

# **ICA Country Report Sweden 2006**

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Government Structure

Sweden is a constitutional monarchy, but the King has no political power. The political system is that of a parliamentary democracy. Executive power is held by the Government, headed by the Prime Minister and responsible to the Parliament (Riksdagen). The Swedish Constitution was adopted on 6 June 1974 and amended in 2003. Sweden is a member of the European Union since January 1995.

The Government Offices in Sweden form a single, integrated and relatively small public authority comprising the Prime Minister's Office, ten ministries and the Office for Administrative Affairs. It is a politically controlled body. The Government determines its policies and sets its priorities. In total there are three levels of the public sector; some 240 central government agencies, 21 regional government authorities (county councils) and 290 local government authorities (municipalities). However, this should not be understood as a hierarchy of powers; regional and local government administrations are independent of the Government.

The Swedish public administration made an early start on computerizing its work systems and information. The Swedish administrative model, with its independently managed central-government agencies, is considered to have had a major bearing on the rapid development of digital applications and e-services within the public administration. Thanks to a parallel implementation of performance management and delegation of powers, it has been possible to create a development-oriented public administration.

There is no special investment facility for e-government projects, since these are seen as parts of the normal service and administrative development. Each administrative body is responsible for its own e-government projects, which are financed within the normal budget allocation system. The necessary co-ordination is achieved through consultations, co-operative forums and consensual agreements.

There are no specific e-government acts with regards to legislation. E-government activities are regulated by general laws and ordinances on public administration, public registers and data security.

Different ministries, primarily the Ministry of Finance but also the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications and the Ministry of Justice, set the principles for public administration.

The Ministry of Finance is responsible for the development of all aspects of public administration. Accessibility and effectiveness are important to government activities. It should be easy for members of society to take advantage of the services offered by the authorities. IT infrastructural issues are dealt with in the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications and among the agencies, mainly The National Post and Telecom Agency.

Verva, The Swedish Administrative Development Agency, is responsible for promoting an efficient public administration, and has a stated responsibility for promoting e-government services. It also co-ordinates public procurement of ICT equipment and services, through a system of framework agreements, and operates the national public information portal.

The internet penetration in Sweden is comparatively very high, as is the use of e-government web sites. Some 80 % of the citizens regularly use the Internet and two-thirds have Internet access in their homes. Last year the internet penetration has laid steadily but out of internet subscriptions the dial-up connections have decreased from being 57 % during 2004 to 41.5 % 2005 in favour of direct connections.

## 2 The Strategic Approach towards eGovernment

### 1.2 New Strategy for the Development of eGovernment.

In June 2006 the Swedish Government presented its new strategy for the development of eGovernment. The strategy is an important element in the Government's overall policy for public administration, and the national work in line with the EU Lisbon strategy. It builds on both the Government's bill Central government administration in public service (Bill 1997/98:136), in which the Government issued guidelines, and requirements for the central-government administration of the future and the European Commission's new eGovernment action plan – "eGovernment for all Europeans. "

The Government's aim is to set the ground for higher efficiency and effectiveness in public administration, and to improve the service for citizens and businesses. Through the strategy, the Government is strengthening its governance concerning the development of public administration based on information technology, and sets targets that are to be reached by 2010. In the paper the Government also states that increased coordination and cooperation will result in better efficiency and effectiveness of the public administrations collected information technology-resources. This also points at the possibility to coordinate the investments in information technology to lower the cost and facilitate cooperation between administrations. The strategy will be carried out during the next four years and regularly assessed.

The strategy's headlines are;

#### **A more efficient and effective information management by 2010**

A better utilization of public information through more consistent principles for, inter alia, management, archiving, and access, will facilitate the exchange of public information between administration and increase access for citizens and businesses. Digitalisation and structuring of public information enables development of new e-services both public as private.

#### **Quicker and more secure administrative process through use of information technology by 2010**

An increased use of information technology in administrative processes will eliminate time-consuming manual processes, shorten handling time and increase quality and data protection. Public administrations will develop strategies for how to digitalise their internal and cross border processes, and analyse internal and external hindrances that needs to be solved.

### **Electronic processes for public purchases by 2010**

In line with an European Union Directive (see 1.2.1), a national action plan for electronic public procurement is being developed. As a complement to this work, the Government together with the public administrations will assess the complete process of public purchase with the aim of reaching a higher level of automation. As a first step in this direction, all public administrations shall by 1 July 2009 handle their incoming and outgoing invoices electronically.

### **A common government policy for secure electronic communication**

The use of eID shall be promoted. Guidelines for secure electronic communication, information transition and archiving will be developed.

## **1.2.1 National Action Plan for e-procurement**

As a member state of the European Union, Sweden introduces new directives for public procurement. The entire procurement process is being revised in order to make sure that the public sector as well as the suppliers gain from the electronic procurement. To this effect in 2005 a national working team was established. to increase electronic public procurement. The final report is due in February 2007. Beside from informing the public administrations and suppliers on the consequences from the new EU directives, proposals have been put forward regarding security and systems solutions. Consequences of increased use of e-services on the electronic public procurement are also investigated.

## **1.2.2 Electronic billing**

The Swedish National Financial Management Authority leads the work on the procurement of an infrastructure for e-billing, and develops support for agencies. A standard for electronic billing in public sector has been suggested. In the new e-Government strategy it is suggested that electronic billing system should be mandatory in public agencies as of 1 July 2009.

## **1.2.3 E-commerce in public sector**

Guidelines for e-commerce in public sector, aimed for purchasers and suppliers, are being prepared. The Swedish Administrative Development Agency runs this work, including close international cooperation towards standards in the Nordic countries as well as within EU and UN.

## **3 Organisational Issues**

### **3.1 Verva, the Swedish Administrative Development Agency**

On the 1 January 2006, a new government agency was established: Verva, the Swedish Administrative Development Agency, working under the authority of the Ministry of Finance. By establishing Verva, the Government signals policy consolidation with regard to public administrative development in general, and e-government in particular. The core of Verva is all the e-government activities “spun off” from the Swedish Agency for Public Management (Statskontoret). An important departure from the past is that Verva is expected to work with all the public sector; primarily with central government agencies but also with the regional and local public administrations.

The mandate of the Government Interoperability Board (GIB) has been transferred to Verva.

The Delegation for development of public e-services, working to promote cooperation actors across society in wide-ranging collaboration and provide visionary and innovative thinking, was put down and its business area has been included Verva.

### **3.2 Municipal Platform**

The initiative of collaboration at local level, the Municipal Platform (see Sweden Country Report 2005), has been continuously formalized. The Municipal Platform is to be seen as an enabler in the e-services development to introduce economies of scale and overcome the large costs and efforts linked to development when the multiplicity of services is large and the volumes are small. Today there are 30 municipalities collaborating with the aim to identify, design and introduce common systems architecture, technical platform, basic functions etc for e-services in the municipalities and create conditions to use similarities among the municipalities for co-operation in different ways. Five services are been looked at:

- Renewed application for economic aid;
- FAQ web site robots;
- Application for Swedish upper secondary school course program;
- Application for child care;
- Application for local grants to sports and leisure-time associations.

## **4 Operational Issues**

### **4.1 New Guidelines for Public Sector Web Sites**

The purpose of the National Guidelines for Public Sector Web Sites is to support public administrations in their development and design of web sites and to provide a basis for achievement of the vision of “the 24/7 agency”. Guidelines for accessibility and usability are integrated with guidelines for web management, editing and procurement. As many visitors as possible, irrespective of capabilities, should be able to search for and read information and to interact with administrations via their web sites. The guidelines are intended to be used by all agencies. The WAI Guidelines WCAG 1.0 are integrated into the guidelines.

The present version, 2.0, of the guidelines was published in June, 2004. The guidelines has had strong impact and are much appreciated within the public sector in Sweden. One of the success criteria have been the intense communication around the guidelines. Newsletters, local seminars across the country, and a network consisting of agencies, municipalities and IT-consultants.

Verva is preparing to publish the next version of the National Guidelines during autumn 2006. This version will also be available in English.

### **4.2 Measurement of Basic Accessibility**

Verva is regularly running an automatic test of basic accessibility of public web sites. The start pages of more than 1000 public agencies and organisations are tested. The tool used is based on W3C Validator. The test is limited in purpose. It gives information as to whether the web page is created according to standard and if the coding is made in a correct way. The latest measurement was made in March, 2006. The results showed that 8 % of the web sites tested were accessible according to criteria.

### **4.3 Swedish Government Secure Intranet**

SGSI (Swedish Government Secure Intranet) is an internet service for secure communication via TESTA between EU member states and EU bodies, as well as within Sweden between Swedish agencies. SGSI is an IP-

service, a virtual private network that has no direct connection with the open Internet.

A security target in common for Swedish agencies has been developed by Verva. According to this security target, the SGSI may be used by state agencies that have been accredited. The security target defines requirements on management, organisation, IT operation and accessibility to SGSI. Accreditation implies that case sensitive information that have been classified according to the Council of the European Unions security regulations (2001/264/EGT, EGT L 101/1 11.5.2001) up to “RESTRAINT UE” can be transferred to TESTA and to connected agencies. A panel of agencies connected to SGSI approves which agencies will be accredited, i.e. have the possibility to communicate within the SGSI.

#### **4.4 Supporting the use of eID in e-services**

The usage of electronic identification for e-services is constantly increasing in Sweden. The usage of the most common electronic identification method, a soft certificate issued by the banks and used for both public and private services is increasing at the rate of some 25 000 new users and approximately 60 000 more transactions a month. At the end of 2005 there were some 800 000 users and 1 800 000 transactions a month.

During the end of 2005, a consortium of three Government Agencies, three County Councils and three municipalities made a joint order based on the central frame agreement for electronic identification. For a lump sum of about 60 MSEK (6.44 million €) these organisations bought an unlimited use of electronic identification services till the end of 2007.

In October 2005, a new passport and a new national identification card was made available to the citizen of Sweden. Both the passport and the identification card are made up to ICAO regulations and have contactless radio chips holding a digital copy of all passport identification information including the picture. The identification card has been accepted as a passport within the Schengen countries. The identification card is also equipped with a regular contact chip (ISO 7816) that can be installed with certificates for electronic identification.

In June 2006 the Swedish Government commissioned Verva, to stimulate the use of eID in the public sector. For this purpose an annual sum of 12 MSEK (1.3 million €) is allocated.



## 5 For more information

The Government Offices of Sweden  
[www.sweden.gov.se](http://www.sweden.gov.se)

The Swedish Administrative Development Agency  
[www.verva.se](http://www.verva.se)

The Swedish National Financial Management Authority  
[www.esv.se](http://www.esv.se)

The Swedish Agency for Public Management  
[www.statskontoret.se](http://www.statskontoret.se)

The National Post and Telecom Agency  
[www.pts.se](http://www.pts.se)

The National portal to public sector  
[www.sverige.se](http://www.sverige.se)