

Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy Monitor Country Profile 2024: Sweden

The Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy Monitor is a tool used to compare and exchange knowledge on policy making and implementation in EU Member States, Iceland and Norway on the pillars and recommendations of the [European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children \(BIK+ strategy\)](#). The 2024 edition of the BIK Policy Monitor report examines the implementation of the BIK+ strategy in 29 European countries, including all EU Member States, Iceland, and Norway.

The country profile outlines findings about the implementation of the BIK+ strategy based on BIK policies and BIK+ actions across the strategy's three pillars as surveyed in the BIK Policy Monitor (as per February 2024). Download the full [BIK Policy Monitor report 2024](#) from the Better Internet for Kids website.

BIK policies

Policy frameworks

Policy frameworks describe the overarching approach for a better internet and establish the underlying goals, principles and guidelines that shape individual policies within this area.

- This topic is **an important and emerging policy priority**, with children's online protection, digital empowerment, and digital participation partially covered in national/regional laws, regulations and policies.
- There are **separate, dedicated policies that address children and the digital environment** (protection, empowerment, and participation).
- The BIK / BIK+ strategy **has not influenced national policies** on children and the environment

- Children's rights in the digital environment **are not explicitly recognised in national policy documents** but receive implicit support in policies dealing with children's digital activity.

	High	Medium	Low	Other
Coverage of BIK+ issues in national policies		X		
Integration of policy provision		X		
Influence of the BIK+ strategy			X	
Recognition of children's rights		X		

Table 1: Topic summary - policy frameworks

Key national policy frameworks are:

- Since 2018, the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) has been recognised as Swedish law (SFS 2018:1197). The law does not explicitly mention the digital environment; however, it does recognise children's rights to life, survival and development and the right to be protected.
- The [Swedish Radio and Television Act](#) (2010:696) contains provisions aimed at protecting children from depictions of violence and pornography. These regulations apply to on-demand services. Additionally, the Act includes requirements specifying that a provider of a video-sharing platform shall take appropriate measures to ensure that user-generated videos, television programs, and audiovisual commercial communications containing realistic depictions of violence or explicit pornographic content are not provided in a manner that poses a significant risk of exposure to children unless it is justifiable for specific reasons.
- A goal of [Sweden's Youth Policy](#) is for all young people to be able to shape their own lives and influence society's development.
- Policy documents relevant to online safety issues in a wide sense and for all age groups are the government's [strategy for democracy support through](#)

Swedish party-affiliated organisations 2024–2027 and for a sustainable digital transformation in Sweden – a Digital Strategy (2017).

- “A Childhood Free From Violence” (SOU 2022:70) is a government official report proposing a national strategy concerning violence against children. At the time of writing, the inquiry circulates between organisations for comments before it is up for decision. The five overarching goals are: 1) violence against children shall be prevented, 2) violence against children shall be discovered, 3) children shall receive protection, support, and the treatment they are entitled to, 4) children’s rights in criminal trial procedures, and 5) knowledge of the field and method development shall be strengthened.
- “Improved Possibilities for Children to Demand their Rights in Accordance with the Convention of the Rights of the Child” (SOU 2023:40) is a commission of inquiry (set up by the government) that also currently is in the process of consultation.

Policy design

Policy design asks whether evidence and research support BIK-related policies and whether systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating those policies.

- **There is a regular (e.g., annual or bi-annual) nationally representative survey** specifically focused on children’s digital activity which informs national policies on this topic.
- **Systems are in place at the government level to gather information** on children and the digital environment (e.g., dedicated research units, think tanks or commissions).
- **Existing national research funding is available for research** on children and the digital environment, but this is not explicitly specified.
- **Policies are monitored and evaluated but not systematically.** It depends on the needs at a particular time or when policies are being considered.

	High	Medium	Low	Other
Regular data collection	X			
Other information supports	X			
National research fund		X		
Monitoring and evaluation		X		

Table 2: Topic summary - policy design

Recent national research studies include:

The **Swedish Agency for the Media** is tasked by the government to follow and analyse the development of **children’s and young people’s media usage**. Recent reports include

- **Children and Media 2023:** This report presents analyses of self-assessed responses from children and young people aged nine to 18 years based on a questionnaire collected in autumn/winter 2022.
- **Small children and media 2023:** The basis for the report consists of questionnaires answered by parents and guardians during autumn/winter 2022.
- **Parents and media 2023:** Parents & media 2023 reports the results from the survey of guardians' attitudes towards and opinions on various aspects of children's media use.

Policy governance

Policy governance examines how policies are coordinated at the governmental level, whether other implementation bodies are involved in their delivery, and whether structured mechanisms are available to guide their implementation.

- **Policy development sits across a range of ministries, and no lead is specifically assigned responsibility for developing government policies, guidelines and programmes** relating to children and the digital environment.

- **Coordination happens more informally across the different departments** and entities that contribute to government policies, guidelines, and programmes regarding children and the digital environment.
- Government policy has **yet to be developed into an implementable action plan** at this point.

	High	Medium	Low	Other
Lead ministry for policy development			X	
National coordination body		X		
National action plan or strategy			X	

Table 3: Topic summary - policy governance

Policies regarding children and the digital environment are spread across several ministries that work together in various formations.

The **government instruction** for the **Swedish Agency for the Media** includes that the agency should act to strengthen children and young people as conscious media users, make use of their own experiences, and protect children from harmful media influence.

The **Public Health Agency of Sweden** has a national responsibility for public health issues and works to ensure good public health and works with several issues regarding children and the digital environment.

The **Swedish Agency for the Media** together with the Public Health Agency of Sweden is commissioned with a **government mandate** to gather and compile knowledge about the relationship between health effects and digital media usage among children and young people.

Stakeholder involvement

Stakeholder involvement enquires how different stakeholders can participate in policy development. Children’s involvement in policy-making is one such key issue.

Additionally, international knowledge exchange about children's digital participation is also relevant to this topic.

- The Swedish Government has a **collective decision-making process**, meaning that all relevant departments are involved in all decisions
- The Swedish Government Offices use civil society consultations, or **Sakråd**, as a tool to discuss and hear the relevant stakeholders in a specific policy area. There is no permanent structure regarding children and the digital environment specifically, but meetings are held with stakeholders on an ad hoc basis.
- **Children are listened to directly in the policy development process** (e.g., through hearings, consultations, specific surveys) but are not formally involved in decision-making.
- **Policy makers actively participate in various EU-level and other international inter-governmental groups** related to digital policies for children.

	High	Medium	Low	Other
Stakeholder forum				X
Public consultation	X			
Involvement of young people		X		
International knowledge exchange	X			

Table 4: Topic summary - Stakeholder involvement

BIK+ actions

Pillar 1 – safe digital experiences

Safe digital experiences refer to actions taken to protect children from harmful and illegal online content, conduct, contact, and risks as young consumers and to improve their well-being online through a safe, age-appropriate digital environment created in a way that respects children’s best interests.

Responses to EU laws:

- In relation to the national implementation of the [Digital Services Act \(DSA\)](#), three competent authorities have been designated as digital service coordinators: the [Swedish Post and Telecom Authority](#), the [Swedish Agency for the Media](#) and the [Swedish Consumer Agency](#). The [Swedish Post and Telecom Authority](#) is designated as the national coordinator.

Addressing harmful online content:

- The [Radio and Television Act \(2010:696\)](#) states that user-generated videos, TV shows, and audiovisual commercial messages with substantial depictions of violence of lifelike characters or with pornographic pictures should not be available in a way that there is a substantial risk for children viewing them.
- There are no specific processes in place by which a child may complain to an administrative body, i.e., government ministry or agency, about the availability of potentially harmful online content.
- [Marketing in social media](#) is, for instance, regulated by the [Marketing Act \(2008:486\)](#). The law says that it must be clear to the viewer that it is commercial content. It must also be communicated directly so the viewer immediately understands that it is commercial; otherwise, it can be a question of hidden marketing. This can be achieved by labelling the content in a visible way.

Addressing harmful online conduct:

- Non-consensual sharing of intimate images is considered a criminal act and is covered under the Swedish Criminal Code (unlawful breach of privacy, defamation, exploitation of a child, etc.) depending on the content of the image as well as age and pubertal development of the victim.
- With regard to cyberbullying, schools and all of their staff are responsible for preventing and also investigating all forms of harassment or offensive behaviour according to the [School Act \(2010:800\)](#), Chapter 6, Sections 3 and 10. They are also obliged to act to ensure that the [harassment or offensive behaviour](#) is stopped. The [Swedish National Agency for Education](#) states on

its website that social media or other digital communication is included in this responsibility.

Age verification and digital identity systems:

- According to the [Swedish Radio and Television Act](#), detailed depictions of violence or pornographic images may not be provided in on-demand services in a manner that poses a significant risk of children viewing them, unless justified by specific reasons. According to preparatory works, a provider of on-demand services can make it difficult for children to access such depictions by using measures such as personal identification numbers (PIN codes), filtering systems, or labelling.
- There are digital ID systems, and the most common one, "Bank-id", is issued by banks, and they set the age limit, which is currently either 13 or 18 years.

	In place	In development	Not in place	Other
DSA legislation enacted		X		
Codes of practice of digital services	X			
Consumer code of practice	X			
Definition of harmful content				X
Children's complaints mechanism		X		
Bodies can order content removal		X		
Intimate image abuse laws	X			
Cyberbullying laws				X
Age verification for adult content				X
Digital identity systems	X			

Table 5: Topic summary - pillar 1: safe digital experiences

Pillar 2 – digital empowerment

Digital empowerment incorporates actions so that all children, including those in vulnerable situations, acquire the necessary skills and competences to make sound choices and express themselves in the online environment safely and responsibly.

Supports in formal education:

- Online safety is not mentioned explicitly in the [national curriculum](#). However, the national curriculum for primary and junior high schools (Lgr22) includes digitalisation and describes it as a “complex world that students need to learn how to navigate.” The curriculum states that there are opportunities as well as risks associated with digital communication and that students need to learn to communicate safely and responsibly.
- The Swedish National Agency for Education provides material for teachers regarding online safety. The agency’s objective with the material is to enhance the teachers’ understanding of online safety and incorporate those perspectives in their teaching. The agency considers that the matter of online safety has several perspectives, such as safe password use, harassment on digital platforms, and information search, to name a few.

Informal education:

- There are national/regional activities in place to reinforce informal education about online safety.
- Swedish ‘folkbildning’ comprises activities conducted by the country’s folk high schools and study associations where courses, study circles and cultural activities are organised. It is part of the liberal non-formal, voluntary education system. The focus is on peer-to-peer learning.
- [UR, The Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company](#), is part of the public service broadcasting group in Sweden. UR’s mandate is to produce and broadcast educational and general knowledge programmes which strengthen, broaden and complement the work of others active in education. Programs with a focus on online safety are produced but there is no policy addressing the topic directly.

Empowering through digital skills:

- Starting in 2018, digital competence was integrated into the national curricula for all school forms in Sweden, including the curriculum for pre-schools.
- Sweden's local municipalities have a high level of self-government. Many of the country's 290 municipalities have digital policy documents addressing digital literacy, e.g., within the Department of Education and Childcare.
- Media literacy is included in the curriculum for all levels of education. The Swedish Agency for the Media coordinates MIL work in Sweden. The agency runs a network with multiple actors from the public and civic sectors engaged in MIL formal and informal education and awareness activities. The agency hosts an online resource bank where members of the network can share resources, such as media and learning material.

	In place	In development	Not in place	Other
Teaching online safety	X			
Online safety policies in schools				X
Adequate teacher training	X			
Informal education about online safety	X			
Peer-to-peer training in online safety			X	
Support for digital literacy skills	X			
Children's media literacy	X			
Challenge hate speech/digital civil courage	X			

Table 6: Topic summary - pillar 2: digital empowerment

Pillar 3 – active participation, respecting children’s rights

Active participation, respecting children’s rights, refers to actions which give children and young people a say in the digital environment, with more child-led activities to foster innovative and creative safe digital experiences.

Active participation:

- The [Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society](#) is responsible for strengthening youth participation in democracy on a national level, and this work is conducted online as well as offline.
- The [National Youth Policy](#) states that young people must have influence in their lives and in societal development, but it does not mandate participation.
- The [Swedish Agency for the Media](#), [ECPAT](#), the [Swedish Internet Foundation](#) and [Plan International](#) all have material online for both children and teachers to raise awareness of children’s rights concerning the digital environment.

Inclusivity:

- There is currently no system in place to publish child-friendly versions of policy documents or policy initiatives relevant to BIK+ topics.
- The Convention of the Rights of the Child, incorporated into Swedish law (2018:1197), stipulates all children’s right to information. However, there is no other national system; every authority is responsible for its own methods, dissemination, and phrasing of information. [The National Ombudsman for the Child](#) advises on how to communicate directly with children, and there is a national network for agencies concerning communicating with children during crises.
- The [Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society](#) is responsible for strengthening youth participation in democracy on a national level. Until 2025, MUCF runs a collaboration with six municipalities and one region. The goal is to develop new methods for increasing young people's knowledge of and participation in local democracy. The focus is to especially promote

inclusion of young people who in one way or another feel being excluded from society.

Digital creativity:

- The three Swedish public service companies (Swedish public service television, SVT, Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company, UR, and Swedish Radio, SR) are actively engaged online, with social media accounts and podcasts. Their digital platforms distribute all of their programs. Their programs are also promoted through social media, YouTube, trailers, etc.
- Regional activities encourage children’s digital creativity and promote creative uses of digital technologies. Examples of municipalities working to promote healthy and safe digital media use in Sweden are included.

	In place	In development	Not in place	Other
Activities to promote active participation				X
Laws that mandate youth participation				X
Awareness raising on children's rights	X			
Inclusiveness regarding active participation	X			
Child-friendly versions of policy documents			X	
Positive digital content	X			
Activities encouraging digital creativity	X			

Table 7: Topic summary - pillar 3: active participation, respecting children's rights

BIK+ index 2024: Sweden

The BIK+ index has been developed to provide an aggregated at-a-glance overview of the levels of implementation across the two dimensions, BIK policies and BIK+ actions, in Sweden compared to the EU27+2 average. Values are shown in per cent.

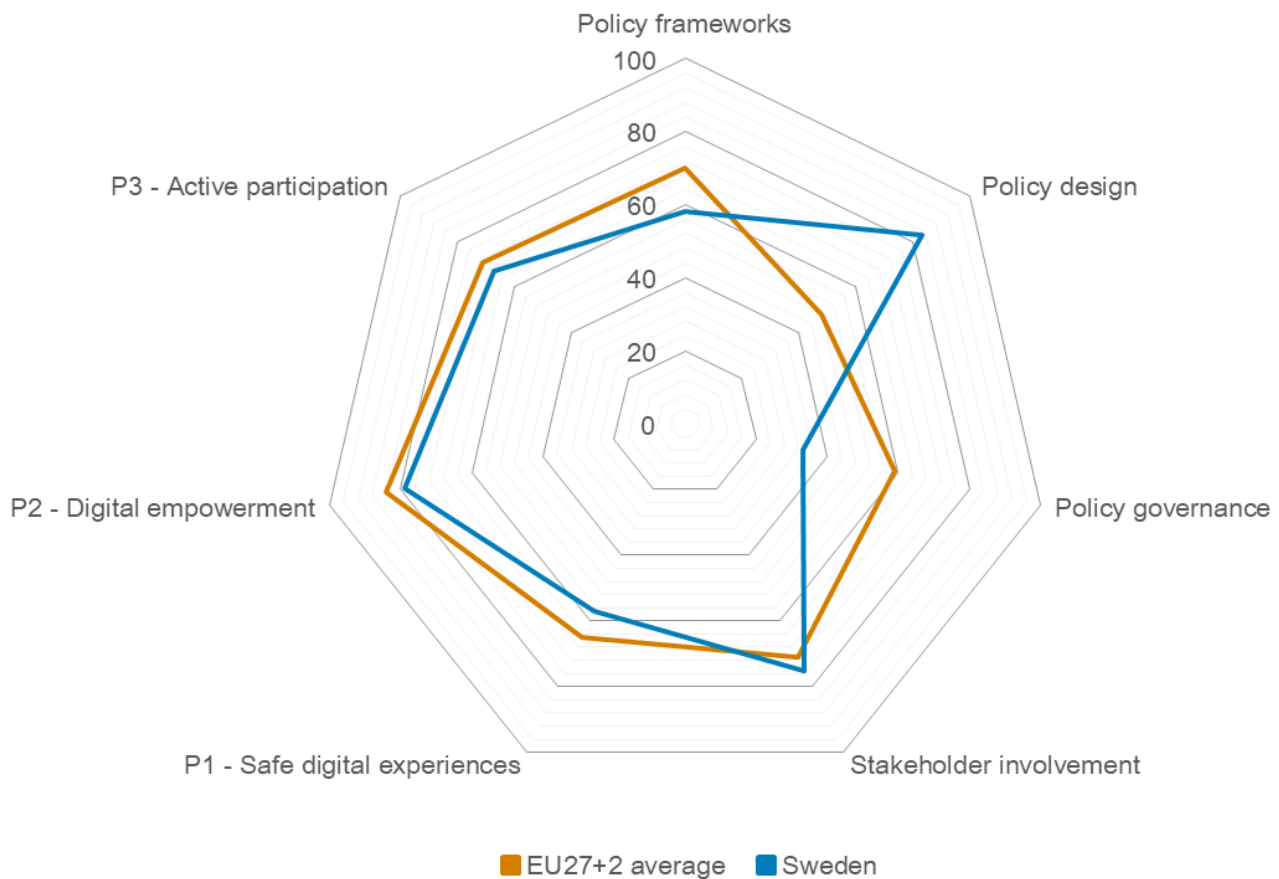


Figure 1: BIK+ index 2024: Sweden - EU27+2 average comparison

 www.betterinternetforkids.eu

 [@Insafenetwork](https://twitter.com/Insafenetwork)
[@safeinternetday](https://twitter.com/safeinternetday)

 facebook.com/saferinternet
facebook.com/SaferInternetDay

 linkedin.com/company/better-internet-for-kids

 youtube.com/@BetterInternetforKids

 info@betterinternetforkids.eu

Better Internet for Kids