



# SWEDEN

OECD Global Action on Promoting Social and Solidarity Economy Ecosystems

Sweden does not have a national framework around the social economy. Civil society organisations (CSOs) provide a partial picture of the social economy. In 2020, 260 506 CSOs employed 188 100 people, of whom 60.9% were women. CSOs' output accounted to 3% of GDP in 2020.

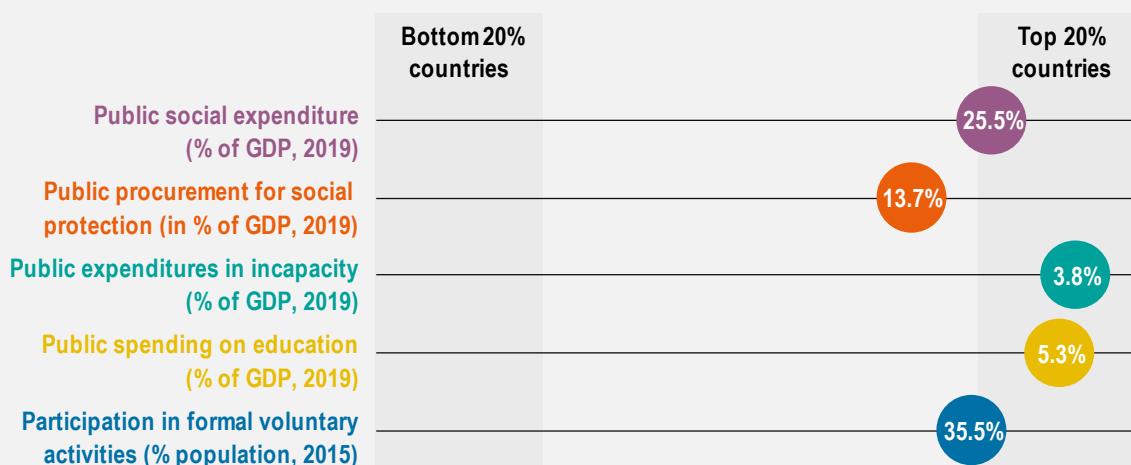
## SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Sweden is a unitary country and a member of the European Union. It is a high-income country with a very high human development level.

	GDP per capita	Labour force participation rate	Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)	Poverty rate	Gini coefficient	Rural population	Stakeholder engagement for developing regulations
Sweden	USD 64 975	83.4%	11.9%	9.2%	0.286 / 1	8.9%	2.0 / 4
OECD	USD 53 937	73.2%	14.8%	11.0%	0.313 / 1	23.1%	2.1 / 4

Note: Data from Sweden refer to 2022, except for NEET (2021), poverty rate (2021), Gini coefficient (2020) and stakeholder engagement (2017). OECD data refer to 2022, except for poverty rate (2018), Gini coefficient (2020) and stakeholder engagement (2017). GDP per capita for OECD is an estimated value. See sources at the end of the document.

## Country position in selected social indicators



Note: For each indicator, the position of the bubble on the line represents the country's ranking compared to OECD and EU countries. Higher rankings are on the right. The panel of countries for the international ranking can vary from an indicator to another due to data availability. See sources at the end of the document.

## SOCIAL ECONOMY ECOSYSTEM

### Definition of the social economy in Sweden

The social economy is defined as consisting of organised businesses that primarily pursue **societal aims** and have an **organisational autonomy from the public sector**.

Note: Translation into English provided by the authors. For the original text, please refer to the report ["Social ekonomi i EU-landet Sverige - tradition och förnyelse i samma begrepp" \(Ds 1998:48\)](#).

## Institutional frameworks



### Institutions

**Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth** is a government agency under the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation with the aim of promoting sustainable business development and regional growth and to implement Cohesion Policy Funds.



### Legal instruments

The Swedish Government launched “**A strategy for social enterprises** – a sustainable society through social enterprise and social innovation” in 2018, which referred to social enterprises independent of legal form.



### Stakeholder engagement

The 2018 Strategy was followed by three-year assignments of EUR 1.8 million per year for the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth and the Swedish Innovation Agency.

## Main figures

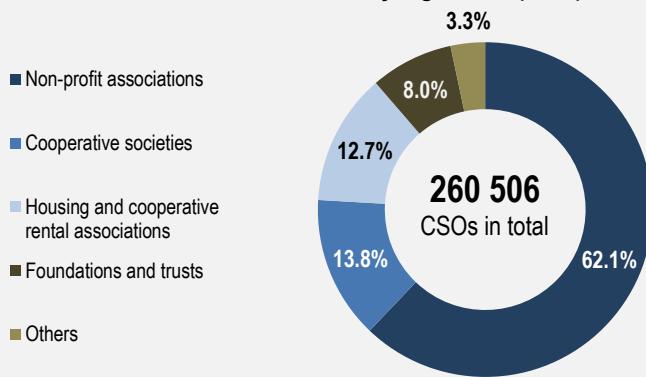
CSOs provide a partial picture of the social economy. In 2020, there were **260 506 CSOs** in Sweden, employing **188 100** people. Women represented **60.9%** of CSO employment, and CSOs' output accounted to **3%** of GDP in 2020. Social enterprises are mostly incorporated as **limited liability companies (38%)**, **economic associations (32%)** or **non-profit associations (26%)**.

### SCOPE

Sweden does not have comprehensive social economy statistics at the national level. Statistics Sweden publishes statistics on CSOs through its National Accounts for Civil Society.

### ZOOM IN ON CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOs)

Number of CSOs by legal form (2020)



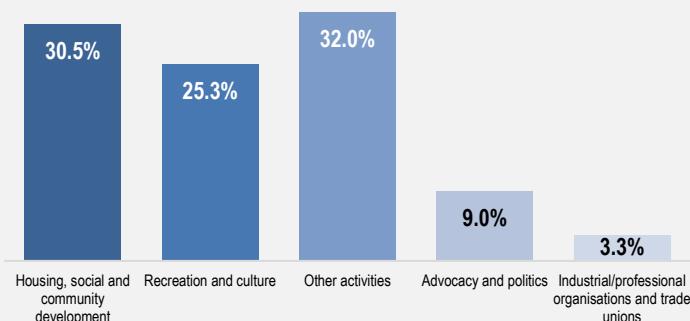
Employment in CSOs by legal form (2020)



Note: Data are retrieved from Statistics Sweden's National Accounts for Civil Society and “The Civil Society 2020” published in 2022.

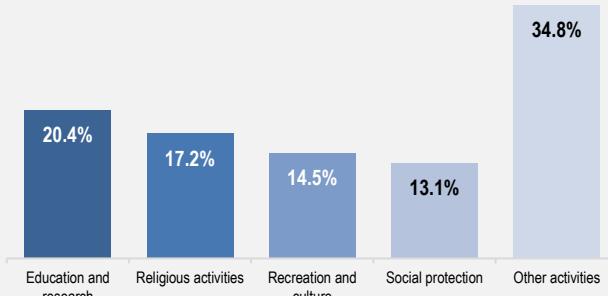
Number of CSOs by sector (2020)

(International Classification of Non-profit Organisations)



Employment in CSO by sector (2020)

(International Classification of Non-profit Organisations)



Note: Data are retrieved from Statistics Sweden's National Accounts for Civil Society and “The Civil Society 2020” published in 2022.

Note: In the number of CSOs by sector chart, other activities include granting foundations and fundraising activities; international activities; environment and animal welfare; education and research; social security; and religious activities. In the CSO employment by sector, other activities include housing, social and community development; advocacy and politics; industrial/professional organisations and trade unions; granting foundations and fundraising activities; international activities; and environment and animal welfare.

## Gender equity



Women represented **60.9%** of CSO employment in 2020.

## Economic contribution



The total output of the civil society organisations amounted to **3%** of GDP in 2020.

## Legal frameworks

Legal frameworks to support the development of the social and solidarity economy (SSE) can be adopted at the national and subnational levels. They can regulate the SSE as a whole, or specific legal entities of the SSE (such as associations, cooperatives, mutual societies, foundations and social enterprises).

For the SSE	<i>Not available</i>
For specific SSE entities at national level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundations Act (1994) – <a href="#">link</a></li> <li>Economic Associations Act (1987, revised in 2018) – <a href="#">link</a></li> </ul>

Note: The list above is not exhaustive of all existing legal frameworks around SSE in Sweden.

## Fiscal treatment

Different fiscal treatment can be established for the social and solidarity economy as a whole, or for specific SSE entities, at the national and subnational level.

Fiscal treatment of SSE entities	Fiscal treatment for contributors to the SSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-profit associations can benefit from tax exemption on incomes from sales if at least 90% of their activities are related to a public benefit aim (e.g. care for children and youth, social assistance, health care, culture, sports, education) and if at least 80% of the financial turnover are channels to fulfil this public benefit.</li> <li>If associations, businesses or public organisations employ a person with 'reduced working ability' they can benefit from a grant to cover part of the salary cost.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Not available.</i></li> </ul>

Note: The list above is not exhaustive. Information is retrieved from OECD desk research and "Relevant taxation frameworks for Social Economy Entities" published in 2023 by the European Commission.

## Social impact measurement initiatives

Driven by a mission of social purpose, SSE entities are increasingly requested to demonstrate the positive value that they generate through their activities. Social impact measurement enables them to assess their positive contribution to society. A diverse range of possible initiatives are available to governments and practitioners to foster a social impact measurement culture.



### Policy Framework

- [Social Enterprise Strategy](#) (2018) △ Government of Sweden

Note: Policy frameworks create enabling conditions and set targeted incentives to conduct social impact measurement.

## FURTHER READING ON THE SSE IN SWEDEN

[Statistics Sweden: The Civil Society 2020](#) | [Euclid Network: European Social Enterprise Monitor Sweden 2020-2021](#) | [European Commission: Social Enterprises and Their Ecosystems in Europe Sweden](#) | [Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society](#) | [Organisation of WISEs \(SKOOP\)](#) | [EU Social Economy Gateway: Sweden](#)

## DATA SOURCES

- Socio-economic data refer to 2022 unless stated otherwise, and relate to data downloaded as of 17 July 2023. Datasets used: GDP per capita, current PPP: OECD national accounts statistics, <https://doi.org/10.1787/na-data-en>; Labour force participation rate (15-64 year old): OECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics, <https://doi.org/10.1787/data-00310-en>; NEET (15-29 year olds, all levels of education): OECD Education at a Glance 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1787/19991487>; Poverty rate (after taxes and transfers, poverty line 50%): OECD Social and Welfare Statistics (database), <https://doi.org/10.1787/data-00654-en>; Gini coefficient (disposable income, post taxes and transfers): OECD Income Distribution Database, <https://www.oecd.org/social/income-distribution-database.htm>; Rural population (OECD): OECD, CFE Regions and Cities databases, <http://oe.cd/geostats>; Stakeholder engagement for developing regulations: OECD Better Life Index, <https://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/#/111111111111>; Public social expenditures: OECD Social Expenditure Database (SOCX), <http://dotstat.oecd.org/Index.aspx?QueryId=26920>; Share of public procurement for social protection (in % of total general government procurements): OECD (2022), "Government at a Glance - 2021 edition", <http://dotstat.oecd.org/Index.aspx?QueryId=107598>; Public spending on incapacity: OECD (2022); Public spending on incapacity (indicator), <https://doi.org/10.1787/f35b71ed-en> (Public spending on incapacity refers to spending due to sickness, disability and occupational injury); Spending on education (primary to tertiary level, in % of GDP): OECD Education Statistics (database), <https://doi.org/10.1787/c4e1b551-en>; Participation in formal voluntary activities (% of people): Eurostat table [ilc\_scp19], based on the 2015 EU-SILC ad-hoc module.
- SSE data were collected using existing repositories of information. For the zoom in on CSOs, data are provided from Statistics Sweden's [National Accounts for Civil Society](#) and the ["Civil Society 2020"](#) published in 2022.
- Further information on the methodology followed in the country fact sheets can be found [here](#).

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