

Education, Work, Guidance
in Sweden

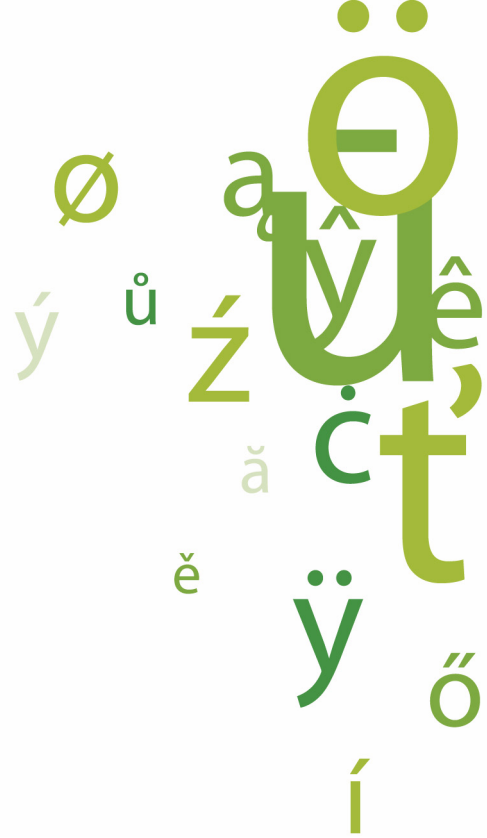


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Education, Work, Guidance in Sweden

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1. Introduction

The aim of this publication is to give the reader an overview of education, work and guidance in Sweden. Following an opening with basic facts about Sweden, part one presents an introduction to the Swedish educational system and the authorities responsible for this area. There then follows a presentation of the Labour Market System in Sweden and the services provided for those looking for work. The last part concentrates on the Swedish guidance system. In each section a number of useful links are included for those who would like to know more about the different areas. There is also contact information to related organisations, educational bodies and authorities in Sweden.

The guide is the result of collaboration between several Swedish authorities at the initiative of *Euroguidance Sweden*, the Swedish National Resource Centre for Guidance. Established by the European Commission, Euroguidance is a network of information centres, promoting mobility throughout Europe and supporting guidance counsellors in their work with international issues.

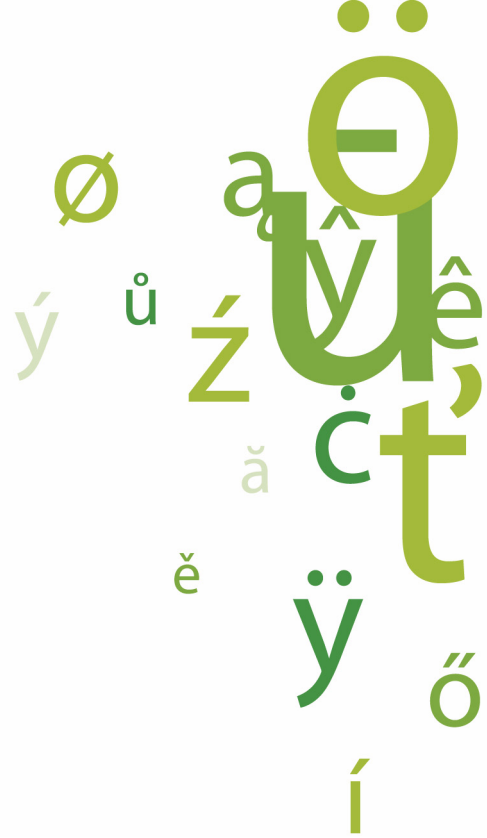
The Euroguidance centres, which exist in all EU and EEA Member States and many Central and Eastern European Countries, act as links between the guidance services of each country, exchanging information about work, study and training opportunities throughout Europe. Individual Centres represent the various Ministries of Education, Training, Labour and Youth across their respective countries.

Euroguidance Sweden is located at the *International Programme Office for Education and Training* (IPK). The IPK is an autonomous public authority under the Swedish Ministry of Education and Research. It acts as the National Agency for the Life Long Learning Programme and administers many other international programmes and activities, along with some Swedish initiatives (www.programkontoret.se).

The other parties contributing to this publication are:

- *The Swedish Public Employment Service – Arbetsförmedlingen*, www.arbetsformedlingen.se

- *Stockholm University (Stockholms universitet)*
The Teacher Education Office,
www.luk.su.se/pub/jsp/polo-poly.jsp?d=9222
- *The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education* – (Myndigheten för Yrkeshögskolan, YH), www.yh-myndigheten.se
- *The Swedish Institute* (Svenska institutet – SI), www.si.se
- *The Swedish National Agency for Education* (Skolverket), www.skolverket.se
- The Swedish Schools Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen), www.skolinspektionen.se
- *The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education* (Högskoleverket), www.hsv.se
- *The Swedish National Board of Student Aid* (Centrala studiestödsnämnden – CSN), www.csn.se
- The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs (Ungdomsstyrelsen), www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se



2. Sweden in Brief

Sweden is among the most modern, progressive industrial nations in the world. Many successful companies, including Ericsson, Volvo and Ikea, have their bases here and Sweden is also a world leader in IT, engineering, medicine, environmental technology and biotechnology.

Sweden is also known for its open, egalitarian and liberal society.

Many Swedes are experienced travellers and most people speak very good English. The Swedish population has one of the highest education levels in the world. In fact, Sweden allocates a higher proportion of its GNP to education and research than any other country, according to the OECD.

In education, as well as in other areas, the government sets up the legal framework and overall policy objectives, while regional authorities and institutions work independently.

System of government: Constitutional monarchy, parliamentary democracy

Population: 9,3 million

Average life expectancy: men 79 years, women 83 years

Literacy: 100 %

Landscape: 53% forests and 9% lakes and rivers

Languages: Swedish; recognized minority languages: Sami (Lapp), Finnish, Meänkieli (Tornedalen Finnish), Yiddish, Romani Chib

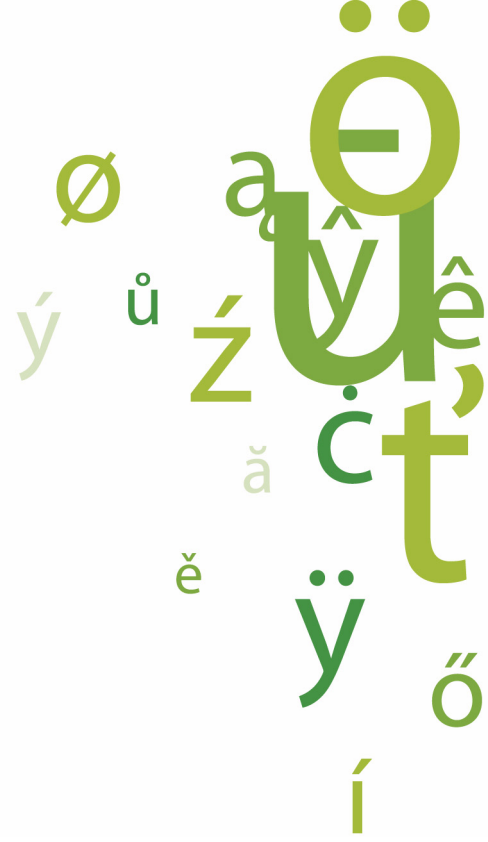
Main exports: Electrical and telecoms equipment, machinery, passenger cars, paper, pharmaceuticals, iron and steel

Average temperature (Stockholm): Jan: -2.8C (+27F). July: +17.2C (63F)

Membership: Council of Europe, European Union, UN, IMF, World Bank, OECD, OSCE, WTO, Nordic Council, PFP, Council of the Baltic Sea States, Barents' Council

The Swedish Institute (SI)(www.si.se), has been entrusted with the task of spreading information about Sweden to the rest of the world. At the official gateway to Sweden the reader will find more information about Sweden and Swedes (www.sweden.se).

Official statistics of Sweden, including a statistical database and annual reports can be found on the website of Statistics Sweden, SCB. (www.scb.se).



3. Education in Sweden

3.1 The Swedish School System

The Swedish public school system is divided into compulsory and non-compulsory schooling. Compulsory schooling includes regular compulsory school, Sami school, special school, and programs for pupils with learning disabilities. Non-compulsory schooling includes the pre-school class, upper secondary school, upper secondary school for pupils with learning disadvantages, municipal adult education, and education for adults with learning disadvantages.

All education in the public school system is free. There is usually no payment required from students or their parents for teaching materials, school meals, health services or school transport. The regular school year begins at the end of August and runs to the beginning of June the following year.

There is a 9-year compulsory school program for children between the ages of 7–16. If the parents wish, a child may begin school one year earlier, at the age of 6. The most recent curriculum for compulsory education (Lpo 94) took effect in 1994. The curriculum states the school's funda-

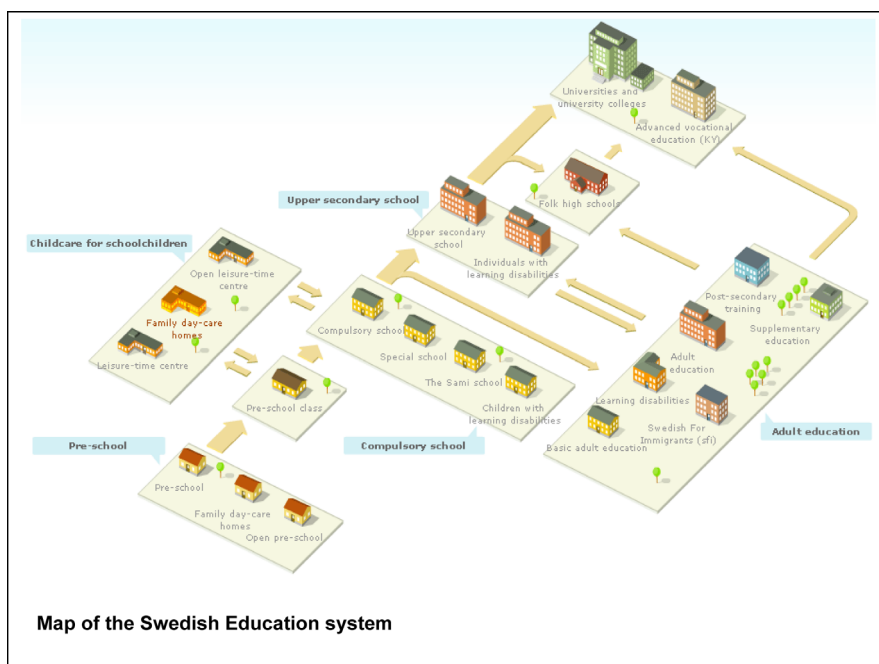
mental values and basic objectives and guidelines. There are also nationally approved syllabi for the various subjects. Each municipality has to decide on a local school plan showing how the schools in that municipality are to be organised and developed.

Almost all compulsory school pupils continue straight on to upper secondary school. Every municipality in Sweden is required by law to offer all students who have completed compulsory school an upper secondary education. There are 17 national programs, all of which lasts for three years. The various upper secondary programs can be seen as preparation for further studies, vocationally-oriented, or a combination of the two. All programs provide a comprehensive general education and make students eligible for studies at the university or post-secondary level.

People have the right to enrol in a regular upper secondary school until they are 20 years old. After that there are various forms of adult education organised by many different operators, from national and municipal adult education, to labour market training, in-service train-

ing and skills enhancement in the workplace. Adult education organised by the municipality (known as Komvux) includes basic- and upper secondary education, as well as continuing education programs.

For more information, visit the map of the Swedish Education System (<http://skolnet.skolverket.se/polopoly/utbsys-eng>).



3.1.1 The Swedish National Agency for Education

The Swedish National Agency for Education, is a central administrative authority for the Swedish public school system for children, young people and adults, as well as for activities of pre-school children and the child care for school age children. Government and Parliament specify goals and guidelines for pre-school and school through the Education Act, curricula etc. The task of the Agency is to work actively for the achievement of these goals. The Agency steers, supports, follows up and evaluates the work of municipalities and schools with the purpose of improving quality and the result of activities to ensure that all pupils have access to equal education.

The Agency has carried out two national evaluations on career guidance (2005 and 2007). As a result of the evaluations, general guidelines on career education and guidance have been developed. The purpose of the general guidelines and comments is to contribute to the improvement of career education and guidance in

all kinds of schools so that the work is of equally high quality throughout the country (www.skolverket.se/publikationer?id=2227).

On the web pages of the National Agency for Education (www.skolverket.se), there are statistics, translations of leaver's certificates, school addresses and information about education for students with a non-Swedish background.

3.1.2 The Swedish Schools Inspectorate

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate (www.skolinspektionen.se), shall inspect and supervise the school system in Sweden. The curriculum, national objectives and guidelines for the public education system are laid down by Swedish Parliament and Government. Within the objectives and frame-work established by Government and Parliament, the individual responsible authority – a municipality or a board of an independent school – may determine how its schools are to be run. The task of the inspectorate is to determine whether – and how well – a school or activity is functioning in relation to the regulations set out in the Education Act, school

ordinances, national curricula and other national statutes. This involves auditing and assessment at both municipal and school level, focusing on the quality and legal aspects of the operation.

The purpose of the inspection is three-fold:

- Asserting the right of each individual to knowledge and personal development
- Asserting national equivalence
- Contributing to higher national educational standard

3.1.3 Utbildningsinfo.se

Utbildningsinfo.se is a Website for students, parents and professionals in the field of education. The site collates collected, current and neutral information about education in Sweden, which is financed or supervised/monitored by the state. The Website consists of different parts: a search tool for educations in Sweden, a web-based career guidance tool, a description of the Swedish school system, a personal folder and a special section for guidance practitioners. (www.utbildningsinfo.se).

3.2 Swedish Folk High School

Folk High Schools have come to be a popular, important and established part of the Swedish adult education system. Today there are 150 Folk High Schools all over Sweden. 107 of these schools are run by various popular movements, organisations and associations (NGO's), whilst the remaining 43 are run by county councils or regions.

All Folk High Schools give general courses (Allmän kurs) 1–3 years. They are suitable for those who have not completed their secondary education or for those who want to qualify for higher education.

The majority of the Folk High Schools also offer a wide range of special courses. Examples of such courses include the aesthetic courses (art & design, painting etc), music, environmental studies and studies concerning the developing countries. Some schools provide vocational training, some of them on a post secondary level, such as youth- and recreational leader and journalist.

Many of the Folk High Schools are boarding schools. Living at the place of study is an important part of the plan in many of the Folk High Schools. Studying and living at school creates a

sense of community, gives possibilities of close companionship and the chance to exchange views outside of class.

All tuition is free of charge at the Folk High Schools. Board and lodging costs about 4.000–4.500 SEK per month and students (Swedish students and non-Swedish nationals who have been living in Sweden for a number of years) can apply for a grant to cover part of the costs.

For more information visit the common website for Folk High Schools. (www.folkhogskola.nu) or the website for the Swedish National Council of Adult Education (Folkbildningsrådet) www.folkbildning.se.

3.3 National Board for Youth Affairs

The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs is a government agency that works to ensure that young people have access to influence and welfare.

The agency foremost focus on the non-formal and informal learning, as it enables young people to acquire essential competences and contributes to their personal development, social inclusion and active citizenship – thereby improving their employment prospects. In an international context the agency gives municipalities and organisations (NGO's) the opportunity to realize their own youth projects within the EU-programme Youth in Action.

Learning activities within the youth field provide significant added value for young people as well as for the economy and society at large.

Some of the tasks undertaken by the agency:

- producing and communicating knowledge about young people's living conditions;
- following up the objectives set for national youth policy by the Riksdag (the Swedish Parliament) and the Government and supporting municipalities in their youth policy work;
- distributing funds to the civil society in the form of support for organisations, projects and international cooperation. All the support the agency distributes is given on behalf of the Swedish government.

There are over 1,5 million children, young people and young adults aged between 13 and 25 in Sweden. The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs make studies on their living conditions,

their health and what they do. This is done by compiling statistics from several government authorities on how life is for young people in Sweden. In the Agency's attitude and values studies young people's perspectives are compared with those of older generations, on things like work, housing, health, education, democracy, influence and leisure. The Agency analyses the situation for young people in neighborhoods marked by social exclusion, and the health situation for young homosexual, bisexual and transgender people and which factors that enhance their health. The Agency also analyses how municipalities organise and finance activities for young people who are neither working nor studying.

Target groups for the National Board of Youth Affairs are decision-makers, civil servants and organisations working with young people, women, homosexuals, bisexual and transgender people, national minorities, ethnic minorities, etc.

3.4 Higher Vocational Education, YH

On 1 July 2009 the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education was established to develop and oversee a new form of publicly funded vocational education in Sweden, YH. The role of the National Agency for Higher Vocational Education is to set up a common framework agreed on and followed by vocational education and training providers. Another task is to evaluate the quality of the YH courses. The agency is also responsible for coordinating and supporting a national structure for validating competence and to be the national coordinating body for EQF – the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning.

3.4.1 What is YH?

YH is a form of post-secondary education designed to meet current competence needs in working life. YH emphasizes learning in the workplace, known as LIA (Lärande i arbete, learning at work). In contrast to the traditional traineeship period, the "LIA" is active workplace learning and problem-solving in an overall educational context. The courses are based on close collaboration between enterprises and various course providers (higher education, upper secondary schools, municipal adult education and companies). Courses which receive the Agency's

approval are intended to correspond to the actual requirements of the employment market. However, there are no restrictions on the enterprises regarding in which sector YH is to be provided. The courses will be open both to those who have recently finished upper secondary school and to people who are already employed and wish to develop their skills within a specific area.

3.4.2 Contents of YH

YH education is post-secondary, in the sense that completed upper secondary education or equivalent knowledge is required for eligibility. The subject matter is taken from professional contexts, courses in higher education, upper secondary, supplementary and advanced courses. The aim is for the courses to provide a combination of practical orientation with in-depth theoretical knowledge. The interplay between theory and vocational practice at the workplace is important both for the quality of the courses and to adapt to the needs of both the market and the students. Courses may be divided into terms, or ongoing, with no division into terms. The student is entitled to financial support in accordance with the current regulations for higher education. The education period is a minimum of 6 months, participant progress and outcomes are assessed and recognized by a certificate/diploma that validates skills for employment.

3.4.3 Employment market links

The LIA periods are characteristic for a majority of the YH-courses. For parts of the course, students will be in the places of work, developing their analytical abilities, applying comprehensive and systematic approaches, and taking responsibility for work projects. If this process is to work properly, skilled supervision must be available. A further requirement is that the workplace itself should be organised in a way that makes learning feasible. The aim of training is to impart familiarity with an occupation or vocational area. The companies involved defray all expenses for the LIA period. YH cover a wide range of vocational areas, e.g., engineering, trade and tourism, agriculture or forestry, information technology and health care.

3.4.4 How to apply for YH

YH projects begin and finish all the year round. The entrance requirements are the same as for

universities and university colleges, i.e. an upper secondary school diploma or equivalent degree. For more information please visit www.yhmyndigheten.se.

3.5 Higher Education in Sweden

In Sweden higher education is open to everybody. About half of the population will take part in higher education courses at some stage of their lives. Usually students in Sweden are aged from 20 to 25, but some are also older. About 60 percent of the students are female.

All higher education is offered in the form of courses. The duration of these courses may vary, but they usually last between 5–20 weeks. Several courses can be combined to form a degree programme. Students themselves are also able to combine different courses to make up a degree. The credit system is closely linked to ECTS, which states that one year of full-time studies will yield 60 higher education credits.

Higher education has become increasingly diversified. Many foreign students come to Sweden on various exchange programmes. More and more young people with foreign backgrounds are also participating in higher education.

3.5.1 University or University College?

Sweden has about fifty universities and university colleges – from Kiruna in the north to Malmö in the south. Most of them are run by the state, but nine of them are “independent course providers” who are entitled to award students with degrees. Independent means that they are not state-run. Being entitled to award degrees means they can offer a higher education qualification to students who complete one or more of their courses.

Whether an institution is referred to as a university or a university college has no effect on the quality of the courses and the degrees have the same legal status. The main difference is that the universities have a basic right to offer a postgraduate programme and award postgraduate degrees. University colleges can only do so once they have been authorised in one or more areas of research and postgraduate study by the Government.

3.5.2 How to Apply for Higher Education

Applications for most courses and programmes are administered by the Swedish Agency for Higher Education Services (VHS), in collaboration with the institutions offering higher education.

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is responsible for the web portal www.studera.nu. On the site, it is possible to search among the various programmes and courses offered by the higher education institutions, read about them and then apply for the ones of interest.

3.5.3 Entry requirements to undergraduate studies

Certain entry requirements have been laid down for admission to higher education, known as admission or entry requirements. These are divided into general admission requirements and specific admission requirements. The general admission requirements are the same for all higher education. In addition to the general admission requirements, most programmes specify some further requirements, called specific entry requirements.

3.5.4 Doctoral studies

A doctoral programme lasts for four years and leads to the award of a doctorate (PhD). After two years of study a student may apply for the award of a Licentiate degree. Postgraduate programmes involve both taught classes and the production of a thesis.

The higher education institution offering a postgraduate programme decides who is to be admitted. Applications to postgraduate programmes are submitted to the institution at which they are offered. In order to be admitted an applicant must have:

- an academic degree equivalent to a bachelor's degree,
- the specific admission requirements laid down by the faculty board,
- the capacity to complete the programme successfully,
- and guaranteed financial support for the entire period of study.

The Handbook for Postgraduate Students, (www.doktorandhandboken.nu), is a website

dedicated to information on research level studies in Sweden. Another useful Website for prospective doctoral students is Study in Sweden (www.studyinsweden.se). It contains comprehensive information about higher education in Sweden.

3.5.5 The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is a government authority that deals with issues relating to higher education. Its tasks include providing information about studies in higher education and about the available institutions and what courses and programmes they offer. Another task is to evaluate the quality of the courses and programmes offered in higher education. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education also performs studies that form the basis for improvements and changes in higher education in Sweden. In order to safeguard the legal rights of students the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education is also responsible for supervision of the higher education institutions in Sweden.

Learn more about higher education in Sweden at (www.hsv.se) – the official website of the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education. At www.hsv.se you will also find the addresses of all the higher education institutions in Sweden and information about how to contact them.

3.5.6 Study Destination Sweden

Higher education institutions are active partners in international cooperation and exchange. Sweden's educational policy recognises that a multicultural student body is an important resource and provides a valuable talent base. In the academic year 2008/2009, more than 35.000 international students attended universities or university colleges in Sweden, taking part in either organised exchanges through their home university or studying for a degree.

The website www.studyinsweden.se is a comprehensive resource for information about higher education in Sweden, geared at prospective students from outside Sweden. The site incorporates a frequently updated database of English-taught programmes, an overview of the Swedish higher education system, practical information about visas and accommodation, scholarships, application procedures and pointers for learning Swedish as a foreign language.

The site was created and is maintained by the Swedish Institute (SI).

3.6 The Swedish Study Aid System

The Swedish Board for Study Support (CSN), (www.csn.se), administrates the Swedish financial aid system and thus plays a significant role in Sweden's national educational policy. The overarching educational objective is to make sure that Sweden is one of the world-leading nations in terms of knowledge, a nation able to offer high-quality education and lifelong learning with the purpose of stimulating growth and social equality. The financial aid system was set up in order to enable people to pursue their studies regardless of financial circumstances or any functional disabilities. The funding of studies by a state-run financial aid scheme is thus a way to reduce those different opportunities depending on private assets or functional disabilities. Public funded financial aid, which is administered by the CSN, is available in four basic types:

- Study allowance (*studiehjälp*) is a grant intended to encourage more young people between the ages of 16 and 20 to study at upper-secondary school. Study allowance is only available during the period of the year when the pupil actually studies and consists of four components: student grant, boarding supplement, extra supplement and a daily travel grant.
- Study allowance for people with disabilities (RG-bidrag) is a contribution towards the cost of education at a national upper-secondary school. The purpose of the grant is to enable more people who are hearing-impaired, deaf or functionally disabled to obtain an upper-secondary education by reducing obstacles caused by financial or geographical factors.
- Student aid (*studiemedel*) is available for studies at folk high school, adult secondary education programme (Komvux), national adult education programme, or another compulsory or upper secondary school or post-secondary level. Student aid is made up of a grant component and a loan component.
- Student aid is also available for studies at colleges and universities abroad. For studies at

the upper secondary level and are younger than 20, you may be able to apply for a study allowance (studiehjälp) to attend schools abroad.

With the exception of student aid financial aid is paid in the form of a grant. Student aid includes both grants and loans.

In addition to student aid students may also apply for supplementary and additional loans. Supplementary loans are available for persons over 25 who have previously received income from work. Additional loans, another form of supplementary loan, are payable for certain extra costs incurred during the course of studies, e.g. the cost of double residency. The extra child allowance (tilläggsbidrag) is a grant for students with children.

3.6.1 Student Aid for Studies Abroad

There is a special program for financial aid for studies in foreign countries. Student aid for studies abroad can basically be divided into two categories:

1. Aid for studying abroad as an exchange student, which means that the period of study is included in the Swedish study program that a student is pursuing.
2. Aid for studies (degree/diploma/certificate) at a foreign university/higher educational institution.

Formal Requirements

There are some basic formal requirements, which must be fulfilled in order to get student aid for studies abroad:

- The applicant must be a Swedish citizen. (In some cases citizens from the European Union and the European Economic Area who are permanently settled in Sweden may also receive financial assistance to study abroad after special assessment.)
- Before beginning the foreign study period, he or she must have been a resident in Sweden for at least two of the last five years.
- The duration of the course concerned must be at least 13 weeks and the studies must be pursued on a full-time basis (inside EU there are at present no requirements of full-time studies, and it is enough with three weeks studies).

- The applicant must be admitted to a foreign school outside Sweden, and have the opportunity to earn a degree or take exams.

When it comes to the educational quality requirements for studies outside the Nordic countries, the regulations stipulate an acceptable standard. For implementation of regulations concerning acceptable standards, CSN and The National Agency for Higher Education (HSV) have set up specific guidelines.

3.6.2 Foreign Nationals

For foreign nationals, CSN first checks whether they meet the basic requirements for Swedish student aid. In order to be entitled to Swedish student aid, the applicant must have moved to Sweden for a purpose other than studying. He or she must also be Swedish resident and hold a permanent residence permit (PUT).

In the case of EU nationals without a basic entitlement to Swedish student aid, CSN will also consider whether the applicant can be treated as a Swedish citizen under the laws of the Community and thus qualify for Swedish student aid. If a person is a citizen of another EU/EEA nation or Switzerland and can be said to be employed in Sweden, he/she may be entitled to Swedish student aid if there is a relationship between his/her work in Sweden and the course of studies he/she is applying for. In other words, the studies applied for must entail some kind of further education or training with his/her vocational sphere in Sweden. In addition, relatives or next-of-kin of a migrant employee may be entitled to Swedish student aid. Persons with a right of permanent residence (PUR) and those granted status by the Migration Board as a third-country national permanently residing in Sweden may also be treated as Swedish citizens and thus be entitled to Swedish student aid.

3.7 Web addresses related to education in Sweden:

Ministry of Education and Research; www.sweden.gov.se

Map of the Swedish Education System: <http://skolnet.skolverket.se/polopoly/utbsys-eng>

The Swedish National Agency for Education: www.skolverket.se

Search tool for educations in Sweden: www.utbildningsinfo.se

Common website for Folk High Schools:
www.folkhogskola.nu

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education: www.yhmyndigheten.se

The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education: www.hsv.se

The Swedish Agency for Networks and Cooperation in Higher Education: www.nshu.se

Search tool for programmes and courses offered by the higher education institutions: www.studera.nu

Information about doctoral studies in Sweden: www.doktorandhandboken.nu

Website for information about higher education in Sweden, aimed at students from outside Sweden: www.studyinsweden.se

The National Board of Student Aid (CSN), www.csn.se

National Agency for services to Universities and University colleges, VHS, www.vhs.se (Evaluation of completed foreign upper secondary education.)

National ENIC/NARIC centre www.hsv.se

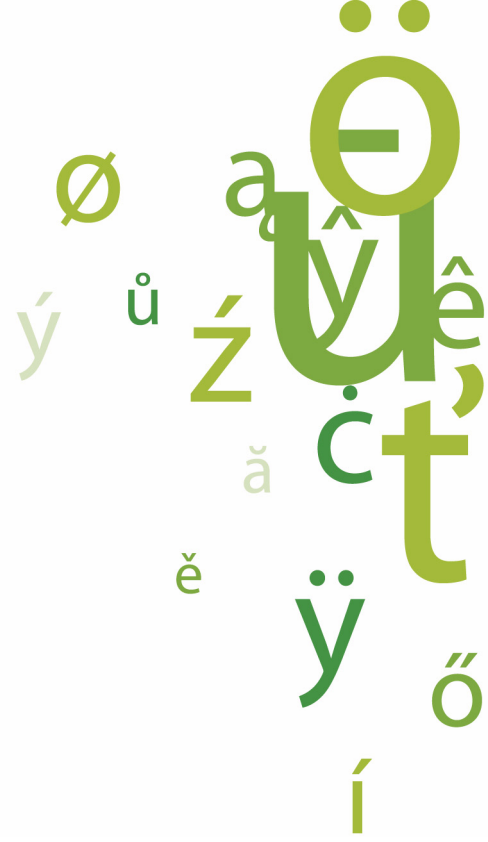
Swedish National Reference Point for Vocational Qualifications, NRP; www.senrp.se

Swedish National Europass centre; www.programkontoret.se/europass

The National Centre for Swedish as a Second Language, SFI; www1.lhs.se/sfi/eng.html

Folkuniversitetet; www.folkuniversitetet.se/templates/PageFrame.aspx?id=3887 (Swedish as a foreign language)

Stockholm University, Department of Scandinavian languages; www.su.se/pub/jsp/polo-poly.jsp?a=21255&d=1538; TISUS – test in Swedish for University Studies



4. Work in Sweden

4.1 The Labour Market in Sweden

For updated information about the general situation of the labour market in Sweden, see the website of the Swedish Public Employment Service (www.arbetsformedlingen.se).

4.1.1 Swedish Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen)

The Swedish Government and the Swedish Parliament have overarching responsibility for employment and overall labour market policy in Sweden.

The Swedish Public Employment Service has an important role in putting these policies into practice in order to facilitate a well-functioning labour market. The responsibility is to achieve the objectives and to carry out the tasks that the Government and the Parliament have entrusted to us.

The most important task of the Swedish Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen) is to make it easier to match job seekers with job vacancies. The responsibility is to support and pre-

pare job seekers to enable them to apply for and fill vacancies. Another important task is to safeguard the role of the unemployment insurance scheme by applying its rules in all instances.

The Employment Service's responsibilities also include facilitating and speeding up access to the labour market for vulnerable groups. The Employment Service also tries to counteract and prevent any discrimination in working life which is based on gender, ethnicity, religion and faith, disability and sexual orientation so that all job seekers have the same opportunities to obtain work.

The Swedish Public Employment Service consists of 68 labour market regions which is brought together with four market areas, with a central head office. In total, some 10.000 persons are employed by the Swedish Public Employment Service.

4.1.2 Services and Channels

The Swedish Public Employment Service aims to help employers find employees and those seeking jobs to find employment. These services are offered by way of Internet services at www.ar-

betsformedlingen.se, Customer Services (phone nr: +46(0)771 416 416) and the local public employment services.

The services provided are:

1. Job hunting
2. Improving your job hunting skills
3. Job counselling
4. Preparatory training for work
5. Starting your own business
6. Clarifying your chances
7. Adjusting your situation
8. Recruiting new staff
9. Training for recruitment

The form of these nine services has been designed so that job seekers and employers can be offered or informed about them at any Employment Office, whether or not the entire range of services is available at every local office.

Based on the requirements of each job seeker or employer, the Employment Office decides whether and how a particular service may be offered.

4.1.3 Counselling within the Swedish Public Employment Service

The job counselling service is an important instrument for fulfilling the tasks of Swedish Public Employment Service in the area of labour market policies. The objective of the service is to enable the job seeker to relate his/her resources, experience and desires to the demands and possibilities of the labour market, in order to make a well-founded choice of work and/or training. The overall objective is to increase the available labour force, enhance geographic and professional mobility, and to diminish unemployment.

Employment officers with a counselling role in Swedish Public Employment Service need to be able to review the situation to decide on a complex matter. Based on each individual's resources, the counsellor has to discern possible jobs and training opportunities, and then motivate the job seeker to make well-founded choices.

As well as introducing Internet-based tools, and ensuring that the job seeker is capable of using them, the counsellor will also be able to offer group and/or individual counselling. These methods are quality-assured in order to guarantee their uniform quality within our organisation.

4.1.4 Availability of Counselling within the Swedish Public Employment Service

Information on professions and courses of study is available to all interested parties on our public website www.arbetsformedlingen.se. The telephone-based Customer Service offers anyone interested support and an introduction on how to use the Internet-based information about professions and studies.

Some of the services available at the Employment Office are only available if you are registered there as a job seeker. The range of services available will depend on the needs of each individual job seeker. The Employment Office decides what services or programs to deploy, balancing the job seeker's needs with the demands and possibilities of the labour market.

4.2 European Employment Services – EURES

Sweden is part of the common European labour market, because of the membership in the European Union and some other bilateral agreements. The Swedish Employment Service is involved in the European Employment Services network – EURES.

The objective of the EURES network is to promote mobility of the workforce on the European labour market, while supporting the goals of each national Employment Service. EURES plays an important role in identifying surpluses and shortages of labour in various sectors, efforts to reduce bottleneck situations being one of the most important tasks of the EURES network. The network can also contribute to improved possibilities for employment for some individuals, especially young people, by offering the possibility to get work experience in foreign countries.

Matching job seekers with jobs and recruiting workers to and from Sweden are integral parts of the efforts of the Employment Service, covered by the general principles for the provision of services on the Website, by Customer Service and by the local Employment Office.

Specialised services are available from trained employment officers, EURES advisers. There are approximately 40 EURES advisers in Sweden, and around 700 in the entire EU/EEA area with Switzerland. Contact information to EURES advisers in Sweden and abroad can be found on the EURES portal <http://ec.europa.eu/>

eures EURES advisers provide the three basic EURES services of information, guidance and placement, to both job seekers and employers interested in the European job market. They have developed specialised expertise in the practical, legal and administrative matters relating to mobility on the national level, across the borders. They work within the Public Employment Service of each member country, or within other partner organisations in the EURES network.

4.3 Looking for Work in Sweden

Citizens of EU/EEA countries and Switzerland, including family members, do not need a work permit to be employed in Sweden. Within 3 months they must register with the immigration authorities, Migrationsverket, by phoning +46 (0)771 235 235 or through www.migrationsverket.se. Citizens from countries outside the EU/EEA area or Switzerland must obtain a work permit, to be applied for and granted before entering Sweden to take up employment. An assessment of the labour market is made in each individual case. More information is available at the Swedish embassies and consulates abroad, or by contacting Migrationsverket.

On the EURES portal (<http://ec.europa.eu/eures>) vacancies and information on working and living conditions in Sweden and other member countries can be found, as well as the possibility to have your CV registered and available in almost all of Europe. If more services are needed, a EURES adviser can be contacted. Information on how to contact EURES advisers in Sweden and abroad can be found on the EURES portal.

The Internet website of the National Labour Market Administration, www.arbetsformedlingen.se is another useful source when looking for work in Sweden. Here job seekers will find the vacancies available in Sweden and employers can advertise for employees. Customer Services can also be contacted, telephone +46 (0)771-416 416. Job seekers may also visit a Local Public Employment Service.

4.4 Web addresses related to work in Sweden:

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communication; www.sweden.gov.se

The Swedish Public Employment Service: www.arbetsformedlingen.se.

The EURES portal: <http://ec.europa.eu/eures>

The Swedish Migration Board: www.migrationsverket.se

Confederation of Swedish Enterprise; www.svensktnaringsliv.se/english

List of Swedish companies: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Swedish_companies

The Swedish Trade Council; www.swedish-trade.se/english

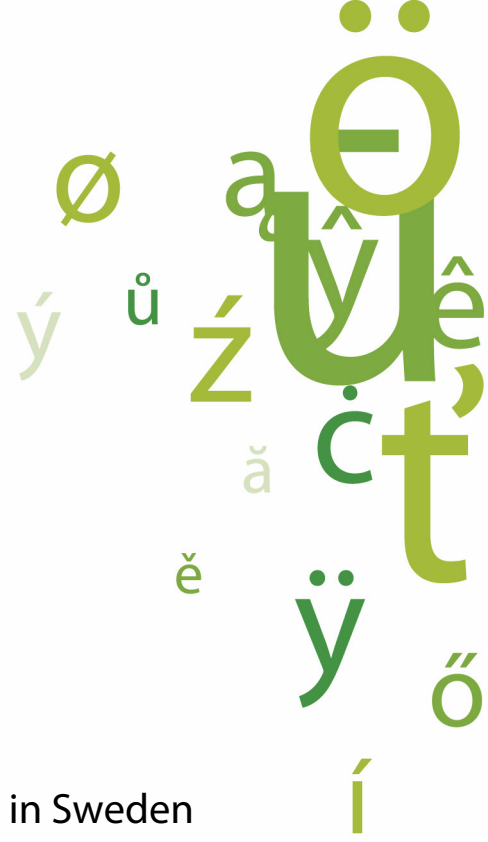
The Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations, SACO; www.saco.se/templates/StandardPage.aspx?id=2243&epslanguage=SV

Salaried employees' National Association, TCO; www.tco.se/Templates/Page2_2319.aspx

The Swedish Trade Union Confederation, LO; www.lo.se/home/lo/home.nsf/unidView/943717B4077AAF1AC1256E4B0033629C

The Union of Service and Communication Employees, SEKO; www.seko.se

The Union of Civil Servants, ST; www.st.org/st-in-english



5. Career guidance and counselling in Sweden

5.1 The Swedish Guidance System

Sweden has a long history of offering public guidance services. Already in the 40's the employment offices started to offer vocational guidance for their clients. The underlying principle has always been that career counselling is an individual right that should be free of charge and available to as many groups as possible. Today career and educational guidance is provided throughout the entire educational system, in compulsory and upper secondary schools as well as within adult education, where guidance services are offered in municipal adult education, advanced vocational education, folk high schools and universities and university colleges. Guidance practitioners usually work within the schools or other educational institutions, but there are also examples of municipalities that offer career and educational guidance for schools through an external guidance centre instead of within each single school. Guidance services are also offered within the 418 Employment Offices around Sweden and in local munic-

ipality guidance and information centres for adults. The private sector is quite limited in Sweden, but there are private employment offices and some companies that specialise in career guidance and helping companies with reorganising or downsizing.

There are no overall statistics of the number of guidance practitioners in Sweden, but a recent evaluation of guidance within the Swedish school system, conducted by the Swedish National Agency for Education, shows that an average Swedish guidance counsellor within compulsory school handles about 522 pupils. The figure for upper secondary level is 479 pupils for every guidance practitioner. Within the municipal adult education (Komvux) there were approx 323 students for each full-time working guidance counsellor. No figures are available for study counsellors at the universities or job counsellors within the employment offices.

Career and educational guidance and information is also offered through publicly funded web services. One of these services is the national education portal [Utbildningsinfo.se](http://www.utbildningsinfo.se) (www.utbildningsinfo.se). It is a website for students, pa-

rents and professionals in the field of education. Another of these tools, Vägledningsinfo.se (Guidanceinfo.se), (www.vagledningsinfo.se), is a web-based guidance service for adults, run by a network of municipalities. The "Choose profession or education" part of the Swedish Public Employment Service site provides information on different professions and gives an idea of which educational background that is needed for different professions (www.arbetsformedlingen.se/go.aspx?TC=31&C1=31&C2=31&C3=31&GORE-DIRECT=true&URL3=Pub-lech%2fnote_lead_startpage.aspx%3fC%3d31%26OC%3d31%26A%3d0%26AP%3d0).

SACO, a trade union confederation of 23 different associations for university graduates or professionals with a college degree and/or students, also offers web based career guidance under the heading "Välja yrke & högskoleutbildning" (choose profession and higher education, www.saco.se/templates/OcupationStandardPage.aspx?id=4102&epslanguage=SV)

Career fairs are arranged regularly in different parts of Sweden. They are often organised in cooperation between local employers and upper secondary schools, where pupils in the ninth grade is the target group, but there is also the big "SACO fair" every year, which informs about university educations for pupils from secondary school and adult education. Personal career guidance is usually offered during these events.

Sweden has a decentralised system for decision-making. There is no central organisation coordinating or governing guidance activities, this is done on a local or regional basis; The local municipal authorities plan their services of career and educational guidance separately, in line with appropriation documents and school curricula. The guidance that takes place at university level and other higher educational institu-

tions is the local responsibility of each university, in line with national goals and ordinances, and the counselling services for those in search of work is designed at the local employment offices, in accordance with the guidelines from the Swedish Public Employment Service. Financing of guidance services is part of the total funding for the local municipality, the local university and/or the local employment office. No sum of money is specifically designated for guidance services.

To get a more coordinated approach towards the work of career guidance counsellors and to support practitioners, The Swedish Association of Guidance Counsellors – SAGC, has developed Ethical Guidelines for all guidance practitioners who are members of the Association. Declaration of Ethics and Ethical Guidelines for educational and vocational guidance counsellors can be found here (in English)(www.vagledarforeningen.org) (click on "Etisk deklaration")

In 2009 new general guidelines and comments on career education and guidance provided in schools and adult education, were adopted by the National Agency for Education, to promote a more uniform use of the legislation. The aim was also to influence development in a certain direction. The guidelines may be found here: (www.skolverket.se/sb/d/193/url/0068007400740070003a002f002f0077007700770034002e0073006b006f006c007600650072006b00650074002e00730065003a0038003000380030002f00770074007000750062002f00770073002f0073006b006f006c0062006f006b002f0077007000750062006500780074002f0074007200790063006b00730061006b002f005200650063006f00720064003f006b003d0032003200320037/target/Record%3Fk%3D2227).

Sweden is part of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network since 2007.

5.1.1 Overview of the Swedish Guidance System

Sectors where guidance services are provided:	Kinds of services offered	Formal regulations/ Administrative control	Educational background
Educational and Career in <i>compulsory, upper secondary and adult secondary education</i>	Individual counselling and information prior to the next step of education. Group activities	National curriculum + School Law /The Swedish National Agency for Education /Municipality	Professional Degree in Career Counselling (Three-year university programme)
Guidance at <i>universities and university colleges:</i> 1. Central level 2. Departmental level 3. Career centres	1. Individual counselling about educational choices 2. Advise in the special field of study, preparation work for credit transfer and eligibility regulations 3. Career choices, applications, job vacancies	Regulation from 1993 stating that university students must have access to study and vocational guidance /local policy documents /The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education /Individual university	General University Degree and in-service training on theories and methods in study- and career counselling, sometimes Degree in Career Counselling
<i>Higher Vocational Education</i>	Counselling on educational choices	No formal regulation /the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education	Varying, sometimes teachers, sometimes Degree in Career Counselling
<i>Swedish Folk High Schools</i>	Varying	No formal regulation /Many of the schools are run by NGO's and some by county councils or regions	Varying, sometimes teachers, sometimes Degree in Career Counselling
<i>Local municipality information centres</i>	Self-service and individual counselling, information	Municipality educational authorities	Varying, often Degree in Career Counselling
<i>Employment Offices/Rehabilitation</i>	Individual counselling mainly for those who need it most. Self-service for others	No regulations regarding guidance activities. /Swedish Public Employment Service	In-service training, sometimes Degree in Career Counselling, sometimes psychologists.

5.1.2 Guidance Services

For compulsory school, secondary school and adult education the curriculum states that "*Student guidance officers and vocational guidance staff should; Inform and guide pupils prior to the next stage of their education and vocational orientation and focus particularly on opportunities for pupils with disabilities*".

The activities and roles of the counsellors differ, depending on the type of school. All study and work activities have the common goal of helping the individual obtain more knowledge about his or her own capacity and the existing opportunities and to form personal goals within education and working life. The counselling is given to pupils both individually and in group sessions.

At Universities and University colleges there are three different kinds of guidance services;

- Guidance at a central level – The central level is usually the first contact that prospective students will have with the university. The most common matters discussed are educational choices, changes of study field, studying abroad and the choice of a right major in order to get a job in the future. Normally there is both a drop-in service and a special schedule for visits booked in advance.
- Educational guidance at the University Departments – The student counsellor at a specific department offer advice in his or her own field of study and also on job opportunities regarding the special branch connected to the subject concerned.
- At some universities there are also Career Centres. They offer individual counselling on career choices and support regarding job applications. They also give continuous information about job vacancies, summer jobs, trainee vacancies and companies willing to help and support students with their thesis work.

The local municipality information centres are very much built on the concept of self-service. The staff usually arranges different kinds of information activities and it is also possible to get individual counselling. The visitors at these centres range from very young people to adults who want to begin their studying late in life or who wish to change careers.

The Employment offices mainly work with unemployed people. Among the services provided are interviews, interest tests and both individual and work activities (see further information under 4.1.4). In Sweden, psychological testing is usually not the responsibility of guidance specialists. Usually testing is a task which psychologists in the employment service handle. They are a rather small group and the tests deal with a limited group of people.

5.1.3 National guidance organisations, associations and resource centres for Guidance Practitioners

The Swedish Association of Guidance Counsellors (SAGC), (www.vagledarforeningen.org), organises around 1.000 Swedish guidance practitioners. SAGC is actively engaged in the development and strengthening of educational and vo-

ational counselling. The association also participates in efforts to improve the professionalism of counsellor practise and professional ethics. An annual conference for Swedish guidance counsellors is arranged and the association publishes a quarterly journal, "Vägledaren i utbildning och arbetsliv" (The Educational and Vocational Guidance Counsellor). SAGC has formulated and ratified a Declaration of Ethics for educational and vocational guidance practitioners.

Within the trade union for teachers, "*Lärarnas riksförbund*", there is a forum for Swedish guidance professionals. They have formulated a work description and an ethical declaration for guidance practitioners and they also answer government questionnaires (<http://forening.proventek.net/vagledarna>).

The Swedish National Agency for Education has provided a forum for counsellors on the website Utbildningsinfo.se, (www.utbildningsinfo.se/sb/d/136). The website includes a special section for guidance practitioners in order to support them in their daily work. The aim of this section is to create a meeting point for those working in different fields of career and educational guidance. The forum has approximately 18.000 members.

The Swedish Association for Municipal and National Adult Education has created a guidance network for guidance practitioners in adult education (VIS), (www.visnet.se).

Within *higher education* a working group has been established to plan the annual conference for study counsellors. The conference is normally organised in May at different Universities. The conference gives an opportunity for student counsellors to meet and discuss current topics. It is also an event for competence development and information about developments in the area of Higher Education.

Counsellors working in *Folk High Schools* (the non-formal adult education in Sweden) meet in a digital forum and arrange an annual conference. For more information visit www.folkhogskola.nu.

5.2 Euroguidance Sweden

Euroguidance Sweden, (www.programkontoret.se/Euroguidance), is the National Resource Centre for Guidance in Sweden. It is part of the Euroguidance network, (www.euroguidance.net). The centre provides a range of services to Swedish Guidance Professionals and to professionals

abroad. It is an information and documentation centre for guidance counsellors who require information about opportunities for studying and training in Europe. Citizens have access to Euroguidance through their local guidance services. Guidance Counsellors may contact Euroguidance Sweden directly on their behalf; (euroguidance.sweden@programkontoret.se).

To help guidance counsellors in their work with international issues, Euroguidance Sweden:

- Answers questions about study and training opportunities in Sweden and abroad
- Supplies information about projects and international cooperation in the area of guidance and counselling
- Provides information about international possibilities for guidance counsellors
- Offers further training for guidance practitioners on mobility issues
- Reports on the international policy development within the field of guidance

The Euroguidance network is responsible for the European Commission portal on learning opportunities, PLOTEUS; (<http://ec.europa.eu/plo-teus>).

5.3 Education for Swedish Guidance Counsellors

5.3.1 Bachelor of Education in Career Counselling

There is one main training course for counsellors in Sweden, a three-year university programme, leading to a Bachelors degree. The course of studies is comprised of 180 ECTS points. Supervision provided includes supporting individuals to explore, articulate and develop their interests and capabilities as well as their knowledge about themselves in relation to society, education, profession and working life. The content of the course of studies gives fundamental knowledge of the prerequisites for making soundly substantiated choices during counselling. Upon completion of the course students will have the skills required to provide young people and adults with guidance and information on issues pertaining to choice of studies and/or occupation.

There is an increasing demand for persons holding a bachelor education/graduate diploma

in career counselling for new duties and assignments both in the public and private sectors.

The major subject in the course of studies is "career counselling" which consists of three main sections:

Social sciences, aimed at imparting knowledge about how society, working life and education are organised, and function

Behavioural sciences, covering the basic knowledge of Psychology, Pedagogies and Sociology required for such an understanding of human behaviour that makes one able to act as a guidance counsellor, tutor and/or information officer.

Practical periods, mainly in schools and colleges, but also in other fields. Practical periods include such aspects as independently carrying out guidance sessions with individuals and/or groups, teaching and giving information.

The education link theoretical studies with practical experiences. Subject lectures and tutorials alternate with reading of relevant literature, field studies, practical application exercises (e.g. interview techniques) that take the form of group work, seminars and private studies. Both written and verbal examinations are held. The course is also available in a distance learning version.

Eligibility

To qualify, students must meet the basic eligibility requirements for undergraduate studies at the university and have received Pass or higher in Social sciences course A at upper secondary school/ college, as well as having at least one year (12 months) of working experience. Unless in the form of employment, caring for children or other persons is not counted as eligible nor is mandatory military training.

Students have the right to include knowledge and skills acquired through studies or working experience in Sweden or abroad among their qualifications, provided that the knowledge and/or skills are of such nature and have been pursued long enough for them to be approximately equivalent to the course, or part of it.

Courses of studies leading to a bachelor's degree/ graduate diploma in Career counselling are offered at:

Malmö University, www.edu.mah.se/LGSYV

For further information, please contact: anders.loven@lut.mah.se

Stockholm University, www.luk.su.se/pub/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=9222

For further information, please contact: ulla.brag-yhland@ped.su.se

Umeå University, www.educ.umu.se/index-eng.html

For further information, please contact: goran.nilsson@educ.umu.se

5.3.2 Master of Education in Career Counselling

During the autumn of 2009 the Department of Education at the University of Stockholm, started a *master's program in career guidance and counseling* in cooperation with Malmö and Umeå University. The program, which runs over four semesters, gives career counsellors an opportunity to broaden and deepen their knowledge in the area of career guidance.

The program is offered on a full-time basis with five physical meetings per year. Each meeting consists of two days.

The aim of the program is to provide a deeper knowledge of how individuals construct their careers, from individual and societal perspectives. The perspectives will be treated in the light of educational, behavioral and social sciences. Students will also be given the opportunity to choose a perspective of their own choice. Special attention will be given to developing the ability to independently integrate and use the acquired knowledge in the field of career management and to analyze the process scientifically.

Eligibility

Bachelors degree in education with a major in career guidance and counseling or the equivalent.

5.4 Web addresses related to guidance in Sweden:

The Swedish Association of Guidance Counsellors (SAGC), www.vagledarforeningen.org

Branch for Swedish guidance professionals within the trade union for teachers, <http://forening.proventek.net/vagledarna>

Euroguidance Sweden, www.programkontoret.se/Euroguidance

Utbildningsinfo.se. A website run by the Swedish National Agency for Education containing a virtual career guidance tool and a special section for guidance practitioners: www.utbildningsinfo.se.

Search tool for schools in Sweden, www.skolverket.se/sb/d/244 (Contact information to guidance counsellors in schools around Sweden can be found on the websites of each individual school).

Search tool for local municipality learning centres in Sweden, www.larcentra.se (Contact information to the guidance services of each municipality can be found through the Websites of local municipality learning centres in different parts of Sweden).

Addresses to higher education institutions in Sweden www.hsv.se/highereducationinsweden/highereducationinstitutionsheis/listof-highereducationinstitutions.4.28afa2dc11bdcdc557480002332.html

(Contact information to the guidance services at higher education institutions can be found on the Websites of each University).

The Swedish Migration Board; www.migrationsverket.se/info/start_en.html (Information about entry visas, residence permits for studies, work permits, citizenships etc)

Guide for students with disabilities: www.studeramedfunktionshinder.nu/english/index.htm

Swedish research in the field of guidance: http://sherwood.lh.umu.se/fkvv/index_en.htm

Research project in the area of career guidance: www.educ.umu.se/forskning/presentation/projekt/individen_vagarna_valen/projekt-beskrivning.html

 Arbetsförmedlingen



THE SWEDISH NATIONAL
BOARD FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS
www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se

 HÖGSKOLEVERKET
Swedish National Agency for Higher Education



Si.
Swedish Institute

Skolverket



Stockholm
University



 Skolinspektionen



This publication has been funded with support from the European Commission. It reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

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