

ADULT EDUCATION AND OER 2015 COUNTRY UPDATE: SWEDEN

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Sweden is a medium-sized EU Member State with a population of just 9.5 million. Its national language is Swedish, which is also an official language of Finland, where it is spoken in some regions including the Åland Islands, an autonomous Swedish-speaking part of Finland.

Education in Sweden is mandatory for all children between age 7 and age 16. The school year in Sweden runs from mid/late August to early/mid June. The Christmas holiday from mid December to early January divides the Swedish school year into two terms. Homeschooling is closely supervised by the government and very limited.

From the age of one, children can be admitted to pre-school (*förskola*). During the year before children start compulsory school, all children are offered a place in a pre-school class (*förskoleklass*), which combines the pedagogical methods of the pre-school with those of compulsory school. Between ages 6/7 and 15/16, children attend compulsory comprehensive school (*grundskola*), divided in three stages. The vast majority of schools in Sweden are municipally run, but there are also autonomous and publicly funded schools, known as 'independent schools'. The education in independent schools has many objectives in common with the municipal school, but it can have an orientation that differs from that of the municipal schools. A handful of boarding schools, known as 'private schools', are funded by privately paid tuition.

In 2008, statistics showed that of all Swedes aged 25–64, 15% have completed only compulsory education (as the highest level of attainment), 46% only upper secondary education, 14% only post-secondary education of less than three years, and 22% post-secondary education of three years or more. Women are more educated than men (26% of women as against 19% of men have post-secondary education of three years or more). The level of education is highest among those aged 25–34, and decreases with age. Both upper secondary school and university studies are financed by national taxes. Some Swedes go straight to work after secondary school. Along with several other European countries, the government used to subsidize tuition of non-EU/EEA students pursuing a degree at Swedish institutions, but in 2010 they started charging non-EU/EEA students 80,000-100,000 SEK per year. Swedish fifteen-years-old pupils have the 22nd highest average score in the **PISA**¹ assessments, being neither significantly higher nor lower than the OECD average.

1 Adult education in Sweden

Since the early 1960s Sweden has been in the forefront in the western world in terms of investment in adult education. In the mid 1970s several reforms were established e.g. on the adult education system and on student welfare. Thanks to those reforms the long tradition of *Folkbildning* (adult liberal education) through the grassroots educational and cultural work in adult education could continue.

The school system for adults includes municipal *adult education*, *special education for adults* and *training in Swedish for immigrants*. Secondary school on a vocational programme provides qualification for further studies. Most often tertiary education is required for attainment to higher education. Post-secondary education is provided by Municipal 'KomVux' schools (short for KOMmunal VUXenutbildning, lit. 'Municipal Adult

¹ <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/>

Education'),² and independent boarding schools named *Folkhögskolor*³ (or People's High Schools in English).

A student from a vocational programme in secondary school is able to apply for what is called Qualified Vocational Education or '*Kvalificerad Yrkesutbildning*' (KY). This form combines education and practical experience from business or industry in the chosen field. The level of education is essentially post-secondary but can also contain courses that meet the requirements of tertiary education. The KomVux and the Qualified Vocational Education in some ways correspond to what is offered by community colleges in the United States.

Municipal adult education in Sweden is organized in three strands:⁴ adult education, post-secondary vocational education and training, and liberal adult education, adapted from information on the website of the Government Offices of Sweden 2014.⁵

Adult education is organized in three strands:

- **Municipal adult education (Komvux)** at basic level is to help adults gain the knowledge they need to take part in society and working life. It is also meant to prepare adults for further study. Municipal adult education at upper secondary level, in turn, is to equip adults with knowledge corresponding to the levels set for pupils at upper secondary school.
- **Education for adults with learning disabilities (Särvux)** aims to equip these adults with knowledge corresponding to that taught in compulsory and upper secondary schools for pupils with learning disabilities.
- **Swedish for immigrants (SFI)** is intended to equip adult immigrants with a basic knowledge of the Swedish language. A further purpose of Sfi is to teach reading and writing to immigrants who lack basic knowledge of these skills.

Post-upper secondary vocational education and training is organised in two strands:

- **Higher vocational education programmes and courses** are organised by state higher education institutions, municipalities, county councils and private natural or legal persons. The courses are designed and delivered by partnerships between businesses and education providers. Hence, the courses have strong links with working life and a sound theoretical foundation.
- **Supplementary education** helps adults develop knowledge and skills in specific occupational fields and can help to preserve traditional trade skills, among other things.

Liberal adult education (*Folkbildning*) has a long tradition in Swedish society. It includes folk high schools, study associations and student organisations at folk high schools. There is considerable freedom in setting course objectives, while the Government Offices of Sweden defines the conditions of the government grants through the Swedish National Council of Adult Education⁶ distributes government's grants to liberal adult education.

Folkbildning (*Folk* means people and *bildning* means learning) is the Swedish form of non-formal adult education. Folkbildning is a voluntary and decentralised form of learning which strengthens and enriches people and thereby the whole of society. Ever since the first study circle was held in 1901, study circles have been a meeting place for increasing

² <http://allastudier.se/tips-o-fakta/49-komvux/>

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folk_high_school

⁴ See <http://www.government.se/sb/d/6997>

⁵ See <http://www.government.se/sb/d/6997>

⁶ <http://www.eaea.org/en/membership/eaea-members/sweden-he-swedish-national-council-of-adult-education-ordinary-member.html>

knowledge and involvement. Sweden's ten study associations organise cultural programmes and lectures. However, it is the study circle which is the cornerstone of folkbildning. In the circle the participants benefit from their own experiences and knowledge and that of others. Folkbildning is part of civil society. Most of the major popular movements in Sweden work in partnership with the study associations, which together have approximately 200 member organisations, which gives access to unique networks, and enabling to engage with people who few other organisations in society are able to reach. Folkbildning organisations have since 1912 financial support from the state. It is generally agreed that folkbildning should be run separately from the state, but be financed by public funds. The importance of folkbildning to Swedish society is recognised by all political parties.

The National Agency for Education in Sweden (Skolverket)⁷ has a special action programme for lifelong learning. The programme aims to create an overview of lifelong learning in the country, identifying and analysing key issues in a strategy for lifelong learning.⁸

2 Copyright in Sweden

The Act on Copyright in Literary and Artistic Works (1960:729)⁹ is the framework for the overall regulations on copyright for the country. The Act states that anyone who has created a literary or artistic work shall have copyright in that work, whatever kind of media it is produced in.

Creative Commons is working with Göteborg University to create Sweden jurisdiction-specific licenses from the generic Creative Commons licenses. The regulations and guidelines are stated in the site *Creative Commons Sverige*.¹⁰

Although many teachers already use and produce CC resources there are seldom any strategic or policy initiatives. There are however a number of national initiatives that are worth noting:

- **Kolla Källan**¹¹ gives a guide to copyright, Creative Commons, source criticism and plagiarism, aimed at schools and adult education. Amongst many other resources is a brochure explaining Creative Commons for teachers that are widely spread in Swedish schools.
- **Legalahandboken**¹² (English: Legal handbook) is a national guide on legal issues affecting higher education institutions in Sweden. It includes guides on OER and Creative Commons as well as extensive information on issues such as copyright law, archiving, public information legislation, social media and freedom of expression legislation.
- **SE Internet Infrastructure Foundation**¹³ has published a wide range of internet guides for use in all levels of education as well as for public use. The aim of these guides is to raise awareness of digital literacy, net security, integrity and privacy issues, copyright and source criticism. They have produced two guides with relevance to Creative Commons that are freely available: Creative Commons (Kristina Alexanderson, Jessica Bäck) and Copyright – Copyleft (Mathias Klang).

⁷ <http://www.skolverket.se/om-skolverket/andra-sprak-och-lattlast/in-english>

⁸ <http://bit.ly/1JGXvY>

⁹ http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file_id=241679

¹⁰ <http://www.creativecommons.se/>

¹¹ See <http://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/resurser-for-larande/kollakallan>

¹² <http://www.legalahandboken.se/>

¹³ <https://www.iis.se/lar-dig-mer/guider/>

Wikimedia Sverige¹⁴ works in partnership with schools, libraries, universities and local organisations to raise awareness of Wikipedia, Creative Commons and openness in general. Their current initiatives are reported on a blog.¹⁵

3 OER in adult education in Sweden

In Sweden there is no special or single political strategy or vision to implement OER in adult education. However, although there are a number of initiatives, projects and resources there is no clear overall strategy from government level at present addressing OER issues. The use of OER in Swedish adult education is at present fragmentary, and is more characterised by local and individual initiatives. Consequently this report cannot claim to be comprehensive.

Swedish MOOC development

Sweden was rather late in entering the MOOC movement. One possible explanation is that since there are no fees for higher education (except for non-EU citizens) the issues of mounting student debt and the need for alternatives is not felt so acutely as in other countries such as the USA. In 2014 the first Swedish universities began offering courses via the main global MOOC consortia Coursera and EdX. The Open Education Europa MOOC scorecard records a total of 9 in all.¹⁶ Recent MOOCs include **Chalmers Technical University**¹⁷ – 2 courses during spring 2015; **Karolinska Institute**¹⁸ – 5 courses 2014-2015; **Lund University**¹⁹ – 3 courses during 2015; **Mid Sweden University** – one course in autumn 2014²⁰ and **Karlstad University** (Lifelong Learning Web) – several open professional development courses for school teachers in cooperation with the National education authority (Skolverket) and Norwegian Lillehammer University College.²¹ **Uppsala University**²² is planning to launch MOOCs in 2015.

A Scandinavian MOOC conference, *MOOCs in Scandinavia*,²³ will be held at Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, 11-12 June 2015. This intends to develop Scandinavian cooperation in MOOC development.

There have also been a number of open courses offered as cMOOCs that have gained much less publicity than the above but are possibly better examples of open practice. Two such courses are **Open Networked Learning**, a 6 week open course for university teachers run by Karolinska Institute, Lund University and Linnaeus University²⁴ and **Digitala skollyftet** – cMOOC for school teachers on the development and use of OER. 2013-2014.²⁵

Some more widely known initiatives in OER are **OER resources for learning 2010-2011**, funded by The National Library of Sweden²⁶ and **OER open possibilities for learning 2012-2013**, funded by the foundation for IT infrastructure.²⁷

Other notable projects in OER where Sweden is involved include:

¹⁴ <http://se.wikimedia.org/wiki/Huvudsida>

¹⁵ <https://wikimediasverige.wordpress.com/>

¹⁶ http://openeducationeuropa.eu/en/open_education_scoreboard

¹⁷ <https://www.edx.org/school/chalmersx>

¹⁸ <https://www.edx.org/school/kix>

¹⁹ <https://www.coursera.org/lunduniversity>

²⁰ <http://www.miun.se/press/2014/mooc>

²¹ <https://www.llw.se/> and <http://www.kau.se/ctf/forskning/kurser-inom-tjansteinnovation>

²² <https://www.uu.se/en/>

²³ <http://ki.se/en/lime/moocs-in-scandinavia-conference>

²⁴ <https://opennetworkedlearning.wordpress.com/>

²⁵ <http://oersverige.se/> and <http://skollyftet.se/>

²⁶ http://www.kb.se/dokument/Om/projekt/open_access/2011/OER%20slutrapport%20v2.pdf

²⁷ <http://journals.lub.lu.se/index.php/sciecominfo/article/view/5678> and

<https://www.internetfonden.se/oer-oppna-mojligheter-for-larande/>

- **IMPOERS**,²⁸ Implementing OER in the Nursing Programme, Dalarna University
- **Implementing OER in Sound and Music Production**, Dalarna University (no URL so far)
- **Luleå Technical University**, OER-based Occupational Therapy programme in preparation²⁹
- **Nordic OER**, funded by the Nordic Council of Ministries³⁰
- **SVERD** Boldic Open Learning Resources Online (BOLDIC OLRO)³¹
- **LangOER** aims at enhancing teaching and learning of less used languages through OER/OEP.³² More information about the situation in Sweden is given on the webpage. Within the framework of LangOER project an online course based on David Wiley's framework for transparency, will be offered starting in late March 2015.³³ An analysis of the interaction of the OER repository Lektion.se from a quality perspective will be presented at the EUROCALL conference. Furthermore Gothenburg University through the LangOER project anticipates participation in the Erasmus+ project ExpLOERer.³⁴

Other initiatives include **DIGIREF**,³⁵ Learning and teaching materials (with CC) free and reviewed by the editorial staff of Digiref; **DIGISAM**,³⁶ a secretariat for national coordination of digitisation, digital preservation and digital access to cultural heritage; **Fjärde uppgiften**³⁷ (*Fourth mission*), a library of short video interviews with prominent Swedish researchers aiming to raise public awareness of current research; **Folkbildningsnätet**³⁸ (Swedish non-formal liberal education, *Folkbildning*), a collection of educational resources (films, podcasts, images, texts, lessons etc.) for use in study associations and folk high schools, mostly with CC licenses: it also contains guides and background to help teachers use the resources; **Kursplanering.se**,³⁹ a resource for course design; **Lantmäteriet**,⁴⁰ the Swedish organisation for mapping (*Lantmäteriet*) provides a huge resource with maps and digital mapping services; **Learnify**⁴¹ is a commercial platform to access a wide range of learning resources, both open and proprietary (focus on schools); **Lektion.se**⁴² (Lesson.se) is a repository for OER from teachers all over Sweden aimed at schools but may even be used in adult education; **Länkskafferiet**⁴³ is a Swedish Link Library for educational use mostly aimed at primary and secondary education and originally developed by the Swedish National Agency for Education; **Matteboken**⁴⁴ is resources in mathematics; **MKFC Stockholms Folkhögskola**⁴⁵ (Stockholm liberal adult education college) is a college providing net-based courses often using OER; **Omvärld.se**⁴⁶ is resources in geography and social

²⁸ <https://impoers.wordpress.com/>

²⁹ <http://www.ltu.se/edu/programme/FVATG/mer-om-utbildningen/Las-Arbetsterapi-vid-LTU?l=en>

³⁰ <http://journals.lub.lu.se/index.php/sciecominfo/article/view/5678>

³¹ <http://www.boldic.org/>

³² <http://langoer.eun.org/>

³³ <https://www.openlearning.com>

³⁴ http://ipkl.gu.se/english/Research/research_projects/exploerer

³⁵ <http://www.digiref.se/>

³⁶ <http://digisam.se/index.php/en/>

³⁷ <http://fjardeuppgiften.se/>

³⁸ <https://wikimediasverige.wordpress.com/>

³⁹ <http://kursplanering.se/>

⁴⁰ www.lantmateriet.se

⁴¹ <http://www.learnify.se/>

⁴² <http://www.lektion.se/>

⁴³ <http://www.lanlskafferiet.org/>

⁴⁴ <http://www.matteboken.se/>

⁴⁵ <http://mkfc.se/>

⁴⁶ <http://www.omvarld.se/>

studies; **OPEN SNH**⁴⁷ (Samverkan för nätbaserad högskoleutbildning, Eng. Collaboration for flexible education) is resources primarily for higher education; **Re:flex**⁴⁸ is a site dedicated to spreading awareness of flexible learning, digital literacy and e-learning aimed primarily at teachers working in Swedish non-formal liberal education (folkbildning): it contains guides on OER, Creative Commons etc.; **Sambruk**⁴⁹ (former Digidel) – instigated on the idea that all Swedish municipalities have identical missions, responsibilities and challenges to undertake in order to serve their citizens; **SE Webbstjärnan**⁵⁰ – provides students and teachers an opportunity to learn more about web, internet and web publishing; **The National Agency for Education (Skolverket)**⁵¹ is the central administrative authority for the public school system, publicly organised pre schooling, school-age child care and for adult education. The site includes a page with links and information about digital learning resources. One interesting initiative is the search engine Spindeln which is set up to search for digital resources for school work (also as link as below) covers over 200,000 open educational resources; **SPINDELN**⁵² OER search tool for schools; **StudiSverige**,⁵³ YouTube channel with lessons in several subjects; **The Digital Museum**⁵⁴ which contains 718,922 objects and exhibitions from 17 museums and collections; **The Open Access project**⁵⁵ initiated by the National Library of Sweden to promote the visibility, transparency and accessibility of open resources is aimed at exploring, raising awareness of and disseminating OER and the resulting advantages for teaching and learning; **UR Access for universities**⁵⁶ is a collaborative service from more than 25 educational institutions, providing access to all streamed material, radio- and TV-programmes provided by the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company (UR); **UR Play**,⁵⁷ the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company's (UR) media player which allows you to watch and listen to UR's programmes whenever you want to; and **Wikimedia Sweden**.⁵⁸

Swedish schools in approximately 250 municipalities have implemented one laptop per pupil schemes (One-to-one). In line with the technology rollout many municipalities have also established their own OER collections, but these are mostly stand-alone initiatives and there is so far no national coordination. These collections are often publically accessible and therefore can benefit other educational sectors. Four such initiatives are **Falköping municipality**, **Teacher-on-demand**,⁵⁹ **Kalmar municipality**, **Kollegieblocket**;⁶⁰ **Kunskapshubben** (Årsta school, Stockholm);⁶¹ and **Köping municipality**.⁶²

4 Quality for OER in Sweden

Swedish *folkbildning* (adult liberal education) has worked with OER at a national level through the Swedish National Council of Adult Education (*Folkbildningsrådet*) to provide a

⁴⁷ <http://www.opensnh.se/>

⁴⁸ <http://www.reflex.folkbildning.net/>

⁴⁹ <http://www.sambruk.se/projektnatverk/digidel2015.4.554830361429b83aad324f1.html>

⁵⁰ <https://www.webbstjarnan.se/>

⁵¹ www.skolverket.se

⁵² <http://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/resurser-for-larande/itiskolan/digitala-larresurser/sok-med-spindeln>

⁵³ <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6isUPfzZc2QqW5FzQ-mRNA>

⁵⁴ <https://digitaltmuseum.se/>

⁵⁵ <http://www.kb.se/openaccess/>

⁵⁶ <http://www.ur.se/Webbar/Access-Mediecentraler3/Access-Mediecentraler/Aktuellt>

⁵⁷ <http://urplay.se/>

⁵⁸ <https://www.wikimedia.se/sv/Utbildning>

⁵⁹ <http://www.teacherondemand.se/>

⁶⁰ <http://kollegieblocket.ksgyf.se/home>

⁶¹ <http://www.kunskapshubben.se/>

⁶² <http://www.koping.se/nyhetslista/nyhetslista/kopings-larare-delar-med-sig/>

platform for the collection and distribution of CC licensed OER created by teachers all over the country. The majority of OER produced has been the result of various local projects thanks to funding in the development of flexible learning. The main drawback of project-based development is that there is no sustainable organisation for updating the resources. The key quality assurance issue in the use of OER in this form of adult learning is that the resources can easily be updated and adapted by all rather than being locked by outdated formats, often because the projects that created them have dissolved and no one takes responsibility for maintenance. The Swedish National Council of Adult Education has also stipulated that all resources produced by projects should have CC BY-NC-SA licenses and that the responsible schools should not profile the resources with their own logos. So far no studies have been carried out as to how OER can contribute to raising participation rates in adult education or whether issues of accreditation/validation of skills and competences acquired via OER can be considered.

The use of OER is still not mainstream even if there are many repositories, initiatives and projects. When they are used it is often within one organisation/school and seldom across organisational structures.

Although there are international quality methods available, as for example the TIPS framework, there is little evidence that they have been used. Two often-voiced concerns with OER in education are the lack of quality assurance and the difficulty of finding reliable material.

Initiatives listed earlier such as Spindeln, Länkskafferiet and Open SNH follow internationally accepted standards for metadata (Dublin Core etc.) and resources have considerable information for teachers and users. However there is little guidance for teachers about how to integrate all these resources into their teaching and the major issue is a question of culture. Changing the culture of teaching and learning towards one of sharing and collaboration takes time to achieve even if the resources, technology and methods exist.