



# Families of Sweden

## Teacher's Guide

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## **Rural Script**

### **Families of Sweden---- Evelina 5 Years Old**

My name is Evelina and I'm five years old. My brother, Eric and I are waiting in front of our house for our Dad to take us to day care. We live just a few blocks from school. We can walk there now, and when we get bigger we can ride our bikes. Sweden has biking, running and walking trails everywhere, even in the countryside, because we love to be outside as much as we can, even in winter.

On days when Dad brings us, we have breakfast at school. When Mom brings us, we have breakfast at home before she goes to work.

My Dad is also going to work, but he comes in to help us take off our boots and coats. Everyone in Sweden takes off their shoes when they come into a home or school.

More children are usually here for breakfast, but lots of kids are sick today. For breakfast, we're having yogurt, milk, cheese, and lunch meat. I like to eat my meat with bread.

Today some of the children are making a cake for Parents Visiting Day. We're following a recipe that tells us how much flour, baking powder, vanilla sugar and water to use. We like to eat the batter that's left in the bowl. I think our teacher leaves some extra batter in the bowl just for us.

My class is learning letters. My letter is E for Evelina.

While we're at school, Dad's working. His company makes leather cases for cellular phones. He takes pictures of cell phones in their cases to send to stores and catalogues. Everywhere you go in Sweden people are using cell phones.

This is my mom. She's a teacher, but not at our school. She's helping little kids learn to blow by blowing through a straw into a bowl of soapy water.

When she finishes work, she comes to our school and talks with our teachers. Then we all have a piece of the cake we made.

Winter in Sweden can be cold and it takes a long time to put on our warm clothes. I'm putting on a jacket, heavy socks, neck scarf, snow pants, mittens, boots and hat.

Mother lets us take our time on our way home. After school, we like to feed the ducks in the park with bread mother brought from home.

Then we go food shopping. This store doesn't have heat, so the fruit and vegetables stay fresh longer. In Sweden, our money is called Kronor.

We also stop at the supermarket. We bring our empty soda bottles to the store and put them in this machine to be counted. After a little while, the machine gives us a ticket that we can use like money in the store.

Instead of using Kronor to pay for our groceries, mom's using a credit card that tells the bank how much money to take out of our account to pay for the groceries.

Mom brings cloth bags from home instead of using paper or plastic bags. Swedish people love nature and we like to do things to help the environment. My mother says that's why we don't have any polluted water or air in Sweden.

When we all get home, we make ham and noodles for dinner, my favorite! We put broccoli and tomatoes over the noodles. It's Eric and my job to set the table. We usually eat dinner at about 6 o'clock. Mother uses butter, flour and cream for the sauce she puts over the noodles.

Eric and I play in the living room while we wait for the noodles to bake.

Eric's just learning to use a spoon, so sometimes Dad has to remind him not to use his fingers.

After dinner we get ready for bed. We have an extra big tub, so it's almost like swimming. We usually bathe about two times a week. Mom and Dad are helping us learn to brush our teeth.

While Mom puts us to bed, Dad cleans up the kitchen and makes coffee for himself and mom to have after we go to bed. Tomorrow is Saturday, so we don't have to get up early for school.

It's Saturday morning and we're driving to a farm where I'm learning to ride a pony! This is my second lesson. I'm finding out which pony I can ride today.

Part of learning to ride is learning how to take care of the ponies, so we brush our pony and check her hooves for stones. We use a bridle to tell the pony what we want her to do. We warm the part of the bridle that goes in the pony's mouth, because it's metal, and if you put cold metal in her mouth it can take the skin off.

We're lined up to listen to our riding teacher. Then we practice what we've learned.

When we get home Eric takes a nap, I play in my room, Mom washes clothes and hangs them to dry, and Dad brings in firewood. We have a stove in our basement that keeps the upstairs floors warm. Most of our heat comes from a furnace with a computer that can choose whether to run on electricity or oil depending on which costs less.

Now we're going to our friend's birthday party. In Sweden we often dress up in costumes for birthday parties. I'm dressed like Pippi Longstockings.

William opens the gift we brought for him. William's mother lights 5 candles on the cake she made for him. William makes a wish before he blows out his candles. We have a saying that if he blows them all out in one breath, his wish will come true!

After we eat, we play games. If the bottle points at you, you have to answer a question. If you know the right answer, you get to spin the bottle next. Hans grew 4cm since last year! Our parents visit while we play.

At home after we have dinner, Mom usually reads me a story before I go to sleep. Tonight she's reading Pippi Longstockings, my favorite book. The woman who wrote this is from Sweden.

It's been a big day and I'm really tired. Goodnight!

## **Urban Script**

### **Families of Sweden----Alexander 8 Years Old**

It's about 7 in the morning and I'm having breakfast with our family. My name is Alexander and I live in Kalmar, Sweden. We're having corn flakes, bread, cheese and yogurt.

It's winter now, so even though it's morning, it's still dark. The sun will go down early in the afternoon, too, sometimes even before we get home from school.

The sun's just coming up as we leave our house at 8 to catch our bus to school. In Kalmar, students often ride public buses to school. We can also ride our bikes if we're old enough and don't live too far from school.

After we leave, Dad gets ready to go to work. We keep our shoes by the door because everyone takes off their shoes when they come into a house or school.

Karin's taking time off work to stay home with the girls while they're little. The city will pay parents to stay home for a year after they have a baby, as long as both the father and mother take turns taking care of the baby, not just the mother. My father says he loved his time at home taking care of me and my brother when we were babies.

Ebba's excited that it's snowing, because we've only had snow twice this year. Karen tries to get exercise every day, so she and the girls often use an exercise videotape. Part of Northern Sweden is in the Arctic Circle, where it's always much colder than here. And for a while in winter, they only get 3 hours of sunlight a day. Maybe that's why most Swedes live in the southern part of the country.

Ebba says she wants to be a painter when she grows up. Karen says she can be whatever she wants to be. She says Ebba's lucky to grow up in a country where women have had equal rights for such a long time. Even before the Vikings, women were often leaders and had the right to own property.

While the girls take a nap, Karen practices music for the church choir. Almost everyone in Sweden is Lutheran, but most people go to church just on special occasions.

Today our school class has swimming lessons at the city pool. Everyone here learns to swim. Sweden is surrounded by the sea on 3 sides, and we have so many lakes and rivers that we're never far from water. A lot of families have summer cottages, and we all look forward to spring, when we can begin to spend more time outdoors.

Back in our classroom, we're doing individual work before we go to lunch. Most kids go to free public schools like this one. We learn several languages, and everyone learns English, because English is spoken in the business world, and doing business with other countries is very important to Sweden. We're a member of the European Community, or the EC. The EC countries are organizing to make communication and trade easier by using the same rules, language and money in each country.

School lunches are free. Today we're having meatballs and gravy, mashed potatoes, cranberries, bread and milk.

Lunch break is a chance to spend some time outside.

After lunch Max's class studies castles in the Middle Ages. Kalmar's famous for Kalmar Castle, which is 900 years old! It's still used by King Karl Gustaf and Queen Silvia for special meetings and celebrations. Even though we have a King and Queen, we're a democracy, which means we elect people to represent us in parliament.

King Karl Gustaf and Queen Silvia live in Stockholm, Sweden's capital, but they also have a summer home on Oland, an island across from Kalmar.

Today Dad's working at a trade fair on Oland. Lots of different companies come here to show what they do or sell. My Dad's business is teaching people how to use computers so they can work at home. Its called "teleworking".

Products and businesses using computers are an important business in Sweden, and the city has a big school just for teaching new technologies.

My Dad says this area is working especially hard to find new industries because a Volvo car factory recently closed, and a lot of people lost their jobs.

One industry that's been important to Sweden for a long time is forestry. Trees cover half of our country.

Glass blowing is another old industry. Our area is sometimes called the Crystal Kingdom because we've had glass blowers like these here for hundreds of years. Sweden's famous for the glass that's made here.

We manufacture this train. It's much faster and quieter than older trains. Lots of people ride bikes to the station and catch the train to work.

When Max and I get home from school, we like to play computer games. Because our Dad and Mom are divorced, Max and I take turns living with our Dad for two weeks, then with our Mom. Since they both live in Kalmar, we can always go to the same school.

Dad's making shish kabobs from moose meat. We get moose and deer from some of our friends who hunt. There are so many moose in this area that they often cause serious accidents when they get hit by cars on the highways.

Karen has been grocery shopping. Karen would like to go back to work now. In order to do that, she would have to have day care for Ebba and Saga. But the day care centers are all full. Karen says if they're still full in 4 months, the government will help her find one. On Fridays we always have dinner in the living room while we watch cartoons on TV. Tonight we're having French fries and salad with the shish kabobs, and Karen has made fresh bread.

Dad reads a Babar book to Ebba and Saga before they go to bed.

Max and I get to stay up later because we don't have school in the morning. Then Dad comes in to wish me goodnight.

Good night!



## Glossary

**Babar:**

The hero of a series of books written by Jean De Brunhoff.

**cell phone:**

A wireless phone similar to a portable phone that can be used almost anywhere in the world.

**democracy:**

A government where decisions are made by the people of the country, either directly or by electing representatives.

**EU: European Union, also European Community.**

A group of European countries that have agreed to use the same language (English), the same rules of business and trade, and the same money (the Euro) in order to make trading easier between countries.

**kronor:**

The official unit of Swedish currency.

**parliament:**

A group of elected officials.

**Pipi Longstockings:**

The heroine of a series of books by Swedish author Astrid Lindgren.

**shish kabobs:**

A Middle Eastern food that is prepared by cooking meat and/or vegetables on a stick or skewer.

**yogurt:**

A pudding-like food made from milk.

## Discussion and Activities After Viewing

- Ask each child to list some of the similarities and differences between their family and school and those in the video.
- Invite someone from Sweden to talk with the class about growing up in Sweden, to tell Swedish stories, or do a Swedish craft.
- Ask the children to describe the weather they saw in the video. Look at a map or globe, pick countries south and north of Sweden, and ask the children to discuss whether the (average) temperatures in those places would likely be warmer or cooler than Kalmar. Then check an atlas or the internet to see how accurate the guesses are.
- Ask young children to draw several outdoor activities that children in Sweden can do in the wintertime. Ask the children to draw several activities that Swedish children can do outdoors in the summertime. Have the children share their pictures with the class and discuss why the activities are different.
- Sweden is one of the leading countries in advanced technologies. Did the children see any evidence of that fact in the video?
- Ask the children to describe the European Union or the EU? Have the children discuss what life might be like in the United States if each state had different money, language and rules.
- Ask the children why the area around Kalmar is called the Crystal Kingdom.
- Kalmar has very little traffic, even during “rush hour”. Ask the children to think of reasons why this is so.

## Questions

1. Why do people in Sweden always take their shoes off when they enter a house?
2. Why is there little pollution in Sweden?
3. Why do some parts of Sweden only get 3 hours of sun in the winter?
4. What is the European Community doing to make trading easier?
5. What was the Middle Ages like in Sweden?
6. Why does the city pay for the parents to stay home to care for new borns?

## Answers to Questions

1. Why do people in Sweden always take their shoes off when they enter a house?

It is a custom, which probably came about because of how snowy the country is in winter. People's shoes probably were covered with snow.

2. Why is there little pollution in Sweden?

Sweden is sparsely settled. Eight and a half million people live in an area the size of California. Half of its electricity comes from clean hydropower and half comes from nuclear power.

3. Why do some parts of Sweden only get 3 hours of sun in the winter?

On the poles of the Earth, the tilt of the rotational axis away from the sun during winter, means that less sunlight hits the Earth.

4. What is the European Community doing to make trading easier?

The European Community started using a single currency for all members in January 2002. The national currencies were no longer used. This simplifies trade because people do not have to worry about changing money at varying exchange rates.

5. What was the Middle Ages like in Sweden?

The Middle Ages in Europe lasted from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. This was a period of much warfare. For safety and defense, people formed small communities around the castle of the local lord. They owed their land to lord and paid part of the harvest as rent.

6. Why does the city pay for the parents to stay home to care for new babies?

The country feels that it is very important to have families and that parents should be able to be home with newborns. Swedish people get many benefits from their government and in turn they have to pay high taxes.

## Some Things We've Learned About Sweden

(Please circle the correct answer)

1. T F It's bad manners to eat with your hands in Sweden
2. T F Sweden is a tropical country.
3. T F Sweden's money is called Kronor.
4. T F It's OK to make noise when you eat in Sweden.
5. T F Sweden is too cold to grow trees.
6. T F Sweden is a democracy.
7. T F Sweden is part of the European Union, where countries use the same trade rules, language and money to make trade easier.
8. T F Some people in Sweden are learning to use computers so they can work at home.
9. Why is the area around Kalmar called the Crystal Kingdom?
10. What were some of the things that people in Sweden do to protect the environment?
11. What clues do we have that Sweden's weather is cold in winter?
12. What should you remember to do when you enter a Swedish home?
13. Draw pictures of each part of Evelina or Alexander's story. Try to include as many details as you can remember from each part

## **Introduction**

Sweden is known today as one of the leading liberal democracies and advanced economies of the world. Sweden is famous for her neutrality, her Viking heritage, her many manufactured products as well as the beauty of the country.

## **The Land and the Climate**

Sweden is a large country, about the size of the state of California. To the north is a vast mountain and forest region with large lakes and river valleys. In the far north, the region of Lappland overlaps northern Finland. Central Sweden is an expanse of lowland in the east and highland in the west; and in the south is wooded hills and plains and at the southern extremity, the small but rich plains. This is Sweden's oldest settled and most densely populated agricultural area.

About one sixth of the country lies within the Arctic Circle. In the summer, sunlight can last around the clock north of the Arctic Circle, and even as far south as the capital, Stockholm, the nights during this period have only a few hours of semidarkness. In winter Stockholm experiences only about 5 1/2 hours of daylight; in areas as far north as Lappland, there are nearly 20 hours of total darkness alternating with 4 hours of twilight.

Despite the fact that Stockholm lies at the same latitude as southern Alaska, the climate in Stockholm is much milder. The Gulf Stream warms the air and makes the weather mild but changeable. Another type of influence comes from continental high pressures to the east. These create sunny weather, hot in summer and cold in winter.

The northern interior receives heavy snowfall for up to eight months of the year and has severe temperatures that drop as low as -40° F (-40° C). The average January temperature at the head of the Gulf of Bothnia is 10° F (-12° C). Sea ice covers the Gulf of Bothnia from November to May. In southern Sweden winters vary more from year to year than in the north; snowfall is irregular, and average January temperatures range between 23° and 32° F (-5° and 0° C). Coastal waters seldom freeze. Summer temperatures vary far less, although summer is much shorter in the north. The mean July temperature in the north is 59° F (15° C), and in the south 63° F (17° C). Precipitation throughout the year is natural for

this climate. Late summer and autumn are the rainiest seasons.

### **Plant and animal life**

Sweden is covered with great forests of fir, pine, and birch. Southern Sweden has more mixed forests, and in the far south deciduous trees such as beech, oak, linden, ash, elm, and maple are common. The forests are rich in berries, lingonberries and blueberries among them, and mushrooms.

Of the large mammals, bears and lynx still inhabit the northern forests and there are large numbers of moose, roe deer, foxes, and hares. Hunting and fishing are closely regulated, and many species of animals are fully protected. Large herds of domesticated reindeer owned by Sami (Lapps) graze the northern mountains and forests.

Summer brings large numbers of migratory birds from southern Europe and Africa, as, for example, cranes and wild geese. Sweden has a rich variety of aquatic animal life, but environmental pollution has taken its toll. This applies specially to the Baltic seal. Fish species include the cod and mackerel of the Atlantic and the salmon and pike found in the Baltic and in lakes and rivers. Atlantic herring and its smaller relative, the Baltic herring, are traditional staple foods.

Sweden has always been in the forefront of nations seeking to protect the natural environment. In 1910 it was the first European country to establish a national park and in 1969 it passed a modern environmental protection act. In all, more than 7,700 square miles of land have been set aside as national parks and nature reserves. It still has environmental problems due to heavy acid rain as well as pollution in its coastal waters from neighboring countries.

### **People**

Most of Sweden's nine million people live in the southern third of the country, and most of these people live in towns. At present, more than 85 percent of the population live in urban centres. The vast majority of the people live in an area defined by the capital Stockholm on the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea, Göteborg on the western coast by the northern tip of Denmark and Malmö in the extreme south. In Sweden the average living space is relatively large, with each person having some 470 square feet (44 square metres) of space. About 40 percent live in government-subsidized housing. The cities are generally noted for their

efficient planning and lack of slums.

The population is homogeneous in ethnic stock, language, and religion. It is only since World War II that notable change has occurred in the ethnic pattern. Of a population of 9.05 million in the 2008, some 1 million were born abroad or were the children of immigrant parents. Since 1970 immigration has accounted for some 70 to 80 percent of the population growth. By far, most of the immigrants have come from the European Union countries, with which Sweden has a common labor market.

Sweden has two indigenous minority groups: the Finnish-speaking people of the northeast along the Finnish border, and the Lapp or Sami population of about 15,000 scattered throughout the northern Swedish interior. Once a hunting and fishing people, the latter group developed a reindeer-herding system that they still operate very efficiently. Presently most of the Sami in Sweden have other occupations as well. The Sami and Finnish languages belong to the Uralic language group.

The Swedish language belongs to the North Germanic (Scandinavian) subgroup of the Germanic languages and is closely related to the Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, and Faeroese languages

### **Daily Life**

Swedes are among the wealthiest people in the world but they are also highly taxed. Most enterprises are privately owned and market-oriented, but the government controls roughly 60 percent of the income. Most households own at least one car. Local public bus transportation is well developed, but only Stockholm has a subway as the backbone of its local transportation system. Sweden is one of the foremost nations in winter sports, and facilities for skiing in particular have developed rapidly. In competitive sports, other than winter events, tennis, soccer (football) and gymnastics are highly developed

Sweden has an excellent system of free and compulsory public education. Primary and secondary schools are run by the municipalities. The majority of children attend preschools for at least one year. All pupils follow the same curriculum for six years. The first foreign language, English, is introduced in the third year, and additional languages may be studied in subsequent years. From the seventh year the curriculum is divided into different lines chosen by the pupils themselves. Special education is given to all pupils suffering from



physical or mental handicaps. The upper secondary school, (tenth grade) is not compulsory. The curriculum in this school has been divided between college preparatory and vocational programs.

Universities and colleges are administered by the state, but they have been given much autonomy in the use of resources. Sweden has 13 major universities. The oldest is Uppsala University was founded in 1477. Other well-known institutions include the universities of Lund (1666), Stockholm (1877), Göteborg (1891).

Sweden is noted for its liberal employee benefit plans. The normal statutory work week is 40 hours, but actual work hours per employee in Swedish industry is among the lowest in Europe. The minimum amount of annual paid vacation is five weeks and two days. In addition, there are other legal grounds for paid absence. Employers pay additional fees of more than 43 percent of gross wages for statutory social benefits, including pensions. A basic old-age pension is available to everyone starting at age 65.

Less than 6 percent of Sweden's land area is tilled and only 2% of the population works in agriculture. Sweden is a major world exporter of forest products. Swedish manufacturers produce a variety of wood products, including prefabricated houses, boards, and furniture. Since the late 19th century, forestry in Sweden has been managed to protect against over cutting. A major concern is the ongoing acidification of forest soils.

Manufacturing is very important and Sweden is highly dependent on free international trade to maintain its living standard. The number of workers employed in private industry—about 800,000 in Sweden (in addition to 400,000 abroad)—is second only to the number of public employees.

Engineering, including the automotive and aerospace industry, is by far the largest manufacturing industry, producing about 50 percent of industrial value added. The electric and electronics industry is also important, specially the telecommunications industry. Other industries include power equipment, pharmaceutical, construction, food processing and metal- and plastic-processing industries. Power comes mainly from hydropower and nuclear power.

## **Government**

Sweden is a constitutional monarchy. The constitution, dating from 1809 is the basis of Sweden's parliamentary democracy. The king is the head of state, but he exerts no political power; his responsibilities are ceremonial only. Succession is accorded to the firstborn child regardless of sex. Actual power is vested in the unicameral parliament elected by the people for three-year terms. The prime minister must be approved for office through a vote of Parliament.

## **Cultural life and the arts**

The rural folk traditions include national costumes, dances, folk music, and the like, and many traditions are retained even in urban settlements. Spring is celebrated on the last night of April with bonfires and song across the country. The bright Midsummer Eve is celebrated around June 24, about the time of the year's longest day; in the ceremony a large pole, decorated with flowers and leaves, is placed into the ground. The Lucia candlelights are a relatively recent but very popular custom performed for St. Lucia's Day on the morning of December 13, at almost the darkest time of year; the ceremony features a "Light Queen," who, wearing a white gown and a crown of lighted candles, represents the returning sun.

The country's cultural institutions are subsidized through state funding. Every municipality has a public library. The libraries are often centers for other cultural events as well. The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, founded in 1739 is famous for selecting Nobel laureates in chemistry and physics, while Swedish Academy selects the Nobel Prize in Literature.

The vital Swedish folk song has been developed further by a number of musicians. A number of Swedish opera singers, among them Jenny Lind, Jussi Björling, and Birgit Nilsson, gained renown throughout the world. In Swedish literature, the nineteenth century writer August Strindberg is the most famous. He is still generally considered the country's greatest writer. One of the most heavily published and translated modern Swedish writers is Astrid Lindgren noted for her children's books, including the famous *Pippi Longstocking* series. The Swedish stage and film director Ingmar Bergman gained critical acclaim outside Sweden with his film *Wild Strawberries* (1957). Carl Milles dominated monumental sculpture in the 1920s.

## History

When the last Ice Age ended about 14000 years ago, and the glaciers retreated to the north, it is thought that humans followed closely behind. The first traces of human life in Sweden date to about 9000 BCE in the extreme southern reaches of Sweden. By 2500 BCE evidence of agriculture and cattle raising appear in a culture with close continental links. The Bronze Age in Sweden began around 1500 BCE as evidenced by rock carvings and ornate weapons of chieftains and other decorative items preserved in the earth.

Trade links between the Roman Empire and Scandinavia gave Rome some knowledge of Sweden. The Germania (written AD 98) of Tacitus gives the first description of the Svear, or Suiones (Swedes), stated to be powerful in men, weapons, and fleets.

In the second half of the 9th century, in what is called the Viking Age, Swedish chieftains controlled the trade routes from the Baltic to Constantinople and the Caspian that were connected by the river valleys of Russia and Ukraine. On these rivers they founded strongholds such as Kiev and Novgorod. Among the items traded were slaves from the surrounding lands and furs. The Vikings, which may contain Norwegian, Danish or Swedish elements, also raided and settled in northern France, England and Ireland.

Evidence indicates that at the end of the Viking era in the 11th century Sweden remained a loose federation of provinces. From the ninth to the 11<sup>th</sup> century the country was slowly Christianized. The oldest document in which Sweden is referred to as a united and independent kingdom is a papal decree, by which Sweden in 1164 became a diocese with its own archbishop in Uppsala.

Much of this period is marked by conflict as different groups fought for royal power, often drawing in Sweden's neighbors Norway, Denmark and later on, continental powers as well. There was also competition for power between the kings, the nobles, the Church and the merchants. Nobles were able to gain rights for themselves including the requirement that new taxes had to be approved by a parliament. By the early sixteenth century, the Swedish kings had been able to tame the Catholic Church by taking over its lands. By the seventeenth century, after administrative reforms, Sweden fought her neighbors and emerged as the strongest power in the Baltic only to see it disappear in face of new powers like Prussia and Russia.

As in most of Europe, agriculture was the main preoccupation in the Scandinavian countries before the 17th centuries. But increasing economic activity in these centuries led to a more specialized and commercial exploitation of the natural resources. Sweden's forest provided the indispensable raw materials for European shipbuilding and overseas expansion. Because the trees grew slowly, the wood became hard and well suited also for furniture and tools. The mining industry in Sweden was founded in the 13th century. In the 16th and 17th centuries copper and iron were the most important exports from Sweden. But Sweden also had its own metallurgical industry, with weapons as a specialty. Sweden expanded its powers in the aftermath of the Thirty Years War.

In contrast to some of its neighbors, whose farmers became serfs, Sweden's farmers remained free. Sweden was the only European country in which peasants formed a part of the parliament. Social mobility was primarily influenced by the state. Individual careers and personal fortunes could best be made as soldiers, purveyors to the crown, officers, and public servants

### The 18th-19th century

This period saw a transition from absolutism to a parliamentary form of government. While again involved in losing conflicts with other European powers, notably, Russia and Prussia, a parliamentary system gradually developed. The period was notable for its social and cultural advancements. Ideas about land reform were formulated, progress in science was encouraged, and the Swedish press was initiated. Noteworthy individual achievements include the thermometer scale of Anders Celsius, the botanical classification system of Carolus Linnaeus (Carl von Linné), and the religious philosophical postulations of Emanuel Swedenborg. Sweden reached a level of scholarly and cultural attainment equal to that of the most advanced nations of western Europe.

On the economic front, too, Sweden developed rapidly. Its metals industry grew to the largest in Europe. The population of Sweden, which in 1815 was barely 2,500,000, reached 3,500,000 by 1850 and 5,100,000 by 1900. During the period 1815 to 1900, therefore, the country's population had more than doubled, despite a loss of 850,000 emigrants (mainly to North America) during the period 1840 to 1900. Agriculture became more modernized, moving away from the communal open fields to enclosures. During the greater part of the 19th century, however, Sweden was a poor and overpopulated country.

Among the most important of the reforms was the abolition of medieval

regulations, and restrictions. Monopolies and guilds were eliminated as were all bans on exports and imports, these together with a reduction in customs duties, was the first step toward free trade. A number of other liberal reforms were introduced: equal rights of inheritance for men and women (1845), unmarried women's rights (1858), a more humane penal code through a number of reforms (1855–64), religious freedom (1860), and local self-government (1862).

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Sweden tried to maintain its neutrality in a very belligerent climate. Surrounded by more massive countries she tried her best to stay out of the various wars in the European theater. In World War I, Sweden managed to stay out of the fray entirely. In World War II, Sweden was only barely able to stay neutral despite German pressure. During the Cold War, Sweden again was facing increasing difficulty of having to choose between European Union membership and its policy of neutrality toward the USSR.

During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Sweden's neutrality left her industries intact between the great wars and the economy was able to fill the demand for consumer goods throughout the continent. Sweden was transformed from an agricultural to a modern industrial country. Politically, the economic development ushered in the universal franchise. The period 1946 to 1950 was a period of great reform, during which new, comprehensive laws were adopted concerning old-age pensions, child allowances, health insurance, rent allowances, educational reforms, and the expansion of institutions of higher education and research. The Social Democrats' hope of nationalizing industry was not realized. By tax reorganization the government achieved wider distribution of wealth. Later in the twentieth century, the country tried to adjust its socialist tendencies to improve the competitiveness of its economy. The policies tilted more toward free-market ideas again

## Websites

[travel.yahoo.com/t/Europe/Sweden/](http://travel.yahoo.com/t/Europe/Sweden/)

[www.royalcourt.se/eng/index.html](http://www.royalcourt.se/eng/index.html)

## Recipes

### Swedish Meatballs

#### Ingredients:

- 500 grammes (1 lb) ground beef
- 1 small onion
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup dried bread crumbs
- vegetable oil (for frying)
- salt, pepper

#### Proceed as follows:

1. Finely grate or chop the onion.
2. Mix the ground beef, the onion, the egg and the bread crumbs. Add some white pepper and salt to taste.
3. Form into 30 walnut-size meatballs.
4. Heat 2 tbsp of vegetable oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Sauté the meatballs in two batches until browned on all sides and cooked through (approximately ten minutes).

The meatballs can be served alone as cocktail snacks or, as a meal, together with, e.g. mashed potatoes and lingonberry jam.

For meatballs in a brown gravy, fry the meatballs in four batches. After each of the first three batches add 3-4 tbsp of water to the skillet, stir and pour the water into a separate vessel. After the fourth batch powder 1-2 tbsp all-purpose flour over the skillet, stir, add 3-4 tbsp cream, stir, add the water from the first three batches, stir, add some Japanese soya sauce, stir and bring to a slow boil, then add the fried meatballs and heat for a few minutes.

## **Activity**

### **St Lucia's Crown**

#### **Items Needed**

**1 Styrofoam Wreath form 8 –10 inch in diameter**

**Several small branches of pine or cedar boughs 3-4inches in length**

**Several small penlight flashlights**

#### **Directions-**

- 1. Cut holes in form with butter knife for penlights , space evenly around wreath**
- 2. Poke branches into wreath to cover**
- 3. Trim with red/white ribbons if wanted**

**Insert lights into holes.**

# Factbook







## Introduction

**Area:**

*total:* 449,964 sqkm

*land:* 410,934 sqkm

*water:* 39,030 sqkm

**Area - comparative:** slightly larger than California

**Land boundaries:**

*total:* 2,205 km

*border countries:* Finland 586 km, Norway 1,619 km

**Coastline:** 3,218 km

**Maritime claims:**

*continental shelf:* 200-m depth or to the depth of exploitation

*exclusive economic zone:* agreed boundaries or midlines

*territorial sea:* 12 nm (adjustments made to return a portion of straits to high seas)

**Climate:** temperate in south with cold, cloudy winters and cool, partly cloudy summers; subarctic in north

**Terrain:** mostly flat or gently rolling lowlands; mountains in west

**Elevation extremes:**

*lowest point:* Baltic Sea 0m

*highest point:* Kebnekaise 2,111 m

**Natural resources:** zinc, iron ore, lead, copper, silver, timber, uranium, hydropower

**Land use:**

*arable land:* 7%

*permanent crops:* 0%

*permanent pastures:* 1%

*forests and woodland:* 68%

*other:* 24% (1993 est.)

**Irrigated land:** 1,150 sq km (2007 est.)

**Natural hazards:** ice floes in the surrounding waters, especially in the Gulf of Bothnia, can interfere with maritime traffic

**Environment - current issues:** acid rain damaging soils and lakes; pollution of the North Sea and the Baltic Sea

**Geography - note:** strategic location along Danish Straits linking Baltic and North Seas

## People

**Population:** 9,059,052 (July 2009 est.)

**Age structure:**

*0-14 years:* 16%

*15-64 years:* 65,6%

*65 years and over:* 18.3% (2008 est.)

**Population growth rate:** 0.15% (2009 est.)

**Birth rate:** 10.13 births/1,000 population (2009 est.)

**Death rate:** 10.22 deaths/1,000 population (2009 est.)

**Net migration rate:** 1.66 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2009 est.)

**Sex ratio:**

*total population:* 0.98 male(s)/female (2009 est.)

**Infant mortality rate:** 2.75 deaths/1,000 live births (2009 est.)

**Life expectancy at birth:**

*total population:* 80.8 years

*male:* 78.6 years

*female:* 83.3 years (2009 est.)

**Total fertility rate:** 1.67 children born/woman (2008 est.)

**Nationality:**

*noun:* Swede(s)    *adjective:* Swedish

**Ethnic groups:** indigenous population: Swedes and Finnish and Lapp (Sami) minorities; foreign-born or first-generation immigrants: Finns, Yugoslavs, Danes, Norwegians, Greeks, Turks

**Religions:** Lutheran 87%, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Baptist, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist

**Languages:** Swedish and small Lapp- and Finnish-speaking minorities

**Literacy:**

*definition:* age 15 and over can read and write

*total population:* 99% (2009 est.)

## Government

**Country name:**

*conventional long form:* Kingdom of Sweden (Konungariket Sverige)

*conventional short form:* Sweden (Sverige)

**Government type:** constitutional monarchy

**Capital:** Stockholm

**Administrative divisions:** 21 counties (lan, singular and plural); Blekinge, Dalarnas, Gavleborgs, Gotlands, Hallands, Jamtlands, Jonkopings, Kalmar, Kronobergs, Norrbottens, Orebro, Ostergotlands, Skane, Sodermanlands, Stockholms, Uppsala, Varmlands, Vasterbottens, Vasternorrlands, Vastmanlands, Vastra Gotalands

**Independence:** 6 June 1523 (Gustav VASA elected king)

**National holiday:** Day of the Swedish Flag, 6 June

**Constitution:** 1 January 1975

**Legal system:** civil law system influenced by customary law; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction, with reservations

**Suffrage:** 18 years of age; universal

**Executive branch:**

*chief of state:* King CARL XVI GUSTAF (since 19 September 1973); Heir Apparent Princess VICTORIA Ingrid Alice Desiree, daughter of the monarch (born 14 July 1977)

*head of government:* Prime Minister

*cabinet:* Cabinet appointed by the prime minister

**Legislative branch:** unicameral Parliament or Riksdag (349 seats; members are elected by popular vote on a proportional representation basis to serve four-year terms)

**Judicial branch:** Supreme Court or Hogsta Domstolen, judges are appointed by the government (prime minister and cabinet)

**Diplomatic representation in the US:**

*chancery:* 1501 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20005-1702

*telephone:* [1] (202) 467-2600

*FAX:* [1] (202) 467-2699

*consulate(s) general:* Los Angeles and New York

**Diplomatic representation from the US:**

*embassy:* Strandvagen 101, S-115 89 Stockholm

*mailing address:* American Embassy Stockholm, Department of State, Washington, DC 20521-5750 (pouch)

*telephone:* [46] (8) 783 53 00

*FAX:* [46] (8) 661 19 64

**Flag description:** blue with a yellow cross that extends to the edges of the flag; the vertical part of the cross is shifted to the hoist side in the style of the Dannebrog (Danish flag)

## Economy

**Economy - overview:** Aided by peace and neutrality for the whole of the 20th century, Sweden has achieved an enviable standard of living under a mixed system of high-tech capitalism and extensive welfare benefits. It has a modern distribution system, excellent internal and external communications, and a skilled labor force. Timber, hydropower, and iron ore constitute the resource base of an economy heavily oriented toward foreign trade. Privately owned firms account for about 90% of industrial output, of which the engineering sector accounts for 50% of output and exports. Agriculture accounts for only 1% of GDP and 2% of employment. In September 2003, Swedish voters turned down entry into the euro system concerned about the impact on the economy and sovereignty. Until 2008, Sweden was in the midst of a sustained economic upswing, boosted by increased domestic demand and strong exports. This and robust finances offered the center-right government considerable scope to implement its reform program aimed at increasing employment, reducing welfare dependence, and streamlining the state's role in the economy. Despite strong finances and underlying fundamentals, the Swedish economy slid into recession in the third quarter of 2008 and growth continued downward in the first half of 2009 as deteriorating global conditions reduced export demand and consumption.

**GDP:** purchasing power parity - \$333 billion (2009 est.)

**GDP - real growth rate:** -4.6% (2009 est.)

**GDP - per capita:** purchasing power parity - \$36,800 (2009 est.)

**GDP - composition by sector:**

*agriculture:* 1.6%

*industry:* 26.6%

*services:* 71.8% (2009)

**Population below poverty line:** NA%

**Household income or consumption by percentage share:**

*lowest 10%:* 3.6%

*highest 10%:* 22.2% (2000)

**Inflation rate (consumer prices):** -0.5% (2009 est.)

**Labor force:** 4.93 million (2009)

**Labor force - by occupation:** agriculture 1.1%, industry 28.2%, services 70.7% (2009 est.)

**Unemployment rate:** 9.3% (2009 est.)

**Industries:** iron and steel, precision equipment (bearings, radio and telephone parts, armaments), wood pulp and paper products, processed foods, motor vehicles

**Industrial production growth rate:** -9% (2009 est.)

**Electricity - production by source:**

*fossil fuel:* 6.09%

*hydro:* 46.49%

*nuclear:* 45.16%

*other:* 2.26% (1998)

**Agriculture - products:** grains, sugar beets, potatoes; meat, milk

**Exports:** \$132 billion (f.o.b., 2009)

**Exports - commodities:** machinery 35%, motor vehicles, paper products, pulp and wood, iron and steel products, chemicals

**Exports - partners:** Germany 10.4%, Norway 9.4%, Finland 7.5, UK 7.3%, Denmark 6.9%, %, US 6.6%, Netherlands 5.1%, France 4.9%, Belgium 4.4% (2009)

**Imports:** \$121 billion (f.o.b., 2009)

**Imports - commodities:** machinery, petroleum and petroleum products, chemicals, motor vehicles, iron and steel; foodstuffs, clothing

**Imports - partners:** Germany 17.5%, Denmark 9.4%, Norway 8.6%, UK 6.2%, Netherlands 5.7%, Finland 5.7%, France 5%, Russia 4.6%, Belgium 4.1% (2009)

**Currency:** 1 Swedish krona (SKr) = 100 oere

**Exchange rates:** Swedish kronor (SKr) per US\$1 – 7.821 (2009), 6.7629 (2007), 8.4831 (January 2000), 8.2624 (1999), 7.9499 (1998), 7.6349 (1997), 6.7060 (1996), 7.1333 (1995)

**Fiscal year:** calendar year

## **Communications**

**Telephones - main lines in use:** 5.3 million (2009)

**Telephones - mobile cellular:** 10.9 million (2009)

## **Transportation**

### **Railways:**

*total:* 12,821 km (includes 3,594 km of privately-owned railways)

### **Highways:**

*total:* 420,907 km

*paved:* 130,453 km (including 1,591 km of expressways)

**Waterways:** 2,052 km navigable for small steamers and barges

**Ports and harbors:** Gavle, Goteborg, Halmstad, Helsingborg, Hudiksvall, Kalmar, Karlshamn, Malmo, Solvesborg, Stockholm, Sundsvall

**Airports:** 249 (2009 est.)

**Airports - with paved runways:** 152