



Reporting on Education in Sweden

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SWEDEN





Basic facts

- **The third largest country in the European Union - geographically**
- **Small population: 9,3 million**
- **Capital: Stockholm**
- **About 85% of the population live in urban areas**
- **About 20 % are either born outside Sweden or have at least one parent born outside, many of them refugees**
- **Sweden ranks first in the world in The Economist's Democracy Index and seventh in the United Nations' Development Index.**
- **Member of the European Union since 1995**



Political system

- **Constitutional monarchy – royal power is limited to official and ceremonial functions**
- **Parliamentary system.**
- **Executive power is exercised by the government, led by the Prime Minister of Sweden.**
- **Legislative power is vested in both the government and parliament, elected within a multi-party system.**
- **Elections every four year.**
- **Foreign policy – non-alignment in peacetime**



Disposition of today's presentation

- 1. The education system in general**
- 2. Why national reports?**
- 3. Different kinds of reports**
- 4. Empirical data**
- 5. Purpose, effects and experiences**



The stages in the education system

Pre-school activities (age 1-5)

- Pre-school
- Family day-care
- Open pre-school

**Pre-school class
1 year
(age 6)**

**Compulsory school
9 years
(age 7-16)**

**Upper secondary school
3 years
(age 16-19)**

• University
• University college
• Advanced vocational training

Adult education (age 20-64)

Basic education for adults	Upper secondary education for adults	Supplementary studies
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A market-oriented system

- Pupils and parents can choose schools and programs (within certain limits)
- Today 10 % of all pupils age 6-16 and 20 % age 16-19 attend independent schools.
- Independent (private) schools have to be approved by the Swedish National Schools Inspectorate.
- Independents schools are entitled to public financing.
- Independents schools are often run by business groups, enterprises – a new phenomena.



DECENTRALIZED SYSTEM

- **Highly decentralized school system**
 - Municipalities and schools decide on financing, organization and profiles.
- **But also national regulation:**
 - Government govern the school system via the Education act, curricula and special regulation
 - Ministry of Education and Research (small)
 - Swedish National Agency for Education (large) is responsible for development, follow-up activity, evaluation at system level.
 - Swedish National Schools Inspectorate is responsible of examining the standards of quality and equivalence in schools.



The swedish model





Extensive educational policies

- **Social equality, inclusion, life-long learning.**
- **All education is free of charge (except pre-school activities).**
- **Free lunches.**
- **Adult education free of charge.**
- **Adult students have right to childcare.**
- **Generous study loans for adult education and university studies.**
- **Pupils in upper-secondary school are entitled to a student grant €100 per month.**



The role of Swedish National Agency for Education

- **Develop and implement national curriculum documents, national tests and diagnostic materials**
- **Support school improvement in areas of national importance**
- **Secure that earmarked governmental grants are distributed and used effectively**
- **Carry through national and international evaluations as well as evaluations of programs used by schools**
- **Take responsibility of national and international statistics and analyses**

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Reporting on Education – why?



- The system from a national point of view is rather complex
- Demands on the Government the national authorities
- Equity principles and national ambitions
- Transparency, accountability
- Efficiency



A broad variety of reports

- **Theme-based national evaluations and analyses and**
- **International evaluations**
- **National reports on effects of national improvement initiatives and of implementation strategies**
- **Annual reports**
- **Research reviews**

- **Local quality assurance reports**



Two types of annual reports

Both are comprehensive reports on the current situation:

- **A) One statistical, descriptive report**
- **B) Another analytical oriented report with recommendations to the government and improvements needed directed to the school owners (municipalities and boards of independent schools)**



Annual descriptive report

- **For Government and Parliament**
- **For "everyone interested"**
- **A "dictionary"**

- **The whole system – from preschool on**
- **Focus on Input and (when possible) output**



Annual analytical report

- **Words instead of figures**

Ambition

- **Policy relevant themes**
- **Value added**
- **Not descriptions of the system but explanation and understanding**



The annual analytic report for 2010

- **Of course a summary from the descriptive report**
- **Headlines/draft titles:**

Governing and responsibility – changes during last ten years

Competence and competence demands

The "soft" side of education



Annual analytical report – empirical material

- **National and international statistics**
- **National and international evaluations**
- **Inspection reports**
- **Research**
- **International outlook**



Reporting on Education – purpose and effects

- **Government strategies and initiatives**
- **Satisfying to sum up**
- **Readers' digest and dictionary**
- **Alter the national agency strategies**
- **Enrich the public debate**



Concluding comments

- **It takes a lot of time**
- **More media coverage?**
- **Aiming higher in the future**