

## COUNTRY PROFILES

### Sweden

Sweden takes culture very seriously and has expended considerable effort explicating why culture is important in all spheres of life. Sweden is also strongly oriented towards the global community and therefore demonstrates a positive attitude to cooperation with other European countries in external cultural affairs. This can be seen demonstrated in its participation in a number of inter-governmental organisations that carry the aim of cultural cooperation.

International cultural cooperation emerges in national cultural policy (Ministry of Education, Research and Culture) and foreign development and cooperation policy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sida).

#### M i n i s t r y o f E d u c a t i o n , R e s e a r c h a n d C u l t u r e

The Ministry of Education, Research and Culture is mainly responsible for national cultural policy, although it's Secretariat for Cooperation and Development is responsible for international relations in the field of culture and the representation of Sweden in international organisations.

Implementation of national cultural policy has to a large extent been handed over to public cultural institutions, in particular the National Council for Cultural Affairs.

#### M i n i s t r y o f F o r e i g n A f f a i r s

The Ministry maintains a global network of cultural institutes that "disseminate knowledge and heighten awareness" about Sweden. The Ministry is also responsible for the Swedish International Development Agency that includes a cultural dimension in its development policies.

Within the Ministry, the Department of International Cultural Relations supervises diplomats working in the field of culture at Swedish embassies, and its two cultural centres (Paris and Alexandria).

Under the wing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Institute is responsible for: "informing the world about Sweden and organising exchanges with other countries in the spheres of culture, education, research and public life in general." It executes these tasks with the explicit purpose of promoting the interests of Sweden. The Institute collaborates with embassies and consulates. Specialised departments deal with publishing information, organising cultural exchanges, and educational and scientific exchange.

One of the objectives of Swedish national cultural policy is the promotion of international exchange and exchange between foreign and Swedish culture. However, Swedish development policy includes culture as an important area of cooperation. Its development agency, the Swedish International development Cooperation Agency- SIDA (operating under the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), emerges as one of the most important actors in international cultural cooperation. It endorses a view of development in which culture is synonymous with human development. This specific perspective on culture has been developed within the framework of the report "Our creative diversity" (1995) of the World Commission for Culture and Development and the action plan "The power of culture" (1998), adopted at the conference hosted by Sweden. Several government papers,<sup>27</sup> and action plans of SIDA stress the goal to: "create opportunities for cultural diversity, creative activities, and sustainable development based on human rights." A recent evaluation report on SIDA's policy, recommends increasing the effects of cooperation efforts on poverty reduction, while maintaining a cultural component.

The Council for Promotion of Sweden Abroad has been established by the Swedish government. It is a forum for strategic discussion on the representation of Sweden abroad. The

Swedish Institute operates a website ([www.sweden.se](http://www.sweden.se)) on behalf of the Council which is the official gateway for information about Sweden.

#### P o l i c y   f o c u s

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers the task of “inspiring confidence in Sweden as a country and spreading goodwill on its behalf” as an important part of Swedish foreign policy. This is based on the view that increasing international interdependency and cooperation necessitates a policy that puts Sweden on the world map.

Within the EU, Sweden aims to promote what Europe shares in common, but also what is genuinely Swedish, such as the Swedish language and issues of public policy. With regard to the cultural paragraph of the European Treaty, Sweden takes the view that this objective - i.e. that cultural issues should be taken into account in every sphere of EU activity - should be achieved both in Sweden and the EU at large. On a global level, Sweden aims to uphold the role of culture in world society, “emphasising the significance of culture for the well-being and liberty of the world’s people and facilitating cultural contacts across all borders.”

#### G e o g r a p h i c a l   f o c u s

Swedish’ foreign cultural policy focuses on the EU and non-EU neighbouring countries.

The Swedish Cultural Centre in France (Paris) is SI’s sole branch office, and the only Swedish cultural centre outside Sweden. However, the Ministry of Culture is the sponsoring ministry of the four Counsellors for Cultural Affairs at Swedish Embassies, in EU member countries: Germany (Berlin), United Kingdom (London), Latvia (Riga) and Poland (Warsaw).

Swedish support for cooperation with non-EU neighbouring countries can be seen demonstrated by Sweden’s:

- participation in the Nordic cultural partnership and through the Nordic Council of Ministers;
- partnership with the Baltic Sea region and the Barents region;
- support, through the Swedish Institute (which allocates special funds to exchanges) with Russia, the Ukraine and Belarus, and with other developing countries;
- sponsorship, through the Ministry of a culture of Counsellors for Cultural Affairs at the Russian-based (Moscow) Swedish Embassy;
- special focus on Russia, the Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and Western Balkans in Sweden’s policy statements;
- Sweden’s contribution to the Anna Lindh Foundation which has been established within the framework of EU Mediterranean cooperation to promote increased understanding between EU Member States and countries around the Mediterranean and in the Middle East. The Foundation has its headquarters at the Swedish Institute and at the Egyptian library in Alexandria.

Further afield, China and Japan are viewed as important partners for Sweden. Also, the Ministry of Culture is the sponsoring ministry of a Counsellor for Cultural Affairs at the Swedish Embassy in the USA (Washington).

Development cooperation targets countries in Africa, Asia, Central and South America.

#### H i g h l y   r e c o m m e n d e d   r e a d i n g

Barbier Frinault et Associates and Ernst & Young France Consultancy, Study of the External Cooperation of the European Union and its Member States in culture and audiovisual sectors. Summary,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/stat/2002/5770\\_barbier/58-02-summary\\_en.pdf](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/stat/2002/5770_barbier/58-02-summary_en.pdf)

The study presents and analyses the external cooperation in the culture and audiovisual sectors of a number of states (including Sweden) and the European institutions with third

countries. New Member States and candidate countries for European Union membership are excluded from the category of "third" countries.

Kleberg, C.-J., (2003) Between Competition and Cooperation - Governmental Programmes versus Private Initiatives: The example of Sweden,  
E-Doc Link: [http://www.ifa.de/europa-akp/konferenz/download/eu\\_kleberg.pdf](http://www.ifa.de/europa-akp/konferenz/download/eu_kleberg.pdf)  
Swedish contribution to the conference "Europe-a Union of Culture?" of the German Institut fuer Auslandsbeziehungen, Berlin, October 2003.

Kulturradet, Sweden's Cultural Policy Objectives,  
E-Doc Link: <http://www.kulturradet.se/ovfiles/CulturalObjectives.pdf>  
Summary of Swedish Cultural policy objectives.

Ljungman, Cecilia M, [et al.] (2004) Sida's work with culture and media,  
E-Doc Link: [http://www.sida.se/content/1/c6/03/33/26/SIDA4439en\\_Main\\_web.pdf](http://www.sida.se/content/1/c6/03/33/26/SIDA4439en_Main_web.pdf)  
Evaluation of Sida's international development policy in the field of culture (2000).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2003) Development responsibility: Sweden's Policy for Global Development,  
E-Doc Link: <http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/02/45/20/c4527821.pdf>  
Government Bill on Sweden's development policy, 2002/3:122.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (2005) Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs, Wednesday 9 February 2005,  
E-Doc Link: <http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/03/96/05/398b767c.pdf>  
Overview of current activities and challenges ahead in Swedish foreign policy.  
Sida, (2000) Policy for Sida's international development cooperation in the field of culture,  
E-Doc Link: [http://www.sida.se/content/1/c6/03/33/56/SIDA3422sv\\_PolicyCult.pdf](http://www.sida.se/content/1/c6/03/33/56/SIDA3422sv_PolicyCult.pdf)  
The Swedish Agency for International Development Cooperation, Sida, is a government agency under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Sida's goal is to contribute to making it possible for poor people to improve their living conditions.

Sida, (2000) Policy for Sida's international development cooperation in the field of culture,  
E-Doc Link: [http://www.sida.se/content/1/c6/03/33/56/SIDA3422sv\\_PolicyCult.pdf](http://www.sida.se/content/1/c6/03/33/56/SIDA3422sv_PolicyCult.pdf)  
Describes the cultural component of Sweden's development cooperation policy.

Sida, (2003) Sida at Work - A Guide to Principles, Procedures and Working Methods,  
E-Doc Link: <http://www.sida.se/content/1/c6/02/13/20/Sida%20at%20work.pdf>  
The report "aims to guide Sida's staff on working methods and procedures in achieving Swedish development cooperation goals. The main text outlines principles and concepts. It relates to two manuals; one concerning the country's strategy process and the other concerning analysis, assessment and follow-up of Sida's contributions to programmes and projects."

Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs, (1995) Swedish cultural exchange with the Baltic Sea countries: experiences, obstacles, possibilities: a report., Stockholm, Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs, Sweden  
The report is divided into four parts, a survey of the history of the Baltic region, organisations for regional cooperation, Swedish experience of cultural cooperation within the Baltic region, and a survey of actual obstacles to cultural exchange. The conclusion contains a discussion of the preconditions for a development of regional cooperation in the Baltic region and bilateral Swedish efforts with respect to the Eastern European countries around the Baltic Sea.

## G e n e r a l / b a c k g r o u n d r e a d i n g

Council of Europe, (1990) Swedish state cultural policy: objectives, measures and results, Stockholm, Swedish Ministry of Education [etc.], ISBN: 91-38-12395-9, Sweden  
A report presented by a working group within the Swedish Ministry of Education and Cultural affairs in cooperation with the Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs.

EFAH, Interarts (2003) Study on cultural cooperation in Europe: Annex 1 - National reports - Sweden,

E-Doc Link: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources\\_info/pdf-word/annex1national\\_reports3.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/eac/sources_info/pdf-word/annex1national_reports3.pdf)

Background to structures, competencies and institutes involved in cultural cooperation.

Meyerscough, J., (1990) National cultural policy in Sweden: report of a European group of experts, Strasbourg, Council of Europe, ISBN: 91-38-12396-7, Sweden

Ministry of Education, Research and Culture, (2005) Official website,

E-Doc Link: [www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/2063](http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/2063)

Outlines policy for culture which includes "promoting international cultural exchange and meetings between different cultures in the country".

National Council for Cultural Affairs, (2005) Official website,

E-Doc Link: [www.kulturradet.se](http://www.kulturradet.se)

The Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs participates in a number of international cooperation projects and has an extensive international network of contacts. This website gives a brief explanation of some of these activities.

Persson, G., (2005) Statement of Government Policy presented by the Prime Minister to the Swedish Riksdag on Tuesday, 13 September 2005.,

E-Doc Link: <http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/04/97/18/94aba2b9.pdf>

General speech on government policy.

The Swedish Institute, (2005) Official website,

E-Doc Link: [www.si.se](http://www.si.se)

The Swedish Institute (SI) is entrusted with the task to inform the world about Sweden and to organise exchanges with other countries in the spheres of culture, education, research and public life in general. In performing this task, the Institute seeks to promote Swedish interests. The SI also has special assignments in the field of international development cooperation. Much of our work is undertaken in cooperation with Swedish embassies and consulates-general around the world.

UNESCO, (2005) The Swedish National Commission for UNESCO,

E-Doc Link: [http://www.unesco-sweden.org/english/9\\_english\\_culture.htm](http://www.unesco-sweden.org/english/9_english_culture.htm)

Official website of the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO. Also available in English.

The Swedish government hosted the "The Power of Culture - the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development" in Stockholm in 1998 where aspects of culture and development were discussed by representatives from all Member States and where the Stockholm Action Plan on Cultural Policies for Development was adopted.

Vahlquist, Gudrun, (2005) Chapter 2.4, International Cultural Cooperation, Sweden : Compendium of Cultural Policies,

E-Doc Link: [www.culturalpolicies.net](http://www.culturalpolicies.net)

Introduction to the main actors and principle institutions working in the field of international cultural cooperation in Sweden.