

The national level – parliament and central government

At national level, the population is represented by the parliament, which has legislative powers. The government proposes new legislation and executes the decisions of parliament. The government has the support of the government offices, which have a number of departments, as well as around 400 central agencies and state-owned companies. The Swedish state administration model is fairly unique, with its relatively small government departments and a large number of civil service departments (central agencies) that are, compared to those of many other countries, relatively autonomous in relation to the government and government offices.

Parliament

The parliament is Sweden's legislative body and consists of 349 members who are elected every four years in general elections. The election results determine how the 349 places or mandates are to be divided up between the political parties. In order to get into parliament, a party must have a minimum of four percent of all votes in a parliamentary election or at least 12 percent of the votes in a constituency (roughly equivalent to a county or a section of a county in the most densely populated areas).

The parliament's most important tasks are to pass laws, make decisions about the state's finances, and supervise the work of the government.

A legislation proposal presented by a member of parliament or a party is called a motion. A proposal brought by the government is called a government bill. Before the parliament can vote on a proposed piece of legislation, the issue is prepared in one of the parliamentary standing committees, which, all together, cover all the areas handled by the parliament. The standing committees are working groups with responsibility for different policy areas. There is a total of 15 such committees. There is also a special body in the Riksdag (The Swedish Parliament) known as the Committee on European Union Affairs. The Government must consult this Committee on what line of policy Sweden is to pursue in different EU-matters. Generally, all parliamentary parties are represented on every committee. Examples of committees are the Standing Committee on Finance, the Standing Committee on Justice, the

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Standing Committee on the Labour Market, the Standing Committee on Agriculture (which also deals with environmental issues) and the Standing Committee on Health and Welfare.

Another important task for the parliament is to make decisions on the state's expenditure and income. This is carried out on the basis of two bills presented by the government in April and September every year.

A third important task is to supervise the government and the public administration. This is known as the supervisory power of the parliament. There are rules for this supervision in the Instrument of Government, which forms part of the constitution. The parliament has five supervisory instruments:

- The Standing Committee on the Constitution's review of the government
- Declaration of no confidence in minister
- The Swedish Parliamentary Ombudsman
- The Swedish National Audit Office
- Members of parliament's interpellations and questions to ministers.

Government

The government rules Sweden and is the motor in the process of changing our laws. The party or coalition of parties that receives the most votes in a parliamentary election creates the government. The newly elected parliament elects a prime minister (head of government) who, in turn, appoints the other members of the government (ministers). The government is accountable to the parliament and must have the support of parliament to be able to implement its policies.

In its tasks of governing Sweden, implementing the parliament's decisions and creating new or amended legislation, the government has the support of the government offices of Sweden, which has a number of departments, and around 400 government agencies and companies. Ministerial autonomy is not allowed in Sweden. All decisions made within the government are made collectively, at weekly government meetings.

Government agencies and companies

Sweden has over 400 central agencies and state-owned companies (according to the most recent review carried out as part of the Responsibility

Committee's investigation) that are accountable to the government and are arranged under the various departments. Their task is the practical implementation of the decisions made by the parliament and government. The government agencies are relatively independent of the government. This means that they are responsible for their own actions, naturally in accordance with the laws that apply to them and according to guidelines drawn up by the government on an annual basis in 'regulation letters' to every agency, which outline each agency's general direction for the coming year. Examples of government agencies include the National Board of Health and Welfare, the National Agency for Education, the National Social Insurance Agency, the National Road Administration, the National Environmental Protection Agency and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The country's universities and several major museums are also government agencies. Examples of state-owned companies are the Post Office and the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation.

The regional level – County Administrative Boards, County Councils and special Regional Councils

As early as 1634, when Sweden was a major political power in Europe, the Swedish state administration was reformed and county administrative boards were established, led by governors appointed by the king. The main task of the county administrative boards became to monitor the bailiffs to ensure that taxes were collected in the correct way, and the governors were the king's office-holders in the counties. This reform and the division of the country into counties with governors as the extended arm of the state at the regional level, has remained until the present day, although the roles of the governors and county administrative boards have of course changed drastically. Taxes are now managed by the National Tax Board, which is a separate government agency with offices both in Stockholm and at the regional and local level.

The most important role of the county administrative boards now is to represent the government at regional level and to coordinate the policy areas that the government has delegated to them. The role of the county administrative boards also includes bringing

a comprehensive national perspective to the regional level, and acting according to that perspective. The work of the county administrative boards includes supervision and in some cases reviewing decisions made at municipal level, as well as advising and coordinating municipalities. The county administrative boards should also take responsibility for protection of nature and the environment.

County councils

The primary area of responsibility for the county councils is healthcare and medical treatment. Other common county council areas are community dental care, education (mainly healthcare training), culture (primarily county music initiatives, county theatres and museums), and supporting trade and industry in the county. The responsibility for public transport in a county is usually split between the municipalities and the county councils. The county councils' work is funded mostly by the county tax, but also through government grants and charges, and it is regulated by the Swedish Local Government Act.

Each county council's political decisions are made by a directly elected assembly, the county council assembly. The assembly appoints a county executive committee that leads and coordinates the county council's work. There are also a number of committees that are charged with various matters to be dealt with in the county council assembly. The committees are also responsible for implementing the decisions that are made – for which they naturally have administrative resources with experts in the fields of activities, including hospitals with doctors, nurses and other staff.

According to Swedish law, the work of the county council is governed by the same legislation as that of the municipalities – the Local Government Act. As such, there is no formal difference between a county council and a municipality in terms of legislation, except in terms of their division of work. This is often hard for observers from other countries to understand.

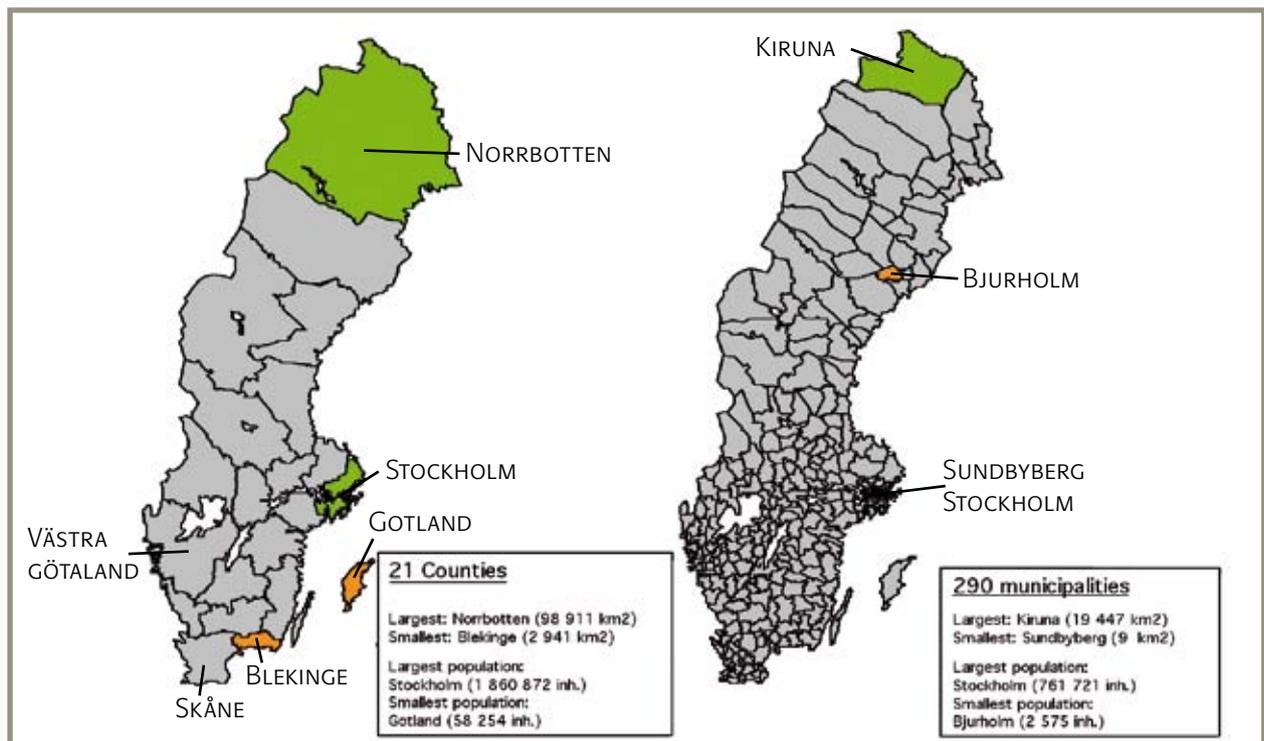
It can also be difficult to understand the differences between the county council and the county administrative board. As such, there is reason to emphasise that the county council works in the same way as a municipality, with special tasks at regional level, which individual municipalities are often too small

to manage in a financially viable way. The county administrative board, by contrast, is a government agency tasked with implementing government decisions at county level and exercising supervision over the county's municipalities on behalf of the state.

Special Regional Councils

To complicate the structure of the Swedish public administration somewhat more, it should be said that there are some regions, especially two (Skåne

and Västra Götaland) that according to a special legislation already have taken over the role of the ordinary county councils and some responsibilities from central state agencies and the county administrative boards in line with the proposals from the Responsibility Committee, commented earlier in this newsletter. These directly elected Regional Councils and their administrations are functioning very well, and this fact is a strong argument for the proposals from the Responsibility Committee.



The Local level – Municipalities

Sweden is divided into 290 municipalities. Each municipality has a popularly elected assembly, the municipal council, which makes decisions on local issues. The municipal council appoints a municipal executive board, which takes the executive lead on the municipality's activities.

The municipal council makes decisions in a large number of areas: compulsory schooling, upper secondary schooling, pre-school, care for the elderly, roads, water and sewage, waste management, energy, emergency services, sustainable development, urban planning and use of land and water in general, etc. The municipalities issue different types of permission, such as building permissions, permissions concerning environmental protection and licences

for serving of alcoholic beverages.

This work is funded through municipal taxes, government subsidies and charges, and is primarily regulated by the Local Government Act. Other important laws for the municipalities are national laws such as the Social Services Act, the Planning and Building Act, the Environmental Code and the Education Act.

The municipal council usually meets once a month to make all the important decisions for the municipality. These meetings are public, as are the minutes. Inhabitants can appeal against decisions made at municipal level at an administrative court.

The municipal council appoints the municipal executive board. The party or coalition of parties that has a majority in the council also gains

a majority on the executive board. The municipal executive board is the central executive body in the municipality. The municipal assembly also appoints the committees that are needed in order to carry out municipal tasks. These committees are responsible for administration and implementation of the assembly's decisions.

Since Swedish municipalities are carrying out the main part of the public administration tasks, their administrations are big. A rule of thumb is that the size of administration – excluding municipal owned companies – corresponds to around 8 % of the population. Stockholm's administration consists of about 50 000 persons and Bjurholm's of around 300 persons.

In not so few municipalities, the public administration is the biggest employer in the municipality. About 20 % of all employees in Sweden are employed within the public sector.

Sweden in the second half of the 19:th century



- 1/3 of the population migrated, the main part to the USA
- Hunger riots
- Low literacy
- Non existent democracy
- Women without right to inherit
- Inequality in distribution of resources
- School system not for everyone
- No religious freedom and dominating priesthood

History

Until the mid 19th century, the church was responsible for areas such as 'care for the poor' and some educational work. The work was divided into parishes. This system was replaced in 1862 when Sweden was divided into municipalities for the first

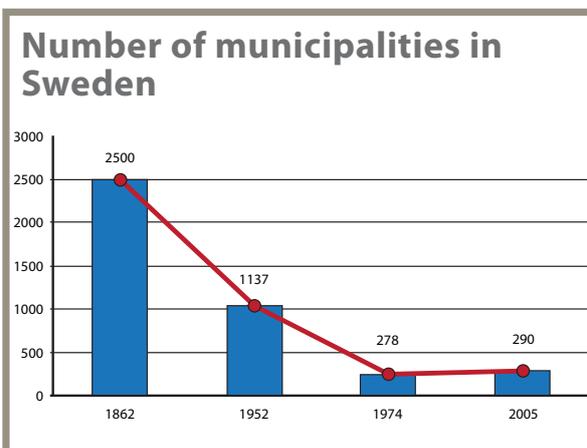
time – 2498 of them. Sweden was at that time one of the poorest countries in Europe with very uneven social and economic conditions.

At this time, 25 county councils were also established in order to deal with areas covering several municipalities. These areas – which included infrastructure, industry and hospitals – grew as industrialisation spread.

By the 1950s it became clear that the development had brought about a need for larger municipalities, in order for them to be able to handle their responsibilities, including education and social services.

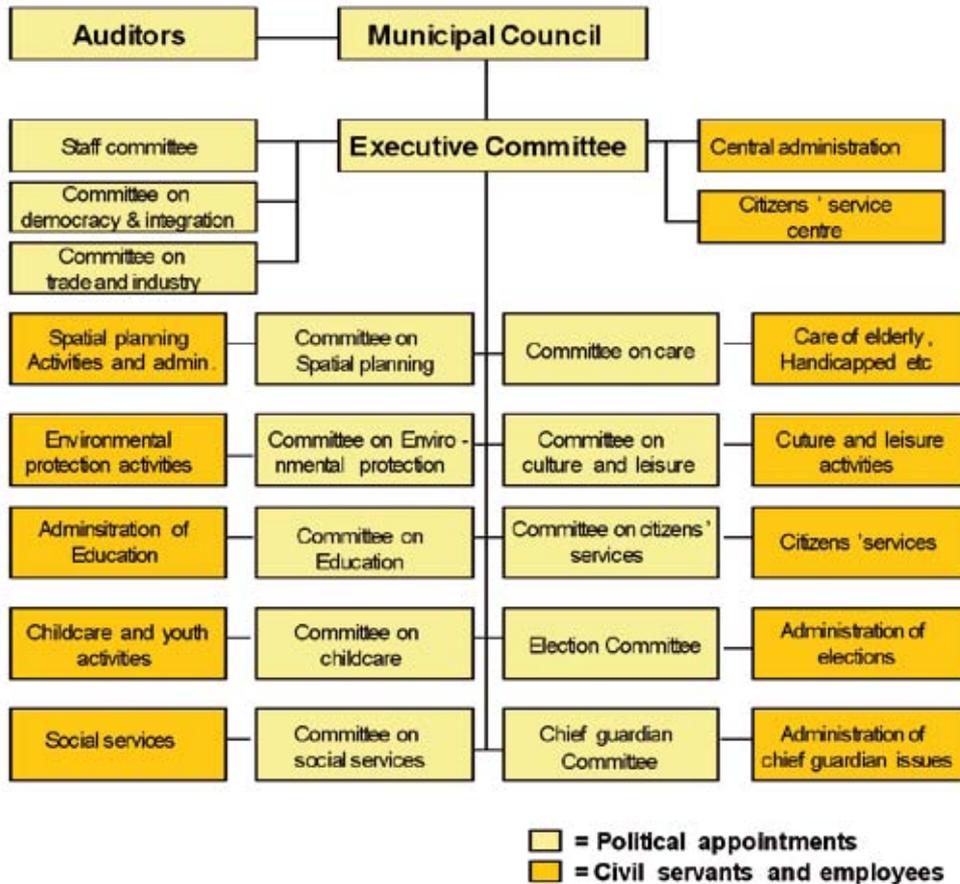
The reform in 1952 cut the number of municipalities to less than half of the previous total. Between 1962 and 1974, the number of municipalities through a main amalgamation process decreased further, from 1037 to 278. The main reason for this amalgamation of municipalities was to make it possible for the new municipalities to handle new tasks that were put on them from central government. Since then, the total has increased slightly as some municipalities have been split. The number of county councils has decreased in recent years as a result of regional reforms. As of 2007, Sweden is made up of 290 municipalities and 21 county councils, of which two are the Skåne and Västra Götaland regions with the extended responsibilities mentioned earlier in this article.

The Swedish municipalities have today good opportunities to decide how to organise their administrations within the frames of the laws and other regulations they have to follow. Many different concepts have been developed and set into practice. A normal structure is the following:



Municipal organisation

-example



Participation in general elections

In the mid 1970s, participation in municipal elections was around 90 percent. At the election in 2006, that figure was 79 percent. County council elections have followed the same pattern, and county council election participation in 2006 was also 79 percent. Participation in the parliamentary election the same year was 82 percent.

For the general elections in Sweden during the period 1994 – 2006, the figures were the following:

Election year	To parliament	To county councils	To municipalities
1994	88 %	84 %	84 %
1998	81 %	77 %	78 %
2002	80 %	77 %	78 %
2006	82 %	79 %	79 %

Some figures about the current elected representatives in Swedish municipalities and county councils

- 40 000 part time politicians
- Compensatory payment for loss of income
- 6 000 full time politicians
- 42 % women (47 % in county councils)
- 58 % men (53 in county councils)
- 14 % aged between 18 and 36 years
- 29 % aged between 37 and 50
- 45 % between 50 and 64
- 12 % aged 65 or more

Project in focus: Stockholm – Marmara Region (Istanbul, Büyükçekmece and Zeytinburnu)

Two items were at the top of the agenda for the politicians and civil servants visiting Stockholm from the Istanbul-Marmara region: education of consumers on waste management, and methods of recycling.

The current phase of the collaboration project between the City of Stockholm (and the associated Nacka Municipality in Greater Stockholm region) and the participating four municipalities in Istanbul-Marmara region (Istanbul, Büyükçekmece, Zeytinburnu and associated Adalar) is based on information work and influencing behaviour in order to increase recycling of waste in Istanbul Metropolitan Urban Region. Nacka Municipality that previously had a joint water project with the Princes' Islands outside Istanbul (Adalar Municipality) has also together with Adalar been associated to the project. From the Swedish side, the goal of the Turkish visit to Stockholm was to inform and show how a functioning waste management and recycling system works.

In Sweden today, there is a high level of awareness of these issues, and a will to pay the charges associated with waste management.

The UN has held several major environmental conferences, of which the earth summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 in particular garnered a great deal of media attention. Incidentally, this was followed up in Istanbul in 1996. In the 1990s, an increasing number of Swedish homeowners became interested in composting food waste in their gardens. Waste began to be seen as a resource, and this thinking now characterises Sweden's attitude to waste management. More and more pieces of detailed legislation have been passed, many at the EU level, which have placed an increased responsibility on manufacturers for waste management.

“We also have collection systems that are easy to understand, with well-marked recycling containers situated in public places in the municipalities,” says

Christina Durling of Stockholm City, who explained how the municipality informs its residents on waste management issues.



Station for sorting of household waste in Stockholm, visited by the Turkish delegation from the Istanbul Metropolitan region during the study visit in August 2007. Here the citizens can leave paper, cardboard boxes, white and coloured glass, rigid plastic, and metal cans. Mr Ibrahim Demir and Mr Nafiz Eyüp Korkut taking a special close view of the design of the containers.

There are still many questions that need to be answered, from landlords, homeowners, companies and individuals in rented apartments. One of the most important tools is the municipality website, which has environmental guides, instructions on how to deal with different kinds of waste, refuse collection times and information on composting, to name a few examples.

“Of course we also do direct mailings of brochures, conduct information campaigns and distribute informational films.”

There is also a customer service line with seven staff members who link the general public with key people, both within the municipality and with the contractors who take care of collections. The staff who deal with invoicing of waste charges also have a responsibility in terms of informing the citizens.

“In addition, the contractor's employees, who meet the inhabitants of the municipality in their day-to-day

work, are also an important information channel.”

Information is spread from central sources to the general public. These sources include the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (a state agency), the independent Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, and the Keep Sweden Clean foundation, which was founded in the 1960s.

In order to reach citizens in an effective way, investments are being made in environmental education for school children from the beginning of compulsory schooling. Informing school students about environmental issues is included in the Swedish curriculum, but more and more schools are also starting to be more active in recycling and waste management. The Keep Sweden Clean foundation introduced the international Green Flag certification process and guidelines for environmental work in schools, and over a thousand Swedish schools follow these guidelines. The Green Flag system seeks to follow the environmental management principles laid down in the EMAS and ISO 14001 systems, from the perspective of children and young people. Several Swedish municipalities have decided that their schools and pre-schools are to use the Green Flag as their environmental management system.

The key concept in Swedish waste management is the recycling principle – seeing waste as a resource. Waste management is based on what is known as a waste hierarchy. This means that waste products should first be re-used, then recycled or incinerated, and only in the last hand be disposed of on a refuse dump. In environmental terms, this order is preferable, as waste is broken down slowest when it is dumped.

There are major energy benefits in using what are known as secondary raw materials. For example, 95 percent more energy is needed to produce new aluminium than to recycle aluminium, according to the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. For some kinds of plastic and steel, the equivalent energy benefit is around 75 percent, and for glass and paper the energy benefit is around 20 percent.

Sofielund recycling facility south of Stockholm, is jointly owned by five municipalities and has been developed to deal with waste from both households and companies. The facility was one of the stops during the Turkish visit. The size of the facility is equivalent to 124 football pitches.



The Turkish delegation visiting the Recycling Center Bromma in Stockholm. From left: Mr Nafiz Eyüp Korkut, Mrs Zehra Taskesenlioglu, Mr Sedat Özkan, Mr Ibrahim Demir, Mrs Merab Bilos (interpreter) and Mr Gökhan Kasap.

In 2006, Sofielund received around 340,000 tonnes of waste and was able to recycle 225,000 tonnes. The area also houses large refuse deposits, and the facility is expected to cope for a further 30-50 years before these deposits are full. One deposit is already being covered with soil, clay and rock.

Nonetheless, even these refuse deposits have their function. All of the deposits contain pipes which make use of the methane gas created.

The recycling process has also been developed in terms of composting of organic waste at the facility. This takes place on a large scale here. Compost material is placed in 3-5 metre wide and 1.5-2-5 metre high windrows on a large outdoor platform. As bacteria break down the compost, the temperature rises.

In order for the heat to kill dangerous bacteria, it must be between 50 and 70 degrees. In order to maintain an even temperature throughout the compost, the windrows are tilled. For the first month this is done once to twice a week, and after that every other week for two months. The humidity of the compost

determines how successful the process will be – if the material is too dry, the decomposition process stops. As such, the windrows are watered whenever necessary.

After around three months, the compost can be placed in post-composting to mature. This compost will become extremely rich in nutrients. It can later be mixed with sand and sold as garden soil under the brand Södertörns jord (Södertörn soil). The water used is conducted to reservoirs where it is purified and then sent to Stockholm Water, a company owned by the City of Stockholm..

In large city areas, where the space available for creation of recycling facilities close to the city is limited, anaerobic digestion is an alternative. The digestion process is estimated to take around one month, compared with composting which takes several months. Anaerobic digestion is also an interesting alternative for cities that need to deal with large quantities of waste from restaurants and other food establishments.

A facility that can process up to 50,000 tonnes of food waste annually is estimated to cost around 32 million EUR.

Only relatively 'clean' food waste can be used in anaerobic digestion.

The Turkish group also visited the district heating power plant in Högdalen. Combustible waste from the Stockholm region is dealt with there. The process creates both electricity and district heating. Istanbul is planning to build a waste incineration facility as soon as possible, and the participants in the visit were extremely interested in different technical solutions.

The Swedish and Turkish group will now focus their collaboration project on information and education of inhabitants, adults, school children and relevant professional groups in Metropolitan Istanbul. It is vital that waste management is communicated in a way that is easy to understand, in order to offer an explanation for the charges.



Bottle and can return facilities at the ICA Maxi supermarket in Nacka. Each machine generates around two million returned bottles and cans per year. Customers can choose either to get money back for the packaging they return or to donate the money to charity. Every year around 11,000 EUR is donated to charity only from this supermarket.

Facts about Sweden and Turkey – some comparative statistics and other data

	SWEDEN	TURKEY
AREA SQUARE KM	449 964	779 452
NUMBER OF INHABITANTS (2006)	9 100 000	74 200 000
NUMBER OF INHABITANTS PER SQUARE KM (2006)	20,2	95,2
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE % (2005)	6	10
SHARE OF WOMEN OF THE WORKING FORCE (2003)	48	39
NUMBER OF PCs PER 1000 INHABITANTS (2003)	621	45
NUMBER OF MOBILE PHONES PER 1000 INHABITANTS (2003)	980	394
IMPORTANT INDUSTRIAL SECTORS	TELECOM AUTOMOTIVE STEEL FORESTRY AND PULP PHARMACEUTICAL	AGRICULTURE TEXTILE AND SHOES MACHINERY TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT
TOTAL GNP IN MILLION US DOLLARS (2006)	380 752	378 425
GNP PER CAPITA IN US DOLLARS (2006)	41 841	5 100
SHARE OF AGRICULTURE OF GNP IN % (2005)	1	12
SHARE OF INDUSTRY OF GNP IN % (2005)	28	24
SHARE OF THE SERVICE SECTOR OF GNP IN % (2005)	71	65
% OF CHILDREN IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (2004)	100	89
FEMALE LITERACY IN % (2002)	CLOSE TO 100	81
MALE LITERACY IN % (2002)	CLOSE TO 100	96
SHARE OF URBAN POPULATION (2005)	84,5	67
EXPECTED LENGTH OF LIFE, FEMALES (2005)	83	74
EXPECTED LENGTH OF LIFE, MALES (2005)	78	69
NATURAL POPULATION GROWTH IN % (2005)	0	1,3
ETHNICAL GROUPS, %	SWEDES 83 NON-NORDIC EUROPEANS 4 ASIANS 3 FINNS 2 OTHER 8	TURKS 81 OTHER 19
DISCHARGE OF CARBON DIOXIDE IN METRIC TONS PER INHABITANT (2002)	5,8	3

The **tuse**net project is part of the Swedish programme for cooperation with Turkey – a programme aiming at strengthening the process of democratisation and respect for human rights in Turkey and promoting closer links with European cooperation structures and common values.

One major ingredient of the programme is bilateral cooperation between local authorities in Turkey and Sweden. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) is supposed to play an important role by inspiring reform of the municipal sector and development of its Turkish equivalent (the Union of Municipalities of Turkey, UMT).

The **tuse**net project aims at supporting Turkish municipalities and UMT to be capable to take on roles as professional organisations in the road to a future EU membership – in areas as good governance, efficiency, democracy and transparency in actions, capacity building, safe-guarding of municipal interests, cooperation with different stakeholders, etc.

The project is built on cooperation between six networks of Swedish-Turkish municipalities, involving 5 Swedish and 22 Turkish municipalities, and between SALAR and UMT.

tusenet is implemented during 2006–2010.

www.tuse.net.org

tusenet

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