grant-aided. Grant-aided schools, like schools run by a municipality, as a general rule are not allowed to charge fees. There are also 3 grant-aided International schools at upper secondary level. For more information on International schools, see [4.16](#).

Another form of education at secondary level and post secondary level provided by independent organisers is supplementary education programmes [kompletterande utbildningar](#), see [7.16](#).

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Skolverkets officiella statistik. (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education 2009/10). Skolor och elever i gymnasieskolan läsår 2009/10. Tabell 2A.

5.19.1. Grant-aided Independent Upper Secondary Schools

Independent grant-aided upper secondary schools friskolor have nation-wide recruitment and are not permitted to charge pupil's fees, application fees, queuing or registration fees.

The majority of grant-aided independent schools at upper secondary level have a general orientation, but there are also schools with alternative pedagogical approaches; In 2009/10 about 9% of the 458 grant-aided independent schools had a confessional orientation, and 5,5% were Waldorf/Steiner schools. Grant-aided independent schools are, in principle, required to follow the curriculum and the national syllabi. They are regulated in the Education Act and in a special ordinance on grant-aided independent schools (SFS 1996:1206).

Education in a grant-aided independent upper secondary school should provide knowledge and skills that correspond to those provided by the national and specially designed programmes in municipal upper secondary schools. Grant-aided independent upper secondary schools should fulfill the general goals of the upper secondary school and be directed by the core values that are the basis for the public school system. They should be open to all pupils who are entitled to equivalent education within the public education system. The independently run schools should also fulfill any additional requirements decided by the Government, i.e. on entrance conditions. A school that meets these conditions may be declared entitled to receive public funds by the Swedish School Inspectorate, providing the school's

activities do not have obvious negative consequences on the municipal school system in the municipality where the school is located, or in municipalities nearby.

In 1992 the requirements on grant-aided independent changed and since then the number of independently run upper secondary schools has been increasing. In school year 2009/10, 458 out of a total of 976 upper secondary schools were independent schools (47 %), a figure which can be compared with 82 out of a total of 638 upper secondary schools 12 years earlier (13%). The supervision of grant-aided independent schools is carried out by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, Skolinspektionen. Municipalities are entitled to scrutinize the activities of grant-aided independent schools.

When a pupil chooses to study at a grant-aided independent school the resources that would otherwise be allocated for its education in a municipal school will be redistributed to the grant-aided independent school. The pupils home municipality must pay a grant, determined on the same grounds as are applied by that municipality when distributing resources to its own schools for the same programme. In cases when the municipality doesn't offer the programme in question, the payment to the schools is based on a national price list yearly settled by the Swedish National Agency for Education.

Förordningen om fristående skolor, SFS 1996:1206 (The Ordinance on Grant-aided Independent Schools)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Skolinspektionen (The Swedish Schools Inspectorate)

5.20. Organisational Variations and Alternative Structures

There are 3 International schools at upper secondary level. These are grant-aided independent schools, (see 5.19). For more information about International schools, see [4.16](#)

The main rule is that distance education is not allowed. However, there is one upper secondary school in Sweden that do offer distance education to pupils regardless where they live in Sweden (Förordning om distansundervisning på gymnasial nivå i Torsås, SFS 1992:1261).

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

5.21. Statistics

There is no information collected on attendance rates and number of pupils per class. See subsections for other statistical information.

5.21.1. Number of pupils

The table shows the number of pupils per programme, vocational programmes in the centre column.

National programme	Vocational	Number of pupils
Arts		22,832
Business and Administration	X	18,434
Child and recreation	X	14,448
Construction	X	17,485
Electrical Engineering	X	24,197
Energy	X	4,248
Food	X	1,869
Handicraft	X	11,901
Health Care	X	14,714
Hotel and Restaurant	X	14,268
Industry	X	10,371
Media	X	16,780
Natural Resource Use	X	11,359
Natural Science		45,371
Social Science		91,853
Technology		20,601
Vehicle Engineering	X	16,885
Total		357 616*
International Baccalaureate (IB)		3 132

* Of which 33 850 are pupils in Specially Designed programs and 7 304 pupils attending an Individual program.

Skolverket: Skolor och elever I gymnasieskolan läsåret 2009/10. Tabell 4A.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

5.21.2. Number of institutions and their sizes

Type of school	Number of institutions	Average number of pupils per school
Municipal schools	497	614
County council schools	21	185
Independently run schools (Including International schools and National boarding schools)	458	187
Total	974	404

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Skolverkets officiella statistik. (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education 2009/10)
Skolor och elever I gymnasieskolan läsår 2009/10. Tabell 1.

5.21.3. Total number of pupils attending programmes, divided by sex 2009/10

Programme	Total number of pupils	Women	Men
Arts	22,832	15,355	7,477
Business and administration	18,434	11,935	6,499
Child and recreation	14,448	10,571	3,877
Construction	17,485	1,654	15,831
Electrical Engineering	24,197	1,165	23,032
Energy	4,248	168	4,080
Food	1,869	1,379	490
Handicraft	11,901	10,187	1,714
Health Care	14,714	11,645	3,069
Hotel and Restaurant	14,268	8,638	5,630
Industry	10,371	1,186	9,185
Media	16,780	10,003	6,777
Natural Resource Use	11,359	7,705	3,654
Natural Science	45,371	22,015	23,356
Social Science	91,853	55,064	36,789
Technology	20,601	4,031	16,570
Vehicle Engineering	16,885	1,610	15,275

5.21.4. Certification and Interruption rates

The table (left part) shows the number and percentage of pupils that finished upper secondary education and received a school-leaving certificate within four years from when they started upper secondary school. Data refers to pupils who started upper secondary education in autumn 2005 (and finished at the latest in spring 2009).

The table (right part) shows number of pupils that interrupted upper secondary education within a year. Data refers to pupils starting upper secondary education in the autumn 2008 (and were absent in autumn 2009).

	Certification		Interruption	
	Number of pupils finishing with a certificate in 2009	Proportion of pupils starting in 2005 (%)	Number of pupils interrupting studies in 2009	Proportion of pupils starting in 2008 (%)
Total	91 593	75.9	9 310	6.1
Municipal schools	76 798	75.1	-	-
County council schools	1 140	81.4	-	-
Independently run schools	13 665	80.0	1 183	3.9
Women with Swedish background	40 526	80.5	3 036	5.1
Women with foreign background	40 256	76.3	3 033	4.7
Men with Swedish background	5 623	65.1	1 438	11.1
Men with foreign background	5 188	57.4	1 803	11.9

Programme	Certification		Interruption	
	Number of pupils finishing with a certificate in 2009	Proportion of pupils starting in 2005 (%)	Number of pupils interrupting studies in 2009	Proportion of pupils starting in 2008 (%)
Arts	5 913	79.4	137	2.4
Business and Administration	3 630	75.4	170	3.9
Child and recreation	3 493	73.6	189	4.7
Construction	3 143	84.5	89	1.8
Electrical Engineering	5 249	76.3	67	1.4
Energy	687	81.8	10	1.2
Food	391	76.5	27	4.7
Handicraft	2 016	84.8	62	2.3
Health Care	2 598	74.5	147	4.1
Hotel and Restaurant	3 585	73.5	200	4.7
Industry	1 773	74.6	71	3.1
Media	4 026	76.8	112	3.4
Natural Resource Use	2 776	82.6	94	3.5
Natural Science	13 349	90.4	238	2.1
Social Science	24 708	84.9	464	2.6
Technology	5 699	84.7	64	1.0
Vehicle Engineering	3 298	75.0	162	3.4
Individual	2 667	20.4	5 360	23.4
Specially Designed	9 288	85.4	385	2.8
International Baccalaureate (IB)	719	75.2	79	8.2
Waldorf	207	85.5	-	-

Out of the 97064 pupils that completed their upper secondary education with a school leaving certificate 2008/09, 90,3 % were eligible for higher studies. For national programmes the number eligible for higher studies was 90,5% and for specially designed programmes 91.7%. (For information about admission requirements for tertiary education, see 6.6.) There are no specific statistics on repeat and dropout rates.

Skolverkets officiella statistik. (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for Education 2009/10) Skolor och elever i gymnasieskolan läsåret 2009/10. Tabell 5B, 8B. Skolverkets statistik: Betyg och studieresultat i gymnasieskolan läsåret 2008/09, Tabell 2B

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education).

5.21.5. Number of teachers, pupil/teacher ratio

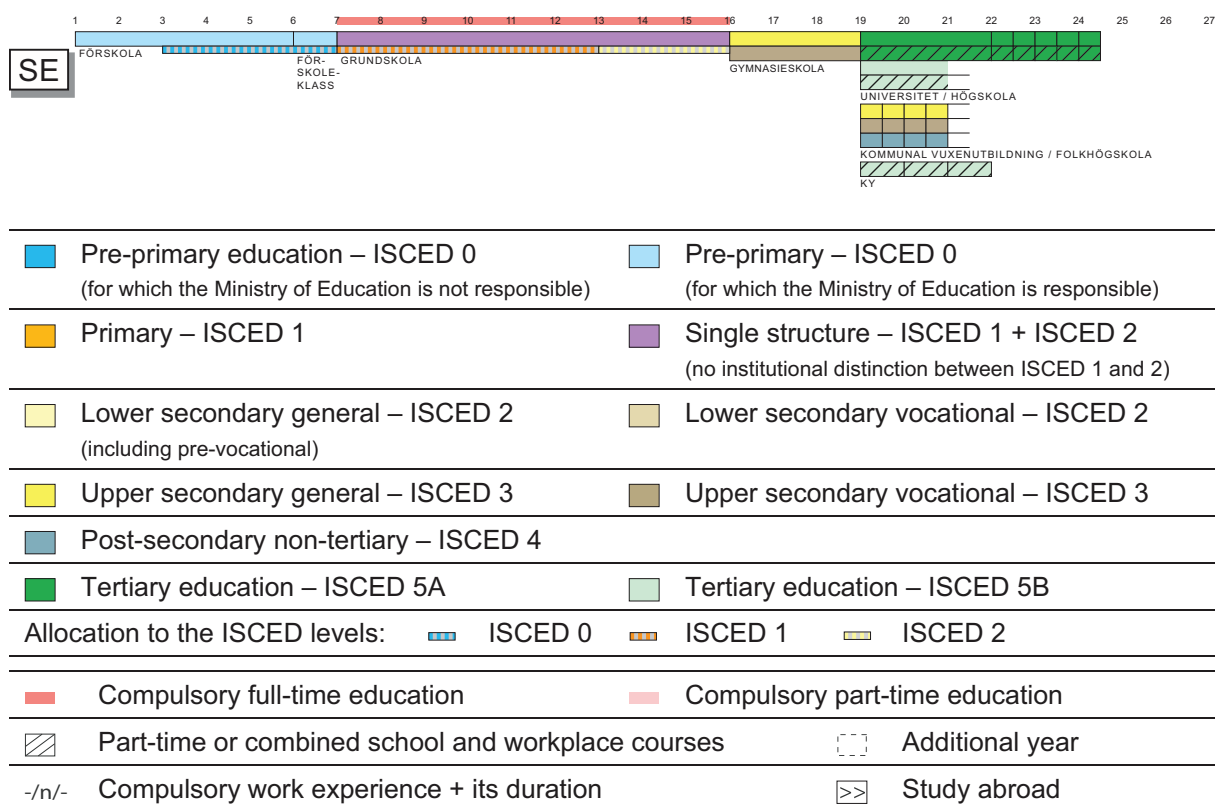
There were 37425 teachers (31175 converted to fulltime positions) working in upper secondary schools in October 2009, which is about 1100 less than the year before (as fulltime positions). There were 7.9 teachers per 100 pupils. In municipal schools there were 8.2 teachers per 100 pupils and in county council schools 11.4 teachers per 100 pupils. In independently run schools there were 6.8 teachers per 100 pupils, whereas the number of teachers in relation to pupils was much higher in international schools and national boarding schools.

Skolverkets officiella statistik. (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education 2009/10) Personal i gymnasieskolan läsåret 2009/10. Tabell 4A.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

6. TERTIARY EDUCATION

Organisation of the education system in Sweden, 2006/07



Source: Eurydice.

(2006-2007)

Higher education and research take place at 14 state universities [universitet](#) and 21 state university colleges [högskolor](#). There are also independently run higher education institutions with the right to award degrees, and that are entitled to grants from the state.

Higher education is organised as courses that can be combined into study programmes, leading to general university degrees. There are a number of tertiary study programmes leading to vocational qualifications.

Characteristic of the Swedish higher education system is that HEIs provide a substantial part of 'life long learning' where those already employed can follow courses as part of their in-house training, or as part of gaining new qualifications for a change in career. HEIs also function as providers for specialized courses for certain groups, a current example is the 'Boost for Teachers' campaign where HEIs offer courses to increase already employed teacher's qualifications. Another characteristic element is that a large part of the publicly financed research takes place at HEIs.

Mainly as a result of the Bologna process, legislation for a three-cycle structure of higher education has been adopted and is applied since 2007. The degree system has been reformed and structured to fit the new three-cycle system (see [6.10.](#)), which is now the only structure for all higher education.. This improves international comparability of Swedish education in accordance with the Bologna process. First and second cycle education is referred to as undergraduate education and the third cycle as postgraduate education.

Higher education is financed through state grants to the individual institutions based on the number of students and their achievements with varying amounts of remuneration for the various educational areas. Parallel with the state-funded institutions for higher education there are a number of independent institutes, of which some are not grant-aided and charge fees.

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket) evaluates the higher education institutions. Evaluations of subjects and programmes leading to a general or vocational qualification and postgraduate programmes take place every six years. The authority decides on rights to award degrees. The national system for evaluation of higher education is being reviewed, see 6.2.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

6.1. Historical Overview

The oldest university in Sweden and Scandinavia, Uppsala University, was founded in 1477 with faculties for philosophy, law and theology; many followed higher education abroad. In the 17th century university education expanded to natural sciences as well as education for public officials. Natural sciences expanded further during the 18th century.

In the 19th century an entry exam (later to become the matriculation exam) was introduced. In the 1860s the exam was transferred to the grammar schools; however the universities retained great influence over examination. Specialisation and interest in research made scientific skills one of the main criteria when appointing professors.

At the end of the 19th century a number of specialised higher educational institutes were started, later to become university colleges. University colleges were established in Stockholm in 1878 and in Göteborg in 1891. They focused on natural sciences and aimed at fulfilling a general educational function co-operating closely with the surrounding society. In time they became universities. In 1889 Sweden appointed its first - and possibly Europe's first - female professor.

The major expansion of higher education took place in the 1960s when many university colleges were established. During the 1950s and 1960s higher education was the subject of a number of governmental investigations, which led to changes regarding financing as well as in the tasks of university staff. A line (study programme) system with centrally determined curricula was introduced in 1969 and postgraduate education became regulated.

In 1977 higher education underwent comprehensive reform. Nearly all post-secondary education was integrated into a single system governed by common legislation and ordinances. The reform emphasised higher education as a preparatory step for working life and its close adjustment to the

needs of working life. At the same time open admission was abolished by the Riksdag, which from now on each year decides on the dimensioning of educational study programmes and the scope of single-subject courses. The admission to education programmes was handled by a central authority that also managed the planning of education provided, including general curricula for the national study programmes. The university colleges themselves handled admission to courses.

A new act and ordinance for the higher education sector was adopted in 1993. Planning and decisions on content of study programmes was transferred to the institutions for higher education, while the responsibility for the scope and goals of the degrees remained with the Government and the Riksdag. The main aim of the reform was to give higher education institutions greater freedom in decision making over courses and admission of students, who in their turn gained greater freedom of choice.

Mainly as a result of the Bologna process, legislation for a three-cycle structure of higher education has been adopted and applied since July 2007. The new structure replaces the former system and is the only structure for all higher education. This will improve international comparability of Swedish education in accordance with the Bologna process. The former degree system has been reformed and structured to fit the new three-cycle system.

In recent years the number of students has increased and new university colleges have been established. Since 1998 each county in Sweden has at least one university or University College.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Uppsala universitet (Uppsala University)

6.2. Ongoing Debates and future developments

See subsections for information.

6.2.1. Tuition fees for foreign students

Tuition fees will be introduced for students from outside the EU/EEA from the autumn term of 2011. In the Government Bill 'Competing on the basis of quality – tuition fees for foreign students' (Govt. Bill 2009/10:65), that has been passed by the Riksdag, the Government proposes that higher education shall continue to be free of charge for Swedish citizens and citizens of an EU/EEA country or Switzerland, while citizens from other countries – 'third country students' – should pay a fee for their higher education as from autumn term 2011. The proposal underlines that the Government wants Swedish higher education institutions to compete on the basis of quality, not by having no fees for education. Two scholarship programmes will be introduced for this group of students.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

6.2.2. New national quality assurance system

In “Focus on knowledge – quality in higher education” (Government Bill 2009/10:139), the Government proposes changing the direction of the national quality assurance system for higher education institutions. The purpose is to strengthen the incentives to achieve high standards regarding learning outcomes of study programmes. Universities and higher education institutions with high quality study programmes will be rewarded through increased appropriations. The new quality assurance system will consist of quality evaluations of higher education programmes and reviews of degree-awarding powers. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education will be responsible for implementing these evaluations and reviews. The evaluations of study programmes should take place every fourth year, instead of every six years as is currently the case. Resources for study programmes at first and second cycle will be allocated on the basis of programme evaluations, as well as on the number of full-time equivalent students and their annual performance equivalents.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

6.2.3. Greater freedom for higher education institutions

The Government Bill “Academia for this day and age – greater freedom for universities and other higher education institutions” (Government Bill 2009/10:149), aims to increase the freedom of publicly funded universities and other higher education institutions within the framework of the current government agency format. In the Bill, the Government presents proposals and makes assessments involving extensive deregulation of internal organization and teaching positions. The general regulatory framework for financial administration that government agencies are required to comply with should be reviewed as to adapt it to better match conditions at higher education institutions.

6.3. Specific Legislative Framework

[The Higher Education Act](#) (Högskolelagen) contains provisions about the higher education institutions that are accountable to the Government, local authorities or county councils. These provisions are supplemented by regulations in the Higher Education Ordinance (Högskoleförordningen). The Higher Education Act and the ordinances governing higher education came into force in 1993. An appendix to the Higher Education Ordinance contains the Degree ordinance (Examensordningen) laid down by the Government. It stipulates the degrees that may be awarded in higher education and their requirements. For information on the development of this legislation see [6.1.](#)

Mainly as a result of the Bologna process, legislation for a three-cycle structure of higher education was adopted in January 2007 and applied since July 2007. The new structure replaces the former system and is the only structure for all higher education institutions (HEIs). For more information, see [6.10.](#)

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

6.4. General Objectives

Governed by the general regulations in the legislative framework, Higher Education Institutions (universities and university colleges) are free to define their own goals and how the programmes are organised. Their main tasks are to:

- Provide education that is based on scientific or artistic grounds as well as on well-established experience
- Carry out research and artistic and other development work
- Co-operate with the surrounding society and inform the public about the institutions' activities

In higher education there should be a close link between research and education and scientific credibility and good practice is to be safeguarded. The higher education institutions must tailor their activities to attain high quality and make efficient use of available resources. Institutions of higher education should promote students influence over the education, as well as the understanding of other countries and international relations. HEIs should work actively to broaden recruitment to higher education among groups that are currently underrepresented in higher education. No student is to be the subject of discrimination based on gender, age, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or disabilities.

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

6.4.1. General goals for undergraduate education

Students should develop:

- The ability to make independent and critical assessments
- The ability to identify, formulate and solve problems
- A preparedness to deal with changes in working life

In addition to acquiring knowledge and skills in the field covered by the course, students should develop the ability to:

- Seek and evaluate knowledge at scientific level
- Follow developments in knowledge
- Exchange knowledge with people without special expertise in the field

Professional degrees have additional specific learning outcomes.

6.4.2. General goals for post-graduate education

Post-graduate studies shall, in addition to deepen and broaden the student's knowledge and skills as stipulated for undergraduate studies, provide the student with the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out independent research.

Since 2007 a three-cycle structure of higher education applies. First and second cycle education is referred to as undergraduate education, and third cycle as postgraduate education. The former degree system has been reformed and structured to fit the new three-cycle system, see [6.10](#).

6.5. Types of Institution

Higher education is provided at universities [universitet](#) and university colleges [högskolor](#). In 2010, there were fifty-two institutions offering higher education of different kinds. The majority of HEIs are public authorities, subject to the same legislation and regulations as other public authorities, as well as the particular statutes, ordinances and regulations relevant to the higher education sector. The main part of higher education and research is carried out at the 14 state universities and 21 state university colleges. Undergraduate education is given at an equivalent level at university colleges and universities. What differentiates the two types of institutions is mainly that universities give a broader range of courses and that they provide post-graduate programmes within one or more areas. Universities have degree awarding powers at First cycle level (University diplomas and Bachelors' degrees), second cycle level (one-year and two-year Masters' degrees), and third cycle level (licentiate and doctoral degrees). In addition, they have entitlement to direct government funding for research. University colleges have degree awarding powers at first cycle level (University diplomas and Bachelors' degrees), second cycle level (one-year Masters' degrees), and can apply to the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education Högskoleverket, for the entitlement to award two-year Masters' degrees. Some university colleges have additional degree awarding powers; they have been awarded the entitlement to award doctorates in a single disciplinary domain. This automatically entitles them to award two-year Masters' degrees and receive direct government funding for third cycle programmes and research in that domain.

All higher education institutions provide programmes leading to vocational qualifications. In most cases education in teaching, medicine, nursing and engineering is an integrated part of the education within the HEIs, however some institutions are specialised in education leading to vocational qualifications in specific fields. There are two institutes of technology, one institute for medical training and nursing, three colleges of nursing, one university college for physical education and sports and seven university colleges for arts.

In addition to the 14 state universities and 21 state university colleges there are independent institutions within tertiary education receiving state subsidies. Three have the right to award qualifications in undergraduate and post-graduate education.

A further fifteen educational organisers have been granted permission to award Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Diploma in Theology or Bachelor of Theology and Graduate Diploma in Psychotherapy.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

6.5.1. Board of governors

Each state HEI has a board regulating the institution's affairs and ensuring that the institution fulfils its obligations.

Teachers and students at the HEI have representation on the board, and staff representatives have the right to attend and speak at board meetings. Teachers and student representatives are appointed through elections. A board consists of a maximum of 15 members. The Government appoints the chair of the board and seven more members. The board also includes a vice-chancellor, the school head, three members representing the teachers and three members representing the students.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

6.5.2. Requirements for post-graduate education

In post-graduate education there are four areas of research laid down by the Riksdag:

Humanities/social sciences, Medicine, Natural sciences and Technology. Post-graduate studies can only be offered by institutions that have been awarded an area of research i.e. each university has at least one such area. The Government may also grant an area of research to a university college.

Institutions with a right to award post-secondary degrees shall have at least one faculty board responsible for research and post-graduate studies. The institution itself decides which faculty boards to establish as well as their areas of responsibility, which does not necessarily coincide with an area of research. The faculty boards are also responsible for undergraduate education if no special boards have been set up by the university or university college.

University colleges without post-graduate education have special bodies for undergraduate education and research if there is no faculty board. At university colleges providing education in arts the board should set up a body responsible for development work in this area.

6.5.3. Internal organisation

HEIs decide on their internal organisation. This includes determining regulations concerning faculty boards, boards for development work in the arts and special bodies for education and research.

6.5.4. Teachers/educational personnel

The institutions appoint teaching staff at HEIs. Teachers at state universities and university colleges may be appointed as professors, lecturers, assistant lecturers, post-doctoral fellows, part-time teachers and guest lecturers (including visiting professors, lecturers and assistant lecturers). Apart from the employments of professors and lecturers which is regulated in the Higher Education Act, the HEIs themselves decide which teachers to employ.

The university or university college decides to what extent a position should focus on education, research (or development work in the arts for staff in the arts field) and administration. Teaching staff from all categories has teaching duties in undergraduate education, however post-doctoral fellows mainly carry out research.

Högskoleförordningen 1993:100 (The Higher Education Act)

6.6. Admission Requirements

To be admitted to a course or a study programme, the applicant must fulfill the basic conditions for eligibility as well as any specific qualifications prescribed by the HEI. Applications to the different courses and programmes are addressed to the National Admission Office for Higher Education (Verket för Högskoleservice, VHS), which handles the admission process for most HEIs. For admission to a university or university college that does not have this agreement with the National Admission Office for Higher Education, applications are addressed directly to the university or university college in question.

Each Institute of higher education determines the number of study places to be provided in different subjects. Indirectly, the Government determines the number of study places by setting a ceiling on the total allocation of state funds based on the number of students. If the ceiling is exceeded, the institution will not receive funds for all their students. The Government also determines the goals for the number of degrees in a limited number of programmes.

HEIs shall work actively to broaden student recruitment to include students from under-represented groups. They are urged to draw up local action plans with measurable goals for this.

Advanced courses in mathematics and languages give extra credit when rating merits for admission to higher education. The subjects given extra credit were introduced in the autumn of 2010. The purpose is to encourage upper secondary pupils to take advanced courses in mathematics and languages. This change also made it less advantageous to retake upper secondary courses in order to achieve a higher

grade, and to add courses after a completed upper secondary education in order to fulfill special qualifications required for eligibility.

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Verket för Högskoleservice, VHS (National Agency for Services to Universities and University Colleges)

6.6.1. Basic Eligibility requirements

To be eligible for higher education, a pupil leaving upper secondary school from a national or specially designed programme must have passed courses covering at least 90 per cent of the 2 500 upper secondary credit points required for a complete programme. The requirements to pass courses covering at least 90 per cent of the total amount of credits also apply for pupils from adult education, however a complete programme from municipal adult education covers less credits than upper secondary programmes; 2350 or 2115 credit points.

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

6.6.1.1. Eligibility for foreign students

Applicants from Denmark, Finland, Iceland or Norway who are eligible for higher education in their respective country are eligible for higher education in Sweden. Applicants whose native language is not Swedish, Danish, Faroese, Icelandic or Norwegian need to have an earlier education corresponding to Swedish upper secondary education as well as adequate command of Swedish and English.

6.6.1.2. Procedure for students lacking formal qualifications

HEIs are obliged upon request to examine whether an applicant who lacks formal qualifications has the necessary proficiency to meet admission requirements. Applicants, who through education in Sweden or elsewhere, practical experience or by other means are capable of profiting from the programmes they have applied for, should also be considered eligible.

6.6.2. Specific Eligibility requirements

Specific eligibility requirements for programmes leading to a professional degree are set out by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket). Each institution sets out specific eligibility requirements for courses or programmes not leading to professional degrees. The specific

eligibility criteria indicate the specific requirements needed to complete a certain programme of higher education. Specific requirements can include courses from the national programmes in upper secondary school or equivalent knowledge from one or more courses in higher education or other experience that is considered important, e.g. for vocational education. There are no specific admission arrangements for e.g. adult students in tertiary education or students in distance education.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Verket för Högskoleservice, VHS (National Agency for Services to Universities and University Colleges)

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

6.6.3. Selection Procedure

In selecting undergraduate students, the following criteria are used

- Grades
- University aptitude test (The university aptitude test is common for all Swedish universities and university colleges. The National Agency for Higher Education has the overall responsibility for the test and most HEIs organise it twice a year. The examination fee is SEK 350 and the result is valid for five years.)
- Other special examinations
- Previous education
- Work experience
- Selection to some programmes can be made on basis on interviews or proficiency in specific areas. See subsections.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

6.6.3.1. Admission to programmes for new entrants to higher education

One third of the places are usually distributed on the basis of grades and one third on results from the university aptitude test. Of the remaining third, universities and university colleges have the right to decide on criteria for selection, for example, prior learning and experience, proficiency in specific areas and interviews..If a large number of applicants' qualifications are equally good the selection may be based on gender in order to obtain more even gender representation. If a selection based on gender is not possible a selection based on specific tests may be used in such a case.

HEIs may, upon approval from the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket), apply a different set of selection criteria or allocate places differently to what is described above in selection for admissions to specific programmes. This may take place in the form of special tests and interviews (for admission to the medical programme). For admissions to art programmes, all places may be allocated on the basis of special tests other than that of the university aptitude test. HEIs may give priority to applicants who already are students in higher education.

6.6.3.2. Education programmes not intended for new entrants to higher education

For programmes not intended for new entrants to higher education – such as second level education - , the institutes themselves determine what selection criteria should be used. For admittance to second level studies, the applicant must have completed a first degree of at least 180 higher education credits, or have equivalent qualifications. Applicants to professional programmes covering the first and second cycle must fulfill the entry requirements for new entrants to higher education. For admittance to third level studies, (degree of Licentiate or degree of Doctor), the requirement is a degree at second level, at least 4 years of studies whereof at least 1 year at second level, corresponding foreign education, or equivalent knowledge.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

6.7. Registration and/or Tuition Fees

Public higher education in Sweden is grant-aided and free of charge. State-funded institutions are not allowed to charge fees. This means that all Swedish students and students from the EU/EEA are educated free of charge. Starting from the autumn term of 2011, citizens from other countries – ‘third country students’ – (from outside the EU/EEA and Switzerland) will have to pay tuition fees for higher education.

Parallel with the state-funded institutions for higher education there are a number of independent institutes, of which some are not grant-aided and charge fees, (see 6.17).

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

6.8. Financial Support for Students

Students who have been accepted by a university, university college or other post-secondary education and fulfil certain basic criteria have a right to student aid if they study at least half time, for at least three weeks. Student aid consists of two parts: a grant and a repayable loan. A student can choose to apply only for the grant. Under certain conditions a student may also be entitled to student aid for studies outside of Sweden. Under certain circumstances the student may also be eligible to a supplementary loan. For students with children there is a possibility to receive extra child allowance. The upper age limit for study support is 54 years. The National Board of Student Aid (Centrala studiestödsnämnden, CSN) is responsible for the allocation of financial support for studies and its repayment.

See subsections for more information.

[Centrala studiestödsnämnden \(The National Board of Student Aid\)](#)

6.8.1. Level of support and eligibility

The total level of study assistance in 2010 was SEK 2035 per week and out of this amount the grant was SEK674. Normally support is granted for a maximum of 240 weeks (12 terms). Students with children may receive a differentiated supplementary grant of about SEK 200 per week for two children. Students aged 25 or above may receive a supplementary loan of about SEK 1500 per month. The supplementary loan is intended for those who earlier have had income from employment and aims to facilitate transition between work and studies.

Study assistance for studies at HEIs abroad may be granted to Swedish citizens and certain foreign citizens who may be entitled to study assistance through their EU citizenship or the EEA agreement.

The main principle is that study outcomes from earlier studies should be assessed for every new application for study allowances. A certain income is allowed without a reduction of the study allowance.

6.8.2. Repayment

Repayment of the study loan starts at the earliest in January six months after a student has graduated. The repayment period for the loan is normally 25 years or up to the year of the borrower's 60th birthday. The system is based on annuity loans, which means that the annual repayment increases by 2 per cent each year, as long as interest rates are unchanged. There is a 'safety clause' whereby the amount to be paid each year can be reduced, depending on the borrower's solvency. In such cases the repayment amount is related to the borrower's income during the year in question. If the repayment is reduced one

year, this means that the borrower will have to pay back a bigger amount the following years, since the loan still has to be paid back within 25 years.

Centrala studiestödsnämnden (The National Board of Student Aid)

6.9. Organisation of the Academic Year

The HEI:s colleges decide how the school year is organised.

Courses are measured by a 'higher education credit' system, and these credits are equivalent to the ECTS's. The academic year is normally divided into two terms, each comprising 30 higher education credits. The autumn term begins in the middle or end of August and finishes in the middle of January, and the spring term begins in the middle of January and finishes at the beginning of June. Additional courses are often offered during the summer months.

The institutions for higher education are usually open all year, except for on national holidays. The timing of vacations, examination periods and other breaks vary between institutions and are decided upon by the higher education institution (HEI) themselves.

6.10. Branches of Study, Specialisation

Legislation for a three-cycle structure of higher education applies since 2007. The former degree system has been reformed and structured to fit the three-cycle structure, which is now the only structure for all higher education institutions. First and second level education is referred to as undergraduate education whilst third level education is referred to as post-graduate education.

All higher education is pursued in courses and programmes. The courses can be taken independently or as part of a study program to form degrees. The scale of a course or study programme is measured in 'higher education credits'. Full-time studies during one term, equals 30 higher education credits equal to 60 ECTS. HEI:s decide about the organisation of their courses. .

The degree descriptions are decided upon by the Government in line with the overarching Qualifications Framework of the European higher education Area (EHEA). A description of the different degrees, their scope and the learning outcomes expected are found in the Higher Education Ordinance and in the ordinance for The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet, SLU), and the ordinance for the Swedish National Defence College (Försvarshögskolan). Decisions governing which HEI:s should be entitled to award a particular qualification are made by the National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket), except concerning the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, the Swedish National Defence College, and the private educational providers for which the Government makes such decisions.

Long-study programmes of 4-6 years are maintained for professional degrees in e.g. medicine, pharmaceutical studies, psychology, dentistry, architecture, civil engineering and law. Higher education

leading to degrees that are normally shorter than 3 years and require less than 180 ECTS is offered at ISCED level 5B. Examples are dental hygienist and a number of shorter general, professional or artistic programmes. Credits from ISCED 5B studies can be transferred to first-cycle programmes and degrees at ISCED level 5A (course by course or as an alternative part of an ISCED 5A programme.) This is not centrally regulated but is handled by each higher educational institution..

See subsection for information.

6.10.1 The three cycle structure of higher education

Higher education is divided into three cycles building on each other. First-cycle qualifications give access to second-cycle studies, and second-cycle studies give access to third-cycle studies. At first and second level there are general degrees, artistic degrees and professional degrees. There are more than 40 professional academic degrees.

General first level qualifications (120-180 higher education credits): A university diploma (högskoleexamen) in the arts, sciences, and social sciences, as well as in artistic and professional fields, may be awarded on completion of 120 higher education credits (2 years full-time studies), including an independent project.

A Bachelor's degree in the arts, sciences, social sciences and artistic fields may be awarded on completion of 180 higher education credits (3 years full-time studies), including 90 credits in advanced studies in the main field, and an independent project equivalent to 15 credits. Qualifications in the field of Arts (konstnärliga examina) (2-3 years, 120-180 higher education credits) Exceptions: Folk high school teachers (60 credits). There are also vocational degrees at the undergraduate level covering 210 higher education credits.

Professional degrees (yrkesexamina) (2-3 years, 120-180 credit points)

First level or second level qualifications: Degree of Bachelor/Master of Education (Lärarexamen)

Second level qualifications (60-120 higher education credits):

A one-year Master's degree in the arts, sciences, social sciences or artistic fields may, on completion, be awarded for 60 higher education credits, including 30 credits for advanced study in the main field, and an independent project equivalent to 15 credits.

A two-year Master's degree in the arts, sciences, social sciences or artistic fields may, on completion be awarded for 120 higher education credits, including 60 credits for advanced study in the main field, and an independent project equivalent to 30 credits, or two 15-credit projects.

A professional Master's degree may be awarded on completion of between 240 and 330 higher education credits depending on the professional area, including an independent project equivalent to 30 credits, or two 15-credit projects.

A professional graduate diploma may be awarded on completion of between 60 and 90 higher education credits, including an independent project.

First level or second level qualifications: Degree of Bachelor/Master of Education (Lärarexamen)

The Master's degree is the equivalent of two years full-time studies and closely related to education at third level.

Third level (120-240 higher education credits):

A licentiate degree may be awarded on completion of 120 higher education credits, including a thesis equivalent to a minimum of 60 higher education credits.

A doctorate may be awarded on completion of 240 higher education credits, including a doctoral thesis equivalent to a minimum of 120 higher education credits.

For information on the position of the teaching qualification within the education and degree structure, see [8.1.6](#).

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet (The Swedish University of Agricultural Science)

Försvarshögskolan (The Swedish National Defence College)

6.11. Curriculum

There is no common minimum curriculum for HE courses or programmes. In the Degree Ordinance (a supplement to the Higher Education Ordinance) the Government has laid down which degrees may be awarded and their objectives. It is up to each institution to decide how to reach the goals. The organisation of teaching is determined locally within the HEI. Day and evening classes can be offered, the latter generally for part-time studies.

For undergraduate courses there must be a course syllabus and for a study programme a programme syllabus. The course syllabus must state the title of the course, the number of higher education credits, its level, aims, main content and course literature. In addition, the course syllabus must state the requirements regarding specific previous knowledge and other conditions for admission, the means by which students' performance is assessed, if there is a limitation to the number or times a student may retake a test to achieve a passing grade, and the grades used, as well as any subsections in the course. The programme syllabus states the courses covered by the study programme, the main structure of the programme and any requirements regarding specific previous knowledge.

The teaching language is usually Swedish but in many subjects the course literature is in English and to some extent in other languages. Efforts to make higher education more international has led to increased student exchange and thereby to an increasing number of courses and programmes given in English.

Language programmes are offered in a number of European and non-European languages. Sweden's five minority languages have special status.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

6.12. Teaching Methods

Teachers decide on methods as well as material. Students normally pay for books and reading material whereas the institution provides laboratory equipment etc. Students are expected to participate actively in group and laboratory work as well as in seminars. Attendance and participation may be monitored. There may be various forms of continual assessment of courses, for example through oral examinations, group presentations or seminars. ICT and computers are important aids in all higher education.

The institutions themselves determine how courses are to be organised. There are courses structured by discipline and courses of an inter-disciplinary nature. In some education programmes (e.g. teacher education and nursing) some of the education takes place at a workplace. A number of institutions of higher education have close co-operation with companies and industries in the region; degree work may be carried out in companies and theoretical studies can be mixed with practice.

The language of instruction is usually Swedish, but a large part of the course literature is in English, and therefore a good knowledge of both Swedish and English is essential, and a basic requirement for eligibility to higher education.

Instruction is also provided in alternative ways for example through problem-based learning [problem baserad inlärning \(pbl\)](#) where groups of students from different programmes e.g. medicine, health sciences and physiotherapy solve complex tasks together.

6.13. Student Assessment

There is some form of assessment at the end of every course. This may take the form of a written or oral examination or, for example, a group presentation at a seminar. There may be various forms of continual assessment. Attendance and participation, for example in seminars, may be monitored. All general degrees contain a dissertation corresponding to one term or half term's studies (see further [6.10.](#)), that is to be carried out individually or in a small group. A specially appointed examiner determines dissertation grades. There is no final examination; all grades attained for the different courses are included in the final degree certificate.

The normal categories used in grading are fail (Icke Godkänd, IG), pass (Godkänd, G) or pass with distinction (Väl Godkänd, VG), or a scale from one to five where five is the highest grade. However, a higher education institution may decide its own grading system and an increasing number are adopting the ECTS scale, a seven-tier grading system. The introduction of the new assessment scale is one step in the internationalisation of HEIs in the Bologna process, see [6.10.](#)

6.14. Progression of Students

Regulations regarding retaking of courses are determined locally at every HEI. A student who has failed a course is entitled to retake it at least five times according to the Higher Education Ordinance. There is no maximum time in which the students have to finish their courses; however student aid and grades may be affected if courses are not finished within the stipulated time. On failing a course progression can be affected in that eligibility for a proceeding course may be based on the course failed.

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

6.15. Certification

The Government defines the degrees that may be awarded in undergraduate education and post-graduate education in the Degree ordinance (Examensordningen). The ordinance states the scope and goals of each degree as well as other requirements for receiving certain degrees. A degree certificate includes results from all courses included in the course of study with numerical and qualitative grades. There is no final examination. The school head of the higher education institution signs the certificate.

Degrees in doctoral studies (licentiate degree and doctor's degree) may be awarded by the Universities, in any of the research areas: Humanities-Social Sciences, Medicine, Natural Sciences or Technology. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket) decides the undergraduate degrees that may be awarded at different HEI:s. However, the Government determines which degrees may be awarded by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet, SLU) and the Swedish National Defense College (Försvarshögskolan), as well as by independent institutions for higher education. (For more information about the levels of, and requirements for degrees, see 6.4)

Students who fulfill the requirements for a degree receive the relevant certificate by the HEI. A certificate may also be obtained for a single passed course.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet (The Swedish University of Agricultural Science)

Försvarshögskolan (The Ordinance for the Swedish Defence College)

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

6.16. Educational/Vocational Guidance, Education/Employment Links

According to the Higher Education Ordinance, students must have access to course counselors and careers guidance. HEI:s must ensure that prospective students are able to obtain the information they need about the HEI. Information on admission, rules for application, eligibility and selection must be

available. At the larger HEI:s there are normally special units to deal with student questions as well as study counselors, whilst at smaller university colleges there is usually one specific person responsible for study and guidance counseling.

The HEI:s are obliged to plan and dimension the education according to the demands of the labour market.

There is no state regulated link between higher education institutions and employers, however labour market days are organised by institutions of higher education at least once a year. Often these involve cooperation between student organisations and the institution's unit for student questions and counseling. Here the students describe their education and companies present themselves. The education at HEI:s is linked to working life and given an external perspective through lectures by visiting professors and consulting teachers. These visits provide possibilities to integrate an external perspective into the teaching of both vocational and theoretical programmes.

Many courses include a compulsory period of practical experience at a relevant workplace, e.g. engineering, teaching, public administration and health science programmes.

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

6.17. Private Education

Parallel with the state-funded institutions for higher education there are a number of independent organisers of higher education, some grant-aided and some not.

Any grant-aided independent institution authorised to award higher education degrees is obliged to assist in the follow-up and evaluation of its programmes. The grant-aided independent institutions base their work on an agreement with the Government, and are obliged to follow the statutes, ordinances and regulations relevant to the higher education sector. If a grant-aided independent institution is authorised to award qualifications, its students are entitled to receive financial support for their studies. An independent institution with governmental grants cannot charge tuition fees. There are some independent institutions that do not receive governmental grants; hence they are free to charge tuition fees. These institutions are classified as private.

6.18. Organisational Variations, Alternative Structures

Distance education has a long tradition in Sweden since we are a sparsely populated but large country. Most HEIs offer distance courses of varying scope and orientation. The courses are designed to meet the educational needs of the individual as well as those of society, their purpose is to provide study opportunities regardless of place of residence and work or family circumstances. Thus, distance education is a way to enable studies later in life and promote lifelong learning. Technology for this – personal computers, fax machines, interactive video and videophone – is creating further scope for distance education and has made this a priority development area.

6.19. Statistics

See subsections for information.

6.19.1. Number of students in higher education

In the autumn term 2009 there were a total of 360 933 students enrolled in undergraduate education, which was about 10 per cent more than in the autumn term the previous year, and the highest number ever. Out of these about 81 000 persons entered higher education for the first time. In the academic year 2008/09 57 500 higher education degrees were awarded to 50 200 persons (some were awarded more than one degree), whereof 32 700 women and 17 500 men. Out of those who were 24 years old in 2008/09, 44 percent started higher education studies before they turned 25.

In the autumn of 2009 there were nearly 17200 active doctoral students and out of these around 3400 were new doctoral students. Nearly 2700 doctoral degrees and 750 licentiate degrees were awarded in

the year 2009. Women were awarded 51 per cent of the doctoral degrees and 42 per cent of the licentiate degrees.

Source: Swedish National Agency for Higher Education and Statistics Sweden, "Universitet och högskolor. Doktorander och examina på forskarnivå 2009, Doctoral students and degrees at third cycle studies 2009"

Number of students enrolled in different fields of undergraduate education in year 2009, by sex and age*

Field of education	Men -24	Men 25-34	Men 35-	Women -24	Women 25-34	Women 35-	Total
Humanities & theology	18123	10956	5296	25337	14915	11395	86022
Social sciences & law	45549	27269	9918	67551	40143	29859	220289
Creative & artistic field	2167	1963	838	2962	2472	1502	11904
Medicine & dentistry	3340	2992	886	9797	7014	3864	27893
Natural sciences	25593	8850	2779	18022	7049	3845	66138
Unknown orientation	1157	552	23	1573	685	24	4014
Technology	47599	20279	4423	19618	7896	3109	102924
Health- & social care	1844	1904	956	11167	9101	8420	33392
Other orientation	3851	1900	577	3953	2155	1478	1391

- Please notice that the number of students enrolled in different fields summarizes to a higher number than the total number of 360 933 students enrolled in undergraduate education because a student can be enrolled within more than one field of education.

Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket)Högskoleverkets NU-databas (Database of the Swedish National Agency for higher education)

Number of students in postgraduate education in the autumn semester of 2009, divided by field, sex and age,

Field	Women -29	Women 30-39	Women 40-	Men - 29	Men 30-39	Men 40-	Total
Humanities & Social sciences	430	1 001	1 024	338	826	671	4 290
Medicine	846	1 217	1 164	501	889	688	5 315
Natural sciences	499	426	90	620	523	117	2 275
Agricultural Sciences	118	181	64	88	127	66	644
Technology	609	539	225	1 550	1280	466	4 669

Source: Högskoleverkets NU-databas (Database of the Swedish National Agency for higher education)

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

6.19.2. Number of institutions

In 2010 there were about 52 institutions for higher education in Sweden: 14 state universities, 21 state university colleges, 3 private institutions for higher education with undergraduate as well as postgraduate education, 3 private institutions for education leading to University Diplomas in nursing and a number of small private institutions for education leading to University Diplomas mainly in divinity (3), fine arts/music (2) or psychotherapy (5). The institutions range from large "classic" broad universities to specialised institutions of different sizes in e.g. fine arts or agricultural sciences.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

6.19.3. Trends in student distribution across regions

One third of all HEI students take courses rather than following a full programme leading to a specific exam. The number of distance students is continuously increasing, from 21 500 in academic year 1993/1994 to 53 600 students who solely follow distance studies in the spring semester of 2009. The proportion of distance students in spring 2009 was 19 % compared with 8.4 % in 1993/1994. Distance studies are more common among female students, 20%, than among male students, 16%. Two out of three of the students who solely follow distance studies are women. To study solely by distance is most common among older students; among the total number of students older than 34 years two out of five chose distance studies in the spring semester 2009.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

6.19.4. Percentage of the population aged 20-74 with at least 3 years of higher education or postgraduate education, by age and sex

Percentage of the population of the same age with at least 3 years of higher education or with post-graduate education in 2009

Percentage with at least 3 years of higher education				Total % with post graduate education
Age (years)	Total % of the population	Male %	Women %	
20-24	5	4	6	0
25-34	30	24	36	0.6
35-44	22	18	26	1.3
45-54	17	15	20	1.2
55-64	16	15	17	1.1
65-74	12	11	12	1.1

SCB: Statistics Sweden, Yearbook of Educational Statistics 2010 Tables

6.19.5. Certification rates by field of education and training

Number of graduates distributed by degree in 2008/2009

Degree	Number of graduates in 2008/2009	Number of Women	Number of men
University Diploma	1 209	690	519
Bachelor degree	15 019	10 217	4 802
Master degree	1 340	516	824
Master of Engineering	3 413	945	2 468
Bachelor degree in Law	1 033	684	349
University Diploma in Teaching	8 061	6 274	1 787
University Diploma in Medicine/Corresponding	983	589	394
Master of Psychology	415	308	107
University Diploma in Physical Therapy	203	158	45
University Diploma in Nursing	4 234	3 651	583
University Diploma in Social Care	300	280	20
BSc in Social Work (Social line)	1 741	1 526	215

University Diploma in specialist nursing	1 949	1 661	288
University Diploma in Special Education	416	392	24
University Diploma in Dentistry/ Corresponding	199	120	79
University Diploma in Vocational technology	24	14	10
Older degrees	5	4	1
Vocational University diploma	29 016	20 181	8 830
Total number of graduates	57 543		
Awarding certificates for the first time	41 845		

Data include degrees reported so far, as a rule 1 per cent can be added to the total number of degrees.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

6.19.6. Number of teachers and teacher/student ratios

In October 2009 there were 66 300 employees at higher education institutions, equivalent to 52 600 full-time equivalents. Compared to 2008 this is an increase of 2 400 employees. The number of employees engaged in research and teaching (excluding postgraduate students) amounted to 25 000 full-time employees. Compared to 2008 this is an increase of 1000 employees. The largest categories are senior lecturers: 6700 full-time employees and junior lecturers: 5 800 full-time employees, which equals 27 and 23 percent respectively of the teaching and researching staff. The number of students per teacher or researcher varies between subjects and institutions.

Statistiska centralbyrån (SCB)

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

7. CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR YOUNG SCHOOL LEAVERS AND ADULTS

The state and municipalities have the overall responsibility for providing an infrastructure for lifelong learning. The goal of adult education is to help adults supplement their education in order to strengthen the individual's position socially and in working life. Each municipality is responsible for ensuring that municipal adult education is available. Municipalities and county councils may commission other educational bodies to provide adult education.

Adult education provided by municipalities can be divided into:

- Municipal adult education, *kommunal vuxenutbildning* (komvux), consisting of basic adult education *grundläggande vuxenutbildning*, and upper secondary adult education *gymnasial vuxenutbildning*.
- Municipal adult education for adults with intellectual impairments, *vuxenutbildning för utvecklingsstörda, särvox*.
- Swedish tuition for immigrants, *svenskundervisning för invandrare, sfi*.

Post secondary Advanced Vocational Education programmes, in which a part of the time usually is spent at a workplace, is administrated and supervised by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, (Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan). The programmes are financed by the state and organised by privat and public actors, in conjunction with actors from working life.

Supplementary education programmes, *kompletterande utbildningar*, are independently organised and supported by the state (see [7.16.](#)). These constitute a complementary education at upper secondary level within certain subjects and vocational fields. The supervisory authority is the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education.

The Swedish Public Employment Service, Arbetsförmedlingen, a public authority with offices and personnel all over Sweden, is responsible for labour market training, *arbetsmarknadsutbildning*, intended primarily for unemployed adults in need of retraining or further training and education. The Parliament and the Government has assigned the Swedish Public Employment Service to focus on people who are at some distance from the labour market and who, for example, have been unemployed for a longer period of time.

The liberal adult education sector, *folkbildning*, provides adult education through folk high schools, *folkhögskolor*, and adult education associations, *studieförbund*. Some folk high school courses and some of the education within the supplementary education programmes and labour market training programmes are comparable to Advanced Vocational Education programmes in terms of content. Some folk high schools provide Swedish tuition for immigrants as well as, among other courses, second chance education where students can obtain the equivalent qualifications to the compulsory school leaving certificate and the upper secondary school leaving certificate

Arbetsförmedlingen (The Swedish Public Employment Service)

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

www.folkhogskola.nu

7.1. Historical Overview

The folk high schools and the adult education associations are the oldest forms of organised adult education in Sweden. During the 19th century the growing urge for knowledge and education led to the establishment of the liberal adult education movement, [folkbildningsrörelsen](#). The first folk high schools started in 1868 and aimed at providing a general civic education to older youth. The first folk high schools affiliated to political movements emerged in the beginning of the 20th century.

The adult education associations grew out of the popular movements, [folkkrörelser](#). [These movements were for example the Good Templars, the trade unions, the consumer cooperative movement, and the free churches which opposed the strong position of the State Lutheran Church, the Temperance movement etc.](#) Education was not open to all so these popular movements took education into their own hands; the first study groups (evening classes) were formed in 1902.

Alongside the educational opportunities for adults provided by the schools for young people, the 1950s and 1960s saw the development of separate schools for adults. State evening schools where adults could take lower and higher school leaving certificates were founded in 1938. In the 1950s intensive study evening courses were introduced, providing opportunities for adults to supplement their education at lower and upper secondary levels. Initially, these evening schools were run mainly by adult educational associations. In 1963 they were awarded state grants. Subsequently, they underwent a period of rapid expansion and nearly all evening schools came under the control of the municipalities. Adult education was also organised by the vocational schools as part-time courses. Courses in technical subjects, offered as full-time courses during the day, were also offered as part-time courses in the evening in technical evening schools.

In 1967 the Riksdag decided on an extensive reform of adult education. This involved a dual structure comprising state adult education with national recruitment and municipal adult education recruiting locally. As a result of the reform, the upper secondary evening schools were replaced by municipal adult education kommunal vuxenutbildning. In 1977 education for adults corresponding to compulsory school for young people was introduced – in 1992 integrated into municipal adult education. Municipal adult education is a part of the public education system.

In 2001 the Government decided on national goals and strategies for the whole adult education system.

In July 2009, the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan), was established, and the Higher Vocational Education Act entered into force on 15 April. The provisions in this Act aim to ensure the establishment within higher vocational education of post-upper secondary (ISCED levels 4 and 5b) vocational education that meets the needs of the labour

market. This means that supplementary courses, adult apprenticeships for certain skilled trades and advanced vocational education programmes are regulated under one single umbrella 'advanced vocational education'. Advanced vocational education programmes are organised by state higher education institutions, municipalities, county councils and private natural or legal persons. Education programmes are to be characterised by a strong link to workplaces and based on a solid theoretical ground. In addition, programmes are to be developed and run in cooperation with working life and education providers. After applying to, and being approved by the Agency, a provider is eligible for central government grants or special funds for the programme.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.2. Ongoing Debates and future developments

See subsections.

7.2.1 New Education Act

On 23 March 2010, the Government presented the bill 'The new Education Act - for knowledge, choice and security' (Govt. Bill 2009/10:165) to the Riksdag. After the Riksdag has processed and approved the bill, the new Education Act is expected to apply as of 1 July 2011.

The proposed reforms of the adult education in the new Education Act are as follows:

- Adult education policy objectives will be introduced in all three types of school, i.e. municipal adult education, education for adults with intellectual impairment and Swedish tuition for immigrants (sfi).
- Validation and individual study plans will be regulated in the Act for all three types of school.
- The right to adult education at upper secondary level in order to achieve basic eligibility for higher education institutions will be introduced for pupils who have attended a vocational programme at upper secondary level.
- The possibility of re-taking courses in municipal adult education will be limited
- New provisions on systematic quality enhancement procedures that are to be documented are introduced while the requirements for quality assessment reports and municipal school plans are removed. This means that each body responsible for schools is to systematically and continuously plan, monitor and develop its educational services. The focus is to be on achieving the national objectives for education.

- The option of establishing local boards in municipal schools will be made permanent. A local board will be able to take decisions on certain matters that are otherwise the responsibility of the school head. The local board for a unit within adult education provided by a municipality shall have members representing students and members representing the staff. These members can not outweigh the other members. The local board can not take decisions regarding individual students.
- The Swedish Schools Inspectorate, Skolinspektionen, is given a clear legal basis for its supervision in the Education Act. A scale of sanctions will be introduced, where the ambition, as far as possible, is to have the same sanctions against municipal and independent schools. Opportunities for the Swedish Schools Inspectorate to perform clear, effective supervision will be improved by allowing them to impose fines on both public and private responsible bodies and to use other sanctions.
- Clearer basic values for all types of schools will be laid down by law. The responsibility of education to communicate and gain acceptance for respect for human rights and fundamental democratic values will be clarified.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

7.2.2. New grading scale for compulsory school, upper secondary school and municipal adult education

The Government has proposed a new grading scale for the the public school system (Government Bill 2008/09:66). The new grading scale will contain six levels and a seventh coding to indicate that a grade cannot be awarded. The five levels A-E will denote pass results and F a non-pass result. If material for the assessment is entirely non-existent due to substantial absenteeism, a grade will not be awarded, and this will be designated by a horizontal line. This change can be implemented from the school year 2011/12.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

7.3. Specific Legislative Framework

Government provisions on adult education are laid down in the Education Act (1985:1100) and in a number of ordinances. The Education Act is currently being reviewed, see 7.2.

Supplementary education programmes, kompletterande utbildningar, are governed by the Ordinance on government subsidies to supplementary education programmes (SFS 2000:251). The Ordinance sets certain requirements on the course provider about what quality standards the course must have to be

allowed to be called a supplementary education programme and come under government supervision. Government supervision means that the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is entitled to inspect the course. Higher vocational education are governed by the Act (SFS 2009:128) and the Ordinance (SFS 2009:130)

Since 1975 all employees are entitled by law to unpaid leave of absence for studying, provided they had the same employer the last six months or for a total of 12 months during the two previous years. An employee is also entitled to attend studies arranged by the trade unions irrespective of employment status. Each person has the right to choose the orientation of his or her studies. Neither the employer nor the union can give priority to persons opting for study programmes considered important from the viewpoint of the company or union. Nor are there any restrictions on the duration of studies. Self-tuition is not regulated in the law. The employer may postpone the leave of absence for six months.

The unemployed are obliged to take part in stipulated education, and labour market education comes under the Ministry of Labour. This obligation is regulated in the ordinance on labour market training programmes (2000:634).

Förordning (2000:634) om arbetsmarknadspolitiska program (The Ordinance on Labour Market Training Programmes)

Förordning (2002:1012) om kommunal vuxenutbildning (The Ordinance on municipal adult education)

Förordning (2009:43) om statsbidrag för yrkesinriktad gymnasial vuxenutbildning m.m.

Förordning (1992:736) om vuxenutbildning för utvecklingsstörda

Förordning om svenskundervisning för invandrare, (The Ordinance on Swedish tuition for immigrants) 1994:895

Skollagen (The Education Act, 1985:1100)

Förordning om statligt stöd till kompletterande utbildningar (The Ordinance on government subsidies to supplementary education programmes) SFS 2000:251.

Myndigheten för Yrkehögskolan (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.4. General Objectives

The state education system for adults aims to give adults the opportunity to supplement their education in accordance with their individual needs. The legislation is rights based and each adult over the age of 20 has the right to education equivalent to the compulsory school and the upper secondary school. The goal for the state education system for adults is to strengthen the learners' position in the labour market and strengthen their capacities to become in cultural and political life. The quality of education provided must be equivalent regardless the type of school and irrespective of where it is located.

The curriculum (Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna, Lpf 94) for adult education under municipal responsibility is laid down by the Government and sets out the overall goals and general principles of adult education. According to the curriculum, adult education should:

- Bridge education gaps and thus work for increased equality and social justice.
- Enhance students' ability to comprehend, critically examine and take part in cultural, social and political life.
- Educate adults for a range of work tasks.
- Contribute to modernization of working life and the achievement of full employment.
- Satisfy the individual desires of adults for broader study and education opportunities and give the opportunity to supplement upper secondary education.

The state education system for adults must be in line with fundamental democratic values. Everyone working within the adult education system should promote respect for each individual's value as well as for the environment. In particular, steps should be taken to promote gender equality and prevent any attempt by pupils to subject others to abusive treatment i.e. bullying and racism.

Basic municipal adult education, [grundläggande vuxenutbildning](#), aims to provide adults with the knowledge and skills equivalent to the level acquired in compulsory school. The education should prepare the students for participation in social and professional life, and create a platform for future studies or a career. The objectives of the teaching are determined by the individual's prior knowledge. When these objectives have been achieved, the course of education ends. The participant decides how fast the studies proceed. This means that the course can be combined with work or other types of schooling.

Municipal upper secondary adult education, [gymnasial vuxenutbildning](#), aims to provide adults with knowledge and skills equivalent to the level acquired at upper secondary school. Municipal adult education is provided in the form of courses, and courses in the various subjects usually build on each other. The syllabi and grading criteria in municipal adult education are the same as those in upper secondary for young people, with the exception of specialised sports. There may also be other courses, designed to meet individual learner's needs. The study plan is individual and adapted to individual needs. This means that the participant determines the pace of study, the number of subjects and the combination of subjects. Many students only study one or two courses.

(Vuxenutbildning för utvecklingsstörda), Särvux, is education for adults with intellectual impairments under the responsibility of municipalities. Education for adults with intellectual impairments is a separate school form for adults with intellectual impairments who wish to supplement their education, see [10](#).

Swedish tuition for immigrants, [svenskundervisning för invandrare](#), sfi is organised by municipalities and aims mainly to provide adult immigrants with basic knowledge and proficiency in the Swedish language and knowledge about Swedish society. Studies in sfi are to be adapted to the needs of the individual, and characterised by flexibility. The syllabus enables the student to combine or integrate courses in sfi with studies in upper secondary school, basic or upper secondary adult education, adult education for those with learning disabilities, practical work-place experience, employment or other work. Municipalities and county councils may commission other educational bodies to provide adult

education, thus sfi is also provided by some grant-aided independent organizers and some folk high schools.

Supplementary education programmes, [kompletterande utbildningar](#), are independently organised and supported by the state (see [7.16.](#)). The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is the authority responsible for the administration and supervision of the programmes. Supplementary education programmes constitute a complementary education at upper secondary level within certain subjects and vocational fields. The educational provider decides on the content of the course and its syllabus.

Advanced vocational education aims at promoting economic growth and employment and to meet emerging needs for enhanced vocational skills in industry and commerce and to provide education to individuals who do not see traditional academic education as their first option. Advanced vocational education is arranged by independent educators. A certificate from the three-year upper secondary education or corresponding qualifications are required for admission. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is the authority responsible for grant allocation to- and supervision of the programmes.

The purpose of the **liberal adult education, [folkbildning](#)**, is to strengthen and develop democracy and make it easier for people to influence their life situation and increase involvement in societal development. Liberal adult education also aims to close educational gaps and raise levels of education, and to broaden interest in and increase participation in cultural life. The state determines the purpose of the state grant for liberal adult education whilst the folk high schools themselves determine the goals.

The **labour market training programmes, [arbetsmarknadsutbildning](#)**, are intended to increase the knowledge of job seekers so that they can have a stronger position on the labour market and improve their chances to get a job. Specific programmes should also stimulate employers into recruiting specific groups of unemployed. Labour market training programmes should also counteract the shortage of labour by giving job seekers knowledge required by the labour market.

Skolverket (Swedish National Agency for Education)

Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish Public Employment Service)

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.5. Types of Institution

Further description of each type of institution is provided in the subsections. For information on education for adults with intellectual impairment [vuxenutbildning för utvecklingsstörda](#), [särsvux](#) see [10.](#)

7.5.1. Adult education under municipal responsibility

Municipal adult education [kommunal vuxenutbildning](#), education for adults with intellectual impairments [särsvux](#) (further described in [10.](#)) and Swedish tuition for immigrants [svenskundervisning för invandrare](#), [sfi](#) (further described in [7.5.2.](#)), are available in all municipalities. Municipal adult education may be offered by various education providers.

7.5.2. Swedish Tuition for Immigrants

Swedish tuition for immigrants, [svenskundervisning för invandrare](#), [sfi](#) aims to provide adult (over the age of 16) immigrants with basic knowledge and proficiency in the Swedish language. Tuition is free of charge for students. Each municipality must as soon as possible, and at the latest within three months, ensure that tuition is offered to any applicant resident in the municipality who lack basic knowledge in Swedish. Finnish citizens who work in Sweden and live in Finland close to the Swedish border are also eligible. There are also folk high schools that provide Swedish tuition for immigrants.

[Skolverket](#) (Swedish National Agency for Education)

7.5.3. Supplementary education programmes

Supplementary education programmes, [kompletterande utbildningar](#), are independently organised and supported by the state (see [7.16.](#)). These constitute a complementary education at upper secondary level within certain subjects and vocational fields. The supplementary education programmes are under the supervision of the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education.

[Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan](#) (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.5.4. Advanced Vocational Education and Training

Advanced vocational education is a form of post-secondary education. The aim of the education programmes is to satisfy the needs of the labour market for skilled labour with appropriate competence. In most of the advanced vocational education programmes part of the education is carried out at a workplace. Admission criteria is a school leaving certificate from a three-year upper secondary education or corresponding qualifications. Many programmes cover two years of studies (corresponding to 80 weeks of full-time studies), but the length may vary between six months and more than two years.

Each advanced vocational education programme has an education plan drawn up by the organiser and approved by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education. There are private and public organisers. The education plan regulates e.g. how the education should be carried out, the overall goals of the education and the goals for each individual course. It also covers teachers' eligibility and admission requirements.

In July 2009 the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education was established to develop and oversee a new form of publicly funded vocational education at post upper secondary level (ISCED levels 4 and 5) called Higher Vocational Education Courses, HVECs. They cover a wide range of vocational areas and have one goal in common, namely the provision of advanced vocational education, tailored to the needs of the labour market.

HVECs are intended to serve the needs of job seekers and industries where competence and labour are in demand. Companies and the business sector are partners in the design and construction and content is jointly determined. HVECs last for at least six months and participant progress and outcomes are assessed and recognised by a certificate/diploma that validates their skills for employment.

The role of the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is to set up a common framework agreed on and followed by vocational education and training providers. Content is based on the knowledge and experience of what is needed in working life.

As the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is responsible for all publicly funded courses in vocational higher education throughout the country, the principal missions of the Agency are to:

- determine what courses are to be provided
- make decisions on public funding to be allocated to education providers
- assess and audit quality and outcomes of courses
- analyse and assess needs for skilled competence and the development of the labour market
- coordinate and support a national framework for validation
- serve as the national coordinator for EQF –the European Qualifications Framework in Lifelong Learning

Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.5.5. Liberal Adult Education

The organisers of liberal adult education, [folkbildning](#), i.e. the adult educational associations, [studieförbund](#), and folk high schools, [folkhögskolor](#), determine the goals of their activities. This form of education aims to promote democracy, equality, gender equality as well as international and cultural understanding and development. Liberal education seeks to give everyone, but particularly those with limited education, a sound basis of knowledge and enhanced influence over their living conditions, as well as to stimulate interest in new areas.

Liberal adult education is largely financed through support from the state, county councils and municipalities. The Swedish National Council of Adult Education (Folkbildningsrådet) is responsible for allocating the state support to adult education associations and folk high schools.

[Folkbildningsrådet \(Swedish National Council of Adult Associations\)](#)

[Utbildningsdepartementet \(The Ministry of Education and Research\)](#)

7.5.5.1. State grants and administrative bodies for liberal adult education

The Government grants state funds to make it possible for people to gain influence their own lives and contribute to involvement and participation in the development of society through education. In addition, state grants contribute to strengthening and developing democracy as well as broadening cultural interest in society and expanding participation in cultural life. Activities that aim at closing educational gaps and raising the level of education in society are given priority as well as activities for people that are educationally, socially or culturally outside mainstream society. People with foreign background, people with intellectual impairments and the unemployed are prime target groups.

The Swedish National Council of Adult Education (Folkbildningsrådet) is responsible for allocating state grants, as well as for the administration, organisation and evaluation of activities. The Swedish National Council of Adult Education comprises The Swedish National Federation of Study Associations (Folkbildningsförbundet), the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (Sveriges kommuner och landsting) and the Interest Organisation of Popular Movement Folk High Schools (Rörelsefolkhögskolornas intresseorganisation, RIO). Each year the authority submits a budget report for the coming two years to the Government, which includes a review and evaluation of the year's activities. The state is responsible for evaluation in order to provide the basis for assessment of whether the grants have been used in accordance with goals and conditions.

[Folkbildningsförbundet \(The Swedish National Federation of Study Associations\)](#)

[Folkbildningsrådet \(Swedish National Council of Adult Associations\)](#)

[Rörelsefolkhögskolornas intresseorganisation \(The Interest Organization of Popular Movement Folk High Schools\)](#)

Sveriges kommuner och landsting (SKL) (The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR))

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

7.5.5.2. Folk High Schools

There are 150 folk high schools, [folkhögskolor](#), in Sweden, of which county councils or municipalities own and run 43. The remaining 107 are run by various popular movements, [folkrörelser](#), and organisations. The folk high schools are not tied to a national curriculum; each school determines its own activities on the basis of their ideology and preferences for particular spheres of knowledge.

The special conditions for state grants to folk high schools state that each school must have a governing body and that all state-assisted tuition must be free of charge. General courses at folk high schools must account for at least 15 per cent of its total activities. The general courses are primarily intended for those who lack compulsory or upper secondary education and their length vary.

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

7.5.5.3. Adult Education Associations

Nine adult education associations, [studieförbund](#), receive funds from the state's appropriation for liberal adult education, [folkbildning](#). Each association has its own particular profile, reflecting the interests of the organisations affiliated to it.

Adult education organisations run study circles, cultural programs and other liberal adult education activities for the general public as well as for their respective member organisations. The study circle, [studiecirkel](#), is the most common activity and most typical of the adult education associations. Study circles are run in a variety of subjects and are based on the interests of participants. The group together plan and run their studies with or without a teacher. The condition for state grants is that the study circles are jointly and systematically run. Each study circle or cultural group must have a leader who is approved by the local section of the educational association.

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

7.5.6. Labour Market Training

Labour market training, [arbetsmarknadsutbildning](#), is adult education that is given priority on labour market policy grounds and directed towards persons who are at least 25 years old, and who are, or who are at risk of becoming, unemployed. It is either a form of retraining to update knowledge and skills or new vocational training. The programmes are most often organised by private educational providers; some programmes are organised by university colleges with a special orientation. Decisions on labour market training are made by the [Swedish Public Employment Service](#).

[Arbetsförmedlingen](#) (the Swedish Public Employment Service)

7.6. Geographical Accessibility

Municipal adult education, *kommunal vuxenutbildning*, education for adults with intellectual impairments [vuxenutbildning för utvecklingsstörda](#), [särvux](#), Swedish tuition for immigrants [svenskundervisning för invandrare](#), *sfi*, liberal adult education, *folkbildning*, and labour market training, [arbetsmarknadsutbildning](#), are available in all municipalities. Advanced vocational education programmes and supplementary education programmes, [kompletterande utbildningar](#), are offered all over the country.

For students in sparsely populated areas, distance learning is possible. However, distance learning is promoted as an option irrespective of if students live in sparsely populated areas or not.

[Skolverket](#) (Swedish National Agency for Education)

[Arbetsförmedlingen](#) (the Swedish Public Employment Service)

[Folkbildningsrådet](#) (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

[Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan](#) (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.7. Admission Requirements

The municipality is obliged to offer basic adult education corresponding to the compulsory school, *grundskolan*, (up to ninth grade) for everybody over 20 who does not have the proficiency normally gained in the compulsory school.

For upper secondary adult education, municipalities must strive to offer courses that meet the demands and needs. If the number of places is fewer than the number of eligible applicants for a course, priority must be given to those who lack the knowledge taught in the course and has previous short education.

According to the particular criteria for eligibility applicants should 1) have limited education, 2) be in need of the course for a planned or current occupation, to supplement an incomplete programme from the upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan, or to supplement their qualifications, 3) be able to complete the studies in accordance with the agreed study plan.

Swedish tuition for immigrants [svenskundervisning för invandrare, sfi](#), is offered to all immigrants from the age of 16. The Government decides on exemptions to the conditions for eligibility.

The organiser of supplementary education programmes, [kompletterande utbildningar](#), decides on admission requirements. Most of them require a school leaving certificate from upper secondary school, while other solely require the applicant to be at least 18 years old and have completed compulsory school, grundskolan. For admission to some supplementary education programmes, work life experience is often required.

The stakeholders in liberal adult education themselves formulate their own admission requirements, eligibility requirements and restrictions. The lower age limit for folk high schools is 18 years.

Labour market training, [arbetsmarknadsutbildning](#) is available from the age of 25, for unemployed and those who are at risk of becoming unemployed. The education organiser can decide on additional admission requirements.

[Skolverket \(Swedish National Agency for Education\)](#)

[Arbetsförmedlingen \(the Swedish Public Employment Service\)](#)

[Folkbildningsrådet \(Swedish National Council of Adult Associations\)](#)

[Myndigheten för Yrkehögskolan \(the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education\)](#)

7.8. Registration and/or Tuition Fees

State and municipal adult education is grant aided and free of charge. Advanced vocational education programmes receive grants from the state and are free of charge.

The organiser can decide to charge for learning aids. Private education organisers often charge fees. In some cases students can get study assistance to cover these, see 7.9.

In supplementary education a fee is charged for the courses. The cost can vary depending on whether the course is government-subsidised or not. Some courses entitle a student to a study grant, others do not.

[Centrala studiestödsnämnden \(The National Board of Student Aid\)](#)

[Utbildningsdepartementet \(Ministry of Education and Research\)](#)

7.9. Financial Support for Learners

The National Board of Student Aid (Centrala studiestödsnämnden, CSN) is responsible for the allocation of financial support for studies. CSN approves and distributes financial aid for studies; grants and loans. CSN also handles repayment of the loans. The main principle is that earlier studies are assessed for each new application.

Students in municipal adult education can apply for student aid, which consists of a grant and a loan. The total amount (grant and loan) is SEK 2035 per full-time study week in 2010. The grant part is SEK 674. Students over the age of 25 can obtain the higher grant for studies at compulsory or upper secondary school level, or for attending vocational training at upper secondary level for adults. For students with children there is also a possibility to receive extra child allowance. The extra child allowance is 127 - 249 SEK per week depending on the number of children. For more information on study assistance see [6.8](#).

Students at folk high schools, folkhögskolor, and, advanced vocational education programmes are entitled to study support.

Supplementary educations, kompletterande utbildningar are provided by independent organisers of which some charge fees for the education. These educations are administrated by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, who decides in which of these educations students are entitled to study support.

During labour market training, participants receive financial support in form of a grant from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, Försäkringskassan. If the participant is entitled to unemployment benefits, the grant corresponds to this amount.

The government has decided on a "sfi-bonus", so students in Swedish tuition for immigrants can receive extra support if the studies are completed within a certain time. The purpose of this is to encourage immigrants over the age of 16 to learn Swedish faster and by this enhance their chances of finding a job. The municipalities are responsible for the distribution of the grant, which corresponds to a maximum of SEK 12000.

Centrala studiestödsnämnden (The National Board of Student Aid)

Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish Public Employment Service)

Försäkringskassan (Swedish Social Insurance Agency)

Myndigheten för Yrkehögskolan (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.10. Main Areas of Specialisation

Each type of adult education is further described in the subsections.

7.10.1. Municipal adult education at basic and upper secondary level

Municipal adult education, kommunal vuxenutbildning, includes education at the equivalent levels of compulsory school, [grundskola](#) and upper secondary education, [gymnasieskola](#). Information about the goals for adult education is given in the subsections

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

7.10.1.1. Basic adult education

The syllabi laid down by the Swedish National Agency for Education sets out the detailed goals for basic adult education, [grundläggande vuxenutbildning](#). Courses are offered in the following subjects: Swedish/Swedish as a second language, English, mathematics, social studies, religious studies, history, geography, physics, chemistry, biology and home economics and nutrition. The syllabi are the same as for compulsory schools, see [4.10.](#), but the courses may be split into several sub-courses. The curriculum for basic adult education is the curriculum for the non compulsory school forms, Lpf 94.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

7.10.1.2. Upper secondary adult education

Upper secondary adult education, [gymnasial vuxenutbildning](#) offers all subjects available at upper secondary school except for sports and chess. The project work [projektarbete](#) mandatory for completion of upper secondary school is not needed for completion of upper secondary adult education. The compulsory subjects, in which a grade is required for a certificate of the completion of upper secondary school, are Swedish/Swedish as second language, English, social studies, religious studies, mathematics and natural science. The syllabi are common for adult upper secondary education and upper secondary school (see [5.13.](#)); the knowledge goals are the same for adults as for young people, but course contents, scope and emphasis can differ. A work plan defines the measures for achieving the goals of the course and is put together by teachers, student representatives and other staff involved. The school head has the final say over the work plan. The curriculum for upper secondary adult education is the curriculum for the non compulsory school forms, Lpf 94.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

7.10.2. Swedish tuition for immigrants

Swedish tuition for immigrants, [svenskundervisning för invandrare, sfi](#), follows the basic values given in the national curriculum for non-compulsory schools (Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna, Lpf 94). The syllabus is determined by the Government and describes three different study paths depending on the individual's level of knowledge, experience and study goals.

Tuition should be related to the students' needs and be based on their circumstances and experience. The municipality must work together with the local employment agency to enable a combination of Swedish tuition with workplace experience or gainful employment to give students the opportunity to practice speaking Swedish. Swedish tuition for immigrants may be combined with other forms of public education e.g. upper secondary studies for youth. Municipalities and county councils may commission other educational bodies to provide Swedish for immigrants.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

7.10.3. Supplementary education programmes

Supplementary education programmes, [kompletterande utbildningar](#) are independently organised under the supervision of the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, and supported by grants from the state (see [7.16](#)). These programmes constitute a complementary education at both upper secondary level and post upper secondary level within certain subjects and vocational fields, e.g. arts and handicrafts.

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.10.4. Advanced Vocational Education and Training

In July 2009 the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education was established to develop and oversee a new form of publicly funded vocational education at post-secondary level ; 'higher vocational education'. Such programmes exist in a wide range of vocational areas and their common objective is to provide advanced vocational education and training tailored to labour market needs. Right from the initial phase, companies and business sector social partners participate in the development of these programmes. Each higher vocational programme has a steering group in which the social partners and representatives from working life form a majority.

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.10.5. Liberal education

The folk high schools, [folkhögskolor](#) offer courses at various levels from general courses at compulsory and upper secondary levels to special courses in subjects such as music, media studies, handicraft, languages, international development co-operation, vocational courses etc. For information on the activities of adult education associations, [studieförbund](#), see [7.5.5.](#)

[Folkbildningsrådet](#) (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

7.10.6. Labour market training

Labour market training, [arbetsmarknadsutbildning](#) is mainly vocationally oriented and aims to enhance the possibilities for participants to become employed, but it can also be a steppingstone to further studies. The training covers a wide range of vocational areas and is continuously adapted to the needs of the labour market. This training comes under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour.

[Arbetsförmedlingen](#) (the Swedish Public Employment Service)

7.11. Teaching Methods

The adult education system aims to use participants' previous education and experience to deepen and develop their knowledge as a basis for work and further study and participation in society. How to achieve this is not centrally regulated; each individual organiser decides on how to organise the work and the teachers are free to choose teaching methods. ICT is frequently used as a pedagogical tool. Each student has an individual study plan which forms the basis for planning studies in adult education provided by the municipalities, [kommunernas vuxenutbildning](#).

Through its steering documents advanced vocational education is linked with work and training. All forms of technology are used in teaching including distance learning.

Within liberal adult education each school determines its own profile and the teachers are free to choose their own teaching methods. It is common that students work together in small groups. Computers and other ICT solutions are used and distance studies are highly prominent. Studies in a folk high school or in a study circle can be partly or fully on a distance.

Teaching methods in labour market training varies widely; some programmes are linked with training at a workplace.

Skolverket (Swedish National Agency for Education)

Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish Public Employment Service)

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.12. Trainers

The same regulations for education and competence apply to teachers in adult education as in the rest of the public school system, for further information see [8.](#) There are no formal regulations within higher vocational education and supplementary education programmes, [kompletterande utbildningar](#), because skilled personnel from the industry often teach these courses. Liberal adult education is less regulated than public adult education as regards teachers' eligibility and formal education; both adult education organisations and folk high schools have a great deal of autonomy.

Skolverket (Swedish National Agency for Education)

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.13. Learner Assessment/ Progression

For information about learner assessment and progression in the different types of institutions, see subsections.

7.13.1. Adult education under municipal responsibility

Anyone who wishes to receive a grade from adult education is entitled to examination in all courses and the project work offered in municipal adult education – whether a previous grade is held or not. A student attending regular upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan, however may not sit for examination in a course or project for which he/she has received a passing grade. The learners are not obliged to complete their studies within a prescribed period; however the study support system sets a limitation to the duration of studies. Courses can be taken individually, full-time or part-time. Assessment can be oral or written and is carried out continuously. Pupil progress is measured qualitatively. The grading system used in municipal upper secondary adult education is related to the goals of each course as laid down in the syllabi. Grading criteria stipulate the knowledge required for each grade. The grades awarded are:

Pass with Special Distinction (Mycket Väl Godkänd, MVG),

Pass with Distinction (Väl Godkänd, VG)

Pass (Godkänd, G)

Not passed (Icke Godkänd, IG)

If the teacher lacks a basis for assessment of student achievement due to student absence, no grade is given. For basic adult education and supplementary education programmes Pass with Special Distinction is not awarded.

In basic adult education an overall grade for a course is awarded when a student has received a grade for all sub-units included in the course. Testing and diagnostic materials used in basic adult education are the same as those used in compulsory school. In upper secondary adult education grades are awarded after every course completed and, if included in the studies, for the project work. In order for the assessment to be as uniform as possible across the country, it is recommended that teacher's use centrally approved examinations to aid them in their assessment.

In Swedish tuition for immigrants, [svenskundervisning för invandrare](#), [sfi](#) grades are awarded on a two-point scale: Pass (Godkänt, G) and Pass with Distinction (Väl Godkänt, VG). If a student does not attain a pass grade, the teacher shall state the level of knowledge attained by the student in relation to the goals of the course in a certificate.

For information on grading in the municipal education for adults with intellectual impairments, Vuxenutbildning för utvecklingsstörda, [särsvux](#) see [10.](#)

The grading system of municipal adult education will change as from the autumn of 2011, see 7.2.

Skolverket (Swedish National Agency for Education)

7.13.2. Supplementary education programmes

The organiser of a supplementary education programme awards grades or a certificate describing what subjects the pupil has studied.

[Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan](#) (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.13.3. Advanced Vocational Education

In advanced vocational education the grades are Pass (Godkänt, G), Not passed (Icke godkänt, IG) and Pass with Distinction (Väl Godkänt, VG).

[Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan](#) (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.13.4. Liberal adult education

Within liberal adult education a certificate is normally issued on completion of studies. There are exceptions where grades are given. In folk high schools students who so wish may be given an overall assessment of their aptitude for studies. This assessment is an appraisal of the student's scholastic capabilities as a whole and is based on the assessments of all teaching staff. Scholastic aptitude assessments are given for those study courses that the school considers to be relevant. Factors taken into account when making the assessment are knowledge and skills and development of these, capacity for analysis, processing and overview, ambition, endurance and capacity to organise studies, and social skills

The following grades are used:

Excellent study aptitude (4)

Very good study aptitude (3)

Good study aptitude (2)

Poor study aptitude (1)

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

7.14. Certification

See subsections for information about certification awarded by the different types of institutions.

7.14.1. Municipal adult education

Students with passing grades in all compulsory subjects of a basic municipal adult education programme (programme within [grundläggande vuxenutbildning](#)) that is: Swedish/Swedish as a second language, English, mathematics and social science, are entitled to a final certificate. Other subjects, such as home economics and consumer studies, religious studies, history, geography, physics, chemistry and biology can also be included in the certificate. Each student decides which other subjects are to be included in the final certificate. The municipalities (in the first instance) and principals at each school (in the second) are responsible for awarding certificates and assessing the knowledge.

A student in upper secondary adult education [gymnasial vuxenutbildning](#) who has completed all compulsory subjects (subjects that students must attain a passing grade in to receive a school leaving certificate) and additional courses or project work contained in the syllabus, totaling a minimum of 2350 upper secondary credits (see [5.11.](#)), is entitled to a leaving certificate for adult upper secondary education. Where students have more than one grade for the same or comparable course, the higher grade is entered on the certificate.

Skolverket (Swedish National Agency for Education)

7.14.2. Supplementary education programmes

On completion of a supplementary education programme, the participant is given a grade or an attendance certificate from the educational provider with assessment grades defined by each provider. Numerous schools issue diplomas as well. Since the schools do not follow national syllabuses, the leaving certificates have no official status. This means that the leaving certificate does not provide a basis for applying to a higher education institution.

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.14.3. Advanced Vocational Education

In advanced vocational education programmes educations that correspond to at least one year of full time studies leads to a vocational training diploma. An advanced vocational diploma is awarded for educations that corresponds to at least two years of full time studies where at least 25% of the education has been carried out in a workplace, and which includes a final project.

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.14.4. Liberal adult education

Completed studies in liberal adult education usually lead to a certificate without a grade, although there are exceptions. In folk high schools students who so wish may be given an overall assessment of their aptitude for studies. This assessment is an appraisal of the student's scholastic capabilities as a whole and is based on the assessments of all teaching staff. Scholastic aptitude assessments are given for those study courses that the school considers to be relevant.

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

7.14.5. Labour market training

After completing labour market training a certificate is issued by the education organiser. The forms vary depending on the type of education – programmes related to a certain industry may provide industry-specific certification, whilst other education programmes lead to a more general certificate. The type of certificate issued is decided in agreement with the employment agency at the time the education is procured.

Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish Public Employment Service)

7.14.6. Validating Adult Knowledge and Competence

To take advantage of the knowledge and competencies that people have acquired in work, during education abroad and social life etc. is an important development area in adult education. In order to define the initial level for further studies or to document real knowledge and skills prior to applying for employment or in connection with personal development at a work place validation should include a structured assessment, documentation and recognition of a person's knowledge and competencies , independently of how these have been acquired The authority responsible for coordinating and supporting a national framework for validation is the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education. For information about recognition and validation of foreign degrees see [11](#).

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.15. Education/Employment Links

Basic vocational education and training is provided within the framework for upper secondary education. Workplace vocational training as part of the upper secondary adult education system is gradually getting more important. Information and guidance are vital at all levels of education to enable the individuals to make informed choices. All municipalities in Sweden offer a study and vocational guidance service. The curriculum (Curriculum for the Non-compulsory School, Lpf 94) states that the school should co-ordinate with working life as well as universities and university colleges. Universities and university colleges, employment exchanges, industry as well as the labour market partners and industrial representative organisations thus have important roles in providing information to students. The school shall strive to ensure that each student can make reasoned choices regarding further studies and vocational orientation and that they become familiar with the conditions of working life, especially within his/her study area. Educational and vocational guidance is generally given within the schools. It is the responsibility of the school head to ensure that students receive educational and vocational guidance.

Most municipal schools have specially trained career and guidance counselors studie- och yrkesvägledare. Although career education and guidance is the responsibility of all school personnel, the career and guidance counselors have specialist knowledge that plays a central role in career education and guidance. In order to be employed as a career counselor in the public school system, the applicant must have an education that is intended for such work. There is a 3 year university programme for career and guidance counselors.

In most advanced vocational education programmers part of the education is spent at a workplace i.e. workplace training is an integrated part of the education. In vocational education programmes theoretical learning is integrated and blended with vocational practice at the workplace. The programmes are intended to serve the needs of job seekers and industries where competence and

labour are in demand, and for this reason companies and the business sector are partners in the design and construction of such programmes right from the very start. Vocational education programmes provide opportunities to gain firsthand experience and contacts in working life. Participants get an insight into their chosen professions early in their training.

Information about all folk high schools is gathered on a common website, which offers students, as well as persons who are considering future studies, computer based career and guidance counseling from career and guidance counselors.

Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna, Lpf 94 (Curriculum for the Non-compulsory School System)

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

Skolverket (Swedish National Agency for Education)

7.16. Private Education

See subsections for information.

7.16.1. Higher Vocational Education

In July 2009, the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan, was established, with the purpose of ensuring the establishment within higher vocational education of post-upper secondary vocational education, which meets the needs of the labour market. This means that continuation courses, certain supplementary courses, adult apprenticeships for certain skilled trades and advanced vocational education programmes are regulated under one single umbrella: 'higher vocational education'. Vocational education programmes may be organised by state higher education institutions, municipalities, county councils and private natural or legal persons. Such education programmes are characterised by a strong link to workplaces and have a firm theoretical basis. The programmes are to be developed and run in cooperation with working life and education providers. After applying to the Agency, a provider becomes eligible for central government grants or special funds for the programme.

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

Utbildningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Research)

7.16.2. Supplementary Education Programmes

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is the supervisory authority for the supplementary education programmes, [kompletterande utbildningar](#). These programmes are independently organised and supported by the state. These constitute a complementary education at upper secondary level and post secondary level within certain subjects and vocational fields. Supplementary education institutions provide either further training in a certain occupation, training for a completely new occupation or preparatory training for studies at higher levels. Admission to the programmes may require certain initial knowledge, e.g. working life experience or completion of upper secondary education.

There are around 300 different supplementary education programmes in various fields; economics, media, computing, arts and crafts, health, tourism etc. The length of the programmes varies between a few months and three years and the type of certificate awarded varies depending on programme. Tuition fees are charged on the supplementary education programmes and the fees vary depending on for example if the school in question receives state grants or not. If a supplementary school under state supervision is considered valuable from a national viewpoint, its pupils may be entitled to study support. If a school program is regarded as particularly important, the school may also receive a state grant. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is the supervising authority.

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

[Utbildningsdepartamentet \(Ministry of Education and Research\)](#)

7.16.2. Grant-aided private organisers of adult education

The task of providing adult education in the form of basic adult education, upper secondary adult education, and education for adults with learning disabilities, as well as Swedish tuition for immigrants, can be handed over by the municipalities and county councils to private organisers. The private actors in question have to have been admitted by the authority to award grades and issue leaving certificates. Folk high schools with the right to award grades can provide Swedish tuition for immigrants. The private organisers and folk high schools are entitled to grants for such types of education.

[Utbildningsdepartamentet \(Ministry of Education and Research\)](#)

7.17. Statistics

There is no information collected on the number of participants who are unemployed. See subsections for other statistical information.

7.17.1. Numbers of students in 2008/2009

Type of education	Number of participants 2008/09	Proportion men/women (%)		Age
		Men	Women	
Municipal adult education	171 940	35	65	median 27
- basic education	31 973	35	65	median 32
- upper secondary education	136 515	35	65	-
Swedish tuition for immigrants	84 333	45	55	18 % <25 25 % >40
Supplementary programmes	5 386	-	-	-
Advanced vocational education	40 700	46	54	Average age 29
Folk high schools (spring 2009)	100 800	Number: 41 500	Number : 59 300	Nearly 50 % <25
Study circles arranged through adult education associations (spring 2009)	744 000	43	57	
Other adult liberal education (spring 2009)	342 000	36	46	
Municipal education for adults with intellectual impairments	4 866	51	49	

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

Statistics Sweden: Folk high school spring and autumn 2008.

Source: Skolverkets officiella statistik 2009 (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education 2009)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.17.2. Number of institutions 2008/2009

Type of institution	Number of institutions
Schools for municipal basic and upper secondary adult education	323
Organisers of Swedish tuition for immigrants	294
Schools for supplementary education	99
Schools for Advanced Vocational Education and Training	255
Folk high schools	150
Adult education associations	9
Municipalities arranging education for adults with intellectual impairments	215

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

Statistics Sweden: Folk high school spring and autumn 2008.

Source: Skolverkets officiella statistik 2009 (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education 2009)

Myndigheten för Yrkehögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.17.3. Certification rates by field of education

The proportion of pupils completing courses they have started by education form and subject.
Data collected in 2009.

Type of education and subject	Proportion completing course (%)
Basic adult education	64.2
Swedish as a second language	65.0
English	57.2
Orientation course	73.9
Mathematics	59.2
Swedish	60.4
Social studies	65.1
Other courses	75.4
Upper secondary adult education	73.7

Orientation course	81.2
Computing	73.4
Mathematics A	63.0
Mathematics B	60.2
English A	65.0
Social studies A	67.7
Psychology A	79.1
Swedish B	62.4
English B	66.2
Health care	80.2
Working environment and safety	80.4
History A	67.6
Mathematics C	63.9
Medicine, basic course	80.9
Ethics and life issues	81.7
Health and social care	82.1
Man, socially and culturally	81.5
Other courses	74.7
All	72.5
Women	74.5
Men	68.8
Born in Sweden	72.9
Born abroad	71.9

Type of education and subject	Proportion completing course (%)
Post secondary continuation courses	68.5
Swedish tuition for immigrants (% that finished or still attends the course)	70.2
Basid- and upper secondary municipal adult education incl. supplementary courses	72.5

Slightly more than 9000 students were awarded a degree from an Advanced vocational education programme in 2009. Out of these around sixty percent were women.

Skolverkets officiella statistik 2009 (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education 2009)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.17.4. Participants with tertiary qualifications

The proportion of participants in different types of adult education with tertiary qualifications 2008/2009.

Type of education	Proportion of pupils with tertiary qualifications (%)
Basic adult education	33.1
Upper secondary adult education	16.2
Post secondary continuation courses	14.8
All	19.3
- women	20.4
- men	17.2
- born in Sweden	9.6
- born abroad	33.5

For studies at advanced vocational education programmes tertiary qualifications are required for eligibility. In 2009 five percent of the students, in addition to a completed upper secondary education, also had a degree from a university or university college.

Skolverkets officiella statistik 2009 (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education 2009)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

7.17.5. Distribution of full-time/ part-time learners

In the school year 2008/2009, 52 % of the students in basic adult education, upper secondary adult education and continuation courses attended evening classes, and 18 % of the students conducted distance classes.

In Higher Vocational Education around 3000 out of 40 000 students choose to study part-time in 2009, while the remaining 37 000 students studied full-time. Two out of three of the students who chose part-time studies were women.

In the autumn semester of 2008 there were 600 distance courses on folk high schools on offer and the number of participants in the courses increased with 13 percent compared to the previous year. There were a total of 3 930 students in the distance courses whereof more than two thirds were women.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education)

Folkbildningsrådet (Swedish National Council of Adult Associations)

Statistics Sweden: Folk high school spring and autumn 2008.

8. TEACHERS AND EDUCATION STAFF

8.1. Initial Training of Teachers

Teacher education is provided at 26 universities and university colleges. Some of the university colleges for arts provide teacher education in practical arts subjects (see [8.1.4.](#)). A teaching qualification is obtained after completion of between three and five and a half years of full-time studies– different educational levels requires different amounts of credit points. There is also a short teacher education programme of one and a half year for those with a previous bachelor or master degree. The teaching degrees comprise general courses as well as specialisation courses such as sports, foreign languages etc. Teacher students who intend to work with pupils with special needs receive special training.

Mainly as a result of the Bologna process, the former degree system has been reformed and structured to fit a new three-cycle structure of higher education, see [6.10.](#) For information on the position of the teaching qualification within the new education and degree structure, see [8.1.6.](#)

School heads undergo special training upon their appointment; the school head training programme is described in [8.3.1.](#)

Teacher education is to be changed as from the autumn term of 2011, see 8.1.2

8.1.1. Historical Overview

Teacher education started with the introduction of a special regulation in 1862, supplemented in 1865 with a decision to establish nine academies for educating teachers, six for men and three for women. The teacher education academies were cathedral schools. At an early stage teacher education became an instrument for central regulation of the contents and organisation of education.

The first teacher education institutes were dominated by teaching in Christianity; Swedish, mathematics and singing were other priority subjects. Foreign languages were introduced in 1913. Initially the training was two years, but it was soon extended to four years. Entry requirements were determined by course content – a prospective teacher only needed to be proficient in what children would be taught in school.

In 1950 a total of six comprehensive teacher-training colleges were established. However, education of pre-school teachers and primary school teachers continued for some time at schools for elementary school teachers. Some of these schools were later transformed into smaller teacher education colleges. By 1968 the university colleges had completely replaced the academies. One major change in the 1968 reform of teacher education was the introduction of education plans determined in great detail at national level.

As a result of the 1977 higher education reform, all teacher education was brought into the national education system for universities and higher education. Teacher education was a part of the educational reform of 1993 (see [6.1.](#)) characterised by decentralisation and governed through goals and objectives. Decisions regarding the allocation of resources within the institutions themselves were then transferred to the universities and university colleges.

The improved geographical access to higher education that characterised the 1977 reform did not effect the teacher education, which was already satisfactory in terms of geographical distribution. In fact, the teacher education institutions were often the basis for new university colleges.

In 2001 an integrated teaching degree for all teachers, from pre-school to upper secondary school, was established giving all teachers a common basic competence combined with a specialisation for particular subjects/subject areas and/or age groups. The teaching degree program is between three and five and a half years long depending on the chosen subject area and school level. With the 2001 reform of teacher education the possibilities to further education for teachers increased; all institutions giving teacher education offer courses that are open to or designed for already active teachers wishing to further their competence.

Mainly as a result of the Bologna process, legislation for a three-cycle structure of higher education was adopted in January 2007 and applied since July 2007. The degree system has been reformed and structured to fit the new three-cycle system, see [6.10.](#) For information on the position of the teaching qualification within the new education and degree structure as from the autumn of 2011, see [8.1.6.](#)

8.1.1.1. Pre-school and school-age childcare

Pre-school teachers were trained at special pre-school training schools, usually for two years. Training of leisure-time pedagogues (working at leisure-times centres open before and after school hours and during holidays) was developed without any special ordinances and varied in forms; the two year long training was provided as special courses in upper secondary school or as adult education at teacher education colleges or pre-school academies. Leisure-time pedagogue training was also organised as part of labour market training.

In 1977 training for pre-school and leisure-time centres was brought together into the higher education system. In 1993 pre-school and leisure-time centre qualifications were merged into a University Diploma in Child and Youth Training which included several orientations. In 2001 an integrated teaching degree was established, in which the degree in Child and Youth Training was replaced by a teaching degree for teaching in pre-schools, pre-school classes and the first years of the compulsory school.

8.1.1.2. Compulsory school

Teacher education for primary school started as independent initiatives without support from the state. The education was short and extensive and most students were women. In 1931, when the state took

over responsibility, training was extended to two years. The comprehensive school realised by the introduction of the new compulsory school in 1962, affected teacher education so that different categories of teachers should obtain similar, and in-depth, pedagogical training in order to reduce the gap between pre-school teachers and grammar school teachers. Practical supervised training in a school is by tradition a part of the teacher education.

In 1988, a new teacher education system was introduced in which a single degree in Education for the compulsory school replaced the degrees from the separate teacher education programmes for class teachers at the lower and intermediate levels of the compulsory school (years 1-6, ages approximately 7-12) and subject programmes for the upper levels (years 7-9). These changes were introduced to create a compulsory school functioning as a coherent unit.

In 2001 an integrated teaching degree was established, in which the degree in Education for the Compulsory School was replaced by degrees for teaching in the first years of the compulsory school or in the higher levels of the compulsory school. This structure provided all teachers with common basic competence, combined with a specialisation for particular subjects/subject areas and/or age groups.

8.1.1.3. Upper secondary school

A single upper secondary teaching diploma was established in 1992/1993 opening the profession to new categories of prospective teachers. This made it possible to enter the teaching training relatively late in an education. Upper secondary teacher education aimed at jointly organising the training for theoretical and vocational subjects. Flexibility in teacher education was intended to increase the possibilities for matching schools' need for different categories of teachers with the supply of trained teachers.

In 2001 an integrated teaching degree was established, in which the degree in Education for Upper Secondary School was replaced by a degree for teaching in the higher levels of the compulsory school (school years 7-9) and upper secondary school.

8.1.1.4. School head training

In 1976 the Riksdag decided that all school heads should undergo a national two-year training programme. In 1986 an overall programme where the state and municipalities shared responsibility for different parts was introduced. In 1992 new principles for steering the school became the basis for a new training programme for school heads provided by universities and university colleges. The organisers receive state funds allocated by the Swedish National Agency for Education. The school head training programme is described in **8.3.1.**

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

8.1.2. Ongoing Debates and future developments

8.1.2.1. New teacher education programmes

In its bill 'Top of the class – new teacher education programmes' (Govt. Bill 2009/10:89), that was passed by the Riksdag in April 2010, the Government proposed that the degree of Bachelor/Master of Education be replaced by four new professional degrees: a degree in pre-school education, a degree in primary school education, a degree in subject education and a degree in vocational education. There will be a cancellation of the requirement in the Higher Education Act that there be a special body responsible for teacher education and for research associated with such education at higher education institutions that have the right to award degrees in education. The new education programmes will start in the autumn of 2011,

New professional degrees

The four new professional degrees will include knowledge objectives in the subject to be taught, and objectives concerning other key knowledge, and skills of a more general nature, for school and pre-school teachers. The new degrees will lead to greater clarity regarding the three components of teacher education: studies in the subject to be taught, a school placement comprising 30 higher education credits and an educational science core of 60 higher education credits. (Sixty higher education credits (ECTS equivalents) are equivalent to one year of full-time studies).

1. Degree in pre-school education

The degree in pre-school education will comprise 210 higher education credits. The programme will be clearly oriented towards work in pre-school. In the course of the programme, prospective pre-school teacher will acquire the knowledge and skills required to meet the learning and care needs of the youngest children, and have very solid knowledge of how reading, writing and basic mathematical skills are acquired.

2. Degree in primary school education

The degree in primary school education will allow for three specialisations: the first directed at work in pre-school class (for children the year before they start the compulsory school) and years 1–3, the second at work in years 4–6, and the third at work in out-of-school care (in so called leisure time centers which cater for children before and after the school day and during holidays).

Degree in primary school education directed at work in pre-school class and years 1–3 of compulsory school

The degree in primary school education directed at work in pre-school class and years 1–3 of compulsory school will comprise 240 higher education credits. This programme will give the teacher a broad range of knowledge and equip her/him to follow pupils' development and teach most subjects. Knowledge about the development of reading and writing skills and in-depth knowledge of mathematics for younger children should be an essential part of their skills.

Degree in primary school education directed at work in years 4–6 of compulsory school

The degree in primary school education directed at work in years 4–6 of compulsory school will comprise 240 higher education credits. The requirements concerning both a broad orientation and in-

depth subject studies are considerably higher, and students will acquire a well-defined identity as a teacher oriented towards teaching in school years 4–6 (ages approximately 10–12). Apart from knowledge of Swedish, mathematics and English, the subject studies should allow for choice, with students choosing between social subjects, natural science subjects and technology, or one or more practical or artistic subjects.

Degree in primary school education directed at work in out-of-school care

The degree in primary school education directed at work in out-of-school care will comprise 180 higher education credits. The focus of the programme should primarily include knowledge in the field of out-of-school teaching and one or more practical or artistic subjects.

3. *Degree in subject education*

There will be two specialisations for students in subject education: one directed at work in years 7–9 of compulsory school (ISCED level 2) and the other at work in upper secondary school (ISCED level 3).

Degree in subject education directed at work in years 7–9 of compulsory school

The degree in subject education directed at work in years 7–9 of compulsory school will comprise 270 higher education credits, 195 of which are to be in the subjects themselves (this includes the degree project and parts of the school placement). This specialisation will provide teachers with the skills to teach three subjects. The programme will provide a limited number of subject combinations so as to suit the needs of the school system and to increase teachers' employability.

Degree in subject education directed at work in upper secondary school

The degree in subject education directed at work in upper secondary schools will comprise 300 or 330 higher education credits, of which 225 or 255 will be in the subjects themselves (this will include the degree project and parts of the school placement), depending on the choice of subjects. This specialisation will provide teachers with the skills to teach in two subjects. The programme will provide a number of subject combinations so as to suit the needs of the school system and to increase teachers' employability.

4. *Degree in vocational education*

The degree in vocational education will comprise 90 higher education credits. To be accepted to the programme basic eligibility for higher education studies should be required as well as advanced and relevant vocational knowledge. It will be possible to provide programmes with great flexibility in terms of time and location as well, as to enable those with vocational skills to study to become a vocational teacher.

Different paths to degrees in education and pre-school education

For those who have sufficient knowledge of at least one subject, a supplementary teacher education programme will lead to a degree in subject education. This supplementary teacher education programme will comprise 90 higher education credits.

Since 2007, a special supplementary educational programme has been offered at higher education institutions to those with foreign teaching qualifications to enable them to qualify for employment in the Swedish school system and this programme will be continued.

At present, there are many teachers employed to teach subjects for which they lack formal qualifications.. The Government has therefore initiated a further educational programme for unqualified teachers. Through this higher education institutions can validate previous professional teaching and offer individualised educational programmes that enable participants to meet the requirements for a degree in education, or one of the new professional degrees.

Entitlement to award degrees

Higher education institutions wishing to organise teacher or pre-school teacher education will apply to the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education for entitlement to award the new professional degrees.

Degree in special needs education

The Postgraduate Diploma in Special Needs Training will be extended to include specialisations for deafness or hearing impairments, vision impairments, serious language impairments and learning disabilities. This would meet the need of special needs schools and schools catering for children with disabilities, and for special needs teachers with specific knowledge about the groups of pupils in these schools.

Educational science research

In matters determined by the Swedish Research Council, the Council's Committee on Educational Sciences decides on the allocation of funds to research and postgraduate education that is relevant to the development of the school and pre-school. In order to give greater freedom to researchers in the field of educational science the normal co-financing requirement is abolished.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

8.1.3. Specific Legislative Framework

The law and ordinance governing higher education was adopted at the same time as the university and university college system was reformed in 1993. The reform aimed to reduce Government influence over the details in the operations of higher education institutions. The Higher Education Act states the general goals of higher education. The goals for teacher education and the qualitative demands on future teachers are formulated in the Degree ordinance established by the Government.

Mainly as a result of the Bologna process, legislation for a three-cycle structure of higher education was adopted in January 2007 and applied from July 2007. . The former degree system has been reformed and structured to fit the new three-cycle system, see **6.10.** For information on the position of the teaching qualification within the new education and degree structure which will apply as from the autumn of 2011, see **8.1.6.**

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

Högskoleförordningen (Higher Education Ordinance) SFS 1993:100

8.1.4. Institutions, Level and Models of Training

Teacher education is provided at 26 universities and university colleges across the country. There is one integrated teaching degree, which means all teachers have a common basic competence combined with a specialisation for particular subjects/subject areas and/or age groups. The length of studies varies from three to five and a half years depending on the chosen subject area and age level.. A new teacher training will be introduced as from the autumn of 2011 and HEI:s wishing to offer teacher training will have to apply to the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket) to be able to offer the new programmes, see 8.1.2.

Practical supervised training in a school should account for one sixth of the general common education area and one fourth of each orientation, see 8.1.6.

The school head training programme is described in 8.3.1.

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

8.1.5. Admission Requirements

Applicants must fulfill the general qualifications for eligibility to higher education, and any additional qualifications prescribed by the higher education institution concerned. For more information on eligibility requirements, see 6.6. Requirements for programmes leading to a professional degree are set out by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket).

All who are offered employment in pre-school, school and school age child care are checked against a register of persons convicted of sexual offences, crimes of violence or related to child pornography. This also covers teacher trainees, participants in adult education and other trainees within this field as well as staff who work under circumstances similar to employment, for example, temporary staff from from companies in the staffing industry, kitchen staff and cleaning personnel.

The Act (SFS 2000:873) on checking registers of staff in pre-school, school and school age child care.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

8.1.6. Curriculum, Special Skills, Specialisation

The Degree ordinance states which learning outcomes to be fulfilled to obtain a particular degree in addition to those laid down in the Higher Education Act (see [6.15.](#)). The higher education institutions may lay down additional specific goals and decide themselves the content of their courses as well as how to organise the education in order to reach the goals. The skills needed to receive a teaching qualification are described in [8.1.7.](#)

As from the autumn 2011 a new teacher training programme is introduced, see 8.1.2.1

All teachers get a common basic competence, combined with specialisations in particular subjects/subject areas and/or age groups. The teacher education programme comprises a minimum of three years of full-time studies and a maximum of five and a half years of full-time studies depending on the chosen subject area and age level:

- At least 3.5 years for teaching in preschool, pre-school class, the lower level of the compulsory school as well as school age child care and mother tongue tuition.
- At least 4 years for teaching at higher level of the compulsory school and the upper secondary school, with exception for the upper secondary schools vocational subjects. One or two specialisations (of at least 1.5 years each) in a subject or subject area should be included.
- At least 3 years for teaching in subjects specific to vocationally oriented programmes in upper secondary schools. Instead of emphasis and specialisation, extensive professional experience as well as higher education in relevant subjects (of at least 1.5 years) or other equivalent education is required.

The teacher education programme consists of three education areas:

- The general education area, common for all students, covering key topics such as learning, special needs education, socialisation, fundamental values as well as interdisciplinary subject studies (at least 1.5 years)
- Subject/subjects that the prospective teacher intends to teach (at least 1 year)
- Specialisation complementing earlier acquired knowledge (at least one term)

In the general education area, practical supervised training in a school should account for at least half a term. To receive a teaching qualification, students must also complete an independent project work corresponding to half a term's studies.

Mainly as a result of the Bologna process, the degree system has been reformed and structured to fit the new three-cycle system, see [6.10.](#)

The teaching qualification can be taken at first and second level, depending on orientation and specialisation. Teaching qualifications with orientations that require 3-3.5 years education are at the first level. These cover education in pre-school, the pre-school class and leisure-time centres. At the first level there are also programmes for vocational education and mother tongue tuition. The qualification focusing on the earlier years of the compulsory school years can be taken at either the first or second level.

Teaching qualifications requiring at least four years education and some additional specialisation are at the second level. These cover programmes that focus on the later years of the compulsory school, and the upper secondary school. The qualification focusing on the earlier years of the compulsory school can be taken at the second level if this includes specialisation. University colleges and universities can choose the level at which teacher training shall be offered; first level, second level or both.

The teacher education programme emphasises the importance of competence in special needs education, enabling the teacher to identify frequently recurring problematic situations in the school and to assist pupils. All teachers, irrespective of category, obtain special needs education within the general education area. In addition, teachers can deepen their knowledge in this area by studying orientations or specialisations within special needs education.

There are no special eligibility limits between different levels within the school. Prospective teachers choose an orientation and the normal situation is to teach at the level appropriate to one's specialisation. The employer decides whether the teacher has the competence required.

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

Högskoleförordningen (Higher Degree Ordinance) SFS 1993:100

8.1.7. Evaluation, Certificates

Evaluation is carried out continuously by means of written and verbal examinations. A teaching qualification is awarded in the first or second cycle depending on the number of credits attained, the degree of specialisation demanded in a subject or a disciplinary domain, and the extent to which second cycle study is required. On completion of the programme a student receives a degree from the higher education institution. The degree certificate states which orientations and specialisations a student has completed and for what teaching it is intended. The certificate includes grades for all courses completed and is signed by the principal of the higher education institution. The Degree ordinance, an appendix to the Higher Education Ordinance stipulates which qualifications may be awarded in undergraduate education.

For a teaching qualification the student shall have demonstrated the knowledge and skills required to attain the objectives of the relevant level (early year's education, extended school programmes, the school system or adult education) and also to participate in the development of the appropriate educational area in accordance with the applicable regulations and guidelines.

Knowledge and understanding - For a teaching qualification the student shall have:

- demonstrated the knowledge in a subject or a subject area required for the field of education concerned, including knowledge of the disciplinary foundation of the subject or subject area and relevant methods in this field, and also demonstrated insight into current research issues
- demonstrated knowledge of learning and teaching
- demonstrated knowledge of the significance of learning to read and write and of mathematics for the acquisition of knowledge by children and pupils, and
- demonstrated knowledge of the significance of a gender perspective in educational activities and the presentation of subject matter.

Moreover, to teach or undertake other educational tasks in early years education and at primary level the student shall have:

- demonstrated a high degree of knowledge of the acquisition of reading and writing skills and of the acquisition of basic mathematical skills.

Moreover, to teach at primary, secondary or upper-secondary level the student shall have:

- demonstrated a high degree of knowledge of analysing and assessing pupils' learning and a high degree of knowledge of grading.

Competence and skills - For a teaching qualification the student shall have:

- demonstrated the ability to apply the knowledge in subjects or subject areas and about learning and teaching required in the educational activities in which he or she is involved so that all children and young people learn and develop
- demonstrated the ability to convey and establish basic social and democratic values
- demonstrated the ability to convey, establish and apply applicable regulations intended to prevent and counteract discrimination and other demeaning treatment of children and pupils
- demonstrated the ability to plan, undertake, evaluate and develop teaching and other educational tasks autonomously and together with others and also to participate in managing these activities
- demonstrated the ability to analyse, assess, document and evaluate the learning and development of pupils in relation to educational objectives and also to inform and cooperate with parents and guardians
- demonstrated the ability to use information technology in educational activities and realise the significance of the role of various media in this respect, and
- demonstrated the ability to apply, systematise and reflect on, critically and autonomously, both his or her own professional experience and that of others as well as relevant research findings in order to contribute to the development of the profession and the formation of knowledge in subjects or subject areas.

For a second-cycle teaching qualification comprising 240, 270, 300 or 330 credits the student shall have:

- demonstrated specialised skills in applying, systematising and reflecting on both his or her own experience and that of others as well as relevant research findings critically and autonomously.

Judgement and approach - For a teaching qualification the student shall have:

- demonstrated self-awareness and the capacity for empathy
- demonstrated the ability in his or her educational practice to make assessments informed by the relevant disciplinary, social and ethical aspects and taking particular account of human rights
- demonstrated the ability to adopt a professional approach to children, pupils and their parents or guardians, and
- demonstrated the ability to identify the need for further knowledge and professional

development as teachers.

A requirement for the award of a teaching qualification comprising 180 credits or 210 credits is completion by the student of an independent project (degree project) for at least 15 credits.

A requirement for the award of a teaching qualification comprising 240, 270, 300 and 330 credits is completion by the student of an independent project (degree project) for at least 30 credits or two such projects for at least 15 credits each.

The degree certificate is to state what specialisation(s) and advanced studies the student has completed and for what kind of teaching or educational level the qualification is intended. Specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a teaching qualification.

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

8.1.8. Alternative Training Pathways

The teacher education programmes are available as distance education. Distance courses and campus courses at an higher education institution can also be combined into a teaching degree. Some Swedish universities offer such distance and ICT-based courses, of which some are aimed at competence development as part of in-house training, CPD.

8.2. Conditions of Service of Teachers

Most pre-school teachers, leisure-time pedagogues, teachers and school heads are employed by a municipality, and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, SALAR (Sveriges kommuner och landsting, SKL), negotiates with the teacher trade unions over salaries and general working conditions. Teachers employed by grant-aided independent schools, get their salaries and working conditions set through negotiation by the principal organiser and the teachers' trade union. For some teachers in independent schools, the negotiations may take place with the assistance of an employer organisation and the teachers' trade union. Teachers at state universities and university colleges are appointed by the institutions and are state employees. Salaries at all institutions are individually negotiated between the teacher, the employer and a trade union, and there are no salary scales and not rules on minimum or maximum years of work before obtaining any specific salary level.

To be permanently appointed as a teacher in the national school system(the Education Act) an applicant must have a university diploma in teaching, knowledge of the Swedish language as well as of the regulations applicable to the school system, in particular the regulations concerning the goals of education. The applicant should also have undergone either a teacher education programme in Sweden, which content focuses on the type of teaching the position involves, or equivalent training from another Nordic country or a country that is a member of EFTA or the EU. If the applicant has

undergone a course in higher education other than those, the National Agency for Higher Education determines whether it fulfils the necessary conditions.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Sveriges kommuner och landsting (SKL)/ The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)

8.2.1. Historical Overview

See subsections for information

8.2.1.1. Employer responsibility

Prior to 1991, teachers in the compulsory and upper secondary schools were employed by the municipalities, but the state negotiated with the teachers' trade unions on salaries and working conditions. The responsibility as employers for teaching staff was divided between the state and the municipality. From the point of view of the municipalities, dual employer responsibility was a clear obstacle for the municipalities' aim to introduce an integrated personnel policy and meant that neither the state nor municipalities took overall responsibility for the school and its activities. Teacher associations regarded state regulation as a guarantee that schools would be equivalent in all parts of the country.

The question was subject to a number of public investigations and in 1989 a proposal was put forward suggesting giving municipalities the overall responsibility for running schools. It is the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, SALAR (Sveriges kommuner och landsting, SKL), that negotiates with teachers' trade unions over salaries and working conditions. Within the framework of the agreement on salaries, working hours and conditions of employment, schools also undertake to increase the fulfillment of the nationally set goals for education by i.a. local development work.

The curriculum, which emphasises the role of the teacher as a mentor for pupils has stimulated the development of teamwork and increased co-operation within the school. The pre-school has a long tradition of working in this way.

Sveriges kommuner och landsting (SKL)/ The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)

8.2.1.2. In-service training

In Sweden competence development for teachers was introduced at the end of the 19th century as part of the central regulation concerning contents and organisation of education. There was no real organised competence development for teachers until the middle of the 20th century. The introduction of new curricula for compulsory and upper secondary school in 1962 and 1968 respectively coincided with organised competence development, which became increasingly guided by the state during the 1960s.

In 1990 the Riksdag decided on a new division of responsibility between the state and the municipality. Today the guiding principle is that competence development is a local responsibility, whilst setting the goals for this training, in compulsory and upper secondary schools, is a state responsibility. It is also a state responsibility to follow-up and evaluate local activities. It is the responsibility of the employers of the teachers to make sure that they get the CPD needed and it is, in principle, compulsory for teachers to take part in such training. There are no central regulations on the contents or frequency of CPD, however, the Swedish National Agency for Education provides digital materials, newsletters etc. and organizes conferences on specific themes with extra funding from the Ministry of Education and Science. Recent examples are a programme for mathematics teaching, a campaign called the 'A boost for Teachers' (where the Agency publishes a catalogue of courses for teachers too choose from and which teachers can participate in while retaining 80 per cent of their salaries) etc. See 8.2.10.3

[Riksdagen \(The Parliament\)](#)

8.2.2. Ongoing Debates and future developments

Issues such as the status of the teaching profession and recruitment prospects are constantly discussed. Development and career opportunities, and salary development for teachers are in focus for teacher organisations as well as municipalities in their role as employer.

8.2.2.1. Registered teachers and stricter qualifying rules

As from July 2012 a system of teacher and preschool teacher registration will enter into force. To be qualified to teach at a school, a teacher should be registered and qualified for certain subjects and grades. Registration will be required for a teacher to be able to independently set grades and to be a mentor to new teachers during their introduction year. Further, only registered teachers will be qualified for permanent employment. A teacher or preschool teacher can apply to be registered after a degree in initial teacher training or initial preschool teacher training and a successfully completed introduction year. The introduction year will give the future teacher/preschool teacher introduction to the profession and make it possible to assess suitability for the profession. During their introduction year, new teachers are to have the support and assistance of a mentor. If a teacher or preschool teacher seriously neglects their work, their registration may be withdrawn, such decisions will be taken by a

special committee - the Teachers' Disciplinary Board - under the Swedish National Agency for Education.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

8.2.2.2. New Education Act

On 23 March 2010, the Government presented the bill 'The new Education Act - for knowledge, choice and security' (Govt. Bill 2009/10:165) to the Riksdag. The Riksdag approved the bill in June 2010, the new Education Act will apply from July 2011. The proposed reforms regarding teachers in the new Education Act are:

- Senior subject teachers will be re-introduced into the entire school system. A teacher who has passed a Licentiate or doctoral degree and has demonstrated excellent quality of teaching over a period of service of at least four years is to be appointed a senior subject teacher.
- Clearer and more stringent rules will be introduced on the necessary requirements for teachers to be permanently employed to teach.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

8.2.2.3. New national quality assurance system

In accordance with a Government Bill approved by the Riksdag, there will be changes in the direction of the national quality assurance system for higher education institutions. The purpose of the changes is to strengthen the incentives to achieve high standards for learning outcomes of study programmes. Universities and higher education institutions with high quality study programmes will be rewarded through increased appropriations. The new system will consist of quality evaluations of higher education programmes and reviews of degree-awarding powers. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education will be responsible for implementing evaluations and reviews, and these should take place every four years, instead of every six years. Resources for study programmes at first and second cycle will be allocated on the basis of programme evaluations as well as on the number of full-time equivalent students and their annual performance equivalents.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

8.2.3. Specific Legislative Framework

In addition to general labour legislation conditions, employment regulation procedures apply as well as the requirements for teaching qualifications, promotion, work content etc set out in the Education Act (concerning school teachers) and in the Higher Education Ordinance (concerning teaching staff at universities and university colleges).

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

8.2.4. Planning Policy

The aim of the forward planning policy is to maintain balance between teacher supply and demand. The government sets goals for the number of students to pass teacher exams at different levels for the coming four year period. This is based on long-term projections and quantitative analyses as well as qualitative forecast analyses, general analyses for each level of education and for specific subjects. Projections of supply and demand of teachers are made annually for a fifteen years cycle.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

8.2.5. Entry to the Profession

The recruitment procedure for teachers in pre-school education, compulsory education and upper secondary education as well as for teachers at higher education institutions is completely open. The responsibility of the recruitment lies with the municipalities or schools. The schools/municipalities are responsible for publishing posts, requesting applications and selecting candidates.

According to a central agreement, fully qualified teachers (as described in [8.2.](#)) are employed on a 12-month probationary basis before they receive a permanent position. The purpose is to give newly qualified teachers a year of introduction under the guidance of an experienced teacher. An applicant without full qualifications may be employed on contracts lasting a maximum of 12 months at a time, unless there are special reasons for exceptions to that rule.

All offered employment in pre-school, school and school age child care are checked against a register of persons convicted of sexual offences, crimes of violence or child pornography. This also covers teacher trainees, participants in adult education and other trainees in the area. This also goes for staff who works under circumstances similar to employment, for example, temporary staff from companies which supplies temporary staff, kitchen staff and cleaning personnel.

The Act (SFS 2000:873) on checking registers of staff in pre-schooling, school and school age child care.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

8.2.6. Professional Status

Teachers at compulsory, upper secondary and pre-primary schools are employed by a municipality or an independent organiser. Decisions on employment for individual staff are taken at school level.

All teachers at state higher education institutions are employed by the state (see [6.5.](#)).

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

8.2.7. Replacement Measures

There are no specific regulations in this area; the school head is responsible for replacement for absent teachers. Usually the school head uses existing resources especially for shorter vacancies, and this is done depending on the individual situation, the length of the replacement etc. Teachers who have to work over time filling in for vacant colleagues are to be financially compensated. Additional workload is considered in the individual wage negotiations between the employee (represented by their trade union) and the employer.

The regulations for recruitment of substitute teachers are the same as for permanent posts i.e. a teacher who is not fully qualified can only be employed for 12 months at a time. Overall collective agreements state that if you are employed as a substitute for a certain time, you have to be offered a post within the organisation, however not necessarily at the same school.

8.2.8. Supporting Measures for Teachers

The school head is responsible for ensuring that teachers receive the support they need. The details of such support are not centrally regulated. Support may be provided as extra resources (staff) to a class or to one or more pupils, smaller classes, individual support for the teacher etc as well as internal or external mentorship.

8.2.9. Evaluation of Teachers

Teacher evaluation is not regulated by law. However, all school staff has regular individual development dialogues with the school head and wages are individually set in accordance with labour market rules.

8.2.10. In-service Training, PCD

Competence development of teachers is a central instrument for attaining equivalent and high-quality teaching standards. It also aims at strengthening the attainment of national and local goals and develops school activities. In-service training mainly takes place during study days, evenings or pupils' holidays. Qualifications obtained via competence development are taken into account when determining individual salaries.

8.2.10.1. Organisers

Under the Education Act the organiser of education is obliged to ensure that competence development is available for teaching staff. Contract education for this purpose can be purchased from various providers. Higher education institutions and the regional development centres are the primary organisers of publicly funded competence development. Other organisers are the public service company which produces educational broadcasting, the teachers' trade unions, other state authorities inclusive of Higher Education Institutions, and independent educational companies.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

8.2.10.2. Financing

The municipalities have funds set aside for competence development of their staff and decide on its scope. The Government can set aside funds for the municipalities and independent schools to support their work on developing the competence of teachers through extra funding to the Swedish National Agency for Education for web-based support material, conferences etc.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

8.2.10.3. Content

The state shall, by means of the funds made available to the Swedish National Agency for Education, steer activities towards nationally important areas, taking into account that it is the principal organiser of the school that has the responsibility for implementing competence development.

An essential element in the work of The Swedish National Agency for Education is skill development for school staff. and the Agency has the responsibility for the national school head training and for professional development for teachers.. In-service teacher training can be optional, or a prerequisite for promotion.

In the campaign 'A boost for teachers' nearly a quarter of all teachers receive further education between 2007 and the end of 2011. Some 30 000 fully qualified teachers have been offered a chance to study at a higher education institution. During their studies they receive 80 per cent of their current pay. At the

same time the Government put SEK 1 billion into supplementary education for teachers who are experienced but not fully qualified (to make it possible for them to obtain a Bachelor/Master of Education), continuing professional education for teachers of Swedish for immigrants (SFI) and training for school heads.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

8.2.10.4. Admission Requirements

The only general admission requirement for competence development courses is that the teacher is employed at a school. Certain courses, however, can require that participants are teaching certain subjects or within certain sectors of education but this is not centrally regulated.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

8.2.11. Salaries

Teachers' salaries are individual and differentiated and are determined locally (see [2.8.](#)).

The table below shows average salaries for 2008. Salaries are not based on a salary scale, thus there is no direct link between salary and years of employment although experienced teachers usually have higher salaries.

	Average salary 2008 SEK per month
Pre-school teachers, Leisure-time pedagogues	22 700
Compulsory school teachers	24 900
Upper secondary teachers	26 400
Teachers in special needs education	26 900
Teaching staff in higher education institutions	32 500

Source: Statistics Sweden

8.2.12. Working Time and Holidays

Staff in pre-school, compulsory school and upper secondary school has an average working week of 40 hours. Working hours for most teachers' amount to 1767 hours of which 1360 hours are scheduled and 407 hours are at the teachers' disposal for administrative and representative duties. For full-time employees this includes 104 yearly competence development hours that may be unevenly distributed between teachers. The regulated working hours are divided into 194 days during or in connection with the pupils' school year. Pre-school teachers have equal rights to holidays as other municipal employees, 25-32 days depending on age. Teachers have holidays from mid-June to mid-August. Teachers' vacation increases with age.

Teachers at universities and university colleges have a 40-hour working week and 28 (until the age of 29), 31 or 35 (starting at the age of 40) days of holidays. The teaching staff members usually have their holidays during the students' holidays.

8.2.13. Promotion, Advancement

In the school area there is no national regulation of teachers' promotions etc. See [8.2.2.1.](#)

Promotion of teaching staff in the higher education sector is regulated in the Higher Education Ordinance. A senior lecturer permanently employed at a state higher education institution shall on application be promoted to a permanent position as professor at the institution, if the senior lecturer is qualified for such a position. Corresponding rules apply for promotion from a position as junior lecturer

to senior lecturer. Teaching skills are emphasised in the qualification requirements for all categories of teachers. The school head carries out the promotion.

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

8.2.14. Transfers

There is no national steering of teacher mobility. Teachers cannot be forced to take a certain position; open recruitment is applied for all posts with posts advertised and open for application etc. General rules for dismissal apply and salary is negotiated for each post separately.

8.2.15. Dismissal

There are no national regulations governing dismissal of teachers or change of career. Mismanagement of work, criminal activities, changes in the demand for teachers etc. may – as in other workplaces – be reasons for dismissal. In such cases the same regulations apply to teachers as to other employees.

The notice of termination by an employer must be based on objective grounds; however these are not further defined. The employee can take the case to court. Court records (previous decisions) are taken into consideration when stating what is an objective ground for termination of a post. Objective grounds for notice of termination are not needed when the employer provides other work in his service for the employee. The employee can request a written statement of the circumstances on which notice of termination is based.

The minimum period of notice is six months for the employer and three months for the employee. If the employee has been employed for more than 15 years (or 10 years if the employee is over the age of 40) the minimum period for the employer is one year. If the employee so requests, the time may be shortened.

A notice of termination must be given in a written document stating the procedure if the employee wishes to claim damages or invalid notice of termination. The employee's rights to priority concerning re-employment shall be stated as well as information that notification is required for the employee to exercise such rights.

Notice of termination must be delivered personally, or alternatively if the employee cannot be reached, posted by registered mail to the last known address. Notice of termination is deemed effective when received by the employee. If dispatched by mail notice of termination shall be deemed effective 10 days after the letter was submitted to the post office for delivery. If the employee is on holiday notice of termination is deemed effective not earlier than the day after the holiday ends.

8.2.16. Retirement and Pensions

As regulated by the central agreements between the trade unions and the employers organization all categories of teachers retire at the age of 65. There are possibilities to retire between the ages between 60-65, and in such a case the pension is reduced for each calendar month of retirement before the age of 65. State employees (staff at state universities and university colleges) may opt for part-retirement from the age of 61 with little loss in retirement pension. Employees have the right to, if he or she so wishes, remain at work up to the age of 67.

8.3. School Administrative and/or Management Staff

Pre-school

In pre-school, day-to-day administration is carried out by a work team consisting of pre-school teachers and child minders who supervises the work of the other pre-school staff. In some cases pre-schools have a head similar to a school head [rektor](#) at school level (see below). Teachers have the pedagogical responsibility for ensuring that work is carried out in accordance with the goals of the curriculum.

School level

At school level the role of the school head [rektor](#) is to actively guide and coordinate the educational activity of their institution and manage its staff. The post requires pedagogical insight, acquired through training and experience, but the head normally has no teaching duties. Following their appointment, school heads complete a national initial school management training programme organised by higher education institutions with the support of state funds allocated by the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket). The municipality that appoints and employs specifies the local requirements regarding professional experience and is fully responsible for the open recruitment procedure.

The curriculum contains a number of tasks for which the school head has a special responsibility. The curriculum states that the school head has overall responsibility for making sure that the activity of the school as a whole focuses on attaining the national goals. The school head is responsible for following up the results of the school and evaluating these in relation to national and local goals. Finally, the school head is responsible for ensuring that the rights of pupils and parents are taken into account and that support is provided to pupils in accordance with their needs. The municipalities are responsible for arranging competence development for school heads.

Some schools have a 'biträdande rektor', a deputy to the 'rektor' or school head. This employee, who normally has no teaching duties, carries out administrative, staff or finance tasks, depending on the internal division of responsibilities in the school concerned. The appointing municipality specifies the local requirements which normally include a degree in teaching combined with management skills.

Higher education

The head of a tertiary education institution – a university or university college ([universitet](#) or [högskola](#)) - is its legal representative and responsible for its teaching, research and administration. Either a professor or senior lecturer may become a head of a higher institution [rektor](#); or a deputy for the head of the institution prorektor. Usually there is a special post as general manager [förvaltningschef](#). The general manager is the supreme employee beside the head of the institution and is responsible for questions of legal, administrative and economic character.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

8.3.1. Requirements for Appointment as a School Head

The municipalities are responsible for recruiting and appointing school heads. A precondition to be appointed a position as school head is good pedagogical insight through training and experience.

School head training at school level

Appointed school heads at compulsory and upper secondary school levels are obliged to take part in the national school head training programme.. The organisers of the programme receive state funds allocated by the Swedish National Agency for Education. The national school head training programme is open to persons who, in accordance with the Education Act, serve as school heads either in the public school system or in recognised grant-aided independent schools and who have not attended such a programme earlier. Admission to the programme is made in consultation with the municipality concerned. The purpose of this programme is to enable school heads to develop and apply democratic learning and communicative leadership as laid down in the curricula. The programme aims at better equipping school heads to exercise their responsibilities as laid down in curricula and other legal instruments. The training is carried out during working hours and includes seminars, residential courses and supervised practice, and must be completed within four years from the day the school head was appointed.

Appointment of heads of higher education institutions A professor or senior lecturer may become a head of a higher education institution [rektor](#); administrative skills are taken into account in the selection. The government appoints tertiary level school heads for up to 6 years on the basis of a proposal by the governing body of the institution concerned. Appointment may be for more than a single period. Heads of tertiary institutions are employed by the institution and are not subject to individual evaluation. The board at state higher education institutions appoints a deputy for the head of the institution prorektor, The deputy head of institution is appointed for no longer than six years, and qualifications for appointment as a professor or senior lecturer are required to qualify for the position.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

8.3.2. Conditions of Service

School heads are employed on a permanent contract by the institution. Although they are not subject to individual evaluation, their general performance may be assessed as part of the overall responsibility of the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) to follow-up and evaluate early childhood education/care and school, and in the responsibility of the Swedish schools Inspectorate Skolinspektionen to perform quality controls in schools.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Skolinspektionen (The Swedish School Inspectorate)

8.4. Staff involved in Monitoring Educational Quality

The Government and Riksdag, together with the national agencies, have the overall responsibility for the quality of education in Sweden. This responsibility encompasses supplying support and stimulation for learning institutions as well as the development of quality and the examination of quality work.

Pre-school compulsory school and upper secondary school

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate Skolinspektionen, is responsible for quality controls of schools, pre-schools, school-age childcare, compulsory school, upper secondary school and adult education. The educational inspection is carried out through regular supervision and thematic quality evaluations. In the regular supervision the main focus is legality and the purpose is to ensure the right of each individual in relation to the Education Act. In the thematic quality evaluations focus is on quality aspects in the teaching and learning processes in relation to the results and performance of schools. The aim is to affect the work of schools and local authorities in order to increase quality and standards of achievement. The school Inspectorate is also responsible for the approval process for independent schools. This means that the Inspectorate decides whether to approve the establishment of new grant-aided independent schools and their entitlement to receive grants, as well as on the reversal of such decisions.

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) is the central administrative authority for the Swedish public school system. The Agency is to contribute to target fulfillment in the area of education through the follow-up, evaluation and development of schools, pre-schools, school-age childcare and adult education, and through the development of certain policy documents.

Universities and university colleges

There are no specific inspectors of higher education institutions, , each institution decides how to carry out monitoring and evaluation. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is responsible for

evaluation at national level, as well as for follow-up and analysis of activities at higher education institutions. The authority has the task of ensuring that the higher education institutions comply with relevant legislation and regulation, and the agency also follows up the plans for equality between the sexes set up by the institutions. Other important areas are the application of national admission criteria, the use of information technology and student participation. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is responsible for reviewing the quality of higher education, and evaluates all subjects and programmes in undergraduate, advanced and post-graduate education in a 6 year evaluation cycle.

The national quality assurance system of higher education institutions is to be changed, see 8.2

8.4.1. Requirements for Appointment as an Inspector

Inspectors are recruited mainly among teachers and teacher trainers but can also be practitioners in other fields such as government and local authorities.

Those working with inspection or equivalent activities work under the same conditions as other state employees. The recruitment is an open procedure and the Swedish Schools Inspectorate decides which competence the inspectors are required to have. The same applies for the recruitment to positions at the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education and to the Swedish National Agency for Education.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

8.5. Educational Staff responsible for Support and Guidance

Each school or higher education institution is responsible for employing the staff they need and the types, and number of personnel in various categories is not regulated. In larger schools there is usually a guidance counselor [studie- och yrkesvägledare](#) and the larger institutions for higher education often have a special student office for this purpose. There is a three year university education for career and guidance counselors.

See subsections for more information.

8.5.1. Counselors at school level

Educational and vocational guidance is generally given within the schools and it is the responsibility of the school head to ensure that all pupils receive educational and vocational guidance. There are especially trained career and guidance counselors [studie- och yrkesvägledare](#) at compulsory schools [grundskola](#), upper secondary schools [gymnasieskola](#) and in schools for municipal adult education

kommunernas vuxenutbildning. Although career education and guidance is the responsibility of all school personnel, the career and guidance counselors have specialist knowledge that plays a central role in career education and guidance. In order to be employed as a career counselor in the public school system, the applicant must have an education that is intended for such work.

There is a 3 year university programme for career and guidance counselors. A school-leaving certificate [slutbetyg från gymnasieskolan](#) with a additional passing grade in social sciences (the basic requirement for tertiary education is a passing grade in Swedish/Swedish as a second language and English) is required for admission to the programme, , which leads to a guidance counselor degree studie- och yrkesvägledarexamen. Guidance counselors are recruited by schools through open procedures and are employed by the municipality on a permanent contract.

8.5.2. Counselors at tertiary level

At higher education institutions högskolor there are student counselors studievägledare who provide students with educational guidance including individual guidance regarding their choice of studies and general information on educational programmes, careers and the job market, at central and institutional level. Student counselors often have an appropriate university education of at least 3 years with a guidance counsellor degree studie- och yrkesvägledarexamen. They are recruited by the institution concerned on the basis of an open recruitment procedure and are appointed by the school head [rektor](#) or by somebody appointed to fulfill that task. In state universities and university colleges counselors are employed by the state on a permanent contract.

[Högskoleverket](#) (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

[Skolverket](#) (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

8.6. Other Educational Staff or Staff working with Schools

At school level each municipality is responsible for employing the staff they need and types and number of personnel is not regulated at central level. In larger schools there is usually a school nurse (will become compulsory by the autumn of 2011), a school welfare officer, a caretaker, school meal personnel, cleaning staff, a school librarian and computer technicians.

At higher education institutions teachers are professors, senior lecturers, lecturers, research assistants, part-time teachers or guest teachers. The institutions for higher education decide to what extent the teachers at the institution shall be responsible for education, research or artistic development and administrative duties. The higher education institutions should strive towards that all categories of teachers teach in undergraduate programmes, except for research assistants who primarily undertake research.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

8.7. Statistics

There is no information available on the number of teachers as part of the working population, the number of teachers working part-time, the maximum and minimum salaries in comparison to per capita GDP and participation in in-service training. See subsections for other statistical information.

8.7.1. Number of employees at educational institutions and distribution men/women

2009/2010	Number of employees	Full-time equivalents	Share of women (%)
Total	174 028	139 965	69.6
- Women	123 665	97 139	100
- Men	50 373	42 826	-.
By staff category			
Pre-school teachers	9 209	6 312	95.6
Leisure-time pedagogues	4 336	3 317	74.4
Recreation leaders	917	606	46.6

Child minders	6 943	4 607	76.4
Teachers at the lower level of compulsory school	12 514	10 571	96.1
Teachers at the intermediate level of compulsory school	10 585	8 968	77.5
Compulsory school teachers	41 818	33 925	75.0
teachers in special needs education/ pedagogues in special needs education	10 846	9 038	85.0
Teachers of general subjects	22 139	18 324	55.8
Senior subject teachers	160	133	30.7
Teachers of practical/ aesthetic subjects	21 768	16 690	54.7
Teachers of vocational subjects	11 715	10 110	42.3
Teachers of mother tongues	2 934	2 059	69.0
Other teachers	7 385	5 933	76.2
Study and guidance counselors	2 227	1 795	78.0
School heads	6 411	5 691	58.6
Other school leaders	2 121	1 866	64.2

2009/2010	Number of employees	Full-time equivalents	Share of women (%)
By school form			
Pre-school	97 620	83 207	Number of women: 89 604
Pedagogical care	4 535	-	Number of women: 4 492
Open pre-school	723	510	Number of women: 715
Pre-school class	8 397	6 122	94.7
Compulsory school	107 067	85 559	75.0
School for pupils with impaired hearing	371	302	78.1
School for pupils with severe intellectual impairments	8 878	7 392	78.6
Upper secondary school	40 963	34 064	50.4
Municipal adult education	4 619	3 705	66.1
Municipal education for adults with	348	277	85.9

severe intellectual impairments			
Swedish tuition for immigrants	2 609	2 198	83.4
Supplementary education programmes	776	349	51.4

In October 2009 there were 66300 employees at higher education institutions, equivalent to 52600 full-time employees. The number of employees engaged in research and teaching (excluding postgraduate students) amounted to 25000 full-time employees. The largest categories are senior lecturers: 6700 full-time employees and junior lecturers: 5800 full-time employees, which equal 27 and 23 percent respectively of the teaching and researching staff.

There is a development towards a more even gender balance among teachers and researchers working in higher education institutions. In mid-1990s roughly 30 per cent of the research and teaching staff were women; in 2008 the ratio of women to men was 42 to 58. The largest changes in research and teaching staff have taken place among senior lecturers, where the proportion of women has risen by 18 percentage units, and post-doctoral research fellows, where the rise has been 17 percentages between 1995 and 2008. The lowest proportion of women can be found among the professors (19 per cent) even though there has been a 500 per cent rise in the number of women professors between 1995 and 2008.

Statistiska centralbyrån (SCB)

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education: Swedish Universities & University Colleges Short Version of Annual Report 2009.

8.7.2. Age distribution amongst teachers

	Average age
Total	47
By staff category	
Pre-school teachers	49
Leisure-time pedagogues	44
Recreation leaders	42
Child minders	44
Teachers at the lower level of compulsory school	51
Teachers at the intermediate level of compulsory school	51
Compulsory school teachers	43
Teachers in special needs education/ pedagogues in special needs education	53

Teachers of general subjects	46
Senior subject teachers	54
Teachers of practical/ aesthetic subjects	46
Teachers of vocational subjects	50
Teachers of mother tongues	49
Other teachers	48
Study and guidance counselors	48
School heads	52
Other school leaders	50
By school form	
Pre-school class	48
Compulsory school	47
School for pupils with impaired hearing	47
School for pupils with severe intellectual impairments	48
Upper secondary school	47
Municipal adult education	52
Municipal education for adults with severe intellectual impairments	54
Swedish tuition for immigrants (Sfi)	49
Supplementary education programmes	47

In the next fifteen years many teachers will retire. In 2008 almost 45 percent of the teachers were 50 years of older.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Source: Skolverkets officiella statistik 2010 (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education 2010)

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

8.7.3. Supply and demand of teachers

The current shortages of teachers in early year's education, extended school programmes, special educational needs and vocational programmes will worsen in the future. The figures suggest that there will be a balance or relatively good balance between supply and demand in the labour market for graduates with qualifications in secondary or upper-secondary teaching.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

9. EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

The state has overall responsibility for supervision, follow-up and evaluation of the education system in Sweden. The central authorities carry out the national evaluation of educational institutions in their respective areas of responsibility. The school system is goal-based with a high degree of local responsibility. The main responsibility for education lies with the municipalities and authorities responsible for grant-aided independent schools. Various steering documents are used to steer activities; school curriculum, course syllabi, etc. drawn up at different levels within the school system. It is the task of the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) to work actively for the achievement of these goals. The Swedish National Agency for Education steers, supports, follows up and evaluates the work of municipalities and schools with the purpose of improving quality and the result of activities to ensure that all pupils have access to equal education. A director general heads the Agency a council is appointed by the government.

The Swedish National Agency for Education is also responsible for distributing and evaluating government grants for the achievement of goal fulfillment and for guaranteeing quality. The Agency support preschools, förskolor, and schools in their development, The support may be provided for general development needs identified as shortcomings or problems in national or international surveys in areas such as mathematics, languages and reading and writing

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen), ensures that local authorities and grant-aided independent schools follow laws and regulations. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate is the central agency responsible for pre-school, the welfare of schoolchildren, schools management and adult education, kommunal vuxenutbildning, and the aim of the Agency is to ensure the equal right of all children to good education in a safe environment. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate conducts regular supervision of all schools and can also initiate, or in order to investigate complaints from pupils, parents or other person undertake an investigation of a specific school. An investigation of a school or institution may lead to an official reprimand from the Inspectorate to the responsible authority and a demand for action.

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate is also responsible for granting licenses to new grant-aided independent schools, friskolor. Furthermore, it decides on applications for entitlement to subsidies and also monitors national supervision of upper secondary schools, gymnasieskolor. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate follows up applications by visiting new schools immediately after they are opened.

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket) is responsible for the evaluation of higher education. The task of reviewing the quality of higher education includes evaluating subject areas (main fields of study) and study programmes, and granting degree awarding powers. Higher education institutions apply to the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education for the right to award vocational or professional degrees. In addition, university colleges apply to the Agency for the right to award two-year Masters' degrees. Independent and self-governing higher education institutions apply for degree awarding powers for all first (undergraduate) and second (Masters') cycle programmes. A

decision about the entitlement to award a degree may be revised. This can be the result of the Agency's evaluations of subject areas and study programmes which take place on a cyclical basis.

The Agency's quality assurance work has several purposes; Individual student's right to a course or study programme of high standard, employers need for highly trained graduates - in a global world Swedish higher education must retain high standards.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

9.1. Historical Overview

The introduction of evaluation of schools is closely related to the changing perceptions of education that developed in the beginning of the 20th century, focusing on the needs of the individual and the development of society. The development of evaluation has been characterized by efforts to find increasingly sophisticated methods of carrying out evaluations to help education support individual, social and educational development.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

9.1.1. Pre-school and school level

By the beginning of the 1990s comprehensive changes had been implemented in the regulatory system as well as in the division of responsibility between elected officials and between the central and local levels of administration. A shrinking economy increased the demands for efficiency in the use of public funds, and this in conjunction with greater freedom of choice and increased possibilities for pupils and parents to choose education. This created an entirely new situation for evaluation. Rationality and usefulness were given prominence with emphasis on individual needs.

The introduction of the learning outcomes based education system transferred the choice of method of assessment to the schools.

Since the inclusion of pre-school, förskola, in the curriculum for compulsory education, the possibilities to evaluate its activities on a national level have improved.

The system of regular educational inspection was introduced in 2003. The Swedish inspection model was created to respond to the needs of national evaluation, audit and accountability in a highly decentralised system of governance with a high degree of local responsibility.

Until September 2008, the Swedish inspection was organised as an independent agency under the Ministry for Education and Research; The Swedish National Agency for Education. The agency was responsible for national development and steering documents such as national curricula in different teaching subjects, grading criteria, general guidelines. In 2006 the Government established an

independent schools inspectorate. The purpose was two-fold. Firstly, it was considered to be important to separate the body responsible for steering and support from the one responsible for evaluation and control. Secondly, the purpose was to emphasise the importance of national inspection and to encourage a more forceful and rigorous inspection carried out more frequently. From October 2008 the national inspection has been organised under a independent agency; the Swedish Schools Inspectorate while the Swedish National Agency for Education retains the rest of their earlier responsibilities.

Skolinspektionen (The Swedish Schools Inspectorate)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

9.1.2. Higher education

The national body responsible for external quality assurance, the Swedish National Agency of Higher Education, was established in 1995 and functions independently of the government and the higher education institutions themselves, although it is financed from the Ministry of Education and Research. It conducts audits of Higher education institutions quality assurance systems and since 2000 undertakes recurring external evaluations of all programmes and subjects at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Until 2009 the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education has conducted quality audits of higher education institutions every six years. The purpose of the quality audits was to evaluate the internal quality assurance procedures and to develop a working culture where these procedures are regarded as an important and natural part of the daily operations of the higher education institutions. The quality assurance system of higher education is to be changed and quality audits are not included in the new quality assurance system, (see 9.2.)

Mainly as a result of the Bologna process, legislation for a three-cycle structure of higher education was adopted in January 2007 and applied as from 1 July 2007, see **6.10.**

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

9.2. Ongoing Debates and future developments

9.2.1. New national quality assurance system

In accordance with “Focus on knowledge – quality in higher education” (Government Bill 2009/10:139), which has been approved by the Riksdag, there will be changes in the direction of the national quality assurance system for higher education institutions. The purpose of the changes is to strengthen their incentives to achieve high standards for learning outcomes at their study programmes. Higher education institutions with high quality study programmes will be rewarded through increased

appropriations. The new system will consist of quality evaluations of higher education programmes and reviews of degree-awarding powers. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education will be responsible for implementing these evaluations and reviews, and these should take place every fourth year, instead of every six years as has been the case earlier. Resources for study programmes at first and second cycle level will be allocated on the basis of programme evaluations, as well as on the number of full-time equivalent students and their annual performance equivalents.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

9.2.2 New Education Act

In March 2010, the Government presented the bill 'The new Education Act - for knowledge, choice and security' (Govt. Bill 2009/10:165) to the Riksdag. The Riksdag approved the bill in June 2010, and the new Education Act will apply as of 1 July 2011. In the new Education Act the Swedish Schools Inspectorate is given a clear legal basis for its supervision. A scale of sanctions will be introduced, where the ambition, as far as possible, is to have the same sanctions against municipal and grant-aided independent schools. There will be an increase in the rules regulating the work of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate to enhance their power to perform clear, effective supervision and allowing them to impose fines on public and private responsible bodies, and to use other sanctions as well. New provisions on systematic quality enhancement procedures (that are to be documented) are introduced while the previous requirements for quality assessment reports and municipal school plans are removed. This means that each body responsible for schools is to systematically and continuously plan, monitor and develop its educational services. The focus is to be on achieving the national objectives for education.

9.3. Administrative and Legislative Framework

9.3.1. Pre-school and school level

State regulations concerning the evaluation of the education system, including pre-school [förskoleverksamhet](#), school-age childcare [skolbarnsomsorg](#) and the pre-school class [förskoleklass](#) are set out in the Education Act (1985:1100), and in a number of ordinances. As from July 2011 the new Education Act will come into force.

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) has laid down general guidelines for quality reporting. The Government determines the goals, guidelines and distribution of resources for the central authorities through appropriations and regulatory letters. The curricula stresses the importance of developing methods for evaluation that are clearly related to the goals for the activities and that contribute to pedagogical development.

9.3.2. Higher education

State regulations concerning the evaluation of the education system are set out in the Higher Education Act and in a number of ordinances.

The evaluation system of higher education institutions is to be changed, see 2.2

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

9.4. Evaluation of Schools/Institutions

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate, and The Swedish National Agency for Education are responsible for the national inspection and evaluation of the school system (pre-schools and schools) whilst the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is responsible for the evaluation of higher education institutions (see further [9.4.2.](#)). Internal evaluation is carried out at local level, see [9.4.1.](#).

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

9.4.1. Internal Evaluation

The municipalities themselves are responsible for the organisation and implementation of evaluation locally, which leads to variations in how the evaluation is carried out. Methods for internal evaluation vary between educational institutions.

9.4.1.1. Pre-school and School Level

Work in pre-school and school should be planned, implemented, evaluated and developed in relation to the goals set up in the curriculum. The general objective of the internal evaluation of pre-schools, förskolor, and schools is to ensure that the curriculum is being followed. In addition a quality assessment is made on basis of the general guidelines from the Swedish National Agency for Education.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

9.4.1.1.1. Responsibility

The municipalities are responsible for planning and running pre-schools. They are also expected to inspect, follow up and evaluate them on a continuous basis and through annual follow-up and evaluation measures. The follow-up is often based on administrative and economic reports. Factors examined are expansion, use and allocation of resources and quality. Supervision of pre-school can be carried out in the same way as supervision of schools, see **9.4.1.2.**

The school is responsible for following up and evaluating its activities, whilst the municipalities are responsible for following up and evaluating schools in the municipality. Each school organiser should have a work plan for its activity and should each year prepare a report on how these plans are implemented as well as an annual quality report. The report should assess the extent to which education achieves the goals set up by the state and proposals for necessary changes if the goals are not met. In the individual school, the school head is responsible for the way in which the internal self-evaluation is carried out.

9.4.1.1.2. Evaluators

There are no specific pre-school inspectors. Evaluation may be carried out by an independent external investigator and/or by the personnel or management of the school in consultation with parents and children.

The general objective of the evaluation of schools is to report goal attainment and measures planned for increasing goal attainment. In accordance with an ordinance on quality reporting in the school, each school submits a quality report to its principal organiser. The principal organiser then establishes quality reporting for all school units. The Swedish National Agency for Education has drawn up general guidelines on quality reporting in schools and pre-schools. The school head, who is responsible for the evaluation, locally determines who will carry out the evaluation. Teachers, other staff and pupils participate in drawing up the quality reports. Pupils' parents and guardians can also take part in the work.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

9.4.1.1.3. Collection of information and the use of results

The staff in the pre-school should continuously monitor and observe how the school's activities affect each individual child and the group as a whole; active observation forms the basis for evaluation and planning. Some municipalities use parent questionnaires to monitor and evaluate quality over time, in and between different pre-schools. Methods for evaluation based on a number of quality indicators are used to provide more detailed evaluation. Such indicators are determined either by the municipalities or the individual pre-school.

How data is collected in schools is decided locally; the school head is responsible for how the evaluation is carried out. There are great variations between how different schools organise and carry out their evaluation. One way of gathering information is during study days where planning and evaluation of school work takes place.

The municipalities strive to make their quality reports known and easily accessible for everyone. Quality reporting is an instrument for improving and developing schooling and the very implementation of quality reporting itself starts a quality enhancing process:

- The school's pupils, teachers, school management and other staff through this process establish a clear, common over-all picture to be used as a basis for discussing the need for improvement measures.
- Parents and other interested parties receive good information about the school. As a result they can participate in discussions on development of the school, obtain greater insight and – on the basis of their different roles – increased influence.
- Pupils and parents receive crucial information prior to choosing school, programme, courses etc.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

9.4.1.2. Higher Education Level

Each Higher Education Institution (universities and university colleges) is responsible for the quality of its own activities. The Higher Education Act (Högskolelagen) states that quality development is a joint responsibility for staff and students.

Students are given the opportunity to take responsibility for their education, both in terms of content and organisation. Students, teachers, researchers and others in the academic world should be involved in the development and renewal of subject knowledge, pedagogical approaches, educational programmes and courses and important support functions (library, premises, and equipment).

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

9.4.2. External Evaluation

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate, and the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education are the central authorities responsible for external evaluation of education at pre-school/school level, and tertiary level respectively.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

9.4.2.1. Pre-school and School level

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate ensures that the responsible authority, that is to say the municipality or management of an grant-aided independent school, friskola or pre-school, follows laws and regulations, which apply to that school or pre-school. Regular supervision of schools leads to demands for action from the responsible authority when necessary. In the case of independent schools lack of action by the school may result in the withdrawal of the license to operate or entitlement to subsidies.

A quality assessment permits the Swedish Schools Inspectorate to delve deeply into particular areas. This may concern a school subject such as mathematics, or a more general area such as the pre-school- or school situation for the reception of new pupils. For each quality assessment the Inspectorate evaluates the activities of a number of schools. Judgments are based on the school's steering documents as well as on research and proven experience. The Inspectorate can demand action if it discovers shortcomings and can submit recommendations for further developments. The Inspectorate can also highlight good practice, where schools have succeeded particularly well within the area under inspection.

The Swedish National Agency for Education monitors, follows up and evaluates activities in the entire public school system including adult education.. Their statistics are available from the authority's web site, www.skolverket.se., Data is presented at different levels, from aggregate figures at national level, county and municipal level, as well as to the specific school level for some figures.

The authority produces annually a number of statistical reports , with statistical information on the number of pupils, teacher/pupil ratios, study interruption, incomplete leaving certificates, various expenses etc. Quantitative information on the conditions of Swedish school activity, its organisation and use of resources is regularly collected through questionnaires sent to the municipalities. The Education Act states that the municipalities also are obliged to submit information on school activities as requested by the Government or to the central authorities decided by the Government.

Skolinspektionen (The Swedish Schools Inspectorate)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

9.4.2.2. Higher education

All higher education in Sweden is subject to recurring external evaluation by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education to ensure the quality of individual programmes. In reviewing the quality standards, the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is empowered to query the right to award degrees, should the quality level not be satisfactory. If a higher education institution has its degree awarding powers questioned, the situation is reviewed again after one year. If the shortcomings have not been remedied, the entitlement of the higher education institution to award the degree is withdrawn. There is a follow-up evaluation after three years of any higher education institution that has been subject to a special review, to ensure that the recommendations for improvement have been acted upon.

Prior to every evaluation of a subject area (main field of study) or study programme by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, a panel of assessors stipulate the criteria to be used when judging the quality of the subject area or study programme. These criteria are based on the stipulations of the Swedish System of Qualifications and the quantitative targets that have been designed in accordance with the Bologna Process:

- The number of teaching staff employed until further notice as well as other teachers is appropriate for the scope of the study programme.
- The teachers have the academic or artistic competence, and teaching and other necessary skills not only for teaching but also for supervision, and that they have real opportunities for professional development and independent research or artistic development
- The study programme is taught in a research environment, and that there is an opportunity for a critical and creative approach.
- Students have easy access to literature, ICT facilities and other necessary equipment.
- The course and programme specifications stipulate learning outcomes in accordance with the System of Qualifications.
- The teaching, reading list and forms of assessment are designed to ensure links to research or artistic development and progression.
- The qualitative targets are clearly stipulated, for example, in the grading criteria, and in the instructions for examinations, project work or other forms of assessment, and the higher education institutions provide the students with the prerequisites to reach the qualitative targets.

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

9.5. Evaluation of the Education System

The state has overall responsibility for supervision, follow-up and evaluation of the education system as a whole.

For more information see subsections.

9.5.1. Preschool and School level

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) is continually developing and revising syllabi, grading criteria and other steering documents to ensure that they help to improve equivalence and achievement of goals, as well as reflect the needs motivated by developments in society and the workplace, and the needs of individuals. The Swedish National Agency for Education also follows up how the steering documents are being instrumental in helping, in practice, to increase equivalence between schools and to meet the goals set. The agency also evaluates the knowledge of responsible authorities or institutions regarding the content and purpose of steering documents.

The Swedish National Agency of Education focuses on, by way of national evaluations, areas where development is needed at the national level, as well as providing the underlying basis for this development, e.g., to help school principals and supervisors in their efforts to lead and rejuvenate activities at the local level. The areas evaluated are chosen on the basis of problems or needs detected in the statistics or through educational inspection. The Swedish National Agency for Education also takes the initiative to evaluations in other areas where more knowledge may be needed. Evaluations are also conducted on direct assignment from Government. The evaluation results provide a basis for conscious improvement on all levels throughout the system for everyone involved, as they endeavor to develop and breathe new life into activities. They also provide a broad factual base for anyone wishing to take part in the debate on education policy.

The Swedish National Agency for Education is responsible for Swedish participation in international knowledge assessments. The purpose is to examine how Swedish students fare in comparison with those from other countries, and how the national goals for education in Sweden compare to education in other countries. The results from international comparative studies help to form a basis for analysing variations in different education systems, and Sweden also takes part in international surveys, such as PISA, ICCS, ESLC, TIMSS, TIMSS Advanced and PIRLS.

For more information see subsections.

9.5.1.1. Follow-up through statistics and analysis

The Swedish National Agency for Education collects data regularly from the municipalities on preschool förskola, child care for school children skolbarnomsorg, schools and adult education komvux, and through these data gathers fundamental knowledge on these institutions. The statistics are then used

by municipalities in their planning, and as a basis for governmental and parliamentary planning and decisions. Another purpose of the statistics and in-depth studies is to provide a basis for comparison and to encourage debate, locally and nationally, on how to better achieve the goals set for school and pre-school and child care for school children. The statistics and analyses are available on the web site of the National Agency for Education where the SIRIS system presents much of the data on individual school level, in order for students, teachers and parents to follow local development. In order for the Agency to gain a more nuanced picture, they make in-depth analyses of the statistics. Regular polling of public, parental, student and teacher attitudes toward education is also carried out as a part of the national follow-up.

Statistical data and quality reports from schools and municipalities are gathered on an annual basis. Statistics Sweden (the central government authority for official statistics) is commissioned by the Swedish National Agency for Education to collect large quantities of data, which is then processed by the Swedish National Agency for Education and published in annual reports. Data is available on exam results, grades in compulsory schools *grundskolor*, statistics on pupils, list of all schools, teachers and education staff as well as on education costs. Key indicators such as pupil/teacher ratio, school resources, social background etc., are also available. The generation of statistics has increased in recent years due to a rising interest on the part of the media, municipalities and the general public for school results.

9.5.1.2. National tests

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) is responsible for the national testsystem. This involves producing and developing subject testing and diagnostic materials in cooperation with Higher Education Institutions for compulsory school, and other corresponding school forms, and national tests for upper secondary and adult education courses. Mainly their work focuses on Swedish, Swedish as a Second Language, English and Mathematics. Testing is a tool to support teachers in assessing and enable consistency in grading, and also important for clarifying what is stated in national course goals and grading criteria. The results of the national examinations also enable the Swedish National Agency for Education to describe, analyse and assess the results of different student groups in order to concentrate on areas of knowledge where support measures are needed. Nationally set tests are made by pupils in the 3rd, 5th and 9th year in the compulsory school.

The national tests measure and describe pupil's knowledge, skills and results achieved. They also provide a basis for evaluation of school results. School leaving certificates and the results from national tests are also collected for pupils in upper secondary school. The Schools Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen) offers sample test corrections of the national tests taken by pupils in compulsory and upper secondary education, to ensure equality in the test results nationwide. There are no exams in compulsory school or upper-secondary schools. From the compulsory school the pupils receive a school leaving certificate with grades in all subjects they have taken, and from upper-secondary school the students receive a similar document with grades for all subject courses they have completed during their upper secondary schooling.

Skolinspektionen (The Swedish Schools Inspectorate)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

9.5.2. Higher Education Level

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket) is responsible for monitoring and analysing the development of higher education and research, as well as changes in society which can influence the future of higher education. Since 2001, the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education has conducted evaluations of all subject areas (main fields of study) and study programmes at higher education institutions leading to degrees in the arts, sciences, social sciences and artistic fields as well as vocational and professional qualifications. These evaluations take place on a cyclical basis and on all levels: first cycle (Undergraduate), second cycle (Master's) and third cycle (Doctoral). The purpose of the evaluations is to contribute to developing the content and quality of subject areas and study programmes, to ensure that subject areas and study programmes meet the goals and stipulations of the Higher Education Act and Higher Education Ordinance, and help students by providing information prior to choosing a subject area or study programme.

The National Agency for Higher Education is responsible for the official statistics on Higher Education Institutions (universities and university colleges). These are based, inter alia, on the data collected by the universities' and university colleges' study documentation systems and on the operational reports that they are required to present. After quality assurance procedures and processing, the statistics are published in Statistics Sweden's publication series and in the Agency's National Monitoring database. In addition to its quality evaluations the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education organises national surveys to find out what opinions first, second and third-cycle students as well as teachers have about higher education.

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education's quality assurance policy has been developed in accordance with the European Network for Quality Assurance's (ENQA)

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Statistiska centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

9.6. Research into Education linked to Evaluation of the Education System

The National Agency for Education (Skolverket) administrates, follows up and evaluates monetary steering instruments within the Agency's area of responsibility. This includes the allocation of federal funding to municipalities and other authorities, and grants to Swedish schools abroad. The Agency reviews and assesses the ability of the state to use funding as a steering instrument to encourage municipalities and schools to increase goal achievement, and to ensure quality and equivalence. In total, this involves funding of nearly 10 billion SEK to be administrated, followed up and evaluated. The

Agency also disseminates information about research and information on experiences that are of significance for school heads and teachers.

The government provides funds for educational research at Higher Education Institutions (universities and university colleges). The Committee for Educational Science (Utbildningsvetenskapliga kommittén) within the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet) also distributes funds for this purpose. The Swedish National Agency (Högskoleverket) reviews the operations of the higher education institutions. Its aim is to provide the Riksdag and the government with material on which to base decisions on important issues. The Agency also aims at raising awareness about higher education institutions both in the higher education sector itself and among politicians and the community at large. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is also responsible for centrally produced statistics about the higher education institutions. It decides on what data to collect and how these are to be processed.

The Institute for Labour Market Policy Evaluation (IFAU) is a research institute under the Swedish Ministry of Employment. IFAU's objective is to promote, support and carry out scientific evaluations, including for example labor market effects of educational policies.

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

Vetenskapsrådet (The Swedish Research Council)

The Institute for Labour Market Policy Evaluation (IFAU) www.ifau.se

9.7. Statistics

No data available.

10. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

Special educational support is provided within mainstream education as well as in education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [särskola](#), special schools, [specialskola](#), the upper secondary school for pupils with impaired hearing (riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade), upper secondary schools for pupils with severe physical disabilities (riksgymnasium för svårt rörelsehindrade) and education for adults with severe intellectual impairments, [särsvux](#). There are also possibilities for municipalities to organise special needs education in accordance with their specific local situation. There are grant-aided independent schools for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, but they are few and the range of courses rather limited.

Separate education for pupils with special needs follows the curricula of the mainstream education system but may have specific syllabi and timetables. The tuition should - as far as possible - correspond to that given in mainstream education and give pupils an education appropriate to their circumstances.

Compulsory education

The overwhelming majority of pupils with physical disabilities attend a mainstream compulsory school, [grundskola](#), and receive the extra support they need at that institution. For cases when this is not possible special provision is provided, and consists of regional special schools for pupils with deafness or impaired hearing, [specialskola](#), and [national special schools for pupils with visual impairment and additional disabilities, deafness or impaired hearing combined with severe learning disabilities or congenital deaf-blindness, and severe speech and language disabilities.](#) . A government agency supports municipalities and schools in the education of pupils with disabilities by producing educational materials and other tools etc.

Compulsory education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [obligatoriska särskolan](#) is divided into compulsory school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [grundsärskolan](#) and training school, [träningsskolan](#). Nine years of school is mandatory for all children and youth between the ages of 7-16 with an optional tenth year. The training schools are intended for those who are not able to follow the lessons in the compulsory school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments. In most cases the compulsory education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [obligatoriska särskolan](#) is organisationally integrated in mainstream compulsory education and share premises with a municipal school. A pupil may attend mainstream compulsory school [grundskolan](#) but follow the syllabi for education for pupils with intellectual impairments if the parents so wish.

Upper secondary education

After nine/ten years in compulsory education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, pupils are entitled to four years of education in upper secondary school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments.

There are also national upper secondary schools for pupils with impaired hearing (riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade), and for pupils with severe physical disabilities (riksgymnasium för svårt rörelsehindrade).

Adult education

Adults with intellectual impairments have the right to participate in education for adults with severe intellectual impairments (sär vux) if they fulfill the preconditions set and they can benefit from this education. The municipalities are obliged to offer education for adults with intellectual impairments, [sär vux](#). Adult education courses are open to people over 20 years of age. Adults with physical disabilities can attend municipal adult education. There are also folk high school courses for adults with intellectual impairments. Folk high schools, folkhögskolor, and adult education associations, providing educational group studies, studiecirkel, must provide facilities for persons with functional disabilities in order to receive financial support from the state for their work. Access and opportunities for persons with intellectual impairments are particularly important reasons for providing state support to folk high schools and adult education associations.

Tertiary education

The state Higher Education Institutions (universities and university colleges) are state agencies directly accountable to the Government and the Riksdag. According to the annual governmental approval document the institutions shall reserve a certain part of the grants for aid to disabled students, and if doing so a HEI has higher costs they can apply for extra grants.

These funds should be used for special pedagogical support to individual students to compensate functional limitations arising from permanent functional disabilities. The funds are also used to cover additional costs e.g. for literature, lecturers, help in taking notes, additional assistance, sign language interpretation, interpreting written texts, alternative examinations, extended times for examinations and mentoring.

Central administration

The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten), is the central authority responsible for allocating public funds for special pedagogical issues. The institute creates and provides support to school organisers on special pedagogical issues related to disabilities.

[Regeringen \(The Swedish Government\)](#)

[Riksdagen \(The Parliament\)](#)

[Riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade, RGD-RGH \(Swedish Upper Secondary School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing\)](#)

[Riksgymnasiet för svårt rörelsehindrade \(The National Upper Secondary School for students with Physical Disabilities\)](#)

[Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten, \(National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools\)](#)

10.1. Historical Overview

Special education for children with physical and/or cognitive disabilities has existed since the 19th century.

10.1.1. Education for Pupils with intellectual impairments

The teaching of children with intellectual impairments began in the 1860s as philanthropy, and county councils soon became involved. Boarding schools were the norm until the mid- 20th century, because among other reasons, there were no facilities for transporting pupils between home and school.

In the 1950s the Riksdag decided on a pilot scheme for a nine-year comprehensive school where the so-called 'educable' among pupils with intellectual impairments were entitled to attend. The Act on Provisions for Certain Mentally Retarded Persons in 1967 made schooling compulsory for children with disabilities and gave them the right to an education. The number of pupils doubled and co-operation with regular schools became necessary in order to solve a shortage of school premises. Compulsory education ceased at the age of 21 or in certain cases 23. In the middle of the 1980s, the compulsory education became 10 years and pupils were entitled to a four-year course of study in a special vocational school (now upper secondary education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments) after compulsory education.

In 1985 responsibility at the national level for these schools was transferred from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to the Ministry of Education and Science. Since 1986, the Education Act includes provisions relating to these schools. In 1996 the municipalities took over the responsibility for education for young persons and adults with intellectual impairments from the county councils.

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

10.1.2. Education for Pupils with Physical Disabilities

In 1889 a law was passed making county councils responsible for the tuition of deaf-mute children. Tuition was given at the Tomtebodas Institute a boarding school in Solna (near Stockholm) and the year groups matched those of the elementary school with the same textbooks, though transcribed into Braille. Teaching of the deaf and those with impaired hearing was reorganised in 1938. The country was divided into four 'catchment areas' each with its own compulsory school for deaf-mute children. In the 1950s it was gradually underlined that the teaching should resemble that of the mainstream school system and the notion that boarding schools were not the best solution for these pupils was being formed.

In 1998 the Government decided that parents of children with impaired hearing might be awarded state grants for learning sign language.

10.2. Ongoing Debates and future developments

See subsections for information.

10.2.1. New Education Act

IN March 2010, the Government presented the bill 'The new Education Act - for knowledge, choice and security' (Govt. Bill 2009/10:165) to the Riksdag. The Riksdag approved the bill in June 2010, the new Education Act will apply as of 1 July 2011. The new Education Act does not contain a lot of new texts on special educational support. For more information on the new Education Act see previous chapters.

General changes

Clearer basic values for all types of schools will be laid down by law. The responsibility of education to communicate and gain acceptance for respect for human rights and fundamental democratic values will be clarified. By establishing clear links to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is emphasised that the best interests of the child are the basis for all education.

The legal rights of pupils and their parents/guardians will be strengthened by making it possible to appeal against a considerably larger number of decisions. Decisions on remedial programmes and decisions to deny a pupil a place in a municipal school on the grounds that this would lead to considerable organisational and financial difficulties for the municipality can be mentioned as examples. It will also be possible to appeal against decisions on school transport by means of an administrative appeal, which means a broader review of the decision compared with the legality review that is possible today under the Local Government Act.

The proposal requires that school health and welfare services, apart from a school doctor and nurse, also include access to a psychologist and school welfare officer.

Administrative changes

New provisions on systematic quality enhancement procedures that are to be documented are introduced while the requirements for quality assessment reports and municipal school plans are removed. This means that each body responsible for schools is to systematically and continuously plan, monitor and develop its educational services. The focus is to be on achieving the national objectives for education.

New introductory programmes will be introduced for pupils who are not eligible for national programmes at upper secondary schools.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

10.3. Definition and Diagnosis of Target Groups

See subsections for information.

10.3.1. Separate education

Pupils with severe intellectual impairments

Pupils who are considered unable to attain the knowledge goals of the compulsory school, grundskolan, due to intellectual impairments have a lawful right to education that covers both compulsory education for those with severe intellectual impairments, [obligatoriska särskolan](#) and the equivalent for the upper secondary level, [gymnasiesärskola](#). For pupils who cannot assimilate instruction in a compulsory school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [grundskolan](#) there is training school, [träningsskolan](#), which provides instruction within five so called subject areas and not in traditional subjects (see [10.6.7.1.](#)). This kind of school is intended for those who have an important and enduring intellectual disability due to neurological damage as well as those with autism or similar conditions.

Adults with severe intellectual impairments can receive education within education for adults with severe intellectual impairments (sär vux).

Pupils with severe physical disabilities

Pupils with severe physical disabilities have the right to specially adapted education. The criteria for having the right to such education is that the physical disability itself or in combination with other functional disabilities means that the pupil cannot follow regular education, and also that the pupil need rehabilitation and in certain cases residential arrangements in pupil homes with appropriate care.

10.3.2. Mainstream education

Children in need of special support have the right to receive this in the mainstream school to the extent needed in order to have a chance of attaining the goals of the education. If a pupil after an overall assessment is not considered to be able to attain the goals of mainstream education a place in a school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [särskola](#) is provided. Pupils who need intensive special pedagogical support during a certain period may receive this from the National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten).

Special support in mainstream upper secondary education gymnasieskolan is given to pupils who may not attain the knowledge goals, pupils who due to sickness or similar reasons cannot participate in regular school work, pupils who due to hearing or visual impairments, physical disabilities or explicit

study difficulties cannot follow regular instruction and also pupils with a foreign background who need study supervision or mother tongue tuition.

Adults with functional disabilities have the opportunity to obtain special support in mainstream adult education.

In the Discrimination Act, which applies to the entire education system, disability is defined as a permanent physical, mental or intellectual limitation of a persons functional capacity as a consequence of an injury or an illness that existed at birth has arisen thereafter or which may be expected to arise.

Diskrimineringslag (Discrimination Act) SFS 2008:567

10.4. Financial Support for Pupils' Families

There is no specific financial support for families of pupils with special needs but under the Act on Support and Services to Disabled Persons (Lag om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade, LSS) children with severe disabilities are entitled to personal assistance and a number of other forms of support and service. All children in Sweden are entitled to a general child allowance up to and including the quarter of a year they become 16 years of age. Thereafter there is an extended child allowance that covers the months remaining in compulsory education after the pupil turned 16. Full-time studying pupils in upper secondary education over the age 16 receive a study grant, for more information see **5.9.**

School meals, teaching material and school transports are free except for pupils in education for adults with severe intellectual impairments, [särsvux](#) who pay for their teaching material. In schools for pupils with deafness or impaired hearing, [and for pupils with visual impairment and additional disabilities, deafness or impaired hearing combined with severe learning disabilities or congenital deaf-blindness, and severe speech and language disabilities, specialskola](#) boarding, lodging and travels are financed by the state; the home municipality pays a certain fee to the state for pupils enrolled.

[Lag om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade \(Law on service and support to certain people with disabilities\), SFS 1993:387](#)

10.5. Special Provision within Mainstream Education

Most pupils with special needs receive education in the mainstream education system. The curricula set out specific goals to attain for pupils with impaired hearing/vision and physical disabilities as well as for pupils with intellectual impairments. Compulsory and upper secondary teachers often teach pupils with intellectual impairments.

Regional resource centers promote the all-round development of children and young people who are either deaf or have visual, hearing or speech impairments. Activities focus primarily on special pedagogical research and training.

Municipalities can organise special provision according to the specific needs of the pupils in their catchment area.

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

10.5.1. Specific Legislative Framework

The Education Act applies to the entire state education system. It has been supplemented by a number of ordinances issued by the Government for the various types of schools, e.g. the ordinance for education for pupils with impaired hearing (Specialskoleförelördningen, 1995:401) and the ordinances on education for pupils and adults with severe intellectual impairments (Särskoleförelördningen, 1995:206, Förelördningen om gymnasiesärskolan, 1994:741, Förelördningen om vuxenutbildning för utvecklingsstörda, 1992:736).

The curricula are laid down by the Government and are the same for mainstream education and education for pupils with special needs.. Teachers when awarding grades have the possibility of disregarding specific grading criteria in syllabuses where special reasons exists e.g. disabilities which directly prevent pupils from fulfilling the requirements laid down in the criteria.

The Discrimination Act (Diskrimineringslagen 2008:567) aims to protect against discrimination based on gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnic origin, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. The act applies to most areas of society, including working life and all parts of the education system. The Act also prohibits discrimination of trainees and of temporary or hired labor. There is also a Child and Pupil representative (Ombudsman) to represent children and pupils in cases concerning offensive treatment.

Under the Act on Support and Services to Disabled Persons (Lag om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade, LSS) children with severe disabilities are entitled to personal assistance and a number of other forms of support and service.

Lag om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade (Law on service and support to certain people with disabilities), SFS 1993:387

Diskrimineringslag (Discrimination Act) SFS 2008:567

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

Specialskoleförförordningen (Ordinance for schools for pupils with impaired hearing/vision and physical disabilities), SFS 1965:478

10.5.2. General Objectives

The aim of the educational support for pupils with special needs within mainstream education is to give all pupils genuine opportunities to meet the standards of the education, as formulated in terms of knowledge goals. Self-improvement and entry into productive working activity are general goals for all adult education.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

10.5.3. Specific Support Measures

Under provisions laid down in the Education Act and the curricula, schools have a special responsibility for providing pupils with the help and support they need to overcome any difficulties. It is not centrally regulated what form the support should take but measures should be based on each pupil's needs and may include technical aids as well as additional staff resources. In most municipalities there are teachers who are specialised in supporting pupils in need of extra support. The school head is responsible for ensuring that an action plan is established if it is apparent that pupils need special support.

For pupils with autism who fulfill the conditions for attaining the learning outcomes of the compulsory school but need support, special classes are arranged in a number of municipalities. These classes consist of significantly fewer children than regular classes and teacher/pupil ratios are high in order to satisfy the special needs of each child. Those who work with autistic children are pedagogues in special needs education. A child with autism can also attend a regular class and receive extra support; for pupils with autism, it is primarily the method of learning that is adapted and not the teaching materials.

Within mainstream upper secondary education there are regulations concerning special support measures. If a pupil will not achieve the knowledge goals laid down in the syllabi or if the pupil for other reasons needs special support, this is provided. Special instruction in the classroom may be organised for pupils in need of such support; the school head is responsible for ensuring that a support programme is drawn up for the pupil. For pupils in the upper secondary school who due to sickness or for similar reasons are not able to participate in regular schoolwork, special instruction is arranged in the hospital, in the pupil's home or at another appropriate place. For pupils who due to hearing or visual impairments, physical disabilities or other specific study difficulties cannot follow regular instruction, special classes may be arranged. Pupils with a foreign background may receive study supervision or instruction in their mother tongue.

The Curriculum for the Non-Compulsory school forms (Läroplanen för de frivilliga skolformerna, Lpf 94) states that teaching should be adapted to each pupil's preconditions and needs. The school has a particular responsibility for pupils with functional disabilities but there are no detailed regulations governing this. It is the responsibility of the municipality to take the necessary measures.

For adults with disabilities participating in regular adult education the same goals apply as for other students.

Tertiary education

Universities and university colleges are obliged to consider the special needs of students who have physical disabilities or for other reasons experience difficulties in following courses. In 2006 approximately 4070 students with physical disabilities received such support.

The national university aptitude test (a national test used for admissions to bachelor programmes in higher education) is provided in two special versions for those with serious visual impairments, in Braille and on electronics. People with mild visual impairments or with dyslexia are allowed extra time to complete the test.

Lag om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade (Law on service and support to certain people with disabilities), SFS 1993:387

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

10.6. Separate Special Provision

Special education for children and young people is provided within the education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments. ([obligatoriska särskolan](#) and [gymnasiesärskola](#)), education for pupils in special schools, [specialskola](#), the national upper secondary school for pupils with impaired hearing (riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade) and upper secondary schools for pupils with severe physical disabilities (riksgymnasium för svårt rörelsehindrade). There are also resource centres for pupils in compulsory education with physical disabilities, including pupils who are deaf and blind, pupils with speech impairments, and pupils with impaired hearing and intellectual impairments. For adults (aged 20 or over) there is education for adults with severe intellectual impairments.

Education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [obligatoriska särskolan](#) and [gymnasiesärskolan](#) is arranged by municipalities and independent organisers however the latter are few in this area and the range of their education is rather limited. Compulsory special schools, [specialskola](#) are organised by the state, and the upper secondary school for pupils with impaired hearing (riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade) is organised by the municipality of Örebro in accordance with an agreement with the state which finances the education. For the Sami minority in the north of Sweden there are Sami schools financed by the state.

Any child with physical disabilities enrolled in compulsory education at a special school, [specialskola](#) or a school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [särskola](#) may complete schooling in a way other than laid down in the Education Act. The board of the school takes such a decision. The

alternative arrangements (e.g. home tuition) must clearly represent a satisfactory alternative to the education available under the provision of the law and must be subject to outside scrutiny. Authorisation for alternative tuition may be granted for one year at a time. During that time, the pupil's progress is monitored. Authorisation is revoked with immediate effect if the requisite scrutiny cannot be carried out or if it can be assumed that the conditions under which authorisation was granted have changed.

There is no separate provision at tertiary level.

Riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade, RGD-RGH (Swedish Upper Secondary School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing)

Riksgymnasiet för svårt rörelsehindrade (The National Upper Secondary School for students with Physical Disabilities)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

10.6.1. Specific Legislative Framework

The same legislation applies as for mainstream education, see **10.5.1.**

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

10.6.2. General Objectives

The general goals of the education are the same as for mainstream education and are set out in the curricula. For information on specific goals see subsections.

10.6.2.1. Education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments

The education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments (*obligatoriska särskolan* and *gymnasiesärskola*) aims at providing individually adopted education in accordance with the widely varying aptitude for learning. The school's responsibility for gearing teaching to each individual pupil is crucial in determining what material in the syllabi to cover and the approach to apply. One of the most important tasks of the compulsory education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments is to provide pupils with a sound basis for leading an active daily life and to prepare them for adult life.

10.6.2.2. Education for pupils with impaired hearing

The goals for education for pupils with impaired hearing, [specialskolor](#) and riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade) are the same as for mainstream education at respective levels. Special goals apply in Swedish and English. The compulsory school for pupils with impaired hearing, [specialskola](#) should ensure that graduating pupils are bilingual i.e. can understand sign language and read Swedish, are able to express thoughts and ideas in sign language and can communicate in written English.

[Riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade, RGD-RGH \(Swedish Upper Secondary School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing\)](#)

10.6.2.3. Education for adults with severe intellectual impairments

The aim of municipal education for adults with severe intellectual impairments, [sär vux](#) is to provide pupils with knowledge and skills equivalent to those taught in education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [särskola](#). The education is provided as independent courses and follows the same curriculum as upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan and municipal adult education, kommunal vuxenutbildning. Specific syllabi and timetables apply.

10.6.3. Geographical Accessibility

See subsections for information concerning the different levels of education.

10.6.3.1. Compulsory education

Separate education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [obligatoriska särskolan](#) must be provided by the municipality. If the number of pupils in a municipality is small, it may have a co-operation arrangement with a neighbouring municipality.

Compulsory education for pupils in special schools, [specialskola](#), is carried out in five regional schools with regional catchment areas and three national schools. The national schools cater for pupils with impaired hearing and intellectual impairment, [and for pupils with visual impairment and additional disabilities, deafness or impaired hearing combined with severe learning disabilities or congenital deaf-blindness, and severe speech and language disabilities](#). Four regional resource centers provide support for pupils with disabilities.

10.6.3.2. Upper secondary education

Each municipality is obliged to provide a four-year training programme in the upper secondary school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments. The municipalities can either themselves arrange the education or cooperate with other municipalities.

For pupils with impaired hearing there is one national upper secondary school (riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade). For pupils with severe physical disabilities there are four national upper secondary schools (riksgymnasium för svårt rörelsehindrade) in different regions.

Riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade, RGD-RGH (Swedish Upper Secondary School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing)

Riksgymnasiet för svårt rörelsehindrade (The National Upper Secondary School for students with Physical Disabilities)

10.6.3.3. Adult education

Each municipality must provide separate education for adults with severe intellectual impairments.

10.6.3.4. Tertiary education

All institutions for higher education must consider the special needs of students with physical disabilities or difficulties in following courses.

10.6.4. Admission Requirements and Choice of School

See subsections for information concerning the different types of schools.

10.6.4.1. Schools for pupils with severe intellectual impairments

Children and young people who cannot attend compulsory or upper secondary schools because of their intellectual impairment are entitled to education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [obligatoriska särskolan](#) or [gymnasiesärskola](#). These schools are also open to children with significant and permanent physical disabilities from brain damage. The school organiser determines whether a child may be admitted.

The municipality provides each pupil with a place in a school as far as possible taking into account parental wishes regarding placement. The decision cannot be appealed. A decision not to accept a pupil in education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments because it is considered able to attend a regular school may be appealed to the Education Appeals Board (Skolväsendets överklagandenämnd). Nine years of schooling is compulsory and a pupil cannot be excluded from compulsory education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments.

Skolväsendets överklagandenämnd (The Board of Appeal for the School System)

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

10.6.4.2. Special schools

The board of each special school ([specialskola](#) or riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade) decides whether a child should be accepted. An application can be made by the child's parents or guardian or by the home municipality. Parents or guardians can appeal to the Education Appeals Board (Skolväsendets överklagandenämnd) against a decision to place a child in schools for pupils with deafness or impaired hearing, [and for pupils with visual impairment and additional disabilities, deafness or impaired hearing combined with severe learning disabilities or congenital deaf-blindness, and severe speech and language disabilities](#) ([specialskola](#) or riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade). In Sweden nine-year compulsory schooling is obligatory and pupils cannot be excluded from the special school at the compulsory level. If there is reason to assume that a pupil's behaviour may harm other pupils or if there are other special reasons, the pupil may be excluded from education in the national upper secondary school for pupils with impaired hearing completely or partially for a maximum of two weeks or be excluded for a specific period, for a maximum of three terms from the time the decision is communicated.

Riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade, RGD-RGH (Swedish Upper Secondary School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing)

Riksgymnasiet för svårt rörelsehindrade (The National Upper Secondary School for students with Physical Disabilities)

Skolväsendets överklagandenämnd (The Board of Appeal for the School System)

10.6.4.3. Upper secondary schools for pupils with severe physical disabilities

Questions concerning the admission to education specially adapted to the needs of pupils with physical disabilities are examined by a special board (Board for education for pupils with physical disabilities) for such upper secondary schools. The decisions of the board may be appealed to the Education Appeals Board, but decisions concerning placement in a particular upper secondary school may not, however, be appealed.

10.6.4.4. Education for adults with severe intellectual impairments

To attend courses within education for adults with severe intellectual impairments, [särvox](#) the pupil has to apply to the board of the school. Eligible are individuals who are 20 years old or have finished upper secondary education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments. Students who lack knowledge which pupils normally gain in "obligatoriska särskolan" have the right to attend education for adults with severe intellectual impairments if they can benefit from such a education. A student may be excluded from teaching completely or partially during a two-week period.

10.6.5. Age Levels and Grouping of Pupils

The number of pupils per class is not centrally regulated, however classes in separate education for pupils with special needs are usually considerably smaller and the teacher/pupil ratio is higher.

Compulsory education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [obligatoriska särskolan](#) is for children from the age of 7 to 16 with the right to a tenth year. It is up to each school organiser to organise schooling so that pupils are given the best possible conditions for achieving the goals of the school – how pupils are divided into groups is not centrally regulated. Those who have started upper secondary education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [gymnasiesärskola](#) before 20 years of age are entitled to complete their education regardless at what age. The municipality decides how pupils are divided into groups.

Compulsory education in special schools, [specialskola](#) covers 10 years for children from the age of 7 to 17. It is up to each school organiser to organise schooling so that pupils are given the best possible conditions for achieving the goals of the school – how pupils are divided into groups is not centrally regulated. Upper secondary education for pupils with impaired hearing (riksgymnasium för döva och hörselskadade) can be started when compulsory education is completed until the age of 20. The municipality decides how pupils are divided into groups.

Upper secondary education for pupils with severe physical disabilities can be started until the age of 21.

Adults aged 20 or over are eligible for education for adults with severe intellectual impairments, [särvox](#). The teaching is carried out individually as well as in groups. The average group is 2.9 students.

Riksgymnasiet för döva och hörselskadade, RGD-RGH (Swedish Upper Secondary School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing)

10.6.6. Organisation of the School Year

The same rules apply as for mainstream education; see [4.9.1.](#) for information on compulsory school and [5.12.1.](#) for information concerning upper secondary school.

10.6.7. Curriculum, Subjects

The compulsory school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [grundsärskolan](#) has its own syllabus determined by the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket). This contains i.a. the goals to attain which stipulate the level of knowledge that pupils on the basis of their initial conditions should have attained on completion of schooling. The syllabi are designed to clarify what pupils learn, but at the same time provide great scope for teachers and pupils to choose teaching materials and working methods. On the basis of each pupil's preconditions and needs, an individual study plan is drawn up focusing on what it is possible for the pupil to develop and provide challenges for pupils' acquisition of knowledge.

In education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, work is carried out in smaller groups and staff/pupil ratios are much higher. The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (Specialpedagogiska Skolmyndigheten) is responsible for ensuring that there are teaching materials for different types of functional and intellectual impairments.

The curricula for the compulsory education (Läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet, Lpo94), and for the non-compulsory education (Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna, Lpf 94), apply to the entire education system. Education for adults with severe intellectual impairments, [särsvux](#) is covered by the curriculum for non-compulsory education. For more information on the curricula, see [4.10.](#) and [5.13.1.](#) The curricula are supplemented by separate timetables and syllabi for the various types of school and by specific programme goals for the upper secondary school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [gymnasiesärskola](#) and the education for adults with severe intellectual impairments, [särsvux](#) corresponding to compulsory school.

The programs in the upper secondary school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments last for 4 years, and comprise at least 3 600 hours distributed over the core subjects, programme-specific subjects and eligible courses.

The Swedish National Agency for Education has drawn up syllabi for the education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments ([obligatoriska särskolan](#), [gymnasiesärskola](#) and [särsvux](#)) while the Government determines their timetables. The timetables specify the minimum guaranteed teaching hours in different types of school as well as the scope for pupils' personal options and for the school's options. The syllabi and programme goals set out the goals of each course. As in all education, teachers have a wide degree of freedom together with pupils and parents to choose appropriate working methods and content.

There are no separate subjects directly related to ICT, but the use of ICT is common in many subjects where it is used as a tool.

Riksdagen (The Parliament)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

10.6.7.1. Education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments

The pupils in compulsory school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [grundskolan](#) study approximately the same subjects as the pupils in mainstream compulsory education. The content and scope of the subjects are adapted to the abilities and requirements of each pupil.

For those who are unable to follow the lessons in the compulsory school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [grundskolan](#) there is training school, [träningsskolan](#) with specific syllabi. Instead of individual subjects, the "training school" syllabus contains five subject areas: artistic activity, communication, motor skills, activities of daily living and awareness of reality. The content and scope of the subject areas is adapted to the pupil's own abilities. This means that an individual study plan is drawn up for each pupil.

Upper secondary education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments provides eight national programmes – arts, vehicle engineering, business and administration, handicrafts, hotel restaurant and catering, industry, media and natural resource use. Certain core subjects are common to all national programmes: Swedish/Swedish as a second language, English, mathematics, social studies, religious studies, general science, sport, health and arts. Vocational subjects for all national programmes may be studied, apart from the Arts Programme where aesthetic subjects are studied to the same extent. For pupils with interests other than those covered by any of the national programmes the board of education can provide a specially designed programme. This contains the same core subjects as the national programmes, but includes vocational training that can be a combination of courses from several programmes and local courses.

An individual programme can prepare a pupil for a subsequent transfer to a national or specially designed programme, give the pupil vocational training, [yrkesträning](#) or occupational training, [verksamhetsträning](#) and meet other special needs of the pupil. Vocational education, [yrkesträning](#) should if possible with respect to the pupils' ability include Swedish, mathematics, social studies, sport, health and artistic subjects, in addition to the vocational training and practice. The study course for pupils in occupational training, [verksamhetsträning](#) should include communication and social interaction, reality understanding and physical and social surroundings, artistic subjects, physical education and health as well as daily life activities.

Adult education for those with intellectual impairments, [sär vux](#) aims at providing knowledge and skills which children and students can get in School for pupils with severe intellectual impairments. Vocational education can also be arranged.

10.6.7.2. Education for pupils in special schools

For education in special schools [specialskola](#) the Swedish National Agency for Education has drawn up syllabi for subjects that have no equivalent in the mainstream education system, i.e. for second and third foreign languages, English, Swedish, sign language and dance and drama. For hearing pupils with

severe language impairment (grav språkstörning) the rule is that music replaces dance and drama, and that Swedish replaces sign language. For other subjects the syllabi of the mainstream education apply. The timetables in compulsory school for pupils with impaired hearing are principally the same as for mainstream compulsory and the credit plan and programme goals for mainstream upper secondary education also applies to the upper secondary education for pupils with impaired hearing. Sign language is a core subject in all national and specially designed programmes in upper secondary school for pupils with impaired hearing and can as a result of the school head's decisions replace one or more courses in the study route, although not courses in Swedish.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

10.6.7.3. Education for pupils with severe physical disabilities

To the extent that education can be adapted to the needs of pupils with physical disabilities the education is integrated with corresponding mainstream education in the municipality's upper secondary school. However, the time taken for studies may be increased if this necessary for a particular pupil. Pupils study the syllabuses of the upper secondary school, but if a pupil due to his/her physical disability experiences major difficulties in assimilating a part of the education, the pupil may be exempted from studying up to a maximum of half of a course in a regular syllabus without this having any impact on the credits awarded.

10.6.7.4. Education for adults with severe intellectual impairments

Specific programme goals set out the detailed goals for those parts of the education system for adults with severe intellectual impairments [särsvux](#) that correspond to compulsory education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments. For upper secondary education for adults with severe intellectual impairments the goals of upper secondary education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments apply, see [10.6.7.1.](#)

10.6.8. Teaching Methods and Materials

The organisation of teaching is not centrally regulated. The school head and teaching staff have a great degree of freedom to plan lessons and choose methods and teaching material together with parents and pupils. The teaching is individually adopted.

The teaching material is free of charge in all education for pupils with special needs except for in education for adults with severe intellectual impairments [särsvux](#) where pupils pay for their teaching material.

Overall responsibility for the development of teaching materials for children, pupils and adult students with physical disabilities rests with The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (Specialpedagogiska Skolmyndigheten).

10.6.9. Progression of Pupils

The same rules apply as for mainstream education; see [4.13.](#) for compulsory education or [5.16.](#) for upper secondary education. As a general rule, if there is uncertainty about whether a pupil of compulsory school age should move to the next year, the decision rests with the head of the school, who should consult the pupil's parents or guardian.

For all pupils in schools for pupils with impaired hearing, an individual study plan is established, evaluated and reviewed. If it is the case that the pupil has attained the knowledge and is believed to have the capacity needed to attain the goals of mainstream compulsory education the pupil is transferred and can also receive additional support there.

Pupils from compulsory school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments [grundsärskolan](#) are not eligible for the national or specially designed programmes at a mainstream upper secondary school since this requires passing grades in Swedish/Swedish as a second language, English and mathematics from compulsory school. It is however possible to study an individual programme at the upper secondary level for pupils who are considered capable of managing in mainstream upper secondary education. Pupils in national and specially designed programmes in upper secondary schools for pupils with severe intellectual impairments also have the opportunity of studying courses in mainstream upper secondary education in subjects specific to a programme which have a vocationally oriented or arts profile, if the school head considers the pupil capable.

Adults with severe intellectual impairments can study individual courses in municipal adult education if they fulfill the preconditions to assimilate the education.

10.6.10. Educational/ Vocational Guidance, Education/Employment Links

In education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [särskola](#) years 9 and 10 are devoted to educational and vocational guidance to prepare pupils for further studies at the upper secondary level and to familiarise them with working life. Pupils studying vocational subjects get at least 22 weeks of workplace training. The school option hours may also be used for practical working life orientation.

Career guidance officers in schools for pupils with impaired hearing [specialskola](#) give educational and vocational guidance and work for the employment agency under a special contract. Part of their duties is to help obtain places for working life orientation and obtain suitable employment/youth training placements for pupils in their final year.

In education for adults with severe intellectual impairments, [särvox](#) the municipalities are obliged to offer pupils study and career counseling; it is not centrally regulated how this is to be organised.

10.6.11. Certification

Pupils who attend compulsory school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [grundsärskolan](#) receive a certificate specifying which programme they have completed. Grades are given on a pupil's or parent's request. In such cases, grades are given for the subjects on the timetable and in relation to the requirements set out in the syllabi. A two-point grading system is used: Pass (Godkänt, G) and Pass with Distinction (Väl Godkänt, VG). Pupils in training school receive a certificate of attendance and at parents' request a knowledge assessment. Pupils in upper secondary education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments, [gymnasiesärskola](#) and education for adults with severe intellectual impairments, [särvox](#) are usually awarded grades on the same two-point scale. Pupils at any level of education for pupils with severe "" intellectual impairments, [obligatoriska särskolan](#), [gymnasiesärskola](#) or [särvox](#) who do not achieve a passing grade are awarded a certificate showing that they have attended the course. Pupils in education for adults with severe intellectual impairment [särvox](#) who attend training school receive a certificate of attendance.

The grading of pupils in special schools, [specialskola](#) is the same as in mainstream education. In compulsory school grades are awarded on a three-point scale; Pass (Godkänt, G), Pass with Distinction (Väl Godkänt, VG) and Pass with Special Distinction (Mycket Väl Godkänt, MVG). In upper secondary education the grade Not Passed (Icke Godkänt, IG) can also be awarded.

10.6.12. Private Education

There are grant-aided independent schools, friskolor that arrange education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments and education for pupils with physical disabilities, but they are few and the range of education is rather limited. These schools follow the same legislative framework as schools within the public school system.

10.7. Special Measures for the benefit of immigrant children/pupils and those from ethnic minorities

See subsections for information.

10.7.1. Pre-school provisions

For children who do not attend pre-school, förskola many municipalities run 'open pre-schools', öppen förskola that children and their parents can attend for a few hours a day. For many families with a foreign background these function as a meeting place and provide a first step into Swedish social life. Some municipal authorities also run so called 'special language pre-school groups' [språkförskolor](#) that children with a mother tongue other than Swedish can attend for two to three hours a day in order to learn Swedish. Both of these provisions are free of charge.

10.7.2. Newly arrived pupils

Most municipalities offer newly arrived pupils the choice of a reception class. These classes usually include asylum-seeking pupils and pupils who have been granted a residence permit. The pupils receive tuition in the Swedish language, learn about Swedish society and are taught school subjects at a level based on previous knowledge. The time spent in the reception class varies, depending on the individual pupil's level of education and how quickly he or she acquires a good enough command of Swedish to follow lessons in a regular class.

Newly arrived pupils who have moved into a regular class are taught with the same national subject syllabuses as other pupils. Generally speaking, newly arrived pupils are placed in classes with pupils of the same age. Newly arrived pupils who need additional support to be able to follow the lessons are entitled to what is called 'study guidance'. This extra help, which is given by a support teacher, may be provided either in Swedish or in the pupil's mother tongue. The support teacher often brings together a small group of pupils for special lessons but may also assist individual pupils during their regular classes.

Mother tongue and Swedish tuition

All students whose mother tongue is any other than Swedish can study Swedish as a second language throughout their time at compulsory and upper secondary school. The subject 'Swedish as a Second Language' has its own syllabus and is deemed equivalent to the subject 'Swedish' for example when applying to tertiary education.

Pupils can be offered tuition in some subjects in their mother tongue. This is most common in schools with a high proportion of immigrant pupils and in grant-aided independent schools with a language profile, where the language of tuition is another than Swedish. If possible, the pupils in reception classes are also given tuition in their mother tongue. All pupils in the compulsory and upper secondary school whose parents have a mother tongue other than Swedish, and where this language is used as the means of daily communication can receive instruction in the mother tongue providing the pupil has good knowledge of the language. Municipalities, however, are not obliged to arrange mother tongue tuition if there are no suitable teachers available, or if there are less than five pupils in the municipality wishing to have such instruction. The exceptions from this are the recognised national minority languages in Sweden. Pupils with a national minority language as their mother tongue have the right to mother tongue tuition, even if the number of pupils in the municipality is less than five, and even if the language is not used as the main means of daily communication in the family.

Students with a mother tongue other than Swedish have the right to receive tuition in their native language as a school subject. This subject, 'Mother Tongue Studies' has its own separate syllabus, which also covers literature, history and culture of the country of origin. Grades awarded in this subject are equivalent to grades in other subjects

10.8. Statistics

There is no information available on the percentage of pupils with special needs and the percentage of immigrant children at school. See subsections for other statistical information.

10.8.1. Number of pupils and institutions

Data refers to school year 2009/2010.

Type of school	Number of pupils	Number of institutions	Average number of pupils per school
Compulsory education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments	12 673	722	18
Upper secondary education for pupils with severe intellectual	9 412	269	35

impairments			
Special school	500	8	63
Education for adults with severe intellectual impairments	4 868	No figure*	No figure

* Education for adults with severe intellectual impairments, [särvox](#) was provided in 215 municipalities.

Skolverkets officiella statistik 2009/2010 (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education school year 2009/2010)

During 2009 support was provided for 5 970 students in Tertiary education, (out of which 30 are doctoral students) and allocated to the following measures:

– dyslexia	3 634
– physical disabilities	492
– visual impairment	203
– hearing impairment (except interpreter)	203
– sign language interpreting	153
students with cognitive difficulties	955
– other functional disabilities	330

University of Stockholm, annual report 2009.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

10.8.2. Number of teachers and pupil/teacher ratio, number of pupils per class

Data refers to school year 2009/2010

Type of school	Number of teachers/staff as full-time positions	Number of teachers/staff	Number of teachers (full time positions) per 100 pupils	Average number of pupils per class
Compulsory education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments	7 392 *both compulsory and upper secondary level	8 878 *both compulsory and upper secondary level	27.6	-
Upper secondary education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments			22.8	-

Special schools	302	371	43.9	-
Education for adults with severe intellectual impairments	277	348	5.4*	-

* Teacher pupil ratios in municipal education for adults with severe intellectual impairments cannot be compared with those in other school forms. Students here are taught in smaller groups and in addition receive fewer teaching hours per week than those in other school forms.

Separate/integrated education

20% of the pupils in compulsory school for pupils with severe intellectual impairments [grundsärskolan](#) were to at least 50 % integrated in a class at a regular compulsory school in 2009/2010. The corresponding share for pupils in upper secondary education for pupils with severe intellectual impairments [gymnasiesärskola](#) was 4 %. In sparsely populated and rural municipalities, integration is for practical reasons common.

Skolverkets officiella statistik 2009/2010 (Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for education school year 2009/2010)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

11. THE EUROPEAN AND INTERNA

TIONAL DIMENSION IN EDUCATION

Compulsory education schools, upper secondary schools, adult education and higher education, all take part in international cooperation through internationalisation of teaching and education nationally, as well as through trans-national mobility of pupils, students and teachers as well as administrative staff.

11.1. Historical Overview

Swedish schools at all levels have since the beginning of the 20th century worked with various forms of international orientation. The internationalisation of higher education has been on the agenda in Sweden for about three decades.

11.1.1. Compulsory and Upper Secondary Level including Adult Education

International orientation has been a part of Swedish schools since the beginning of the 20th century. After the Second World War the development towards today's internationalised school education gathered speed, primarily through the focus on development aid to war-afflicted and less well-off countries. This policy was reflected in the curriculum of 1962, which emphasised the need for schools to make pupils aware of international issues in order to lay the foundation for international understanding and co-operation.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, international issues had a prominent place in public debate. In the new curricula for the comprehensive school (1969) and upper secondary school (1970), the vision of an internationalised school was further underlined. International solidarity and shared responsibility was emphasised again, and the need to provide pupils with skills and knowledge for the international job market was underlined.

With increasing immigration and the increasingly multicultural society the concept of internationalisation took a new approach. According to the school curriculum of 1980 the school should 'foster solidarity with less-privileged groups within Sweden' and 'work for the inclusion of immigrants in the social community'. Other factors that characterised international efforts during the late 1980s and early 1990s were the ever-closer relations with the European Community and the development that took place in the eastern parts of Europe. This led to new opportunities to make contacts with schools in other European countries and resulted in a growing co-operation with the Baltic States.

As a means to promote what was called international competence the curricula and syllabi granted increased importance to personal contacts through exchange. The decision-making system introduced in 1991 gave the municipalities the operative responsibility for schools and thus great local freedom of action.

Sweden's entry into the European Union in 1995 made the Union's education and training programmes available and was a strong catalyst for further internationalisation. Today virtually all schools have or have had international contacts, and according to a survey from 2001 more than 7 out of 10 Swedish schools were actively involved in international co-operation projects or had other international contacts.

11.1.2. Higher Education Level

The internationalisation of higher education has been on the political agenda in Sweden for about three decades. A major action-oriented study by the Commission on Internationalisation from 1974 is generally regarded as the starting point. There were several reasons for actions to be taken at this time. The drive towards internationalisation was based on concern for the competitiveness of Swedish industry abroad and a desire to promote active solidarity with cultures and countries in the non-industrialised world.

The proposals of the Commission were based on the idea that international education should prepare students to view the priorities of other cultures from the perspective of those cultures. With a broadened perspective, students should be able to analyse their own value structures more critically as well as to pinpoint problem areas in international relations. Further it was underlined that proficiency in languages and other skills had to become more important in university training in order to promote successful communication across cultures.

Among the pilot projects of the Commission was the development of distinct internationally oriented degree programmes. Another important outcome was the introduction of 'internationalisation grants' to send Swedish teachers and students abroad by the office of the Chancellor of the Universities and Colleges in Sweden (Universitetskanslersämbetet, UKÄ). The focus was on internationalisation as an important tool to enhance the quality of Swedish education.

In 1977 the new Higher Education Act extended the right to receive credit for studies abroad, provided that these studies generally corresponded to the studies at the home institution.

From 1985 onwards the internationalisation grants were made contingent upon the existence of operational plans by the universities and university colleges, setting out priorities for how to internationalise the curriculum. This emphasis on the integration of international elements into the education, rather than regarding studies abroad as an add-on, was a crucial factor.

With the continuing decentralisation of the higher education system in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the internationalisation grants were abolished, and it was left to the universities themselves to assure adequate funds for internationalisation activities. During this period universities and university colleges rapidly increased their international involvement, mainly through teacher and student exchange via bilateral agreements.

In 1989 a major step was taken to increase student mobility through the decision that Swedish students could bring their study support with them when studying abroad (which already was possible for studies in the Nordic countries). This led to a dramatic increase in the number of students going abroad

to study. Most made their own study arrangements, but many took part in student exchange programmes. The largest one, Erasmus, in 1992 became available to Swedish students.

The Erasmus programme proved to be a strong catalytic factor for internationalisation, especially for many smaller universities that entailed new experiences in international cooperation and contacts with colleagues. International offices were set up and teaching in English was introduced at many institutions. This development was reinforced with the EEA-agreement and the subsequent Swedish entry into the EU in 1995, when all the Union's education programmes became available to Swedish participants.

Over the years there has been increased cooperation within the Baltic region, at first mainly with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, but subsequently also with the central regions of northwest Russia. Government funds have supported restructuring and co-operation activities in this region. Since 2008, the three Baltic countries can participate as equal partners in the Nordplus cooperation (scholarships for studies at various levels in a Nordic country) supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Mainly as a result of the Bologna process, legislation for a three-cycle structure of higher education was adopted in January 2007. The new structure is the only structure for all higher education institutions (HEIs), and improves international comparability of Swedish higher education in accordance with the Bologna process. A new credit point system in line with ECTS has been introduced, and the former degree system has been reformed and structured to fit the new three-cycle system,

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

11.2. Ongoing Debates and future developments

See subsections for information.

11.2.1. Implementation of EQF – the European Qualifications Framework in Lifelong Learning

The EQF aims to relate different countries' national qualifications systems to a common European reference framework. Individuals and employers will be able to use the EQF to better understand and compare the qualifications levels of different countries, and different education and training systems. Agreed upon by the European institutions in 2008, the EQF is being put in practice across Europe. It encourages countries to relate their national qualifications systems to the EQF so that all new qualifications issued from 2012 carry a reference to an appropriate EQF level. An EQF national coordination point has been designated for this purpose in each country. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is the national coordinator for this framework. Their task is to cooperate with other major educational authorities and support and steer the establishment of links between the national educational system and EQF. A proposal on the future implementation of EQF was presented to the government in October 2010. Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan är nationell samlingspunkt för

den europeiska referensramen för kvalifikationer för livslångt lärande, European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Yh-myndighetens uppgift är att, tillsammans med andra berörda myndigheter som Skolverket och Högskoleverket, stödja nationella utbildningssystem och EQF.

Yrkeshögskolemyndigheten www.yhmyndigheten.se

www.eqfinfo.se

Regeringen (The Swedish Government)

11.3. National Policy Guidelines/Specific Legislative Framework

Being a small country with a less spoken language, the educational rationale for internationalisation has always been strong in Sweden; the competitiveness of Swedish industry abroad is still an important factor. When Sweden actively started to seek membership of the European Union, politicians from various parties repeatedly stressed the need for a European orientation. This European bias has been balanced by a renewed focus on the role that Sweden can play in a wider international context. The traditional Swedish involvement in humanitarian and peacekeeping missions based on a policy of international non-alignment is also a factor of some importance.

Continued internationalisation is regarded as an important factor to improve the quality of the Swedish education system, in line with Government policy of securing Sweden's position as a knowledge-oriented nation. The initiatives to broaden recruitment to higher education are parts of the internationalisation of education. To recruit more students with foreign background is a question of equality but also of quality, since a multitude of social backgrounds allow different perspectives and create valuable dynamic effects.

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (The International Programme Office for Education and Training)

STINT-The Foundation for Internationalisation of higher education and research.

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

11.3.1. International co-operation organisations

Sweden is an active member in a number of international organisations whose policy trends and normative documents (such as conventions and recommendations) affect Swedish national policymaking.

11.3.1.1. OECD

Sweden is one of the original members in OECD and takes an active part in the activities pursued by the organisation. The organisation's work in the field of education rests on 5-year mandates approved by the education Ministers of the Member States. At the heart of the work programme are analysis and activities promoting discussions on education policies as well as comparisons between Member States.

In the area of research, Sweden takes part in the work of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation Governing Board. This is where the member states discuss and compare priorities in the area of the research. Studies have been initiated – for example on the research and innovation systems in different countries – in which Sweden and other countries have been studied in attempt to understand how research and development affect growth and employment.

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development

11.3.1.2. The Council of Europe and UNESCO

For Sweden the Council of Europe is an important European co-operation forum. Together with UNESCO, the Council of Europe has drawn up the so-called Lisbon Convention on recognition of diplomas in higher education in Europe. The Convention, which aims to facilitate international mobility of students, was adopted in 1997 and ratified by Sweden in 2001. Member States in UNESCO have elaborated texts on various aspects of education and the organization regularly holds global conferences on educational matters. Sweden actively participates in such meetings and Swedish development aid is used for UNESCO's work in third world countries as well as for the financing of other aspects of the programme Education for All.

11.3.2. Official documents and legislation

The main outlines of national educational policies are drawn by the Government and are expressed through steering documents including the Education Act, the Higher Education Act and ordinances, national curricula, programme goals and syllabi. The Swedish Education Act (1985:1100) makes no reference to internationalisation; instead the aims and tasks to be pursued by Swedish schools at all

levels are in the national curricula and syllabi, and at a more detailed level locally, see **11.5**. The Higher Education Act (1992:1434) stipulates that universities and university colleges in their activities should promote the understanding of other countries and of international conditions.

Provisions in the Higher Education Ordinance exemplify how the Swedish education system is influenced by international co-operation. In accordance with the Lisbon Convention, the Ordinance entails regulations about the recognition of higher education qualifications and stipulates that a Diploma Supplement shall be issued automatically together with higher education diplomas. Most higher education institutions have drawn up internationalisation plans and as a rule has administrators dealing with issues relating to internationalisation.

The Swedish policy for global development aims to contribute to the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals. For the field of education, this means that further measures should be taken to develop contacts with developing countries through mobility and exchange, and that support be provided for the building of education systems and research institutions in partner countries. Support should be provided continuously to Swedish development research and to the establishment of a resource base for development co-operation in Sweden.

Högskoleförordningen (Ordinance for higher education), SFS 1993:100

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

Skollagen (Education Act), SFS 1985:1100

11.3.3. Central Administration

The administrative structure at national level leaves a lot of secondary policy-making to a number of central authorities, some of them established for the purpose of supporting and promoting international cooperation in education

11.3.3.1. The Swedish National Agency for Education

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) participate in the international work through involvement in international studies and surveys, as well as by providing empirical data for quality assessment and follow-up. The Agency is responsible for seeing that Sweden takes part in international knowledge assessments. International evaluations is a way to gain more in-depth knowledge on comparable education systems, and on how other countries have dealt with areas similar to those needing improvement in the Swedish education system. The Agency also focuses on, by way of national evaluations, areas where development is needed at the national level, as well as providing the underlying basis for this development. The Agency helps school principals and supervisors in their efforts to lead and rejuvenate activities at the local level, and supports preschools förskolor and schools in their development, for example regarding needs identified as shortcomings or problems in international surveys in areas such as mathematics, languages and reading and writing.

Another focus is the provision of financial support for Swedish schools and Swedish education abroad as well as the distribution of grants for pupils' and teachers' mobility. To promote internationalisation of vocational training the Swedish National Agency for Education has established a National Reference Point for information on vocational education, and to allocate support for pupils in upper secondary vocational programmes who do their work-place training abroad.

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

11.3.3.2. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education acts as Sweden's National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC). NARIC is a network of national centres created to improve the academic recognition of qualifications and periods of study in the Member States of the EU, and the EEA countries. In most cases, these centres are responsible for work related to the implementation of the joint Council of Europe and UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in the European Region. They are then integrated into the ENIC network of the Council of Europe and UNESCO. The two networks have a common website: www.enic-naric.net

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is part of the Nordic National Recognition Information Centres (NORRIC). The purpose of this network is to eliminate the barriers to the recognition of qualifications between the Nordic countries. The website is: www.norric.org

The Agency also has full membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). ENQA disseminates information, experiences and good practice in the field of quality assurance in higher education to European quality assurance agencies, public authorities and higher education institutions. The website is www.enqa.eu

The Agency is also a member of the International Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (INQAAHE). INQAAHE is a world-wide association of some 200 organisations that are active in the theory and practice of quality assurance in higher education. More information is available on the website: www.inqaahe.org

At Nordic level, the Agency is a member of the Nordic Quality Assurance Network in Higher Education (NOQA). More information is available on the website: www.noqa.net

Högskoleverket (The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education)

11.3.3.3. The International Programme Office for Education and Training

The International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK) is a central authority supporting schools, universities, companies, organisations and individuals to take part in international co-operation. Activities range from international co-operation projects in education

and competence development to placements and studies abroad. IPK is responsible for Swedish participation in the EU Programme for lifelong learning, the Linneaus-Palme Programme as well as for the Nordplus programme as well as for Europass, Euroguidance and Eurydice – the network for information on education in Europe. (see further [11.4.2.4.](#) and [2.2.12.](#)).

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (The International Programme Office for Education and Training)

11.3.3.4. The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education

The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (Stiftelsen för internationalisering av högre utbildning, STINT), was established in 1994 to support the internationalisation of Swedish research and higher education, provides financial support for co-operation and exchange to academic institutions, post-graduate students and researchers as well as to university faculties, see [11.6.](#).

STINT-The Foundation for Internationalisation of higher education and reserach.

11.3.3.5. The Swedish Institute

The Swedish Institute (Svenska institutet, SI) is a public agency that promotes internationalisation of Swedish education by awarding individual scholarships for short or long-term study visits, for foreign students in Sweden as well as for Swedish students abroad. Another task is to disseminate general information about Sweden including Swedish education and opportunities to study in Sweden, Study in Sweden. The institute also promotes the teaching of Swedish as a foreign language at universities abroad and administers the Visby programme (see [11.4.2.2.](#) and [11.6.](#)).

Study in Sweden

Svenska Institutet (Swedish Institute)

11.3.3.6. Agencies responsible for the recognition of foreign degrees

Persons with a completed foreign education programme and/or qualification can apply to have it assessed, to determine if it fulfills the conditions for further studies or work. Responsibility for assessment is shared by four agencies; the National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket), the Agency for Higher Education Services (Verket för högskoleservice), the National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan), and the National Agency for Education

(Skolverket). Which agency that carries out the assessment is determined by the aim of the assessment and the level of the qualification in question. Assessment requires paper documentation. If the aim of the assessment is to obtain eligibility for further studies at post secondary level (e.g. higher education and vocational higher education), the assessment is carried out by the Agency for Higher Education Services. If the assessment is for employment purposes, the following alternatives exist:

- For upper secondary education; the National Agency for Education.
- For higher education; the National Agency for Higher Education.
- For vocational education at post secondary level, outside higher education; the National Agency for Higher Vocational Education.
- For education concerning a regulated profession, i.e. a profession requiring official authorisation or registration to work in Sweden (such as medical doctor, estate agent, electricity contractor), it is necessary to apply for the right to practise the profession in Sweden. Applications should be submitted to the agency responsible, for instance, the National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen).

The Agency for Higher Education Services (Verket för högskoleservice)

The National Agency for Education (Skolverket)

The National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan)

The National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket)

The National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen)

11.4. National Programmes and Initiatives

A number of national initiatives have been taken to promote internationalisation at all educational levels. Cooperation is mainly carried out with Western Europe and the Nordic countries and – since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s – the Baltic region, especially Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. A number of central authorities are involved in the implementation of the national policy through the administration of co-operation and mobility programmes, information activities and other initiatives (see further **11.3.3.**).

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (The International Programme Office for Education and Training)

Sida - Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

STINT - The Foundation for Internationalisation of higher education and research.

Svenska Institutet (Swedish Institute)

11.4.1. Bilateral Programmes and Initiatives

The majority of schools, universities, university colleges and other organisers of education have their own bilateral co-operation agreements with institutions in other countries, and municipalities often have town-twinning programmes.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, has bilateral agreements for development support with around 34 partner countries in the developing world. The Agency also has agreements with a number of NGO:s. Promotion of basic education is a central objective in many of these agreements as well as in the agreements between Sida and international organizations such as UNESCO.

Within tertiary education, Sida is funding a cooperation programme for higher education institutions called Linnaeus-Palme as well as two scholarship programmes for Swedish students called Minor Field Studies (for field work linked to a degree project) and Sida travel grant (for internships at international organisations). Sida also funds the Programme Athena that gives pupils, teachers, school management and other teaching staff within upper secondary vocational education and training the opportunity to exchanges with developing countries. The programme is administred by the International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK).

There are also bilateral mobility programmes ('One year in...' further described in **11.6.1.**) that are administered by the International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK).

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (The International Programme Office for Education and Training)

Sida - Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)

11.4.2. Multilateral Programme and Initiatives

Sweden collaborates with other countries through various international organisations: The European Union, the Council of Europe, UNESCO, OECD and the Nordic Council of Ministers. The co-operation varies depending on the aim and activities of the organisation.

Nordiska Ministerrådet/Nordic Council of Ministers

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development

11.4.2.1. Nordic co-operation

The basis for co-operation between the Nordic countries – Denmark (including the Faroe Islands and Greenland), Finland (including Åland), Iceland, Norway and Sweden – is the Helsinki Agreement signed in 1962. There is a special agreement on culture, education, and research called the Agreement on cultural co-operation.. Education and research is considered to be one of the main priority areas within Nordic co-operation. In addition to this, central authorities in the Nordic countries collaborate extensively on both a formal and non-formal basis.

Nordic citizens have the right to pursue upper secondary school education in any Nordic country under the same conditions as a citizen of that country. The agreement (SKOLFS 1993:14) covers national and special programmes as well as individual programmes offered at public upper secondary schools, gymnasieskolor, and municipal adult education, kommunal vuxenutbildning,.

Each Nordic country recognises qualifications from any other Nordic country – whether for access to higher education, for periods of study or for higher education degrees – as equal to corresponding national qualifications. Nordic students may on equal terms seek admission to any Nordic university. This Nordic space for higher education is a sub-space of the European Area of Higher Education and an element in the European Bologna process.

NORDPLUS

In order to strengthen Nordic educational co-operation a number of co-operation and mobility programmes have been created for different target groups (teachers, students, pupils and those active in research and development). The Nordplus Framework Programme offers financial support to a variety of educational cooperation between partners in the area of lifelong learning for the eight participating countries in the Baltic and Nordic regions. The Nordplus Framework consists of the programmes: Nordplus Junior, Nordplus Higher Education, Nordplus Adult Learning and Nordplus Horizontal. The Framework programme supports mobility projects and network activities. In addition to the Nordplus Framework Programme, Nordplus also comprises Nordplus Nordic Languages and Culture and a programme for cooperation between countries in the Nordic and Baltic regions and Russia.. The Nordplus Framework is further described in **11.6.**

Nordic Africa Institute

Another example of Nordic cooperation is the Nordic Africa Institute, founded in 1962. The Institute serves as a research, documentation and information centre on Africa for the Nordic countries. The Institute also encourages research and studies on Africa in the Nordic countries and co-operation between African and Nordic researchers. Scholarships are available for study visits and research. The Institute is a Swedish government authority jointly financed by the Nordic countries.

Nordiska Afrikainstitutet (The Nordic Africa Institute)

Nordiska Ministerrådet/Nordic Council of Ministers

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

Utbildningsdepartementet (The Ministry of Education and Research)

11.4.2.2. Baltic co-operation

The Baltic Sea Project

A large number of Swedish schools are active in the Baltic Sea Project – an international network among schools for a better environment in the Baltic area. Established in 1989, the BSP was the first regional project within UNESCO Associated Schools Project to combine environmental education on a specific environmental issue, the Baltic Sea with intercultural learning. The various sub-programmes, such as Water Quality in the Baltic Sea, Rivers and Coastal watch are coordinated by coordinators from the network countries.

Baltic 21

Initiated by the Prime Ministers of the Baltic Sea countries in 1996, Baltic 21 is a regional expression of the global Agenda 21 adopted by the United Nations “Earth Summit.” Being an open and transparent network for cooperation, Baltic 21 links together a wide range of stakeholders in a common endeavor for regional sustainable development. Members are various government ministries and agencies from the 11 Baltic Sea states, the European Commission, numerous intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, academic and financial institutions, as well as local, city and business networks.

As of January 2010 Baltic 21 is integrated into the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) as an Expert Group on Sustainable Development - Baltic 21.

The 4 strategic areas of cooperation during the years 2010 to 2015 are climate change, sustainable consumption and production, sustainable urban and rural development, innovations and education for sustainable development

The Visby programme

Within the Visby Programme the support for project and network building aims to stimulate long-term co-operation with the Baltic countries, Poland, Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine. This includes student and teacher exchanges or research collaboration. Higher education institutions, HEIs can apply for funding for contact meetings/project planning in one of the countries in the program. PhD students, researchers or teachers at institutions of higher education can apply for grants for short-term visits to actively take part in a conference, for five days including travel time. A university or university college can also invite a PhD student, researcher or teacher for a study or research visit for two weeks to one month. The types of funding in the Visby Program for mobility in upper secondary schools, gymnasieskolor, are project funding and short-term funding for contact meetings. An exchange involving students should cover 1 – 2 weeks in the country in question, and may also include a preparatory visit or activities aimed in particular at teachers and other school staff. Schools in Sweden or the programme country may also apply for individual scholarships for studies in Sweden... The Visby Programme is administered by the Swedish Institute, see **11.3.3.5.**

BSP - The Baltic Sea Project

Svenska Institutet (Swedish Institute)

11.4.2.3. European co-operation

The biggest part of the multilateral co-operation in education takes place within the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme, administered by the International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK). In addition, a large number of schools at all levels and tertiary education institutions take part in trans-national co-operation projects. Swedish universities and university colleges also participate in the TEMPUS programme as well as other cooperation programmes within the EU framework.

Detailed information on these and other EU programmes is available on the website of the European Commission, DG for Education and Culture and the International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK).

European Commission, DG for Education and Culture

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (The International Programme Office for Education and Training)

11.4.2.4. Global co-operation

'Education for All' is UNESCO's main programme for support to the development of education globally. The aim is to meet the Global Development Goal for education by 2015. The programme is divided into six goals:

1

Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children

2

Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

3

Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes

4

Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

5

Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

6

Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Extra budgetary resources for the EFA programme are donated by Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, to UNESCO.

OECD-project on Indicators of Education Systems

Within OECD the project 'Indicators of education systems', INES, for developing statistical indicators within the field of education and thematic reviews of various policy issues is of particular interest. The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) and Statistics Sweden (Statistiska centralbyrån) are the agencies responsible for reporting statistics on education to UNESCO, OECD and Eurostat.

The Linneaus-Palme Programme

The Linneaus-Palme Programme, which was established by the Government in 2000, aims at strengthening co-operation between universities in Sweden and developing countries. The programme is modelled on the Erasmus programme but promotes exchange with countries outside the OECD area and is further described in **11.6.**

The Swedish South Asian Studies Network

The Swedish South Asian Studies Network, SASNET, was established at Lund University in 2000 and aims to stimulate and support research co-operation and student and research exchange between Sweden and South Asia, as well as the development of South Asian studies in Sweden. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, and Lund University jointly finance the network.

The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement

The Swedish National Agency for Education is responsible for the Swedish participation in the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, IEA. The primary purpose of this international co-operative of research institutions and governmental agencies is to conduct large-scale comparative studies of educational achievement. Since its inception in 1958, the IEA has conducted about 30 studies, including Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS & TIMSS Advanced) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Studies (PIRLS).

European Commission - Eurostat

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development

SASNET - Swedish South Asian Studies Network

Sida - Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

11.5. European/ International Dimension through the National Curriculum

The aims and tasks to be pursued by Swedish schools, including the ones related to internationalisation, are listed in the national curricula and syllabi.

For tertiary level, corresponding aims and objectives are set out in the Higher Education Act and in the annual budget documents and are further reflected in the universities' and university colleges' internationalisation plans.

Högskolelagen (Higher Education Act), SFS 1992:1434

11.5.1. Single Structure Education Level

The Curriculum for the compulsory school grundskolan, the pre-school class förskoleklassen, and the leisure time centre fritidshemmet (Läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet, Lpo 94), has an introductory section on fundamental values and tasks, prescribing an 'international perspective in education' aiming to prepare pupils for life in a culturally diverse society with increasing cross-border contacts.

The school should work to enable pupils to communicate in foreign languages. Pupils in the compulsory school should also become familiar with the main elements of the Swedish, Nordic and Western cultural heritage and acquire knowledge about the interdependence of nations and continents. Pupils should develop their understanding of other cultures and be capable of communicating in written and spoken Swedish and English.

According to the curriculum the school head is responsible for developing the school's international links, and ensuring that school staff is aware of the international agreements that Sweden has undertaken to observe in education. It is not centrally regulated how municipalities and individual schools should work with international questions, however in most municipalities and schools internationalisation is an integral part of the school plan as well as the local work plan.

11.5.2. Upper Secondary Education Level including Adult Education

The curriculum for the non-compulsory school system (Läroplan för de frivilliga skolformerna, Lpf 94), states that schools should help pupils develop an identity that can be related to and encompass Swedish as well as Nordic, European and ultimately global values. International links, education exchanges with other countries and working experience in other countries should be supported. The education should create international solidarity and prepare pupils for a society that will have close cross-cultural and cross-border contacts.

According to the curriculum pupils must gain a sound understanding of the central elements of Swedish, Nordic and Western cultural heritage, knowledge of international co-operation and global interdependence and ability to assess events from Swedish, Nordic, European and global perspectives.

The school head is responsible for ensuring that the school's international contacts are developed and that school staff is familiar with the international agreements that Sweden has undertaken to observe in education.

11.5.3. Higher Education Level

Internationalisation is regarded as an important quality aspect in higher education and research. Most higher education institutions have internationalisation plans and one or more administrators dealing with issues relating to internationalisation. Almost all higher education institutions have a Bologna Process Coordinator in charge of the implementation of the aims and objectives of the Process at institutional level.

In accordance with the Lisbon Convention, the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100) entails regulations about the recognition of higher education qualifications and stipulates that a Diploma Supplement shall be issued automatically together with higher education diplomas.

11.6. Mobility and Exchange

In addition to the international mobility carried out within the framework of the EU programmes, there are a number of national programmes enabling pupils and students to undertake part of their studies or training in another country. There are also national programmes supporting the mobility of teachers and academic staff.

The International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK) manages most of the nationally initiated mobility and scholarship programmes, many of which are open to both pupils/students and teachers/academic staff or educational institutions:

- NORDPLUS Higher Education for teachers and students at Nordic universities, colleges and other higher education institutions builds on cooperation in networks, offering activities such as student and teacher exchanges.

- NORDPLUS Language and Culture aims to strengthen language comprehension in the Nordic countries and stimulate interest in Nordic languages, cultures and living conditions.
- NORDPLUS Junior is aimed at pupils, students and teaching staff in preschool, compulsory school and upper secondary school [gymnasieskolan](#). Schools can apply for money to initiate cooperation projects, teacher exchanges and work experience exchanges for pupils.
- NORDPLUS Adult is designed for organisations, institutions, associations and other bodies working with adult learning. The programme awards grants to cooperation projects, courses and work experience in other Nordic countries.
- NORDPLUS Horizontal Programme is a cross- sectoral programme involving activities such as workshops, conferences, studies and innovative courses.

The Swedish Institute administers the Visby Programme, which supports institutional cooperation and individual exchanges at universities and university colleges, as well as in upper secondary schools. This includes student exchanges, teacher exchanges or research collaboration, and encompasses every field of study. It aims to support projects and network building to stimulate long-term co-operation between universities/university colleges or parts thereof (faculties or institutions), as well as between upper secondary schools, - in Sweden and one or more of the Baltic countries, Poland, Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine. Universities or university colleges can apply for funding for contact meetings/project planning in one of the countries in the program, and PhD students, researchers or teachers at institutions of higher education can apply for grants for short-term visits to actively take part in a conference. A university, or university college can also invite a PhD student, researcher or teacher for a study or research visit for two weeks to one month. The types of funding in the Visby Program for funding mobility in upper secondary schools are project funding and short-term funding for contact meetings. An exchange involving students should cover 1 – 2 weeks in the country in question, and may also include a preparatory visit or activities aimed in particular at teachers and other school staff. Support is granted as funds for travel, board and lodging. There are also individual scholarships intended for studies and research at universities and university colleges in Sweden..

The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education, (Stiftelsen för internationalisering av högre utbildning, STINT) awards scholarships to students (post-graduate) and academic staff. To be considered for a scholarship, a student must have a Bachelor of Science degree or equivalent and high proficiency in English. The scholarship covers accommodation, insurance and other personal expenditures for a maximum of three terms of full time studies. The foundation offers:

- Institutional Grants and Institutional Grants for Younger Researchers are programmes that promote long-term collaboration. Within these there is support for research collaborations, the exchange of researchers, doctoral students and students in the latter stages of their studies. These last for a number of years, allowing joint activities to take place and lasting international networks to be formed. STINT also offers a stipend to enable doctoral students to spend one term abroad.
- University lecturers can spend one term at an American liberal arts college. In this way Swedish higher education has a greater opportunity of utilizing the experiences and ideas that the scholarship holders acquire in terms of how teaching and learning can be developed.
- Scholarships to students from eminent universities in Ghana, China, Mexico and South Korea. This initiative is an attempt to strengthen the connection between the foreign universities and Swedish higher education.

- Short-term grants which give Swedish researchers and teaching staff the opportunity to spend short periods abroad. STINT can in the same way help finance short teaching and research trips by foreign researchers and lecturers to Sweden.

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (The International Programme Office for Education and Training)

STINT-The Foundation for Internationalisation of higher education and reserach.

Svenska Institutet (Swedish Institute)

11.6.1. Mobility and Exchange of Pupils/ Students

See subsections for information on programmes at different levels of education.

11.6.1.1. Pre-school, Compulsory school, Upper Secondary and Adult Education

- The NORDPLUS Junior programme is aimed at pupils, students and teaching staff in preschool, förskolan, compulsory school, grundskolan, and upper secondary school, gymnasieskolan. Schools can apply for money to initiate cooperation projects, teacher exchanges and work experience exchanges for pupils. A visit should last at least five days. The International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK) is the main administrator of the programme.
- NORDPLUS Adult aims at developing adult education through cooperation between institutions working in the area of adult education. The International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK) administers NORDPLUS Adult in Sweden.
- 'One year in Germany', 'One year in Austria', 'One year in France' and 'One year in Spain' are mobility programmes open to students in the first or second year of upper secondary school. The Swedish student spends one year at an upper secondary school in Germany, Austria, France or Spain. A scholarship equivalent to regular study support and a boarding supplement is awarded. The International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK) administers the programme.
- Atlas - The International Programme Office for Education and Training's (Internationella programkontoret, IPK) administers the programme. The target group includes staff and pupils at preschool, compulsory school and upper secondary school. They can receive support to participate in international conferences or carry out a joint project with a school in another country. Scholarships for schools aim to stimulate cooperation between schools and childcare institutions in Sweden and abroad, and are intended for visits or exchanges for pupils or school

staff. The aim is to develop long-term international contacts and to enhance the international perspective in education.

- Athena - The International Programme Office for Education and Training's (Internationella programkontoret, IPK) administers the programme. Athena is the Programme for Global Exchange within Vocational Education and Training. The programme gives pupils, teachers, school management and other teaching staff within upper secondary vocational education and training the opportunity to exchanges with developing countries.

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) is responsible for scholarships to upper secondary pupils for workplace training abroad. This is complementary to mobility in initial vocational training in the Leonardo da Vinci Programme, but is not limited to Europe.

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (The International Programme Office for Education and Training)

Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)

11.6.1.2. Tertiary education

- NORDPLUS is a Nordic mobility and co-operation programme for students and teaching staff in institutions of higher education in the Nordic area, including Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The programme allocates mobility grants to students and teachers and funds development projects, courses and seminars. The Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) in Finland is the main administrator of the programme. In Sweden, the International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK) is responsible for the programme.
- Linnaeus-Palme is an exchange programme for teachers and students of first- and second cycle programmes and courses to strengthen co-operation between universities in Sweden and developing countries. Student exchange may be one to two semesters of full-time studies and is intended to provide eligibility for credits on return. Teacher exchange may cover periods of 3-8 weeks. Scholarships are awarded both to outgoing Swedish students and teachers as well as to foreign students and teachers coming to Sweden. The programme is financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, and administered by the International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK). It is the co-operation between University departments that provides the fundamental basis for exchange within the exchange programme Linnaeus-Palme. The respective co-operating departments determine the selection of students and subjects. The department of the Swedish institution prepares the project application concerning resources for teacher or student exchange and which is thus the unit with operational responsibility. In order for students to be eligible for the Linnaeus-Palme grant his/her University has to have a project together with a Swedish University.
- Minor Field Studies, MFS, is a programme enabling Swedish students to spend a minimum of two months in a developing country to do field work within subject areas of benefit for the development in the host country. It targets university and college students who have international interests and who wish to gather material for an undergraduate or postgraduate

dissertation. A Minor Field Study should result in a report in English at Master's thesis level. The grant covers expenses for travel, insurance, food and accommodation. The educational institutions taking part administer the programme and grants. The programme is financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida and administered by the International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK). MFS (Minor Field Studies) is a Sida-funded scholarship programme for field studies in developing countries.

- Sida travel grants are available for Swedish students or recent graduates who have been accepted for unpaid internship in international organisations with a connection to Swedish development work, such as the UN. The aim is to help increase the number of Swedes in international service by making it easier for young academics to gain experience which may qualify them to apply for future posts with international organisations. The programme is financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, and administered by the International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK).
- The International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK) is responsible for the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE), which gives university and college students the opportunity to apply for a work experience placement abroad. The student can be abroad varies from 4 weeks and up to 18 months. The programme is primarily aimed at technology and science students, and over 90 countries participate in this exchange programme.

To obtain study assistance for studies abroad, a student must have been resident in Sweden for at least two continuous years within the last five years. There are some requirements imposed on students and the institution of higher education. There are no obstacles to paying out study assistance when a student receives a scholarship for studying abroad.

Universities and university colleges are themselves responsible for assessing and validating exchange programmes. If the exchange takes place within the context of an exchange programme, a learning agreement is made in advance between the outbound student and the Swedish university/university college – normally the major part of the exchange studies are credited to the student's programme at the university of origin. If the exchange takes place in some other way, for instance if the student is a so called free-mover (not taking part in an organized exchange programme), a learning agreement can be established in advance or an assessment can be made retroactively.

CIMO - Centret för internationellt personutbyte (Centre for International Mobility)

IAESTE - International Programme Office for Education and Training

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (The International Programme Office for Education and Training)

11.6.2. Mobility and Exchange of Teaching and Academic Staff

Mobility of teachers is promoted through scholarships for schools and the Visby programme (see **11.6.**).

Mobility of academic staff is promoted through the NORDPLUS programme neighbor, the Visby programme and the STINT scholarships, see **11.6.** The short-term stipends provide opportunities for staff at Swedish universities to spend up to three months at a foreign academic institution. The programme also provides opportunities to invite foreign faculty as visiting researchers or academic teachers at Swedish universities. Recognition and validation of the experiences is not centrally regulated. The Linnaeus – Palme programme is financing 3-8 weeks of mobility for teaching staff; Swedish teachers going abroad, as well as foreign teachers coming to Sweden. Teachers can also apply for scholarships for participation in international conferences from the ATLAS conference programme, administered by The International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret, IPK), see **11.6.**

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (The International Programme Office for Education and Training)

STINT-The Foundation for Internationalisation of higher education and research.

11.7. Statistics

The number of students who cross Sweden's borders has increased significantly in recent decades. This applies both to Swedish students who travel abroad to study and foreign students who come to Sweden to study. In 2008/09 academic year, there were 24 400 Swedish students abroad in ex-change programmes or on their own but with funding from the Swedish National Board of Student Aid. The number of Swedish students studying abroad has been between 23 600 and 26 200 since 1999/2000. During the same period the number of those coming to Sweden to study has tripled, and amounted to 36 600 people in 2008/09. There has been a 14 percent annual increase on average. This means that the difference between the number of students visiting Sweden and the number of Swedish students visiting abroad continues to increase. In the 2008/09 academic, 45 percent of visiting students were women and 55 percent were men. Among the Swedish students abroad there were 61 percent women and 39 percent men.

See subsections for more information.

Statistiska Centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden)

11.7.1. Exchange students from abroad in Swedish higher education

Exchange students from abroad in Swedish higher education, by type of exchange program in the academic 2008/09

Programme	Participants 2008/09
Bilateral programmes	3 731
EU programmes	8 799
Nordplus	563
Total	13 090

Of the nearly 12 700 newly enrolled exchange students at Swedish universities and institutes of higher education in the 2008/09 academic year, nearly 80 percent were from Europe. After this, Asia and North America followed. The single largest home countries were Germany, France and Spain. Aside from European countries, which completely dominate the exchange programmes, many exchange students were from the US. Around 3500 of these students took part in bilateral programmes, slightly more than 500 participated in Nordplus and 8 600 in EU-programmes

Statistiska Centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden) (International mobility in higher education from a Swedish perspective 2008/09 table 6b).

11.7.2. Swedish students travelling abroad for higher education

Swedish exchange students travelling abroad for higher education, by type of exchange program in the academic 2008/09

Programme	Participants 2008/09
Bilateral programmes	2 557
EU programmes	2 268
Nordplus	217
Total	5 007

In 2009 4 439 Swedes participated in Erasmus programmes, out of these 870 were teachers or educational staff, and 264 trainees.

Over the 2008/09 academic year, 24 400 Swedes studied abroad through exchange programmes or as free mover students but with funding from the Swedish National Board of Student Aid. This was 3 percent more than the previous academic year. Compared to the previous academic year, exchange students have increased by 4 percent and free mover students by 3 percent. Over the past decade the

number of students studying abroad has however decreased. Denmark becomes more popular. Nearly two out of three Swedes, studying abroad, study in Europe. The leading countries for studies are the UK, Denmark and Spain. However, increasingly more people are choosing to study in Asia. 2 000 students studied in Asia in the 2008/09 academic year, which was double the number of 2003. The UK and the US were the largest recipient countries of Swedish students in the 2008/09 academic year. These countries were followed by Denmark, Australia, Spain and France. However, the students' countries of choice have changed over time. Australia, the US and France continue to lose students while their numbers increased for Denmark, Poland and Japan.

In 2009 the International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet, IPK) administered some 60 different programmes and activities aimed at internationalising education. The Agency processed approximately 7000 applications for support, and distributed approximately SEK 205 million in various kinds of support, and helped around 8500 people take part in cross-border programmes in Europe.

Statistiska Centralbyrån (Statistics Sweden) (International mobility in higher education from a Swedish perspective 2008/09, table 15.)

Internationella programkontoret för utbildningsområdet (International Programme Office for Education and Training)