

Country profile 2026: Sweden

Introduction

As shown in the [Digital Decade 2025: Country reports](#), Sweden is a global leader in digital development, with a mature, innovation-led digital economy and a highly skilled workforce. According to recent data, the ICT sector is a cornerstone of the Swedish economy, accounting for 6.2% of the country's Gross Value Added and nearly 29% of all business R&D expenditure. The business landscape is highly digitised, with 86.6% of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) achieving a basic level of digital intensity – a figure that far outstrips the European Union average. In terms of infrastructure, Sweden has 90% coverage for Very High-Capacity Networks (VHCN) and a near-universal 5G reach of 99%, including significant expansion into rural areas. Human capital remains a primary strength, with 70.4% of the population possessing at least basic digital skills and ICT specialists accounting for 8.4% of total employment, the highest in the EU.

According to the [State of the Digital Decade Eurobarometer 2025](#), public sentiment is highly supportive of this transition, as 84% of citizens agree that digitalisation simplifies their daily lives. However, there is a clear demand for enhanced safety, with 94% of the population urging public authorities to prioritise the protection of minors and combat cyberbullying. Sweden has implemented a comprehensive policy framework, including the National Connectivity Strategy, a proactive National Cybersecurity Strategy (2025–2029), and a robust AI strategy focused on ethical governance and improved computing capacity.

BIK policies

Policy frameworks

Policy frameworks describe the overarching goals that shape policies for a better internet for kids.

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
Policy priority	X			
Integrated policy		X		
Influence of the BIK+ strategy			X	
Recognition of children's rights		X		

Table 1: Policy frameworks - Sweden

- ***This topic is comprehensively addressed*** in national/regional laws, regulations and policies.
- ***There are separate, dedicated policies which address the topic of children and the digital environment.***
- ***The BIK+ strategy informs national policies but is not the main influence.***
- ***Children's rights in relation to the digital environment are an important and emerging policy priority***, with specific policies in development on this topic.

Key developments and policy frameworks

- The Swedish Government launched a **government inquiry** in October 2025 to investigate a national age restriction for social media.
- A government inquiry presented in 2025 has proposed a **national ban on mobile phones during school hours**. The ban is proposed to be implemented during 2026.

- The Swedish Gender Equality Agency was in 2024 commissioned by the government to examine **digital and technical dimensions on men’s violence against women**. The assignment ends in February 2026.
- The Children’s Welfare Foundation Sweden has in 2025 been granted financial support to perform an **updated study on young people’s sexuality, experience of violations, sexual exploitation and sexual exploitation through digital media**. The study will be reported to the government in March 2026.
- In 2025, the government appointed the Family Law and Parental Support Authority, as well as the Ombudsman for Children in Sweden, with separate assignments on **sexual exploitation among children and young people**. This concerns developing parental support and identifying contact methods that include the digital environment.
- The Swedish Consumer Agency has in 2025 been tasked to strengthen its work concerning **marketing by influencers** aimed at children and young people, who are continuously exposed to commercial content on social media. The agency shall finalise and report on the assignment in January 2026.

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.

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
Regular data collection	X			
Data on risks, harms, well-being	X			
Information systems	X			
National research fund		X		
Monitoring and evaluation		X		

Table 2: Policy design - Sweden

- ***There is a regular nationally representative survey*** specifically focused on children's digital activity, which informs national policies on BIK topics.
- ***Regular surveys include measures of children's experiences of risks, harms and digital well-being.***
- ***Systems are in place at the government level*** to gather information on children and the digital environment.
- ***Existing regular national research funding is available for research on children and the digital environment,*** but this is not explicitly specified.
- ***Policies are regularly monitored and evaluated,*** but not always systematically.

Key national research studies:

- The Swedish Agency for the Media continues its monitoring and analysis of the development of media use among children and young people. This ongoing research, which comprises the largest national statistical surveys on media use among children and young people, results in three bi-annual reports titled **Småungar & medier** (Small Children and the Media), **Ungar & Medier** (Kids and the Media), and **Föräldrar & medier** (Parents and the Media). In addition, the Swedish Agency for the Media regularly consults children and young people in its operations.
- Regular surveys and studies are conducted to monitor various aspects of children's digital activities, including their media usage habits and online behaviours. These surveys are often part of broader research on youth behaviour or digital media consumption.
- One notable example is **Mediebarometern**, a comprehensive annual survey conducted by the government-financed research institution Nordicom that tracks the Swedish population's access to and use of various media.

Policy governance

Policy governance examines how policies are coordinated at the governmental level, whether other implementation bodies are involved in their delivery and coordination.

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
Lead ministry for policy development		X		
National coordination body		X		
National action plan or strategy		X		

Table 3: Policy governance - Sweden

- **Policy development sits across different ministries** with leadership officially distributed according to the area of specialisation.
- Coordination occurs across relevant departments and stakeholders **through more informal arrangements.**
- **One or more programmes of action are underway** supporting children's online safety and participation in the digital environment.

Stakeholder involvement

Stakeholder involvement enquires how different stakeholders can participate in policy development.

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
Stakeholder forum	X			
Public consultation on BIK topics		X		
Youth involvement in policy		X		

Table 4: Stakeholder involvement - Sweden

- **A formal, designated multi-stakeholder forum is in place that consistently engages all relevant stakeholder groups.**

- ***The public is consulted during the development of new BIK policies.*** While engagement is structured and meaningful, it is event-driven and does not occur outside of major policy formulation efforts.
- ***Children are listened to directly in the policy development process*** but are not formally involved in decision-making.

Stakeholder mechanisms

- The Swedish Government uses a collective decision-making process, meaning that all relevant departments are involved in every decision.
- 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 with stakeholders are held on an ad hoc basis.

BIK+ actions

Pillar 1 – Safe digital experiences

Actions to promote a safe, age-appropriate digital environment that respects children’s best interests.

	In place	In development	Other activity	Not present
Content rating systems for online/video games			X	
DSC measures protection of minors	X			
DSC-SIC working relationship	X			
Definition of harmful online content			X	
Complaints handling mechanism	X			
Intimate image abuse laws	X			
Cyberbullying laws	X			
Age verification requirements			X	
Digital wallet for minors		X		
EU harmonised age verification				X
Laws on online marketing	X			
Protecting mental health and well-being	X			

Table 5: Safe digital experiences - Sweden

Implementing EU laws

- PEGI is in use. However, it is strictly a self-regulatory initiative in Sweden, and there is no law, regulation or formal policy governing this.

- The [Swedish Agency for the Media](#) is responsible for obligations concerning Article 28 within the DSA. It is currently participating in the EBDS coordinated action regarding pornography platforms in its role as the competent authority for the enforcement of Article 28.1.
- PTS has also designated another trusted flagger, [Svenska Stöldskyddsföreningen \(SSF\)](#), concerning scams and fraud.
- As the Swedish Agency for the Media is both the competent authority for article 28.1 under the DSA and the coordinator and awareness centre for the [Safer Internet Centre Sweden](#). There exists a very close collaboration between the responsibilities under both the Act and SIC.

Addressing online harms

- In Sweden, complaints regarding online safety are directed to specific authorities based on the nature of the issue. For example, the Swedish Police Authority for illegal content or the Swedish Data Protection Authority, which deals with privacy violations that are not criminal offences. The Swedish Agency for the Media handles media-related complaints as well as complaints regarding the protection of minors on online platforms.
- 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 the age and pubertal development of the victim.
- While there is no specific law for cyberbullying or "cyberhate" (Näthat), Swedish law covers online harassment through existing criminal provisions. Online abuse may fall under various offenses, such as: Defamation (Förtal) or insult (Förolämpning. If false and harmful accusations are made online, they can be reported as defamation or insult under Swedish law. Unlawful threats (Olaga hot) and Harassment (Ofredande) can apply if someone is threatened or repeatedly harassed online.

- The Swedish Safer Internet Centre is cooperating with other EU member states on the topic of cyberbullying, including by participating in meetings and workshops on the [Action Plan Against Cyberbullying](#).
- Schools and all of its staff are responsible for preventing and also investigating all forms of harassment or offensive behaviour according to the [School Act \(2010:800\)](#), chapter 6, section 3 and 10. They are also obliged to act to stop the harassment or offensive behaviour. The Swedish National Agency for Education states on its website that social media or other digital communication is included in this responsibility.

Age assurance

- 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 character or with pornographic pictures should not be available in a way that there is a substantial risk for children viewing them. However, there is no national policy or law requiring age verification.
- Sweden, through agencies such as the [Agency for Digital Government \(DIGG\)](#) and the [Post and Telecom Authority \(PTS\)](#), is actively participating in the European Union's efforts to implement the European Digital Identity (EUDI), including the [development of digital identity wallets](#). It has been [proposed](#) that the age limit for state e-identification should be 9 years, and this will automatically become the age limit for EUDI wallet.

Supporting digital well-being

- EU Directive 2005/29/EC (UCPD) regulates unfair commercial practices like influencer marketing, dark patterns, and marketing targeting children. In Sweden, this is enforced through the [Swedish Marketing Act](#).
- The [Swedish Consumer Agency](#) has taken enforcement actions both at the national and EU levels against online commercial practices such as influencer marketing, dark patterns, or unfair practices targeting children.

- The **Swedish Consumer Ombudsman** has also taken several cases to court, for example, influencer marketing, dark patterns in financial services, and direct exhortations to children in video games. Furthermore, the agency is currently taking action in the gaming sector against several commercial practices that are considered aggressive towards children (e.g., time-limited offers pressuring children to consume and direct exhortations to buy in-game products).

Pillar 2 – Digital empowerment

	In place	In development	Other activity	Not present
Teaching online safety	X			
Digital skills training			X	
Policies on digital use in schools		X		
Adequate teacher training	X			
Non-formal online safety education	X			
Critical media literacy	X			
Creative digital skills	X			
Supports for parents	X			

Table 6: Digital empowerment - Sweden

Digital empowerment in formal education

- The **national curriculum (Lgr22)** for primary and lower secondary schools includes digitalisation, digital competence, and the idea that we live in a “complex world that students need to learn how to navigate”. It is stated that there are both opportunities and risks in digital communication regarding values and norms. It is also stated that the students need to learn to communicate safely and responsibly.
- The **national curriculum for upper secondary school (Gy25)** states that there are risks associated with digitalisation and the use of technologies,

and that students must understand these risks and learn how to validate digital information.

- The current government has communicated their intention to implement a new curriculum based on an official government report, “[Knowledge for all](#)”. The report recommends that references to digital competence be described only in the subject syllabi when they relate to the knowledge students are expected to learn. The report states that the use of digital tools and digital competence should be viewed as a means of learning, not a goal in itself.
- The Swedish National Agency for Education provides [materials with materials on online safety](#). It is voluntary for teachers to use this material. The agency’s objective with the material is to enhance teachers’ understanding of online safety and to incorporate these perspectives in their teaching. The agency considers that the matter of online safety has several perspectives, such as a safe use of passwords, harassment on digital platforms and searching for information, to name a few.

Digital empowerment and lifelong learning

- Work around media and information literacy (MIL) is coordinated by the Swedish Agency for the Media. The agency runs a network of 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 network members can share media and learning materials.
- In addition, the [Swedish Agency for the Media](#) was tasked by the government with enhancing media and information literacy (MIL) nationwide in 2024 and 2025. This involves collaborating with the MIL Sweden network to develop and disseminate educational material. In October 2025, a new [online web course](#) available for the public (from age 13) on MIL was launched. The course includes a special module for professionals working with children and young people.
- There are various activities at the regional level in Sweden to promote creative uses of digital technologies. Many municipalities or regions have

support centres for teachers to promote creative use of digital technologies.

- There are several national and regional initiatives on children’s online safety targeted to parents. For example, Save the Children Sweden has a campaign called “Safe Online and on social media”. The Swedish Internet Foundation provides information for parents on its website and in the podcast “Our children and the internet”.

Pillar 3 – Active participation, respecting children’s rights

	In place	In development	Other activity	Not present
Promoting civic engagement	X			
Promoting children’s rights	X			
Child-friendly policy documents				X
Addressing digital inequalities	X			
Positive digital content	X			

Table 7: Active participation, respecting rights - Sweden

Active participation

- The Minister of Health at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is responsible for youth policy in Sweden and commissions the [Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society \(MUCF\)](#) to promote youth participation, equality, and civic engagement through programmes, funding and knowledge dissemination. The [National Youth Policy](#) is guided by the objective adopted by the Swedish Parliament: “Young people should have real access to influence.” It emphasises participation in democratic processes as a core component of youth policy.
- MUCF develops and promotes participatory process models such as “LUPP” ([Local Follow-up on Youth Policy](#)), a survey offered to municipalities and regions to enable young people to express their views and influence local policies. Through LUPP, municipalities and regions

receives valuable support to lean on to work knowledge-based on issues affecting young people. The survey includes a section about “Society and democracy”.

- Several civil society and public sector actors run digital democracy and civic literacy initiatives (for instance, through schools and libraries), helping young people understand and engage with political processes online. MUCF and partner organisations have developed educational resources on democracy, rights, cooperation, and participation, accessible via the MUCF website (e.g., sections on evaluating digital sources and being source-critical).

Addressing digital inequalities

- A 2024 [report](#) by the Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (PTS) focuses on addressing digital exclusion in Sweden, especially among vulnerable groups. The report outlines several measures to enhance digital inclusion, including digital literacy training, especially through public libraries and broadband expansion in rural areas. The report stresses the importance of ensuring that all individuals, regardless of background, can fully participate in the digital world through improved access and skills.
- The [National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools \(SPSM\)](#) has the task of ensuring that children, young people and adults – regardless of functional ability – have adequate conditions to fulfil their educational goals.
- The [Swedish Agency for Participation](#) specifically works on disability policy to ensure it has an impact on society as a whole. The agency has a [special website with information on digitalisation and inclusion](#).

Positive digital content

- “[Nyhetskoll](#)” – a collaborative news initiative by the public service companies Svt and UR, was launched in 2025. The purpose of the initiative is to spread news targeted to adolescents. This complements the news service “[Lilla aktuellt](#)” which targets younger children.

BIK+ index 2026: 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.

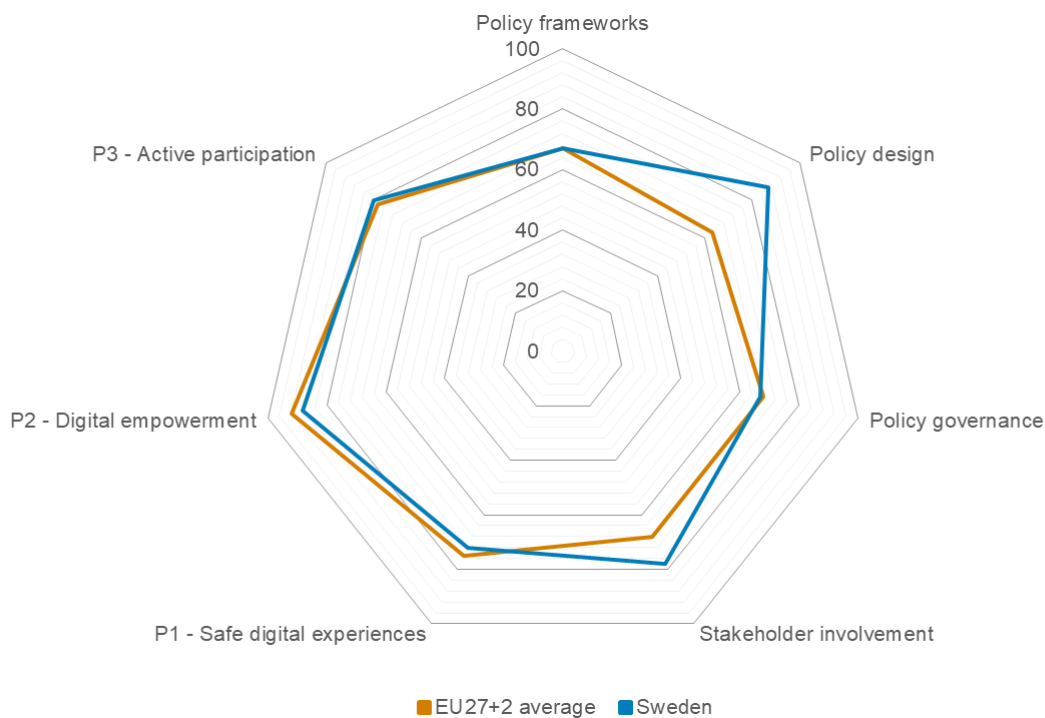


Figure 1: BIK+ index 2026: Sweden - EU27+2 average comparison