



Structures of Education,
Initial Training
and Adult Education
Systems in Europe

SWEDEN

1999

Information provided by:

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If you wish to have more detailed information on education systems in Europe, we warmly recommend that you consult the EURYBASE database (<http://www.eurydice.org>) and the CEDEFOP monographs (<http://www.cedefop.gr>)

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INTRODUCTION

Europe is characterized by a very wide variety of education and training systems. In order that this diversity should be fully appreciated, EURYDICE, the information network on education in Europe and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) jointly published *Education and Initial Training Systems in the European Union* for the first time in 1990. This book was updated in 1995 and then again in 1999/2000. Given the number of countries it now covers¹ and the amount of data available, this most recent update has been placed for consultation on the EURYDICE Network website (<http://www.eurydice.org>), instead of being distributed in printed paper form. In this way, it may be accessed by a maximum number of readers and updated on a more regular basis.

Descriptions relating to individual countries in turn include basic information on the administration and structure of their systems of education and initial vocational training at all levels, as well as brief accounts of their higher education and systems for initial and in-service teacher training, and of the status of teachers. EURYDICE and CEDEFOP have also used this latest update to add a chapter on adult education, which is an important topic in relation to the development of lifelong learning in Europe.

As in the previous edition, the information is structured with respect to a common table of contents to facilitate inter-country comparisons while ensuring that special features peculiar to each system are duly emphasized.

The first chapter within each country section is devoted to a short presentation of the country concerned, together with the basic principles governing its education and training, the division of responsibilities and then more specific information (relating to administration, inspection, financing, private schooling and advisory bodies). The major reforms of education systems are also considered.

The other chapters deal in turn with pre-primary education, compulsory and post-compulsory education (general, technical and vocational), the initial vocational training of young people and higher education. Here also, the way these chapters are structured depends on each national context. Where pre-primary education is not in reality separate from primary education, or where compulsory education spans different levels, no artificial division has been created. In the case of all countries, a brief description of the aims and structure of the level of education concerned is followed by further headings devoted to the curriculum, assessment, teachers and statistics.

Initial vocational training is the subject of a chapter in its own right, as it is generally provided outside the ordinary education system, whether as part of schemes for apprenticeship, the special training of young people or vocational integration. This is followed by a chapter on higher education, in which a summary description is supplemented by sections on admission, fees, the academic year, courses, qualifications and assessment.

As indicated above, this latest updating also provides for the first time a general description of the way formal systems of general education and vocational training for adults are organized. The legislative framework and financing of this kind of education are also covered.

The situation regarding teachers is dealt with in a specific section for each level of education discussed. Also provided are statistics on the number of pupils, students, teachers and educational institutions and, where figures are available, on pupil or student/teacher ratios, attendance and attainment rates or, yet again, on the choice of branches of study or areas of specialization.

¹ **The European countries taking part in the Community Programme in Education, Socrates.**

The description for each country is preceded by a diagram of its education system with explanatory notes. Here again, the way the diagrams are presented has, as far as possible, been standardized so that common – and differing – features of the various systems can be more easily identified and compared.

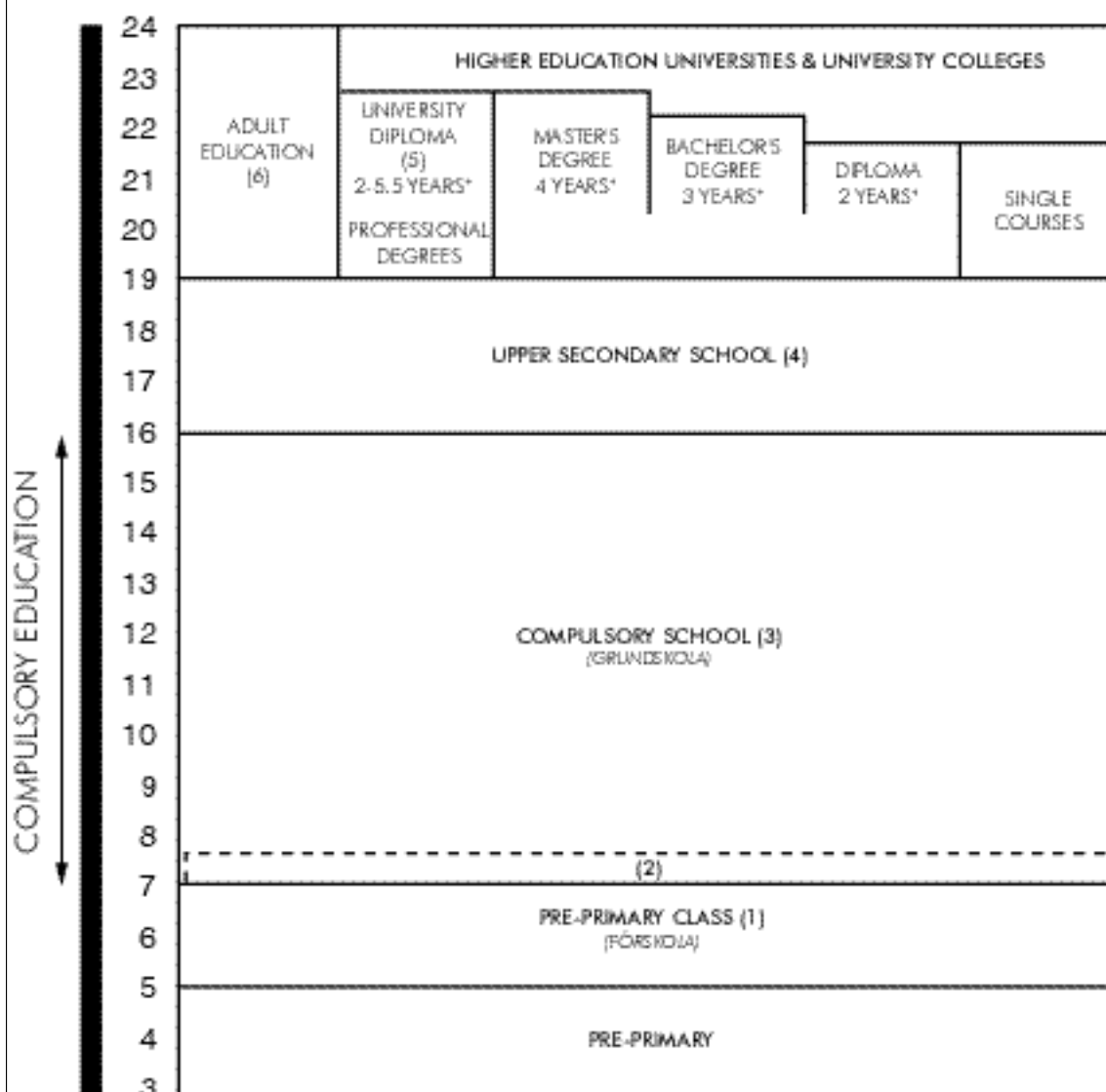
The National Units in the EURYDICE Network have drafted the descriptions for their countries, each using the same proposed outline of content as a common framework. The information on initial vocational training and on adult education has been prepared in close collaboration with members of the documentary information network of CEDEFOP (in the case of the European Union and EFTA/EEA countries) and the National Observatories of the European Training Foundation – ETF (as regards the ten countries of central and eastern Europe). We are extremely grateful to them and to all those who were involved in this project, both in the EURYDICE European Unit in Brussels and at CEDEFOP in Thessaloniki, for their invaluable contribution to this fundamental source of information which is vital to a better understanding of education and training systems in Europe.

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March 2000

THE SWEDISH EDUCATION SYSTEM



* Minimum requirements

1. The pre-primary class is a school form, which was introduced in 1998, replacing the special activities previously run for six-year olds within the framework of the pre-primary. The curriculum for compulsory education is also valid for the pre-primary class.
2. Children have the possibility to start compulsory school at the age of six, if their parents so desire.
3. In 1995, a new curriculum was introduced in the 9-year compulsory school. From the start of school year 1998/99, the curricula have been amended to cover not only compulsory schooling, but also the pre-school class and the leisure-time centre.
4. In the new integrated upper secondary school implemented between 1992 and 1995, all education is organized in terms of 16 different national programmes. All upper secondary school programmes contain the same eight core subjects, Swedish (either as mother tongue or as a second language), English, civics, religious education, mathematics, natural science, physical and health education as well as artistic activities. In addition to these core subjects, pupils study subjects specific to their chosen programme.
5. There are, apart from the general degrees, around 50 specifically professionally oriented diplomas described in the Government degree ordinance. Diplomas concern primarily professions requiring authorisation or registration e.g. programmes for doctors and teachers that may cover periods ranging from two to five and a half years.
6. The public adult education system comprises municipal adult education, municipal education for adults with learning disabilities, Swedish tuition for immigrants and two National Schools for Adults. Other forms of adult education are offered by folk high schools and adult education associations. The Adult Education Initiative is a five year programme launched in 1997 in order to boost adult education and training. The pilot scheme for advanced vocational training is a type of post-secondary education launched in 1996.

N.B. There is no distinction between university and non-university education.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Background

Sweden covers a total area of 450,000 km², with a population of nearly 8.9 million. The national language is Swedish. For many centuries, Sweden was ethnically and linguistically very homogeneous with two exceptions — the Finnish-speaking population of the north-east and the Sami. Today, nearly one million of Sweden's total population are immigrants or have at least one immigrant parent. Immigrants include citizens from other Nordic countries.

The country is a Constitutional Monarchy with a parliamentary form of government. The King has only ceremonial functions as Head of State and the formal power of governmental decision rests with the Government. The Parliament (*Riksdag*) is the country's highest decision-making body. It consists of one chamber, whose 349 members are elected by proportional representation for four-year terms. Apart from nine years (1976–82 and 1991–94) of non-socialist rule, the Social Democrats have been in power since 1932, either alone or in coalition with other parties. The social democratic minority government, formed after the elections in 1994, remained in power after the elections in 1998. Local government is exercised through the 21 county councils and 289 municipalities.

In 1997 around 85 percent of the population belonged to the Lutheran Church of Sweden.

In 1998 the unemployment rate was 6,5 per cent. The same year 74 per cent of Swedish men and 69 per cent of Swedish women (aged between 16 and 64) were gainfully employed. The main sectors of employment were as follows:

Sector: People employed (out of the total number of gainfully employed people):	
Agriculture, forestry	3%
Mining, manufacturing	20%
Building, construction	6%
Services	72%
(of which the public service sector	33% of total)
(of which education and research	8% of total)

1.2 Basis of the education system: principles and legislation

Principles

One fundamental principle of the Swedish education system is that everybody must have access to equivalent education, regardless of sex, ethnic and social background and of place of residence. This principle is mirrored throughout the entire educational system. Pre-primary class, compulsory school and upper secondary school are all comprehensive, designed to accommodate all members of the young generation; and all schools are co-educational. The curricula for the various school forms are valid nation-wide. Higher education is mainly public and always free of charge, and the institutions are located all over the country, with the aim of guaranteeing everybody access to higher education, irrespective of place of residence.

There are options for further and continuing education available in many different forms, and education for adults equivalent to the education provided by compulsory and upper secondary schools forms part of the public school system. This gives everybody the chance to compensate for compulsory and upper secondary education they missed and to rejoin the formal system of qualifications. The

Swedish education system is thus marked by a uniform structure stretching from compulsory to upper secondary level through to adult education.

In order to guarantee that no one should be excluded from education because of lack of personal financial resources, various funding schemes permit students in upper secondary, adult and higher education to finance their studies.

Legislation

State regulations for the education system are set out in the Education Act, the Higher Education Act and in a number of ordinances. Since 1998, pre-primary activities, child care for school aged children and the pre-primary class have been regulated by the Education Act. Previously, these or similar provisions were part of the Social Services Act. Legislation is passed by Parliament while ordinances are issued by the Government.

1.3 Distribution of responsibilities for the organisation and administration of the education system

Overall responsibility for education in Sweden is borne by Parliament and the Government.

Nearly all education and vocational training falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science, from pre-primary to higher education and research. The most important institutions or sectors of education falling outside the purview of the Ministry of Education and Science are: the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, which comes under the Ministry of Agriculture, the Police Academy, which comes under the Ministry of Justice, military training, which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence, and labour market training, which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications.

The ministries are rather small units, consisting of 150 employees on average. They are mainly

concerned with preparing the Government's bills for Parliament and issuing laws, regulations and general rules for the central administrative agencies. These relatively independent agencies are responsible for the enforcement of laws and government decisions. This division of tasks between ministries and central administrative agencies is a characteristic feature of the Swedish administrative system.

Those responsible for the provision of education under the Ministry of Education and Science are the State, the county councils, the municipalities and private education organisers. Practically all public education in Sweden below university level is operated by the municipalities, while most higher education institutions are run by the central government. Universities and university colleges have however been granted a large degree of autonomy in several important areas.

Education in Sweden has traditionally been organised within the public sector. For many years, control of activities within the education system was heavily centralised. Through legislation, regulations and curricula the State issued detailed instructions and rules on educational activities, and on the spending of state grants. The education system has, however, undergone fundamental reforms during the last decade, which have changed the role of the State.

During the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s, public administration underwent a far-reaching decentralisation process when a goal- and result-oriented steering system was introduced. As regards the administration of the education system - schools as well as institutions of higher education - the State has gradually replaced an approach based on detailed regulations by one based on goals and results. Within the framework set out by the Government, local authorities were granted extensive autonomy in administering the schools. Responsibility in several important areas of higher education was devolved from the central to the institutional level.

The distribution of responsibilities in the Swedish education system is based on the main principle that Parliament and the Government should control educational activities by defining national objectives, while central administrative agencies and municipalities and the organisers of the different institutions are responsible for ensuring that educational activities are

implemented in line with these national objectives and achieve the necessary results.

Central level

Legislation is passed by Parliament which also decides on the general funding of government appropriations to the education system. The Government issues the ordinances and general guidelines applying to the various types of education and, in the field of higher education, decides on the distribution of government appropriations to the institutions of higher education. The Government also lays down the curricula and syllabi for the school system.

The State is responsible for the central development and improvement of the education system and must at the same time ensure that all educational activities are monitored and evaluated. The State is also responsible for providing financial assistance to students. Subject to the authority of Parliament and the Government, these tasks in the public education system are performed by central government agencies, immediately subordinate to the Ministry of Education and Science.

The main central authority responsible for the supervision of the school system is the National Agency for Education (*Statens skolverk*). Its foremost responsibilities include the nationwide monitoring, evaluation and supervision of all school activities, and central development work within the school sector. The Agency is also responsible for ensuring that research is undertaken and that in-service training is arranged for teachers. The Agency itself arranges basic training for head teachers and some in-service training for teaching staff. School inspectors are appointed for a year at a time by the Agency.

Monitoring and evaluation of higher education activities at universities and university colleges is, at national level, entrusted to the National Agency for Higher Education (*Högskoleverket*). The Agency has the following main tasks: follow-up and evaluation, production of an annual report on higher education in Sweden, quality assessment, surveillance and investigation, controlling that laws and regulations within the field of higher education are observed, information on and recognition of degrees from other countries, and organisation of the university aptitude test. The National Admission Office to Higher Education

(*Verket för högskoleservice*) is primarily funded by the universities and the university colleges themselves. It is responsible for the co-ordination of the admission of students and the purchase of expensive equipment.

The National Board of Student Aid (*Centrala studiestödsnämnden*) is responsible for the administration, observation and evaluation of financial support to students for post-compulsory studies in Sweden and abroad.

The national agencies submit annual reports about their activities to the Government. In addition the National Agency for Education and the National Agency for Higher Education are, at regular intervals, to provide Parliament and the Government with a comprehensive picture of the situation within their field of responsibility, together with data for the long-term national development of the education sector.

Statistical data on educational activities are collected by *Statistics Sweden* at the request of the National Agency for Education and the National Agency for Higher Education.

Local level

Practically all public education in Sweden below university level comes under the operations of the municipalities. These are bound by law and regulations to provide a number of basic services, of which education is one.

Each Municipal Council appoints one or more committees which have the responsibility to ensure that educational activities are conducted in compliance with state regulations and guidelines and that the external conditions of education are as appropriate and favourable as possible. The committee or committees responsible for schools are obliged to ensure, inter alia, that schools are built and sufficient facilities are provided, that the activities of schools in the municipality are co-ordinated, that qualified teaching and non-teaching staff are hired and receive in-service training, that municipal funds are allocated for school activities, that it is made possible to achieve the objectives laid down in the curricula and that the general guidelines are complied with. According to the Education Act, it is the responsibility of the municipalities to ensure that Swedish schools uphold equivalent

standards all over the country.

On the basis of the Education Act, the curriculum and the syllabi every municipality is required to set out the general objectives for its schools in a school plan, adopted by the Municipal Council. It must clearly state the measures the municipality intends to take in order to attain the national goals for its schools. The municipality is obliged to monitor and evaluate the school plan, to provide the State with information relevant to the evaluation of educational activities and for quality audits. In addition, every school has to draw up a work plan.

The organisation of administration within a municipality, such as the allocation of responsibilities and financing, varies from one municipality to another.

A small number of study programmes within upper secondary education is provided by the county councils, which also appoint one or more committees responsible for ensuring that educational activities are conducted in compliance with state regulations and guidelines and that the external conditions of education are as appropriate and favourable as possible.

Institutional level

In addition to the school plan adopted by the Municipal Council, every school has to draw up a work plan based on the curriculum and local priorities. In accordance with the needs and characteristics of the school's student population educational goals are set by teachers and pupils. The work plan also lists all measures and activities designed to ensure that these targets are met. It is regularly monitored and evaluated.

Most of the higher education institutions are run by the Government. Responsibility for several important areas has however been transferred to the universities and university colleges. The Government lays down certain objectives and parameters - mainly financial - while course structure and content, the application of available resources and the establishment of admissions procedures are decided by the universities and university colleges themselves.

1.4 Inspection/supervision/ guidance

With the administration of the education system based on objectives and results, the State and local authorities as well as individual schools and institutions of higher education, are required to systematically monitor and evaluate educational activities in relation to the objectives set at national level. As mentioned above, the National Agency for Education and the National Agency for Higher Education monitor and evaluate the system at national level.

The Government has decided on several measures aimed at strengthening quality control in school education, e.g. a new supervisory structure employing state education inspectors. These will not only monitor the quality of the educational provision in schools but also promote quality work within the local economy. The inspectors, appointed by the National Agency for Education for a year at a time, will study different aspects of schooling each year.

1.5 Financing

The funding of school level education is shared between central and local governments. The municipal tax revenue is the main income of the local government. In addition, local governments receive state grants consisting of a financial subsidy and a tax and structural equalisation payment. The structural equalisation part is determined by several underlying factors, e.g. the population figure and structurally motivated cost differentials. Within its field of responsibility, each municipality has the right to decide on the allocation of resources and the organisation of activities.

State funding, is not directly linked to school organisation; the municipalities are free to use the grant for educational services or other activities. In a growing number of municipalities the committee(s) entrust to each school an overall budget covering salaries, the costs of teaching materials and equipment, and rents. Income, for example from letting school

premises, is used to offset expenses. However, if a municipality seriously neglects its obligations under the Education Act, or under regulations issued on the basis of this Act, the Government has a right to intervene. Government intervention has, so far, never been necessary.

In addition, there are special state grants for research and development, in-service training for school staff and measures for pupils with learning disabilities, and for a number of independent upper secondary schools.

Teaching materials and school meals in compulsory school are free of charge to the individual; in most municipalities this also applies to upper secondary schools. The municipalities are obliged to provide free school transport for compulsory school pupils, as long as they attend a school proposed by the municipality.

Higher education is financed directly from the State. Appropriations for universities and university colleges are based on proposals by the Government and made out as lump sums from Parliament to each institution. The basic principle of the allocation system is that appropriations are made as a remuneration for results achieved. Results refer to the number of credit points earned by students and the number of full-time equivalent students taught at the institution.

1.6 Advisory and consultative bodies

Within the school system, teachers' organisations and other employee organisations are entitled, under the Co-determination Act, to receive information on and to influence impending decisions. Pupils' rights are enshrined in the Education Act, but their practical implementation is decided locally. In the compulsory school, it is the school head's duty, (usually performed by the teachers) to provide information to and consult pupils and parents on matters which are of importance to the pupils and concern the entire school. Parents are organised in parents' or parent-teacher associations and are able to influence school work in this way. At national level, the National School and Home Union is

often consulted.

Municipalities have, on a trial basis, the right to establish local boards in compulsory education consisting of head teachers, staff representatives and parents, who would form the majority. In upper secondary education municipalities may set up local boards with pupils in the majority. These pilot projects will continue until 2001. Within a municipality, it is possible that only certain schools, or even certain classes or working units are embraced by the local boards.

Co-operation with the surrounding society has been added as a third task for universities and university colleges besides education and research (or artistic development work). The governing boards of the universities and university colleges have a majority of external members (i.e. representatives from trade and industry, municipalities and county councils). This way, experience from different parts of society may enrich and influence the management of higher education institutions. From 1998 onwards, the chairman of the governing board shall be a person whose main responsibilities lie outside the university or university college concerned

The students' right to be represented on councils and governing boards of the universities and university colleges, dealing with educational matters is enshrined in the Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Ordinance. Each council or governing board shall comprise at least three students' representatives.

Furthermore, students at Swedish universities and university colleges are required to join one of the student unions based at each institution of higher education. They represent students' interests and, among other things, nominate the student representatives to the various governing bodies at universities and university colleges. They are largely responsible for student welfare services and social activities.

1.7 Private institutions

In Sweden there are relatively few independent compulsory and upper secondary schools (*fristående skolor*), but the number is growing rapidly. This expansion is due to new

opportunities created at the start of the 1990s for private concerns to operate within the Swedish school system. In school year 1999/2000 around 4 per cent of Swedish pupils attend independent compulsory and upper secondary schools operated by associations, foundations, companies and private individuals.

Conditions for setting up independent schools are set by law. The basic principle, stipulated in the Education Act, is that independent compulsory and upper secondary schools should provide education equivalent to that offered in public sector schools. They should reflect its general aims and inculcate democratic values. A further principle, also laid down by law, is that independent schools are open to all.

The National Agency for Education examines and - if the result proves satisfactory - approves independent compulsory schools. The agency also entitles independent compulsory and upper secondary schools to municipal grants. Compulsory schools are free of charge, while upper secondary schools may charge fees. However, these must not be on an excessive level.

Around two-thirds of independent compulsory schools have a distinct profile. While over half of them comply with specific teaching principles, such as those of Montessori or Rudolf Steiner, others may be denominational or specialised in particular subjects.

In addition to independent compulsory and upper secondary schools, there are also independent schools for pupils with learning disabilities at both compulsory and upper secondary level.

A number of independent institutions –of which many are schools of art and design and

schools for crafts – provide so called supplementary education programmes (*kompletterande utbildningar*) at upper secondary or post-secondary level. The programmes are often based on completed upper secondary studies and/or job experience and admission decisions are often based on an evaluation of samples of previous works, portfolios, auditions etc. The Government may give eligibility for governmental student financial assistance to a supplementary education programme if the course of study constitutes an especially valuable supplement, from a national viewpoint, to existing courses of study. If the education is an especially valuable supplement, the government may grant the right to state funds.

There are some private institutions within higher education, all of them receiving state subsidies. Three of these institutions have the right to award qualifications in undergraduate as well as postgraduate courses (Chalmers University of Technology, the University College of Jönköping and the Stockholm School of economics). A further ten educational organisers have been granted permission to award different qualifications at the undergraduate level. Health sciences are normally integrated in the state universities or university colleges. There are three university colleges of health sciences that are included in the ten private institutions having permission to award qualifications at the undergraduate level and one university college of health science is run by a county council.

Students at an independent university or university college with the right to award degrees are entitled to receive financial support.

2. PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

2A Pre-primary activities

Under the Education Act, municipalities are required to provide pre-primary activities (public or private) for children 1-5 years old, whose parents are gainfully employed or pursuing studies, or for children requiring special support. The aim of these activities is to create favourable learning conditions and to stimulate a child's physical and mental development.

Pre-primary activities are operated in the form of pre-primary institutions (*förskola*), family day care homes (*familjedaghem*) and open pre-primary activities (*öppen förskola*).

2A.1 Organisation

Most pre-primary education institutions (*förskolor*) are run by municipalities. However, the number of private pre-primary education institutions (with municipal funding support) has increased steadily over the last five years. In 1999, 15 per cent of all children in pre-primary education institutions attended a private institution. Parental co-operatives are the most common form of private pre-primary institutions.

Pre-primary institutions are usually open Monday to Friday, all year round and for most of the day. All pre-primary institutions are co-educational and mixed aged groups are predominant.

In the care homes (*familjedaghem*) a child minder takes care of registered children in the child minder's home during the time when parents are working or studying.

Open pre-primary activities (*öppen förskola*) is a drop-in form of activity for social and educational stimulus, primarily designed for

children who do not attend any other form of nursery.

Pre-primary activities are jointly financed by the municipal budget (consisting of state grants and local tax revenues) and parental fees. The fees are often income-related and taking account of the number of children participating in the activities in a family and of the number of hours in care.

2A.2 Curriculum

Since 1998, the aims and responsibilities of the *förskola* have been regulated in a national curriculum replacing the pedagogical program which earlier provided their guidelines. Other forms of pre-primary activities work by guidelines issued by the National Agency of Education. The educational principles of the pre-primary curriculum are built around the idea that welfare and education are linked. Care, nurturing and learning should form an integrated approach. Play is underlined as a key factor in learning.

The curriculum does not lay down the specific means by which goals are to be attained - these are determined by those working in the pre-primary education institutions. There is neither a syllabus nor are there any regulations regarding the allocation of time to the various activities. Some pre-primary education institutions employ specific educational methods, e.g. Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf etc.

2A.3 Teachers

Pre-primary education institutions are staffed by pre-primary teachers and child care attendants. These two professional categories as well as

child minders are municipal employees.

The director or supervisor of the pre-primary education institution is responsible for the regular planning of the centre's work. The staff works in teams where the particular knowledge and competence of each member of staff can be utilised to fulfil the objectives of the curriculum. Parents are encouraged to participate in the activities whenever possible.

Training for pre-primary teachers takes place at universities and university colleges and lasts for three years. It leads to a University Diploma in Child and Youth Training.

2A.4 Statistics

In school year 1999/2000, there were around 319,000 children enrolled in pre-primary education institutions and 69,000 children in family day-care homes (all day child care for children between 0-5 and part time child care for children 6-12). There were around 9,000 pre-primary education institutions. There were also around 900 open pre-primary education institutions.

The number of children per annual full-time equivalent employee in pre-primary education institutions was 5.7 and there were on average 17 children per group in pre-primary education institutions. Around 75 per cent of all children aged 1-5 were enrolled in pre-primary activities in 1999.

The number of staff employed in pre-primary education institutions was corresponding to around 51,000 annual workers. In addition there were 12,500 child minders.

Source: The National Agency for Education

2B Pre-primary class

The pre-primary class (*förskoleklass*) is part of the school system and is intended for 6-year olds. Pupils attend one year before they start compulsory education. The aim is to stimulate every child's development and to provide a sound base for education in compulsory

school. It is compulsory for the municipalities to provide pre-primary class, attendance is however voluntary. Although optional, nearly all six-year-olds (over 90 per cent) are enrolled. The remaining six-year-olds are normally already enrolled in compulsory education.

The pre-primary class was introduced in January 1998 replacing the special activities previously run for six-year-olds within the framework of the pre-primary education. The reason for this reform was to support the integration of different parts of the school system, as regards premises, staff and educational activities. In most cases today, the pre-primary class is organised together with the compulsory school (*grundskola*).

The pre-primary class is regulated under the Education Act. The aims and capacity of pre-primary classes are decided upon by Parliament, whereas the Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the preparation of laws and proposals related to pre-primary classes. The responsibility for supervising pre-primary classes nation-wide lies with the National Agency for Education.

Pre-primary classes are, like the rest of the school system, financed by the municipal budget, which consists of state grants and local tax revenues. Education is free of charge.

A municipality can grant approval to pre-primary classes under private management. These are under supervision of the municipality, which has the right to issue special instructions and to withdraw approval.

2B.1 Organisation

Pre-primary classes are taught for 3 hours/day, mostly in the morning, for a minimum of 525 hours per year. The majority of children combine pre-primary class with attendance in an leisure-time centre, pre-primary education institution or with a registered child minder. Around three quarters of enrolled children are also enrolled in leisure-time centres. For more information on leisure time centres, see chapter 3.5.

Most pre-primary classes are organised in a school, but they may also be organised in a pre-primary education institution. Normally, pupils attend the pre-primary class closest to

their homes. Classes are always co-educational.

2B.2 Curriculum

Education in the pre-primary class should stimulate each child's development and learning and provide a basis for further schooling. As from 1 August 1998, the aims and responsibilities of the pre-primary class are regulated by the national curriculum for compulsory education, decided by the Government. The curriculum was adapted to include pre-primary classes and leisure-time centres. There are no special syllabi for the pre-primary class.

On the basis of the curriculum, each municipality is obliged to adopt a school plan. Within the framework of the curriculum and the school plan the head teacher, other teachers and pupils are free to adapt content, organisation and working methods to local conditions. Teachers are free in their choice of teaching materials.

2B.3 Assessment/certification

Children are not assessed at the end of pre-primary class. A regular dialogue should be carried out between the child's parents and the teaching staff on the well-being, development and educational progress of the child.

2B.4 Teachers

Staff in municipal pre-primary classes are municipal employees. Teaching in pre-primary classes is mainly carried out by pre-primary teachers, but could also be carried out by compulsory school teachers and recreation

instructors. They are all municipal employees. The training course for pre-primary teachers and recreation instructors takes place at universities and university colleges. Both study programmes have a three-year duration and lead to a University Diploma in Child and Youth Training.

2B.5 Statistics

In school year 1999/2000, there were 112,200 children enrolled in pre-primary classes. Many of these children (two thirds in 1997) were also enrolled in pre-primary education institutions, family day-care homes or leisure-time centres.

Most pre-primary classes (90 per cent in 1998) were located in a compulsory school.

Pre-primary classes employed 9,000 annual workers of which almost three quarters were pre-primary teachers. The pupil/teacher ratio was 13,0.

The source for data from 1998, is the National Agency for Education, report 167 "Child Care and School Statistics 1999:2" and for data from 1999 report 183.

3. COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Compulsory education in Sweden takes the form of a 9-year comprehensive school (*grundskola*) for children aged 7 to 16. If parents so wish children may start school when they are 6.

The compulsory school system comprises compulsory schools (*grundskolan*), Sami schools (*sameskolan*) for Sami-speaking children in the north of the country, special schools (*specialskolan*) for children with certain handicaps (children with impaired hearing, vision or speech disabilities) and compulsory education for children with learning disabilities (*särskolan*).

All compulsory schooling is co-educational and provided free of charge. Almost all pupils in compulsory education (around 98 per cent) attend compulsory schools run by the municipalities, usually in their local area. The Education Act states, however, that parents and pupils should be able to make a choice concerning compulsory education. As far as possible, parents' wishes for their children to attend a particular public school within the municipality should be considered. Parents can also choose between public and private schools.

The municipalities are obliged to provide pupils with all the materials necessary for school work. School meals, health care, school transports are also free of charge.

3.1 Organisation

Schools are free to make their own decisions about the organisation of the school, the teaching arrangements and size of classes. Pupils may be taught in groups of the same age or in mixed age groups.

The individual teacher decides on the appropriate teaching methods, the selection of topics to be covered in lessons (within the framework of the syllabus, the local school

plan and the school's work plan) and the choice of teaching material. Under the terms of the Education Act and the curriculum, pupils should have an influence over the organisation of teaching and, as they get older and more mature, are given increasing responsibility for their own work at school.

The school year is divided into two terms and should comprise not less than 178 and not more than 190 school days (Monday–Friday) and 12 days of holiday. Attendance is compulsory for a maximum of eight hours per day (six hours in the two first years of school).

The Autumn term lasts from the end of August to the end of December, the Spring term from the beginning of January to the beginning of June. The exact dates vary from year to year and from one municipality to another.

3.2 Curriculum

From the school year 1998/99, compulsory school and the pre-primary class share a common curriculum. The curriculum is also applied to the leisure-time centre. The aim is to support the integration of activities to reach the goals of the compulsory school.

The curriculum sets out the underlying values and basic objectives and guidelines of the school system. The objectives are of two kinds, a) goal to aim for and b) goals to be attained. The goals to aim for indicate the orientation of the school's activities, whilst the goals to be attained set the minimum level of skills pupils should have attained at a given time. In addition, there is a nationally defined syllabus for each individual subject, stating the objectives which are to be achieved by the end of years 5 and 9. This provides an opportunity for a nation-wide evaluation of the school's performance after the fifth year.

The timetable, which forms part of the Education Act and as such has been adopted

by Parliament, guarantees each pupils a minimum of 6,665 hours of teaching throughout the nine years of compulsory education. The municipalities and the schools themselves are able to decide on the distribution of the guaranteed teaching time across the nine years of schooling. Swedish, English (which is the first foreign language) and mathematics occupy a prominent position in compulsory school. A pass grade is required in these subjects to be admitted to a national programme in upper secondary education (*gymnasieskolan*). All pupils have the right to choose a second foreign language in addition to English.

The hours set aside for pupils' options mean that individual pupils can deepen their studies in one or more subjects. Individual schools may also, within certain limits, develop a distinctive profile of their own by allocating more hours to specific subjects.

In the autumn of 2000 a pilot project with local timetables will start. A selection of municipalities will be allowed to design their own timetables in order to create a more flexible organisation and to meet the needs of every pupil.

Timetable

(Stipulates the number of teaching hours for each subject or group of subjects over the 9 years of compulsory school)

Subject	Hours as of 1 January 1998
	Min. hours
Swedish	1,490
English	480
Mathematics	900
Geography	
History	
Religion	885
Social sciences	
Biology	
Physics	
Chemistry	800
Technology	
Art education	230
Domestic Science	118
Physical and health education	500
Music	230
Crafts	330
Foreign language	320
Pupils' choice	382
Total	6,665
Of which	
Choice of school (decided locally)	600

3.3 Assessment/certification/guidance

Grades are awarded from the eighth year of compulsory school onwards and relate the pupils' achievements to the national objectives stated in the syllabus for the subject. The grades are: Pass, Pass with Distinction and Pass with Special Distinction. The levels are related to national criteria, established by the National Agency of Education.

Pupils completing their compulsory schooling obtain a leaving certificate, signed by the head teacher.

National tests in Swedish, English and mathematics at the end of year 9 ensure that the grading is comparable. A pupil who does not achieve the goals set out in the syllabus for year 9 does not receive a grade in that subject,

but will instead be given a written assessment. Throughout compulsory school, pupils and their parents are to be given regular progress reports, including meetings to discuss development.

Educational and vocational guidance is provided throughout compulsory school and many schools have special staff for this task.

3.4 Teachers

To qualify as a teacher a person must have completed a Swedish teacher-training programme or the equivalent certification from another Member State of the European Union or an EFTA country.

Teachers are municipal employees and they work full-time as well as part-time. The State however requires teachers to be properly qualified to teach. Teachers without appropriate qualifications may be employed for a certain length of time if qualified staff is not available.

Teachers in compulsory school are trained at universities and university colleges. The majority of teachers now in service have been trained in the following way: junior level teachers for years 1 to 3 and intermediate level teachers for years 4 to 6 have completed separate integrated training programmes lasting 2 ½ years and 3 years respectively; whilst teachers specialised in a certain subject for years 7 to 9 were required to have a university or college degree in their subject(s), plus a diploma awarded on completion of a one-year course in the theory and practice of teaching.

A new integrated study programme was introduced in the academic year 1988/89. There are two branches of study in this programme: for teachers of years 1 to 7 and 4 to 9 respectively. Training for years 1 to 7 takes 3½–4 years. Students can choose between three different variations of the basic curriculum and may also specialise in one of two different subject areas. Trainees for years 4 to 9 may specialise in one of five areas, and study between 3½ and 4½ years, depending on their specialisation. They can also extend their subject studies to qualify for service in the upper secondary school. In addition, there is

an alternative training route for teachers for years 4 to 9, where subjects can be studied in different combinations. This is followed by one year of practical pedagogical training.

Remedial teachers follow an extended study programme, lasting for one year or more, after their basic training as compulsory school teachers. Teachers of practical and artistic subjects are trained at special university colleges. They can specialise in one area but are also able, within a training programme for compulsory school teachers, to opt for a combination of their main subject with one or two others.

Supervised teaching practice, equivalent to one term's full-time study, is a requirement in all teacher training.

The municipalities, which are the employers of teachers, have the responsibility for the in-service training of teachers. For in-post teachers, universities and colleges arrange in-service training courses of varying length. The local committee decides which teachers to send. The extent of in-service training is decided locally.

The Government will propose a bill to the Parliament in 2000 with new guidelines for teacher training.

3.5 Leisure-time centres

For children who need further care before or after the activities in pre-primary classes or compulsory school and during school holidays, there is out of school hours provision. This consists of leisure-time centres (*fritidshem*), family day care homes (*familjedaghem*) and open after school activities (*öppen fritidsverksamhet*). Most children who are enrolled in leisure-time centres are 6 to 9 years of age, whilst open after school activities are for children 10 to 12 years of age. Over 60 per cent of the pupils aged 6 to 9 years are enrolled in leisure-time centres.

Activities in leisure-time centres are often an integrated part of school. It is also becoming increasingly common for after school centres and schools to share the same premises and also for staff to work both in the time in school and outside school hours. As from 1 August 1998, the national curriculum for compulsory

education has been adjusted to also regulate the activities in after school centres, as well as the pre-primary class (*förskoleklass*).

3.6 Statistics

In school year 1999/2000 there were 1,035,000 pupils enrolled in around 5,000 schools.

There were 78,400 teachers (annual workers) working in the compulsory school. The pupil/teacher ratio was 13.2.

In the spring of 1998, 97,300 pupils finished compulsory school. Almost all of these (97%) continued into upper secondary education the autumn of the same year.

The source is the National Agency for Education, report 167 "Child Care and School Statistics 1999:2" and report 183.

4. POST-COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION

All municipalities are obliged by law to provide upper secondary education for all pupils leaving compulsory school and must offer a comprehensive selection of national programmes. In principle, students are entitled to study their first choice subjects. Upper secondary education is voluntary and free of charge. General and vocational education are integrated in the upper secondary school (*gymnasieskola*) and all national programmes give general eligibility for entrance to higher education.

The right to start upper secondary school applies up to and including the calendar year in which the pupil turns 20. Thereafter there is an opportunity to take part in adult upper secondary education. Almost all compulsory school leavers (97 percent) continue studying in upper secondary school.

A compulsory school-leaving certificate qualifies pupils to apply for upper secondary school. However, in order to pursue a national programme or a specially designed programme pupils are required to have at least pass grades in Swedish, English and mathematics from the compulsory school.

National programmes

There are sixteen nationally determined programmes (from school year 2000/2001 there will be a seventeenth programme introduced). All of these provide a broad-based general education and give general eligibility for entrance to higher education. They also prepare for working life. All programmes contain the same eight core subjects: Swedish, English, civics, religious education, mathematics, natural science, physical and health education as well as artistic activities. In addition, pupils take subjects which are specific to their programmes. Fourteen of the programmes have a vocational orientation.

The national programmes are frameworks within which the pupils can choose various specialisations. Most national programmes are divided into orientations for the second and third year. In addition, municipalities may choose to set up local branches adapted to local needs and conditions.

The following national programmes are available

- Arts programme – Broad basic training for work in the arts.
- Business and administration programme – For work in retailing and commercial and administrative tasks in industry and administration.
- Child and recreation programme – For work taking care of people in all ages in pedagogical vocational areas as well as in the culture and the leisure sectors, for example, child care, leisure activities, health care, sports and librarianship.
- Construction programme – For work in building and renovating houses and building installations.
- Electrical engineering programme – For work in electrical installation, repairs and maintenance of electrical, telecommunications and electronic systems.
- Energy programme – For work in the repair and maintenance of energy technology plants, technical systems in the power industry, property and shipping as well as the installations and service of VVS (heating, ventilation and sanitation), refrigeration and heat pump systems.
- Food programme – For work in the food industry, retailing and closely related areas such as processing and sales of foodstuff.
- Handicraft programme – For work in various handicraft areas.
- Health and nursing programme – For work caring for people of all ages, in health and medical care.
- Hotel, restaurant and catering programme – For work in hotels and restaurants as e.g. a receptionist, conference organiser, waiter or chef.
- Industry programme – For work in industrial manufacturing and other areas where competencies in manufacturing, maintenance and service is required.
- Media programme – For work in the communications area, e.g. advertising, various forms of design as well as the production of print media.
- Natural resource use programme – For work in agriculture, forestry, horticulture and horticultural complexes with horses, veterinary care, fishing, aqua culture, hunting, wildlife conservation, tourism as well as environmental and nature preservation..
- Natural science programme – Orientation mainly for further studies in i.a. mathematics, natural science and technology.
- Social science programme – Oriented mainly on further studies in social sciences, economics and languages.
- Technology programme – For developing and stimulating interest in technology and technological development in a broad sense and to develop basic knowledge of technologies. Will start as from the school year 2000/2001.
- Vehicle engineering programme – For work in the repair and maintenance of vehicles and aircraft and transport using various types of vehicles.

Other programmes

Students with interests other than those covered by the national programmes can opt to follow a specially designed programme. It corresponds to a national programme in terms of the level of education and length of study, but may in addition combine courses from different national programmes and/or locally devised courses. An individual programme can be followed by a student who leave compulsory school without the necessary qualification to enter one of the national programmes. The aim is however to help and assist students to transfer at a later stage to a national or specially designed programme. Since the individual programme must support and follow the student's needs and interest, it can vary in both, length and content.

A new form of apprenticeship programme has been introduced to the upper secondary school in form of a pilot scheme. The content of the training is regulated by a contract between the pupil, the school, and the workplace. The programme must meet the same goals as other national programmes (the pupils study the eight core subjects) and also leads to basic eligibility for higher education studies.

4.1 Organisation

The vast majority of upper secondary schools are municipal and most students attend the school in the municipality where they live. The number of pupils normally varies between 300 and 1,500. All schools are co-educational. Various types of education within one school can be located in different buildings, and in many places upper secondary pupils and students in municipal adult education share the same building. The number of pupils per class does not usually exceed 30.

Most of the independent (private) upper secondary schools are found in major urban areas and there are great variations between them in terms of programmes on offer. The average number of pupils in independent upper secondary schools is approximately 130.

The school year has the same allocation of time in compulsory and upper secondary school. It is divided into two terms and should comprise not less than 178 and not more than 190 school days (Monday–Friday) and 12 days of holiday. The autumn term lasts from the end of August to the end of December, the Spring term from the beginning of January to the beginning of June. The exact dates vary from year to year and from one municipality to another.

4.2 Curriculum

There is one curriculum for the upper secondary school (*gymnasieskola*) and for other types of non-compulsory schools (municipal adult education (*komvux*), the national schools for adults (*statens skolor för vuxna*), the upper secondary education for pupils with learning disabilities (*gymnasiesärskola*) and municipal education for adults with learning disabilities (*särvux*). The introductory section sets out the basic values and tasks that apply to the whole of the non-compulsory educational system. Other sections deal with the specific tasks and goals of the different types of non-compulsory schools.

Goals and guidelines are specified for the following areas: knowledge, norms and values,

responsibility and influence of pupils, choice of education - work and civic life, assessment and grades, responsibility of the head teacher. The goals specify the educational orientation of the school and are, as in the curriculum for compulsory school, of two kinds: goals to aim for and goals to be attained.

Programme objectives and syllabi supplement the curriculum. There are programme objectives for all national programmes and syllabi for all subjects, stating not only the aims and goals of the course but also the minimum knowledge to be attained by pupils on completion of the course.

The timetable for national programmes is attached to the Education Act. The municipality or the school decide when different subjects are to be studied and how long the lessons should be.

All national programmes contain eight core subjects. They account for approximately one third of the total teaching time of upper secondary education. The core subjects are Swedish/Swedish as a second language, Civics, English, Mathematics, Physical and health education, Artistic activities, Natural science and Religious education.

In addition to the core subjects, pupils take subjects which are specific to their programme. All pupils are also to carry out a project work during their course of studies. In all programmes time is provided for local supplements and individual choice to allow pupils to choose additional subjects and courses within the national programmes.

In the 14 national programmes with vocational orientation, at least 15 weeks of the pupils' total time should be spent on training at a workplace. The school is responsible for procuring such training opportunities and for supervising pupils under such training.

4.3 Assessment/certification/guidance

Assessment in upper secondary education is a continuous process, i.e. marks are awarded on the completion of every course and not for individual subjects or for each term. Marks are also given for special project work.

Marks are awarded on a four-category scale: Fail, Pass, Pass with Distinction and Pass with Special Distinction. Pupils are not compared with one another. Attainment is measured in relation to the goals for the entire course. The criteria for awarding marks are specified in the different syllabi. To support this, centrally compiled tests have been developed in certain subjects.

At the end of upper secondary education students receive a leaving certificate which summarises the marks they have achieved in all courses studied. All three-year programmes meet the general eligibility requirements for access to studies at institutions of higher education. The two programmes which focus more on university entrance also meet most of the specific entrance requirements.

Overall responsibility for educational guidance has been given to the head teachers of upper secondary school. They have to ensure that the pupils obtain guidance on the educational choices available at the school as well as guidance to further studies and vocational training. Contact with working life is an integral part of education. Co-operation between schools and the world of work takes place in the joint committees for the programmes of local upper secondary schools. Some municipalities also have joint planning committees.

4.4 Teachers

Teachers of general subjects have a university degree in two or three subjects. They have also received one year's training in the theory and practice of teaching, subsequent to their subject studies. The minimum requirements for the award of a University Diploma in Education at Upper Secondary School, valid as from the academic year 1993-94, are four years' study with 2 years for the main subject, 1 ½ years for other subjects (2 years for modern languages, Swedish, civics or artistic-practical subjects) and one year's pedagogical training. Upper secondary schools also employ specialist teachers with a doctoral degree or similar qualification. All teachers are municipal employees and they may work full-time as well as part-time.

Vocational teaching in upper secondary

schools is provided by specialist teachers with advanced economic or technical qualifications or by vocational teachers who have completed vocational training and studies of vocational theory. In addition, they have gained a long professional experience and undergone teacher training at universities or university colleges.

Teacher training is currently being reviewed by a commission of inquiry, appointed by the Government. Its tasks are, among other things, the definition of objectives and principles for the regulation of teacher training as well as to put forward proposals as regards the content of and recruitment to teacher training courses. One aim is to boost recruitment to teacher-training courses in mathematics, natural sciences and technology.

The municipalities, which are the employers of teachers, also have the responsibility for the in-service training of teachers.

4.5 Statistics

In school year 1999/2000 there were 305,600 pupils in upper secondary education. There were 594 upper secondary schools, of which 18 per cent were run by private organisers and 6 per cent by county councils.

There were 23,700 annual workers in upper secondary education. The pupil/teacher ration was 12.8.

Percentage of students per type of programme, school year 1998/99:	
Individual programmes	6%
Specially designed programmes	5%
National programmes	88%
whereof	
Natural sciences	20%
Social sciences	25%
14 Vocationally oriented programmes	43%

Almost all pupils (97%) leaving compulsory school in the spring of 1998 were enrolled in upper secondary education the following autumn.

Around three quarters (74%) of pupils who had

started upper secondary education in 1994/95 had completed an upper secondary program within the next four years.

Almost half of the pupils (45%) who completed upper secondary education in the spring 1995 had begun higher education studies within the next three years. Ten years earlier the share was around 20 per cent.

Three quarters of all 16 to 19-year-olds participated in upper secondary education.

For data from 1998, the source is the National Agency for Education, report 167 "Child Care and School Statistics 1999:2" for data from 1999, report 183.

5. INITIAL/VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Already in 1970 the then existing different types of schools for theoretical and vocational education at upper secondary level were amalgamated into one school, the *gymnasieskola* designed to accommodate all young adults. In the mid-1990's a reform of upper secondary education was implemented in which all upper secondary school programmes were extended to three years and the same core subjects were introduced for all programmes. All national study programmes in

upper secondary education thus provide a broad-based general education and give general eligibility for entrance to higher education. Although fourteen of the programmes have a vocational orientation, the distinction is not made between vocational and general upper secondary education. For information on vocational training, please see the section on post-compulsory secondary education.

6. HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education in Sweden is divided into undergraduate studies and postgraduate studies and is undertaken at universities (*universitet*) and university colleges (*högskola*). There is no specific non-university higher education. Undergraduate studies at university colleges are equivalent to those at universities, the difference between these types of institutions regards the postgraduate studies and research possibilities.

In addition to the 13 state universities and 23 state university colleges there are some private institutions within higher education, all of them

receiving state subsidies. Three of these institutions have the right to award qualifications in undergraduate as well as postgraduate courses (Chalmers University of Technology, the University College of Jönköping and the Stockholm School of economics). A further ten educational organisers have been granted permission to award different qualifications at the undergraduate level. Health sciences are normally integrated in the state universities or university colleges. There are three university colleges of health sciences that are included in the ten private institutions having permission to

award qualifications at the undergraduate level and one university college of health science is run by a county council.

Students at an independent university or university college with the right to award degrees are entitled to receive financial support.

State-run universities and university colleges are considered as central government agencies and their employees are civil servants.

6.1 Admission requirements

To be admitted to higher education in Sweden, a student must first fulfil the basic qualifications for eligibility which are common to all programmes or courses, and then meet the specific eligibility requirements which are usually imposed on applicants by the individual university or university college. The latter requirements vary according to the field of education.

Those with a school-leaving certificate for any upper secondary national programme showing a Pass for at least 90 per cent of the credits required or an equivalent knowledge, have basic eligibility. Those, at least 25 years of age and having been employed for at least 4 years or having an equivalent experience and a knowledge of Swedish and English equivalent to a completed upper secondary national programme also have basic eligibility.

If the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of places available, a selection must be made. At least one third of study places intended for new students must be allocated on the basis of school grades, and at least another third must be allocated according to the results of the University Aptitude Test or a combination of such results and work experience. The University Aptitude Test is suited to all forms of higher education, and measures knowledge and skills of importance in studies at tertiary level. For the selection of students of fine arts and some other specific study programmes, special tests are used.

6.2 Fees/Financial support for students

A fundamental principle in Sweden is that all public higher education is free of charge.

Another basic principle is that all students who need help to finance their studies (cost of living) can receive assistance from the central government for this purpose. This support is a combination of a non-repayable grant and a larger repayable loan and may be awarded for both full-time and part-time studies. In 1999, the study grant for an academic year of nine months amounted to nearly 17,800 Swedish kronor and the loan ceiling was slightly above 46,100 Swedish kronor, in total a maximum of approximately 63,900 Swedish kronor for a student pursuing full-time studies.

To obtain financial support certain requirements must be met. To receive financial support over a period of years, students must pursue their studies with a certain rate of success. Students earning above a certain level find their support reduced.

The financial support scheme applies to all students in undergraduate education at universities, university colleges and certain other establishments.

6.3 Academic year

The academic year comprises 40 weeks, divided into two terms. The autumn term usually runs from the middle or end of August to mid-January, the spring term runs from mid-January to the beginning of June. There is usually a two-week teaching break at Christmas.

6.4 Courses

All undergraduate higher education is given in the form of courses. The single-subject courses vary in length from 5 weeks to 1½ years. Universities and university colleges may link

courses into a study programme with more or less scope for individual choice on the part of students taking the course. A first-degree programme will generally take between 2 and 5 ½ years to complete.

For every course and study programme relevant study plans have been authorised by the institution of higher education concerned. The students themselves may also combine different courses into a degree programme.

The average study time is about 40 hours per week for full-time studies, including individual studies and group work. Study time is measured in points; one week's full-time study is equivalent to one point and one term's full-time study corresponds to 20 points.

Instruction takes the form of lectures in large groups (up to around 300 students) and seminars/classes of up to about 30 students. Students are also expected to participate actively in group work, laboratory work and seminars. The language of instruction is usually Swedish, but a great deal of the compulsory course literature is in English.

A number of programmes include practical training in the relevant industry or the public sector. Sometimes practical training takes place during the summer vacation. In many programmes a large part of the final term is devoted to work on a degree project or paper. Students carry out these projects individually or in small groups.

6.5 Assessment/qualifications

There are two kinds of degrees, general (*generella examina*) and professional degrees (*yrkesexamen*), in the system of undergraduate education.

Students are able to choose their study route freely and to combine different subject courses for a general degree.

The general degrees are:

- Diploma (*högskoleexamen*) requiring 80 points (2 years of study)
- Bachelor's degree (*kandidatexamen*) requiring 120 points (3 years of study), including a paper of 10 points in the major subject of 60 points

- Master's degree (*magisterexamen*) requiring 160 points (4 years of study), including one paper of 20 points or two theses of 10 points in the major subject of 80 points.

There are about 50 different programmes leading to professional degrees. The professional degrees (*yrkesexamen*) are awarded upon completion of programmes of varying length (2 to 5½ years), leading to specific professions, e.g. University Diploma in Medicine or in Education.

Students in all courses are subject to continuous examination, written and/or oral. There are, however, no final examinations which cover an entire three or five-year programme. This means that the students have to be prepared to give proof of the knowledge they have acquired regularly each semester.

General degrees of three or more years of study include the writing of a paper. The professional degrees - especially the longer degree programmes of three years or more - normally include a degree project.

Marks are generally awarded on a three-level scale: Fail, Pass and Pass with Distinction. Some courses are only graded Fail and Pass, and some faculties, i.e. Engineering and Law, have other grading systems.

6.6 Teachers

Each university and university college is entitled to decide on the establishment of chairs and the appointment of staff. The teaching staff are grouped into the following main categories: professors, lecturers (including senior lecturers), junior lecturers and research assistants. There are also part-time teachers and visiting lecturers. Teaching, research (or artistic development) and administration are part of the work of all categories of posts. The actual distribution of tasks is decided locally, by the university or university college.

Lecturers and research assistants must normally have a doctorate, while there is no such requirement for junior lecturers. Teaching skills have become increasingly more important in the recruitment of teachers of all categories at universities and university colleges (also in the

recruitment and appointment of professors). Employees at the public universities and university colleges are national civil servants.

6.7 Statistics

In the 1998/99 academic year, there were approximately 310,000 undergraduate students at the country's universities and university colleges, which corresponds to around 250,000 full-time annual students. The share of women undergraduate students was 59 per cent.

The number of examinations passed in undergraduate education was 36,500 of which

60 per cent were taken by women. Nine out of ten degrees were awarded for studies of a minimum of three years.

Nearly half the students in undergraduate education were younger than 25. Nearly a fifth of students were 35 years old or older.

The total number of employees at universities and university colleges was just over 54,000, corresponding to the equivalent of 44,000 full time positions. 4 out of 10 employees were administrative or technical staff. Around 34 per cent of teachers and 11 per cent of the professors were women. Half of all higher education teachers have a doctoral degree.

Source: National Agency for Higher Education

7. ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education in Sweden is based on a long tradition. It is provided in many different forms and under many different auspices, ranging from national or municipal adult education to labour market programmes and personnel training and competence development at work.

The public school system for adults includes municipal adult education (*komvux*), municipal education for adults with learning difficulties (*särvux*), Swedish tuition for immigrants (*svenskundervisning för invandrare*) and National Schools for Adults (*Statens skolor för vuxna*).

The Adult Education Initiative (*kunskapslyftet*) is a five-year programme, launched in 1997 in order to boost adult education and training in Sweden.

A pilot project involving Advanced Vocational Education (*kvalificerad yrkesutbildning - KY*) is also currently carried out.

Popular adult education (*folkbildning*) has a long history in Sweden and is provided by 147 folk high schools (*folkhögskolor*) and by eleven

adult education associations (*studieförbund*).

Below will also be briefly described the so-called supplementary education programmes (*kompletterande utbildningar*), labour market training (*arbetsmarknadsutbildning*), on-the-job training and competence development.

A way of describing the complex system of adult education is to divide it into three main fields:

* Basic and upper secondary school adult education. This field encompasses municipal adult education, municipal education for adults with learning disabilities, Swedish tuition for immigrants, the National Schools for Adults, general courses (*allmänna kurser*) offered by folk high schools and some courses provided by study associations.

* Post-secondary vocational education and training (where admission in practice requires completed upper secondary education or equivalent) encompassing additional training programmes (*påbyggnadsutbildningar*), advanced vocational education and certain labour market training. Some supplementary

education programmes (*kompletterande utbildningar*) and some vocational education and training within popular adult education (folk high schools and study associations) can be included in this field.

* Popular adult education and some supplementary education. This field includes folk high school courses and the study circles (*studiecirklar*) and cultural activities organised by study associations and certain supplementary education.

7.1 Specific legislative framework

The public school system for adults (municipal adult education, municipal education for adults with learning disabilities, Swedish tuition for immigrants and the National Schools for Adults) is regulated under the Education Act and in a number of ordinances, both as regards organisation etc. and public funding. The right to basic education for adults who have not achieved the compulsory school leaving certificate and the right for immigrants to obtain Swedish tuition for immigrants is stipulated by law.

The Adult Education Initiative and the pilot projects involving advanced vocational education are regulated in ordinances, both as regards organisation and public funding etc.

Some of the conditions for state grants e.g. to folk high schools are regulated by law. Some of the special aims of popular adult education are stated there but there are basically no rules - neither on how popular education should be organised nor regarding its content.

Supplementary education programmes (*kompletterande utbildningar*) are regulated in an ordinance on supplementary education.

Labour market training is regulated under the Employment Training Ordinance.

There is no legislation governing on-the-job training. Decisions related to competence development are made by the employer - with various degrees of influence exerted by the trade unions. The conditions under which companies and organisations may purchase education and training services from municipalities and county councils are however

stipulated by law.

Since 1975 all employees have been entitled by law to educational leave. The choice of study rests entirely with the individual. There are no restrictions on the duration of studies.

7.2 Administration

The central and local authorities together with the different organisers are responsible for ensuring that activities are organised in line with national goals and guidelines, defined by Parliament and the Government. The municipalities are responsible for carrying out municipal adult education, municipal education for adults with learning difficulties and Swedish tuition for immigrants, while the National Schools for Adults (*Statens skolor för vuxna*) are run by the State. The activities at the National Schools for Adults are managed by two schools located in different parts of the country. The Swedish National Council of Adult Education (*Folkbildningsrådet*) is a non-governmental organisation responsible for the co-ordination, distribution of state grants and evaluation of educational activities in folk high schools and study associations.

Supplementary education programmes (*kompletterande utbildningar*) are state supervised programmes offered by private independent institutions or organisations.

7.3 Funding

Municipal adult education, municipal education for adults with learning disabilities and Swedish tuition for immigrants are all parts of the public school system and are wholly funded by the municipal budget, which consists of state grants and local tax revenues. The National Schools for Adults are financed by the State. Tuition is free of charge. The Adult Education Initiative and the pilot project on qualified vocational education are funded by the State.

Some of the supplementary education programmes (*kompletterande utbildningar*)

receive governmental grants and/or give students eligibility for study assistance and loans. However, a majority of the supplementary education programmes are only under state supervision and does neither receive governmental grants nor give eligibility for governmental student financial assistance. The student have to pay registration and tuition fees at most of the schools.

Adult education associations and folk high schools are largely financed by funds from the State, county councils and municipalities. In addition, they have incomes from educational activities organised on a commission basis. State support to adult education organisations and folk high schools is allocated by the Swedish National Council of Adult Education.

As regards labour market training, funds are allocated to the National Labour Market Board, which, in turn distributes funding to county labour boards and employment offices. These bodies are responsible for purchasing various training packages.

Since one of the fundamental principles is that no one should be prevented from studying due to lack of financial resources, there are various financial assistance schemes provided by the State for adult students, normally consisting of grants (of various sizes) in combination with a repayable loan. Students have the right to study assistance for both full-time and part-time students. People taking part in labour market training receive grants corresponding to the level of unemployment benefit.

7.4 Organisation

Municipal adult education (*komvux*)

Studies within municipal adult education (basic education and upper secondary adult education) lead to formal qualifications in individual subjects or to the equivalent of a leaving certificate from compulsory or upper secondary school. Education is organised in the form of separate courses, which should be arranged in such a way that students can study full-time, part-time or in their spare time and thus combine their studies with employment. Students are free to choose their own study programme and can combine studies at basic

and upper secondary level.

Basic adult education

Basic adult education corresponds to the nine-year compulsory school. This education is intended to provide a basis for community participation, vocational activity and further study. The level at which a student enters basic education depends on the initial qualifications obtained. Studies are concluded when the individual education targets have been achieved. Students decide their own rate of progress, and in this way studies can be combined with employment or work experiences. Basic education is a right for the individual and its provision is mandatory for the municipalities.

Upper secondary adult education

All upper secondary education, be it for adults or young people have, as from 1994, the same syllabi and curriculum. Adult education is the equivalent but not identical to youth upper secondary education. Municipal adult education consists of a number of courses in the different subjects, which follow on from each other. The course provided can, however, differ from those in youth upper secondary education as regards emphasis, content and scope. The students themselves decide the number and combinations of subjects taken and the rate of progress. Many students take only one or two courses. Those completing the full programme can obtain a three-year upper secondary school leaving certificate.

Additional training programmes (PU)

Additional training programmes (*påbyggnadsutbildningar*) can provide further training in a particular occupation or train for a completely new one. Most of these programmes take between six months and a year to complete and focus for example on economics, information processing or tourism.

Municipal education for adults with learning disabilities (*särvux*)

Municipal education for adults with learning disabilities is a type of school in its own right. It has the same curriculum as upper secondary

education, but with specially adapted syllabuses and timetable. Its task is to supplement pupils' previous education according to their previous studies, experience and aptitudes.

Swedish tuition for immigrants (sfi)

The municipalities are obliged to provide basic Swedish tuition for immigrants, for an average of 525 hours. The aim is to provide adult immigrants with the basic knowledge and proficiency in the Swedish language as well as knowledge about Swedish society.

The National Schools for Adults

As a supplement to municipal adult education there are two National Schools for Adults. Instruction in these schools is partly or entirely in the form of distance learning. Participants are recruited from all over the country and the schools cater for students who for various reasons are unable to attend courses within municipal adult education.

The Adult Education Initiative

The Adult Education Initiative (*kunskapslyftet*) is a five-year programme for adult education which was established on 1 July 1997. It is part of the Government's strategy to reduce unemployment. Central and local government are joining forces in an effort to raise the overall educational level by providing those with lower levels of education with a chance to acquire knowledge in the core subjects equivalent to upper secondary level. This initiative will create additional 100,000 places in municipal adult education at a cost of SEK 3.4 billion per year. The aim is to achieve a more equitable income distribution and to promote economic growth by means of raising educational level and the skills of the work force. The initiative is also designed to develop and upgrade adult education and training in terms of both content and forms of instruction.

Pilot Scheme for Advanced Vocational Education

Since Autumn 1996, pilot projects involving Advanced Vocational Education (*kvalificerad yrkesutbildning, KY*) are being carried out. KY is a form of post-secondary education in which

one third of the time is used for the application of theoretical knowledge at a workplace. This form of education distinguishes itself from the traditional traineeship period by its hand-on approach and problem-solving activities in an overall educational context. The courses are based on close co-operation between working life and various course providers (upper secondary schools, municipal adult education institutions, higher education institutions and educational enterprises). The aim is to satisfy the needs of the labour market for skilled labour with appropriate competence in the production of goods and services using modern technologies. The courses are open to those coming directly from upper secondary school and to people who are already gainfully employed and wish to develop their skills within a defined area. The education is post-secondary in the sense that completed upper secondary education or equivalent knowledge is required for eligibility. A course consisting of 80 points (two years, 80 weeks' full-time study) or more will lead to an Advanced Vocational Education Diploma (*Kvalificerad yrkesutbildningsexamen*).

Popular adult education (*folkbildning*)

Sweden has a long history of a popular-based system of decentralised education and course activities (*folkbildning*). Eleven adult education associations and 147 folk high schools work with these activities in close co-operation with a variety of Non Governmental Organisations.

Popular education is available to everyone and aims at reaching groups who often remain outside other educational systems: those who only have elementary education, the disabled, immigrants and the unemployed. The goal is to reduce the education gaps among people and to strengthen and develop democracy by stimulating the individual citizen's participation in society. Interest in culture is to be broadened and the individual's own creativity to be furthered.

Folk high schools, mainly residential, provide both long-term and short-term cycle courses. Some courses can qualify students for university studies. Tuition is free of charge but the students pay for their own board and lodging. Students are eligible for state financial assistance.

The adult education associations' activities consist above all of study circles, but the

associations are also able to organise studies corresponding to those offered by the school system and within higher education.

Supplementary education programmes

A number of independent institutions — of which many are schools of art and design and schools for crafts — provide so called supplementary education programmes (*kompletterande utbildningar*) at upper secondary or post-secondary level. The programmes are often based on completed upper secondary studies and/or job experience and admission decisions are often based on an evaluation of samples of previous works, portfolios, auditions etc.

Labour market training

Labour market training is an instrument of labour market policy primarily intended as basic vocational or further training for the unemployed. Labour market training consists of specially designed training courses and of training provided within the regular education system. County labour boards or employment offices purchase various training packages from, for example municipal adult education, commercial training companies or the Employment Group (*Lernia*).

There is no formal system for recognition of further skills and competencies acquired by the unemployed in government-funded training programmes. Normally the person having undergone labour market training receives a document describing what is included in the training.

On-the-job training and competence development

Many workplaces have extensive programmes for employees at all levels. In-house training of this kind may involve anything from practical vocational training to extensive theoretical studies. In addition to this there are the various more or less organised forms of training, through e.g. supervision, job rotation, instruction and study visits.

A survey shows that approximately 70 per cent of the on-the-job training is carried out within individual companies concerned. The second most important category of in-house-training

and training courses organised by suppliers in connection with the delivery of new equipment. Private companies and public employers also purchase education from the public education system or from private organisers, e.g. the universities and university colleges, municipal adult education, the Employment Group or various commercial training companies.

In-company training does sometimes result in a diploma or course certificate. In general, however, diplomas are not widely used outside the public educational system.

7.5 Statistics

Municipal adult education, (*komvux*)

In school year 1999/2000 there were around 350,000 students in municipal adult education. The majority of those, nearly 300,000, took part in upper secondary studies. 45,000 were enrolled in basic adult education and 7,000 in supplementary education programmes. The average number of courses per student was 4.2.

In 1998, the most common courses were upper secondary computer studies (91,300 participants), upper secondary mathematics (41,300 participants) and upper secondary English (40,600 participants).

Around two thirds of the students were women and slightly less than a quarter were of foreign origin. The proportion of students of foreign origin was greatest on the basic programme where it was nearly two thirds.

In 1998-99, the number of teachers (as full-time members of staff) was 8,800 and the number of schools were nearly 500.

The source is the National Agency for Education, for 1998 report 167 "Child Care and School Statistics 1999:2" and for 1999 report 183

National Schools for Adults, SSV

In 1999 there were 10,600 participants. Almost all of them studied at upper secondary level. Nearly two thirds of the students were women. The number of teachers (as full-time

members of staff) was 45.

The source is the National Agency for Education

Swedish tuition for immigrants, (Sfi)

In the school year 1998/99 there were 34,700 participants in Swedish tuition for immigrants. Nearly half of those were refugees or asylum-seekers. The rest were other immigrants. Nearly two thirds of the pupils were women. The number of teachers (as full-time members of staff) was 1,100.

The source is the National Agency for Education

Municipal education for adults with learning disabilities, (särvox)

There were 4,200 students in municipal education for adults with learning disabilities in the school year 1999/2000. Nearly half of these studied at special compulsory level, a third at training school (for the severely mentally handicapped) and the rest at special upper secondary level.

The number of teachers (as full-time members of staff) was 225. The average number of pupils per group was 2.2 and pupils had an average of 2.2 pupil-hours per week. Nearly half of the pupils were women. The median age for pupils was 34 years.

Data are from 1999, the source is the National Agency for Education

Pilot Scheme for Advanced Vocational Education (KY)

As from 1999 there are 12,000 students in KY in 270 different courses. Three quarters of the students participate in courses of two years duration.

Slightly more than half (53%) of the students are 24 years old or younger. 15% of the students are 35 years old or older. A little less than half of the students are women.

Folk high schools (Folkhögskolor)

There were 147 folk high schools in Sweden in 1999, out of which 48 were owned by

municipalities or county councils. The remaining 99 folk high schools were run by various popular movements, organisations and supporting bodies.

Approximately 108,500 people attended folk high schools each semester in 1998. Over 100,000 were involved in cultural programmes. Nearly 60 per cent of the students were women.

Adult education associations

There are eleven adult education associations receiving funding from the state's popular adult education appropriation.

In 1998, the number of study circles was approximately 332,000 and the number of participants are estimated at between 1.5 and 2 million individuals (more than 2.8 million if each individual circle is included). Nearly 60 per cent of the students were women. In addition, 185,000 cultural programs were arranged.

Supplementary education programmes (kompletterande utbildningar)

In 1999 there were nearly 400 supplementary education programmes (*kompletterande utbildningar*) under state supervision. More than 10,000 students were enrolled in these programmes provided by around 150 independent organisers. A majority of programmes were in the field of art, crafts, performing arts (dance/theatre/music), advertising and communications, design, industrial/technical studies and ICT, health and health care, trade and commerce. Around 17 per cent of the supplementary education programmes give students eligibility for study assistance and loans. Around 20 per cent of the supplementary education programmes receive governmental grants and give students eligibility for study assistance and loans. A majority — or around 63 per cent — of the supplementary education programmes are however only under state supervision and does neither receive governmental grants nor give eligibility for governmental student financial assistance. Programmes vary in length from less than one semester through two years or more, with a majority of programmes lasting one year or more.