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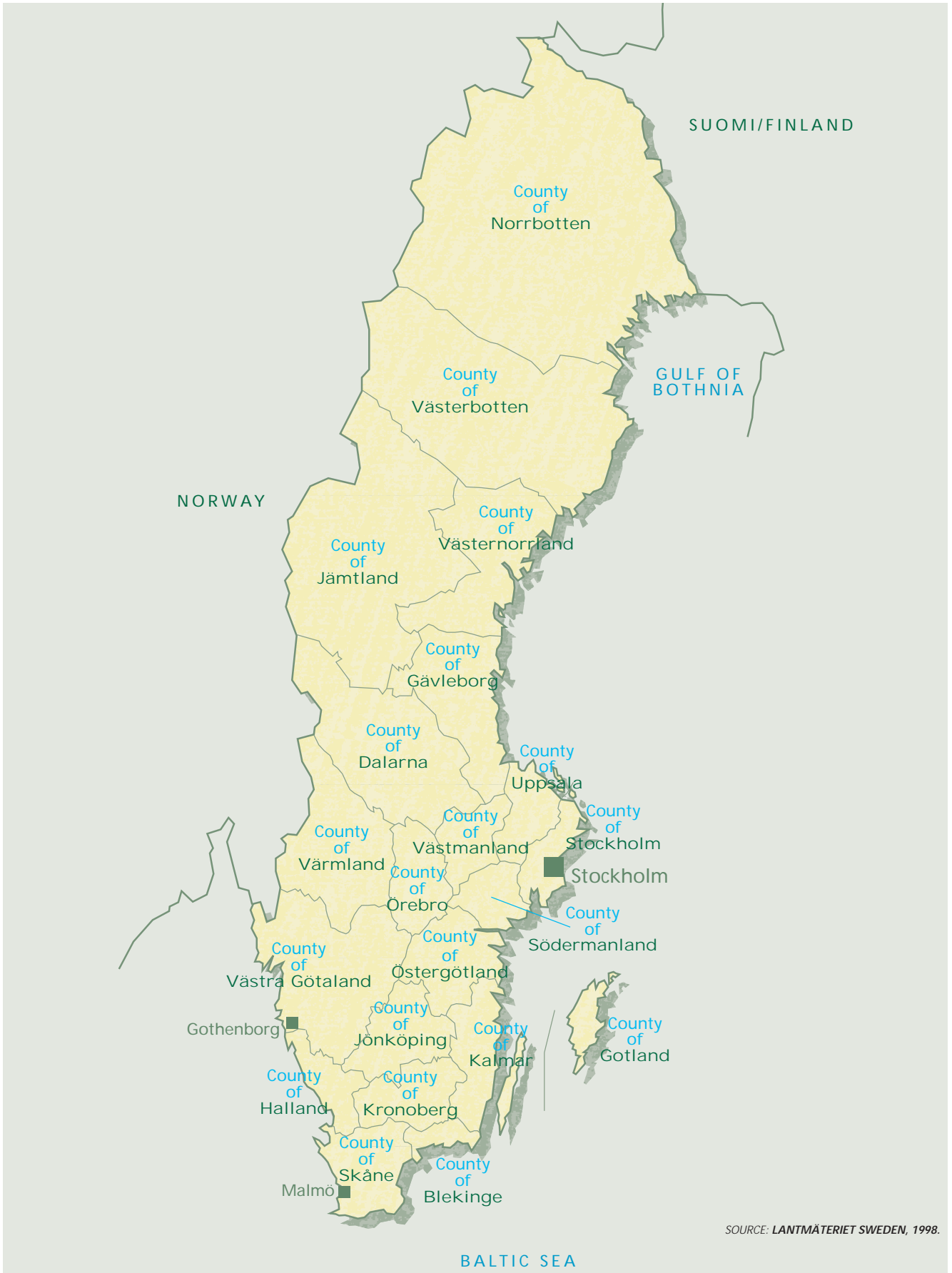


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# Vocational education and training in Sweden



# Sweden - Counties and major cities



SOURCE: LANTMÄTERIET SWEDEN, 1998.

# Chapter I

## General information

### 1.1. Political and administrative infrastructure

#### Government and constitution

##### 1.1.1.

Sweden is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary form of government. Since the constitutional reform of 1974, the monarch has had purely ceremonial functions as Head of State while the formal power of decision rests with the Government.

Parliament (*Riksdagen*) is the country's highest decision-making body. Since 1971 it has had a single chamber with 349 members, who are chosen by direct election every four years. The Social Democrats returned to power again in the election of September 1994, although in a minority position relying on other parties for support.

##### 1.1.2.

The government is headed by the Prime Minister, who is appointed by parliament on the recommendation of the Speaker taking into account political support of the different parties. The responsibility for vocational education and training is shared between the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Labour. The responsibility for initial vocational education as part of upper secondary schooling and formal adult education lies with the Ministry of Education, while the Ministry of Labour has responsibility for continuing vocational education and employment training.

##### 1.1.3.

Popular movements and the social partners have played a significant role in the development of modern Sweden. Formal education has been developed through decisions by parliament and the government, whilst vocational education and in-company training (see Annex 4 for definition of this and other terms) have also been influenced by the social partners. Thus a major part of continuing vocational training is not regulated by the government or parliament, but is subject to the negotiations and local solutions of the social partners. This is particularly true of in-company training and various forms of workplace learning.

##### 1.1.4.

Neutrality in foreign politics has been a fundamental value promoted by modern Swedish governments. Thus, Sweden is not a member of NATO. For many years Sweden was a founding member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Sweden is also an active member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). In 1972, Sweden signed a wide-ranging free trade agreement with the European Community and on 1 July 1991, the important step of applying for membership of the European Union (EU) was taken. After more than three decades of hesitation, the Swedish people voted on 13 November 1994 to join the European Union from 1 January 1995. The outcome was quite even between supporting and opposing groups: 52.3 % voted Yes and 46.8 % said No with 0.9 % blank ballots. The result of the referendum opened the way to Swedish membership of the Union and to seats in the European Parliament. Membership of the European



Union has broadened contacts and networks on education and research, e.g. on issues such as international comparison of education systems, equivalence and recognition of qualifications as well as joint research and development projects.

### Regional and local administration

#### 1.1.5.

Sweden is divided into 24 counties and 288 municipalities. From 1998 onwards the number of counties is being reduced to 21 due to a reform of the regional state administration. Each county is governed by a county board (*länsstyrelse*) with the county governor (*landshövding*) acting as its chairman. The governor and members of the county boards are appointed by the government. The mandate of the county boards with respect to education covers structural aspects of education policy and vocational training, e.g. surveys on the educational attainment of the workforce and the regional infrastructure of education and training institutions. In addition, these bodies are responsible for industrial policies and for development and support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The former regional boards for schools and formal adult education and also the separate boards for higher education have been abolished during the last two decades.

#### 1.1.6.

Local and regional authorities in Sweden have a wide area of operations comprising, for example, education, health and medical care, as well as social planning. These and other tasks are organised and performed at local and regional levels. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities (*Svenska Kommunförbundet*) and the Federation of Swedish County Councils (*Landstingsförbundet*) act as central employer organisations, representing all the local authorities and county councils in Sweden.

The Local Government Act which came into force in 1992 stipulates that the local authorities and county councils run their affairs on the basis of local self-government, without intervention on the part of the state. Decision-making powers with regard to municipal operations at local and county level rest with the directly-elected assemblies.

#### 1.1.7.

One of the cornerstones of local self-government is the right to levy taxes in order to finance undertakings. Local decision-making power is not, however, unrestricted. Parliament has passed legislation setting an upper ceiling for new taxation. The 1992 Local Government Act contains regulations on the executive committees and other boards of the municipalities and county councils. The new legislation has created a variety of decision making bodies including those for general and vocational education in the municipalities.

### Crucial role of municipalities

#### 1.1.8.

Sweden is a unified and to some extent uniform country. The equal distribution of

public services as well as equal rights to education are core concepts of Swedish welfare policy. Stronger market orientation, and increasing decentralisation of political solutions will challenge these ideals. During the 1980s, public administration in Sweden underwent far-reaching decentralisation of responsibilities. The field of education was no exception. In 1991 this change culminated in new legislation giving the cities and municipalities a much stronger position in the development of local school policies and the promotion of various forms of best practice.

### 1.1.9.

Thus, the municipalities have a vital role to play in the decentralised system in terms of how school policy is put into practice. The municipalities decide on how the school is to be organised and how resources shall be allocated. Furthermore they are responsible for implementing school activities within the framework that parliament (*Riksdagen*) and the government (*regeringen*) have laid down. The municipalities are also responsible for following up and evaluating school activities.

## Responsibilities at national level

### 1.1.10.

A characteristic feature of the Swedish administrative system is the division of tasks between ministries and central administrative agencies. The ministries are rather small units. They are mainly concerned with preparing government bills to be submitted to parliament, issuing laws and regulations and general rules for the administrative agencies. The enforcement of laws and government decisions is entrusted to 100 or so relatively independent administrative agencies (*statliga myndigheter*).

### 1.1.11.

Education in Sweden has traditionally been organised within the public sector. Through legislation, regulations and curricula, the state issued detailed instructions and rules for the conduct of educational activities, as well as for the spending of state grants. The education system has, however, undergone fundamental changes towards a goal and result-oriented steering system in recent years.

### 1.1.12.

Overall responsibility for education in Sweden is borne by parliament and the government. With the exception of the University of Agricultural Sciences, which comes under the Ministry of Agriculture, and employment training (see glossary in Annex 4) which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, all education and vocational training comes under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Science.

### 1.1.13.

Following these principles the responsibilities for the main types of VET are shared in the following way:

- basic adult education, partly (Ministry of Education and Science)
- supplementary vocational training (Ministry of Education and Science)
- further vocational training (Ministry of Education and Science)



- upper secondary adult education (Ministry of Education and Science)
- trainee training (Ministry of Education and Science)
- employment training and labour market programmes (Ministry of Labour)
- continuing in-company training (employers)
- private courses (employers, corporations, individuals)
- courses organised by trade organisations (trade unions)

#### 1.1.14.

The main central authority for supervision of the school system is the National Agency for Education (*Statens Skolverk* or *Skolverket* for short). Its foremost tasks include responsibility for national follow-up, evaluation and supervision of all school activities, as well as for central development work within the school sector. The Agency is responsible for ensuring that research is undertaken, that head teachers receive basic training, and also arranges some in-company training for teachers. Furthermore the agency is facing new tasks in the future with regard to a broadening of its sector of responsibility to pre-school and child care as well as adult education promotion. The Agency will have a strategic role in the development of evaluation and new quality assurance systems.

## 1.2. The population

### Demographic trends

#### 1.2.1.

Sweden has a population of 8.7 million with about 85 % living in the southern half of the country, especially in the three major urban regions of Stockholm (the capital), Gothenburg and Malmö.

#### 1.2.2.

Sweden covers a total area of 450 000 km<sup>2</sup>. The distance between the southern tip of the country, and the northern tip, located above the Arctic Circle, is nearly 1 600 km. The landscape is dominated by forests, lakes and rivers. Cultivated land makes up less than 10 % of the land surface. Although Sweden is in area the third largest country in the European Union, it is also one of the most sparsely populated.

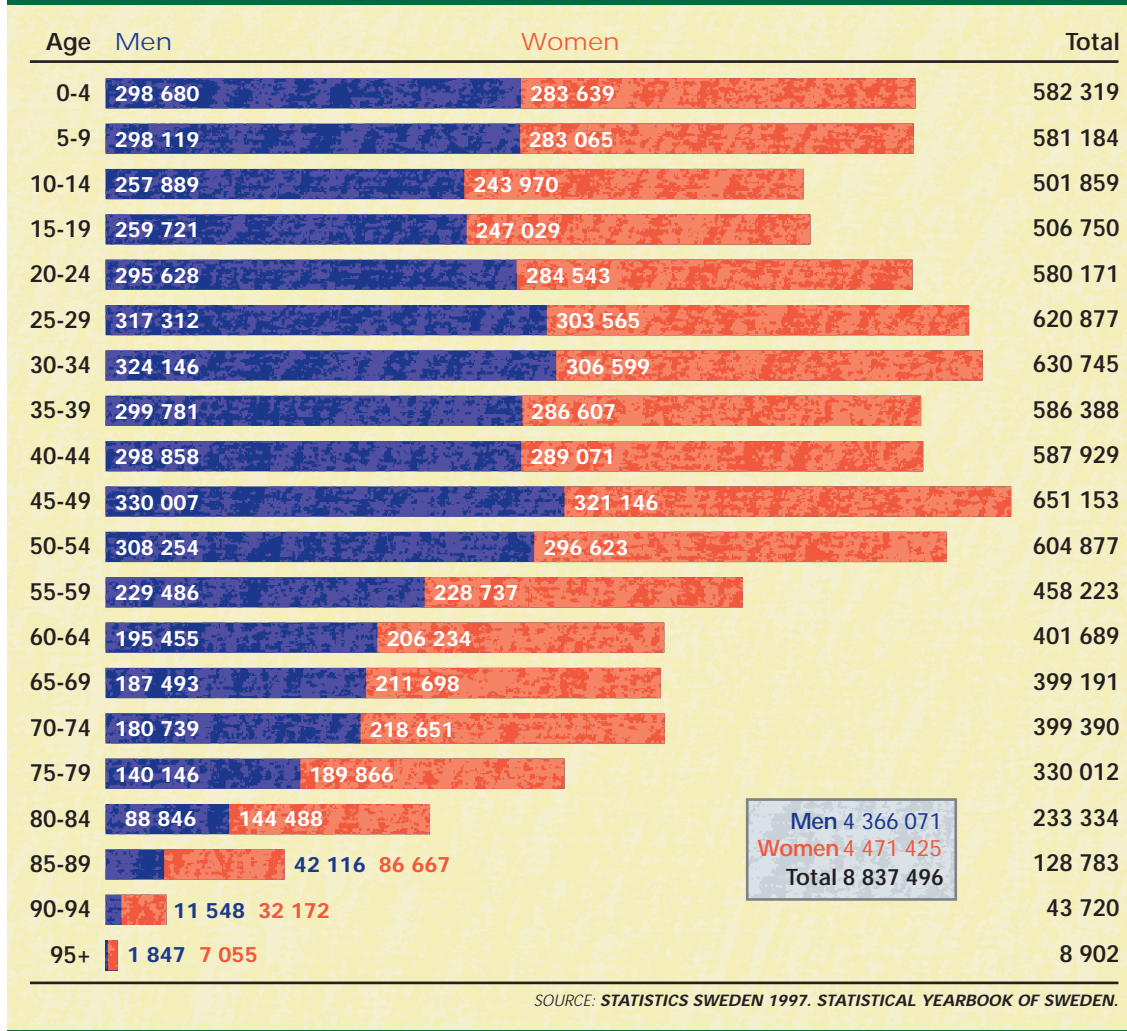
#### 1.2.3.

The national language is Swedish, a Germanic language. For centuries, Sweden was ethnically and linguistically very homogeneous with two exceptions – the Finnish-speaking population of the north-east and the Saami (or Lapps). Sápmi – Saamiland is a region which crosses the borders of four nations. Sápmi is populated by approximately 85 000 Saami of whom 20 000 live in Sweden. The name Sápmi can be interpreted as Saami, the people, or Saamiland. Today, approximately one million of Sweden's total population are immigrants or have at least one immigrant parent (see paragraph 1.2.7). This new multicultural context has major repercussions on the need for education, since the majority of non-European immigrants are refugees, who arrived in the last decade.

1.2.4.

The age pyramid in Sweden shows a similar pattern to most industrialised countries with a growing share of older citizens. From 1990 to 1995 the population increased from 8 591 000 to 8 837 000 persons. The increase during the first years of the decade was annually around 50 000 due to rather extensive immigration. In the last 25 years, this increase in population has only been exceeded in two years: 1989 (68 000) and 1990 (64 000). From 1994 to 1995 the increase was only 21 000.

Figure 1. Population by gender and age, 31 December 1995







## 1.2.5.

According to Statistics Sweden's (*Statistiska Centralbyrån, SCB*) population forecast, from 1995 the population will grow by 1.75 % until 2000. This corresponds to an increase of 155 000. The Swedish population would thus, in terms of this forecast, exceed 9 million by the turn of the century. By 2025 (assuming that women give birth to an average of 1.9 children and that mortality will decline slightly during the period 1995-2025), the population will amount to 710 000 more persons than in 1994 and will reach a total of 9 569 000 persons.

## 1.2.6.

As in many other countries, the proportion of citizens over 65 years of age will increase in the next two decades. The distribution of population by different age groups is of great importance. This has an effect on the balance between those who work and those who need to be supported by social security. At the same time it will have an effect on the number of places that will be needed in schools and the scope of care for the elderly.

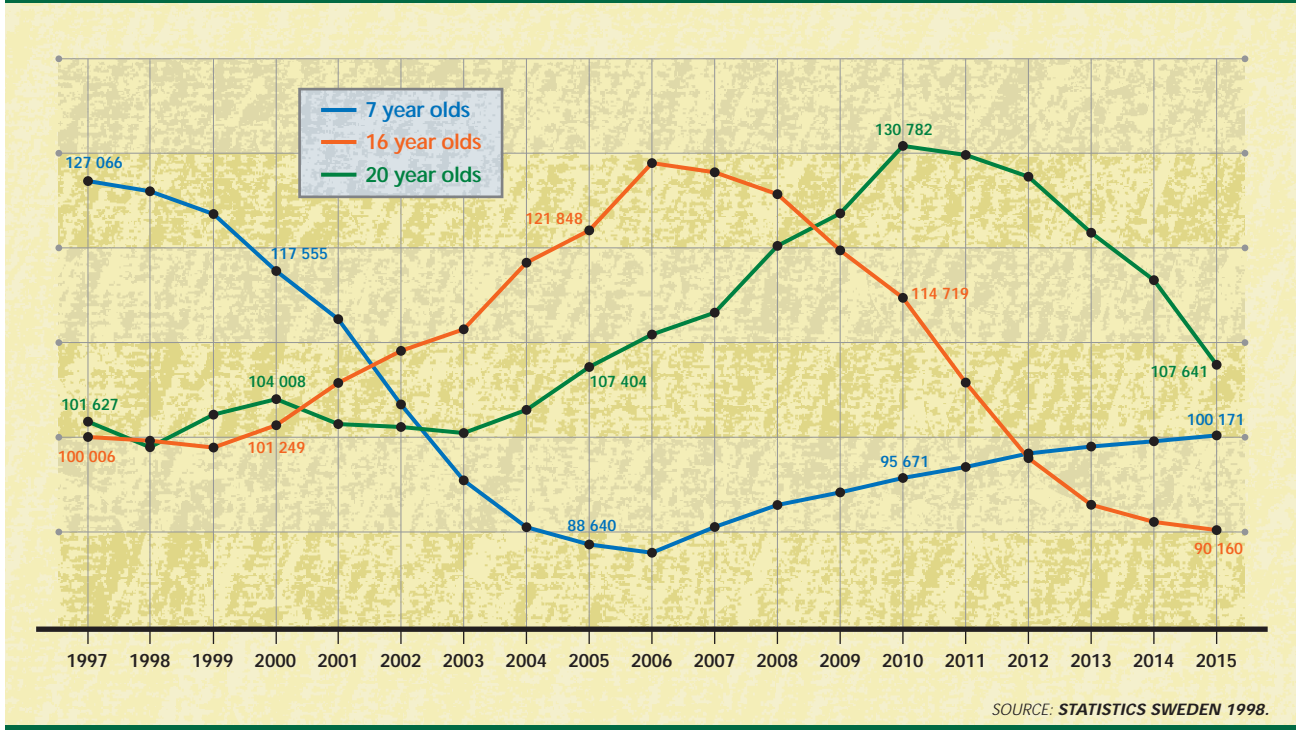
**Table 1. Percentage of the population aged 65 or over (men, women and total)**

Year	Men	Women	Total	Year	Men	Women	Total
<b>1960</b>	10.8	12.8	11.8	<b>2015</b>	18.1	21.8	20.0
<b>1970</b>	12.3	15.3	13.8	<b>2020</b>	18.9	22.5	20.7
<b>1980</b>	14.3	18.4	16.4	<b>2025</b>	19.4	23.0	21.2
<b>1990</b>	15.3	20.2	17.8	<b>2030</b>	20.1	23.8	21.9
<b>1993</b>	14.9	19.8	17.4	<b>2035</b>	20.5	24.3	22.4
<b>1995</b>	14.9	19.8	17.4	<b>2040</b>	20.5	24.3	22.4
<b>2000</b>	14.6	19.3	17.0	<b>2045</b>	19.9	23.7	21.8
<b>2005</b>	14.8	19.1	17.0	<b>2050</b>	19.4	23.1	21.3
<b>2010</b>	16.4	20.3	18.4				

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE, CVT-94

By 2015, average life expectancy is estimated to be 77.9 years for men and 82.3 for women. This is comparable to the 1992 level of 75.4 years for men and 80.8 years for women and means that the difference in average life expectancy between men and women will decline. The forecast also shows that the age group of 7-15 year olds will increase most by 2000, whilst those over 65 years will increase most during the period 2000-15. Educational planning and manpower predictions will thus have to consider major fluctuations in age cohorts for the coming two decades (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Development of age cohorts 1997 - 2015





## Migration

### 1.2.7.

Immigration is increasing again, especially from countries within Europe, the exception being the Nordic countries. As late as the 1920s, Sweden was a country with high levels of emigration. Thereafter the number of immigrants has exceeded the number of emigrants. The pattern of immigration has varied greatly from year to year. In the 1960s and at the beginning of the 1970s, labour force immigration to Sweden was extensive. Immigration from Finland increased significantly in the 1960s and reached a peak in 1970, when people from Finland accounted for half of all immigrants. Since then immigration from Finland has declined considerably.

### 1.2.8.

In the 1980s, immigration consisted mainly of refugees and family members of immigrants already living in Sweden. Nordic citizens were only a small part of the total number of immigrants. The number of immigrants from outside Europe increased greatly. In the 1990s, immigration has been characterised by major variations. In 1993 immigration increased by 17 000 persons compared with 1992. The war in the former Yugoslavia is the main reason for the increase in immigration in 1993 and 1994. The changes in the structure of the Swedish population are illustrated below.

**Table 2. Immigrants, by country of birth, 1993**

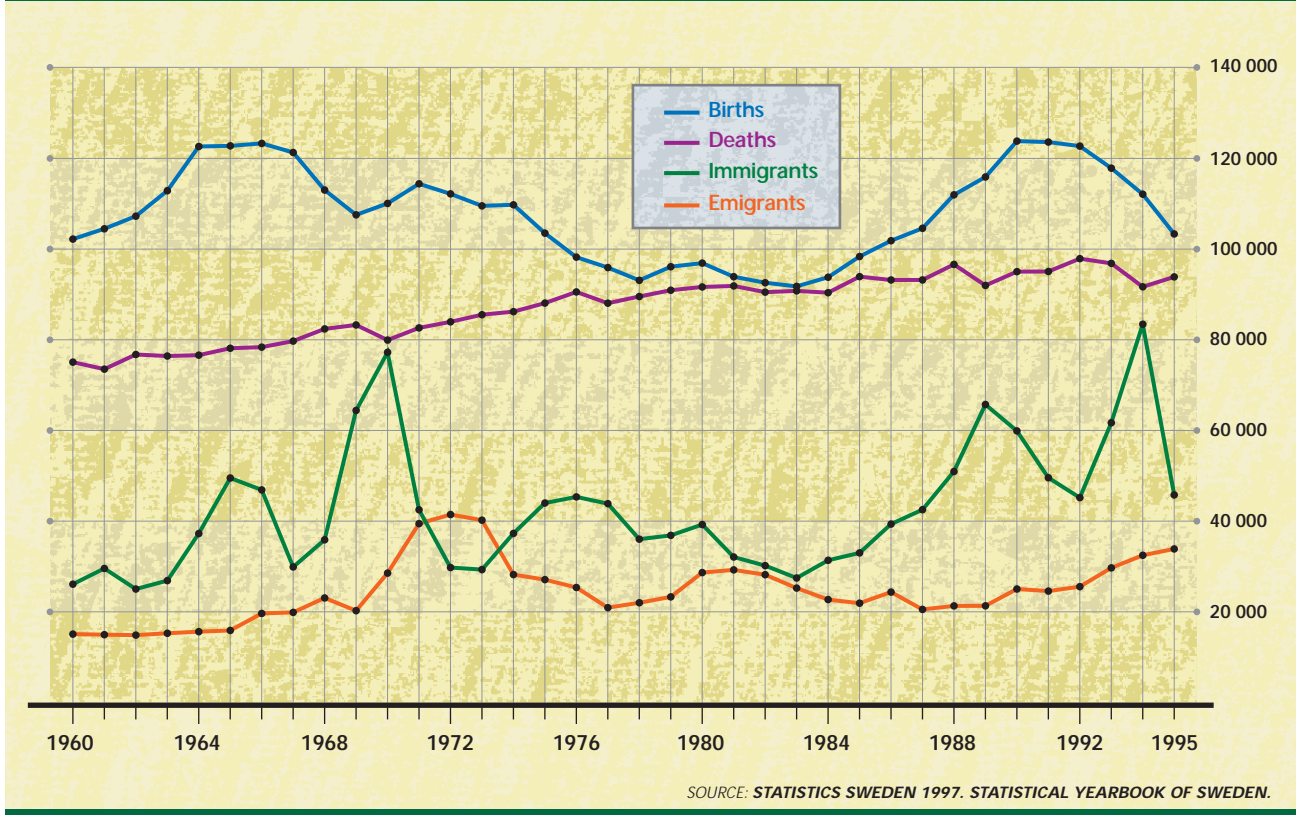
Country of origin	Number of persons
Finland*	209 512
Yugoslavia**	51 712
Iran	48 063
Norway	47 111
Denmark	41 141
Poland	38 502
Germany	36 663
Turkey	28 450
Chile	27 697
Iraq	20 188
Bosnia and Herzegovina	17 774
Hungary	14 976

\* many with Swedish as mother tongue.

\*\* present-day Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

SOURCE: SWEDISH INSTITUTE 1994, FACT SHEETS ON SWEDEN.

Figure 3. Birth rate, mortality, emigration and immigration, 1960 - 95



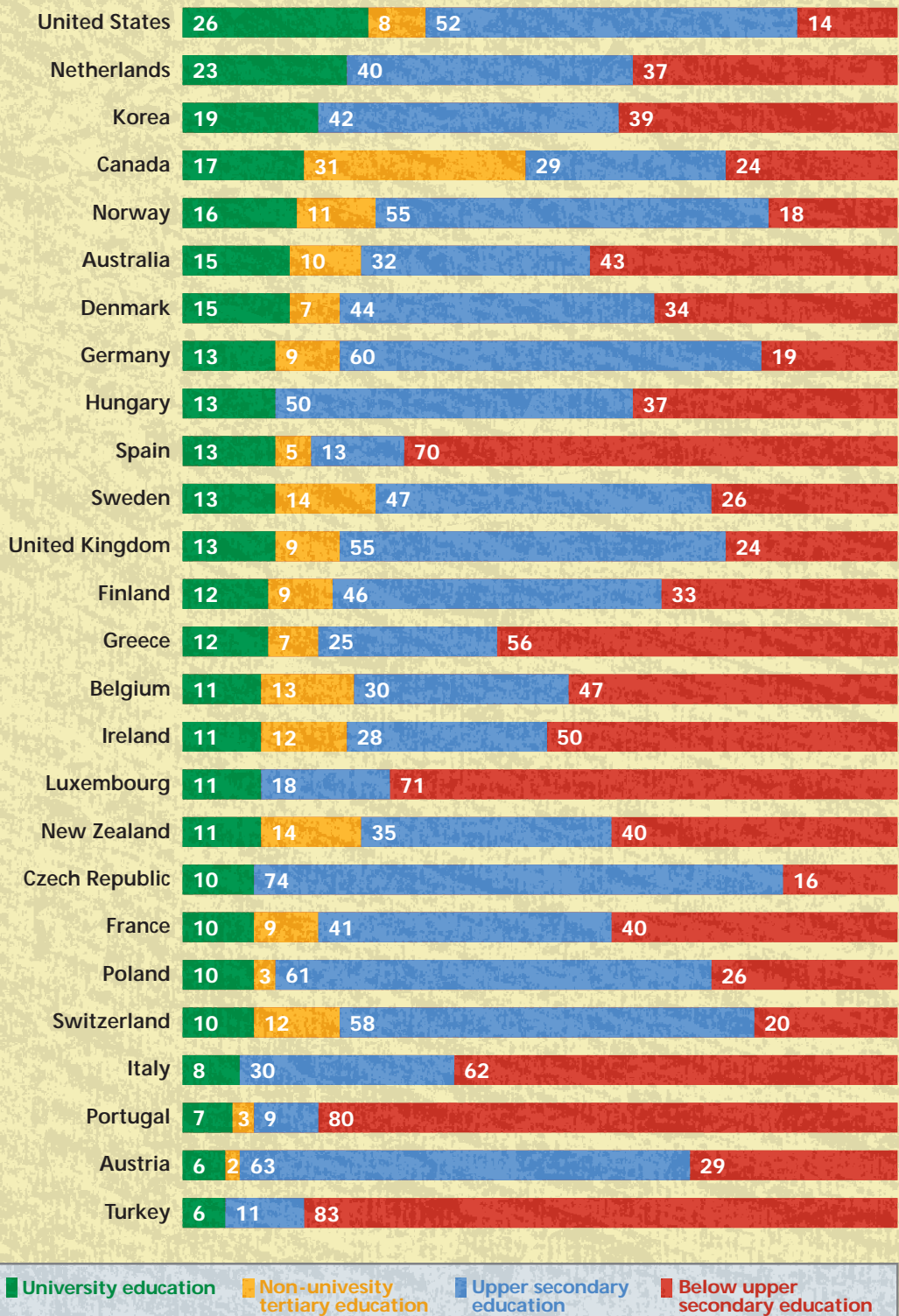
### Educational attainment

#### 1.2.9.

In comparative terms, Sweden has a relatively high level of educational attainment. Seven out of ten Swedes have completed upper secondary or higher education. There are great differences in the level of education between different OECD countries and Sweden has a high position. However, the USA, Germany, Switzerland, Norway and Canada have a larger proportion of the population (24-64 years) with upper secondary or higher education (see Figure 4). In 1992, 79 % of the population in Norway and 70 % of the population in Sweden had upper secondary or higher education. The average OECD figure was 45 %. Norway and Sweden had the highest proportion of the population with higher education in Europe.



Figure 4. Proportion of the population 25 to 64 years of age by level of educational attainment 1996

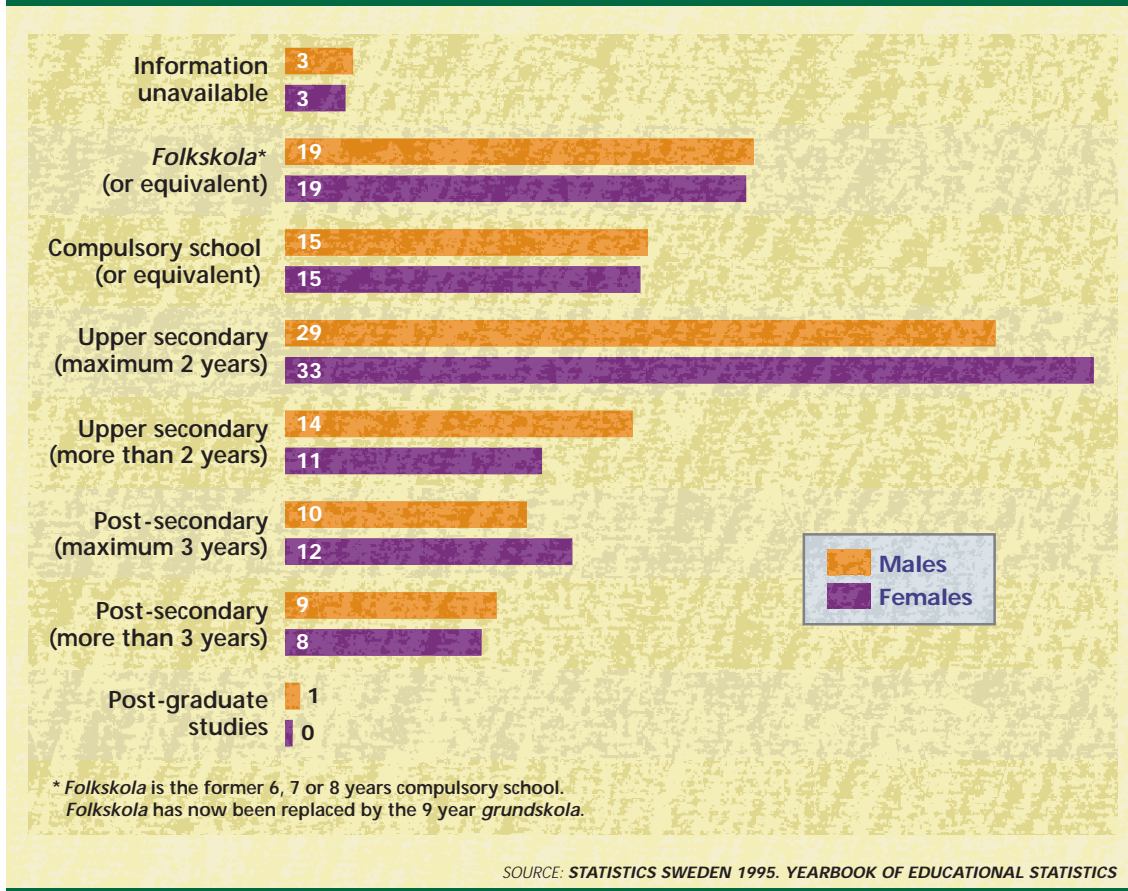


SOURCE: OECD EDUCATION AT A GLANCE 1998.

1.2.10.

Looking at the Swedish labour force, there are still around 25 % who have not acquired an education of more than eight or nine years of compulsory schooling. For demographic reasons low education standards are often combined with age.

Figure 5. Educational attainment in Sweden as % of those aged 16-74, January 1994



1.2.11.

Well-educated employees of high competence are a prerequisite for adaptation and renewal. People with poor basic knowledge run a higher risk of being out of work when the demand for competence increases. Every fourth Swede aged 16-64 has received only an education up to compulsory school level. Among those who still have 10-20 years of their working life left, one third have received no more than an eight or nine year compulsory school education. Looking at differences, men are somewhat less educated than women. Every second employee within industry has a very low educational level. Small and medium-sized companies have in general employees with low educational levels. There are also differences due to regional and industrial structures, as well as the location of institutes of higher education.



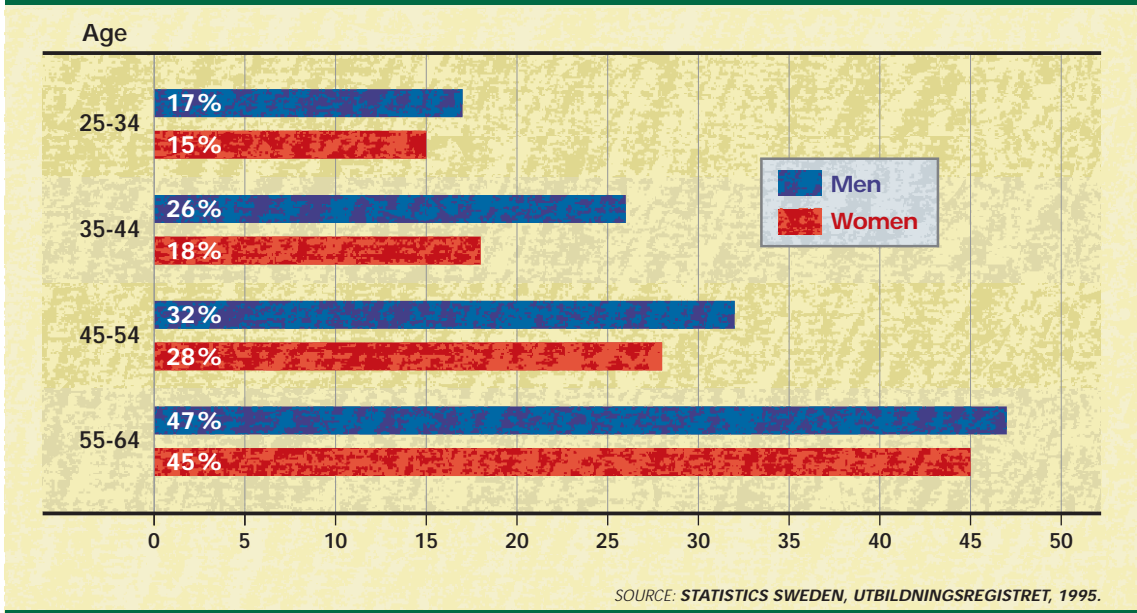
**Table 3. Educational attainment, 1 January 1997, % of population aged 25-64**

	Women	Men
Less than upper secondary	25	29
Upper secondary maximum 2 years	36	32
Upper secondary > 2 years	11	14
Post-secondary < 3 years	16	13
Post-secondary 3 years or more	12	13

SOURCE: STATISTICS SWEDEN 1997. UTBILDNINGSGREGISTRET.

The share of the population with no more than eight or nine years of compulsory schooling is illustrated in the figure below. The figure shows that men in all age cohorts have a lower level of educational attainment than women. It is particularly evident in mid-life years. One possible explanation is that men more often give priority to gainful employment and learn at work, while women have to demonstrate that they have higher educational qualifications in order to compete and make progress on the labour market.

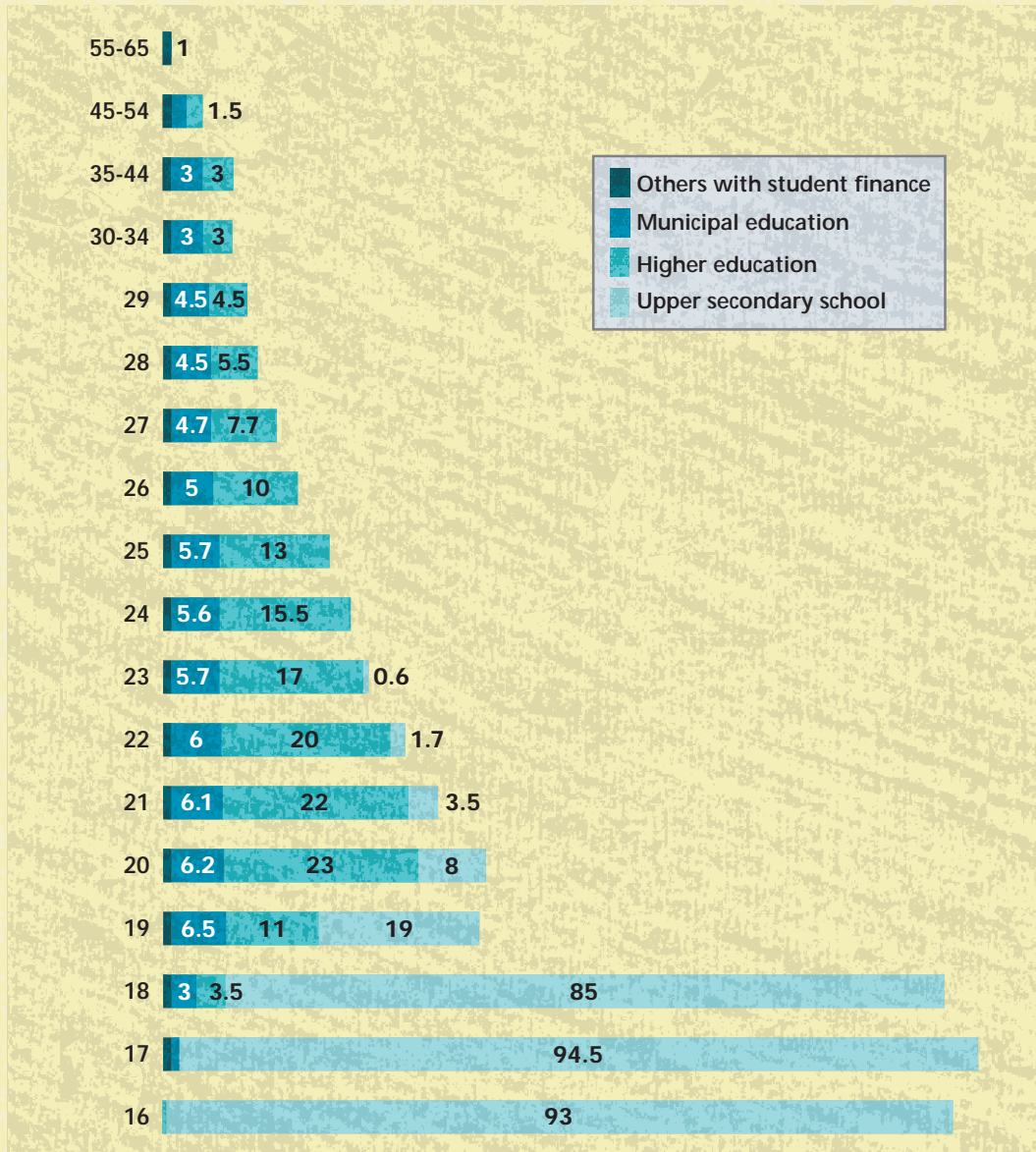
**Figure 6. Share of population with no more than eight or nine years of schooling, men and women of various ages, 1995**



1.2.12.

It is interesting to see the shifting levels of educational participation in different age cohorts. The figure below indicates that there still is a significant generation gap in lifelong learning with respect to formal education (i. e. qualifications obtained within the school system). However, when looking at the role of in-company training and popular adult education (see glossary in Annex 4), the picture is not at all so negative. More than one out of three employees participates in in-company training and one out of four in study circles or other forms of popular adult education.

Figure 7. Share of the population participating in formal education at various levels 1994



SOURCE: STATISTICS SWEDEN, 1996. BAKGRUNDSMATERIAL OM BEFOLKNINGENS UTBILDNING 1996.

1.2.13.

The varying education levels of immigrants is an interesting aspect of the competence of the labour force since immigrants belong to the extremes by being represented among individuals with the highest and also the lowest levels of education. Political refugees from some eastern European countries e.g. Russia and Poland tend to be better educated than Swedes in general, while immigrants from Africa, the Middle East or some Asian countries have relatively low levels of education.





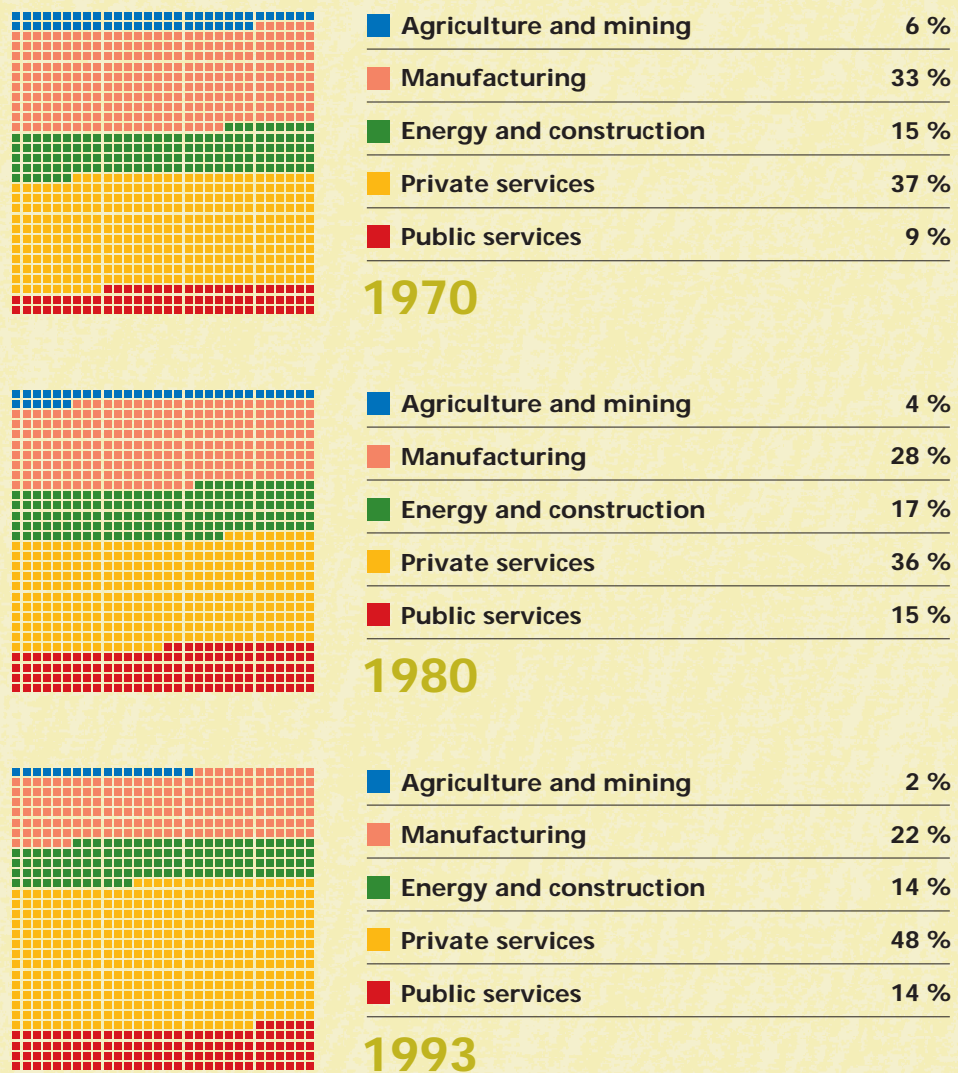
### 1.3. Economy and Labour force

#### Production and employment

##### 1.3.1.

The distribution of gross domestic product by activity in Sweden between 1970 and 1993 is depicted in the figure below. As in other industrialised countries, the service sector's contribution to GDP has increased significantly whereas the importance of manufacturing has declined. While manufacturing contracted from 33 to below 22 % of GDP, services expanded from 46 to 62 % over the period. Within private services, the most important change was the expansion of the financial sector from 14 to 24 %. Public sector growth was largely due to increases in education, health care, and other services.

Figure 8. Gross domestic product by sector 1970-93



SOURCE: MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE 1995, ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING AND INDUSTRIAL POLICY IN SWEDEN.

1.3.2.

Between 1970 and 1995, total employment grew from 3.9 to 4.5 million. The increase took place primarily in the public sector, and was largely attributable to a higher participation rate among women. As shown below, the public sector's share of total employment increased by almost 10 percentage points during the 1970s and amounted to 27.7 % in 1995. Manufacturing's share of total employment dropped from 26 to 20 % and services increased from 55 to 70 %.

**Table 4. Employment by sector, % of total employment, 1970-95**

Sector	1970	1980	1990	1995
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	7.6	5.2	3.5	3.3
Mining and manufacturing	28.6	24.8	21.0	20.1
Electricity, gas heating and water works	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.9
Construction	9.9	8.1	7.7	6.1
Private services	34.5	34.1	39.0	41.9
Government agencies	18.5	26.8	27.9	27.7

SOURCE: SWEDISH INSTITUTE 1997. FACT SHEETS ON SWEDEN.

At the same time, there has been an increase in service activities within the manufacturing sector itself. The table below shows that the share of workers in manufacturing actively engaged in services increased from 27 % in 1970 to 33 % in 1991 on average. The highest level was achieved in chemicals and engineering. In knowledge-intensive production, the borderlines between manufacturing and services are becoming increasingly blurred.

**Figure 9. Share of services in total employment in manufacturing, by industrial sub-sectors in % and % change, 1970-91**

INDUSTRY	Share of services in %				Change in %
	1970	1982	1989	1991	
Food, drink and tobacco	25	26	26	26	4
Textiles, apparel and leather	18	19	21	18	0
Wood products	16	20	19	20	25
Pulp and paper	28	32	32	33	18
Chemicals, incl. pharmaceuticals	34	38	39	40	18
Minerals, concrete, etc.	23	27	26	26	13
Iron and steel	25	26	24	25	0
Engineering	30	33	32	37	23
Other manufacturing	23	28	29	32	39
<b>Total manufacturing</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>22</b>

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE 1995, ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING AND INDUSTRIAL POLICY IN SWEDEN.



## Rise of unemployment

## 1.3.3.

Until the early 1990s, there was a gradual reorientation towards the public sector, and an ongoing decline in manufacturing. Since then, a reversal of these trends has been initiated and may continue in the years ahead, as revival of industry – manufacturing as well as private services – is now a generally accepted policy objective in Sweden. The labour market functioned without too many problems until the beginning of the 1990s. Unemployment was very low in international terms, and the ideal of full employment was successfully implemented. In 1990, total employment started to fall. Between 1990 and 1993, about half a million jobs were lost. Manufacturing suffered most; employment in manufacturing dropped by some 190 000 employees and more than half of these job losses took place in engineering. Construction contracted by about 60 000 workers and almost 120 000 jobs disappeared in private services. Employment in public services was maintained in 1990 but started to fall in 1991, declining by 120 000 between 1990 and 1993 as a whole.

Figure 10. Unemployment, 16-64 years of age, 1976-96

Year	Men	Women	Total
1976	28 900	35 800	64 700
1977	35 100	39 700	74 800
1978	48 600	45 200	93 800
1979	43 800	44 400	88 200
1980	39 800	44 600	84 400
1981	55 100	52 500	107 600
1982	69 500	67 700	137 200
1983	78 600	72 400	151 000
1984	68 900	66 900	135 800
1985	64 800	59 600	124 400
1986	60 500	56 200	116 700
1987	48 400	45 200	93 600
1988	39 800	37 300	77 100
1989	33 800	32 700	66 500
1990	39 600	35 600	75 200
1991	78 200	56 000	134 200
1992	144 500	88 700	233 200
1993	218 500	137 500	356 000
1994	202 100	137 900	340 000
1995	190 400	142 400	332 800
1996	192 100	155 000	347 100

SOURCE: STATISTICS SWEDEN 1997. AKU.

### 1.3.4.

Unemployment rose to over 8 %, or more than 12 % if adults participating in labour market activities are included. There have been many efforts to explain what happened to the Swedish economy and the labour market. Due to increasing international competition in the global economy, Swedish products had to fight harder on the international market. The decline of the industrial sector also had an impact on those parts of the economy more dependent on domestic demand and supply. The low level of demand in the retail sector and transport field led to increasing unemployment in these sectors. The sector suffering most, however, was the building industry with cuts of more than 30 % in the number of employees. Unemployment crises influenced the public sector to a lesser extent and their effects were also temporarily limited due to a number of labour market measures.

### 1.3.5.

From 1994 onwards, it is possible to observe a positive development in the economy with high profits occurring in the industrial sector. It is interesting to note that high productivity increases during the early 1990s took place in a context where there was a significant decline in employees and possibly a more intensive use of new technology in combination with a more efficient work organisation. So far, this development has had a marginal impact on job-creation or unemployment.

### 1.3.6.

Viewed comparatively, Swedish unemployment levels did not, even in 1993, reach the European average of more than 10 % (Table 5). More current figures show that some countries, e.g. Denmark and the Netherlands, have been successful in reducing unemployment, while the Swedish figure has been quite stable.

### 1.3.7.

In Sweden a larger part of the population is gainfully employed in comparison with many other countries. Sweden used to have the highest frequency of gainfully employed women in the world, but has now been replaced by Denmark. In other words, Sweden has less potential surplus manpower than other countries. This underlines the importance of raising the extent to which people's competence is utilised.

**Table 5. Unemployment in the EU in 1997, in %**

	All age groups			Aged under 25		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
EU-15	10.6	9.3	12.4	21.0	19.5	22.9
B	9.2	7.2	11.9	23.0	19.0	27.8
D	9.7	9.0	10.6	10.3	11.1	9.5
DK	6.1	4.7	7.8	8.2	6.7	9.9
GR	9.6	6.2	14.9	31.0	22.1	40.6
E	20.8	16.0	28.3	38.8	32.9	46.0
F	12.4	10.7	14.4	29.1	26.5	31.9
IRL	10.2	10.1	10.4	16.0	16.5	15.3
I	12.1	9.3	16.6	33.1	28.5	38.9
L	3.7	2.7	5.2	9.9	10.9	8.8
NL	5.2	3.9	6.9	9.2	8.1	10.4
A	4.4	3.6	5.3	6.7	5.6	7.8
P	6.8	6.0	7.8	15.4	12.0	19.7
FIN	14.0	13.2	14.9	27.5	25.5	29.6
<b>S</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>20.4</b>
UK	7.1	7.9	6.0	14.2	15.9	12.2

SOURCE: EUROSTAT UNEMPLOYMENT MONTHLY 3/98.

### 1.3.8.

The average age of the population and of the labour force is higher than in many other countries. The number of young persons leaving education and entering the labour market will soon be decreasing. The proportion of young persons starting work immediately after upper secondary education has been declining over time. The proportion declined from 70 % in 1987 to 24 % in 1993 with a slight increase in 1994 (32 % for women and 25 % for men). It has become increasingly common to continue studying for a number of reasons, particularly to avoid unemployment.

### Youth unemployment a major problem

### 1.3.9.

In spite of a number of policy measures to broaden access to education for young people, youth unemployment is still a major problem on the Swedish labour market. An assessment done by Statistics Sweden showed that young people, especially those in their early 20s, suffered most from the unemployment boom. Figure 11 illustrates the need in 1995 for new jobs and employment options if the re-establishment of the 1990 employment level was taken as the base line objective.

Figure 11. Number of additional employment options needed in 1995 to return to the 1990 situation



Thus, bridging the gap between education and work is today a much more complicated endeavour than in a low unemployment context. There are fewer direct bridges from education to work. Employment contracts are increasingly of a temporary character and the individual's occupational career is often preceded by a mixture of work study schemes, short job contracts, unemployment and further studies. In practice, this means that the school to work transition period is extended, often in combination with a delayed date for leaving the parent's home and becoming an independent citizen.



## Unemployment and new skill profiles

### 1.3.10.

Changes in technology and the organisation of work mean that the demand for basic skills combined with the ability both to learn and use new knowledge is increasing in more and more areas. At the same time the proportion of working youngsters is declining, which means that production will be supplied by fewer new entrants to the labour force. This serves to underline the importance of improving the qualifications of workers and means that employers are more interested in providing additional training for their employees. Recent statistics from the Swedish Labour Market Board serve to emphasise this (see Table 6, opposite).

### 1.3.11.

In spite of a full employment policy deeply rooted in the Swedish model, unemployment levels rose significantly in the early 1990s. A contributory factor to these dramatic changes has been the emergence of a new labour market requiring new skills and higher educational qualifications. During the last decade, there has been a significant increase in employers' expectations of skills and high level training. Nowadays more than nine out of every ten new jobs have specific educational requirements compared with one in every two jobs ten years ago. In order to qualify for employment, occupational experience plus vocational education and social skills are increasingly required.

**Table 6. Labour force, employment by sector, and unemployment \***

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
<b>Labour force participation, as % of working-age population (16-64 years of age)</b>							
<b>Total</b>	<b>84.8</b>	<b>83.9</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>79.1</b>	<b>77.6</b>	<b>78.2</b>	<b>77.8</b>
Men	87.0	86.0	84.0	80.9	79.4	80.3	80.0
Women	82.6	81.7	79.9	77.2	75.7	76.1	75.6
<b>Employment, as % of working age population</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>81.2</b>	<b>77.2</b>	<b>72.6</b>	<b>71.4</b>	<b>72.2</b>	<b>71.6</b>
<b>Percentage employed in</b>							
private services	35.8	36.1	37.0	37.3	37.7	37.9	38.2
public services	31.7	32.4	33.2	33.9	33.7	33.2	32.8
manufacturing and mining	22.2	21.2	20.2	19.5	19.4	20.1	20.4
construction	7.0	7.1	6.4	5.9	5.6	5.8	5.7
agriculture and forestry	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.1	2.9
<b>Unemployment, as % of labour force</b>							
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>8.1</b>
Men	1.5	3.0	5.7	9.7	9.1	8.4	8.5
Women	1.1	2.3	3.8	6.6	6.7	6.9	7.5
Aged 16-19	4.5	6.7	10.3	19.2	16.5	14.0	15.3
Aged 20-24	3.0	5.8	10.9	18.1	16.7	15.7	17.1
Aged 25-54	1.1	2.1	4.0	7.1	6.9	6.6	6.7
Aged 55-64	1.4	2.0	3.0	5.5	6.5	7.4	6.5
<b>Long-term unemployed (more than six months), as % of all unemployed</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Employed in labour market programmes, as % of labour force</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.7</b>

\* Because new measuring methods were introduced in 1993, figures for different years are not strictly comparable.

SOURCE: SWEDISH INSTITUTE 1997 FACT SHEETS ON SWEDEN.



