Sweden is a member of the UNESCO Executive Board for the period 2013–2017

This is Sweden:
Area: 450,000 km² – the third largest country in Western Europe
Longest north-south distance: 1,574 km – rich diversity of landscape and climate
Capital: Stockholm
Population: 9.4 million inhabitants
Languages: Swedish; recognised minority languages: Sami (Lapp), Finnish, Meänkieli (Tornedalen Finnish), Yiddish, Romani Chib
Based on a Nordic cooperation
In keeping with a long tradition, the Swedish membership in the Executive Board is based on a cooperation between the Nordic Member States – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden – and Associate Member the Faroe Islands.

Sweden is a true friend of the UN
The United Nations as a global organisation is of great importance to Sweden. For this reason, Sweden is one of the largest contributors to UN funds and programmes.

Ever since the UN was founded, Sweden has been involved in core areas of the UN system. More than 80,000 Swedish nationals have served in UN peace missions over the years. Sweden has also been actively involved in conflict prevention, disarmament and peace support operations, as well as development cooperation, the promotion of sustainable development, the rule of law, international law and human rights.

Sweden is active in many areas of UNESCO cooperation
Sweden joined UNESCO in 1950 and is now serving its fourth term on the Executive Board of UNESCO. Sweden is a major donor to UNESCO’s extra budgetary funds.

Sweden was a member of the World Heritage Committee until 2011 and is a member of the Intergovernmental Committee for the 2005 Convention on Cultural Diversity. Swedish experts participate in other parts of UNESCO’s intergovernmental cooperation, such as the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), the Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB), the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). Many Swedish non-governmental organisations cooperate with UNESCO. Sweden has 15 World Heritage sites, six entries in the International Register of the Memory of the World Programme, five MAB Biosphere reserves and seven professors in the UNESCO Chairs network.
Education as a human right and a tool for participation in an inclusive knowledge society

Sweden’s priorities are:
- quality education for all, including education for sustainable development;
- support for the development of analysis and a system-wide approach to education – from pre-primary to higher education – inclusive of technical and vocational education;
- active participation in the creation of the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals and in the UN Education First Initiative.

Education is the key to development. Today, the world has the largest youth generation ever, which poses challenges to education systems globally.

Tomorrow, basic literacy and numeracy will not suffice. Education must be expanded to include further education with relevant vocational education. National education systems must respond to the needs of the labour market as well as to the needs of students as individuals, as future decision makers and as members of society.

UNESCO should work with all levels of the education system, using a system-wide approach, where broad basic education, vocational education, adult education, higher education and informal and non-formal education are integral parts. The needs of the Member States should be assessed and analysed to provide high quality policy advice.

UNESCO should work on educational matters of global concern. Education for sustainable development is an important part of the development of quality education.

Relevant and reliable statistics are crucial for the development of education systems. UNESCO Institute for Statistics has a decisive role in providing the world with consistent global education statistics.
Science

Access to scientific knowledge for participation in an inclusive knowledge society for sustainable development

Sweden’s priorities are:
- enhancing the development of research policy in low income countries;
- integrated science with the purpose to strengthen sustainable development;
- cooperation in water sciences.

Science has an important role in bridging gaps between countries and regions. UNESCO should further strengthen the work in developing research policy with a global approach.

UNESCO should support international cooperation and integrated science to address climate and environmental change and related social transformations.

The sciences can make important contributions to sustainable development and UNESCO’s science programmes need to cooperate with all other UNESCO programmes. Education for sustainable development must be a part of this.

UNESCO has a clear mandate in the UN family to work on water issues that have a high degree of global relevance. UNESCO’s work on water issues should integrate natural and social sciences, and use an integrated perspective on water and oceans.

Access to scientific knowledge includes scientific education and also relates to scientific research infrastructure and global research cooperation. Access should be the main goal of UNESCO’s science technology and informatics policy and continuing the development of Open Access to scientific publications is an important part of this.
Support to creators of living culture and to cultural preservation in an inclusive knowledge society

Sweden’s priorities are:
• to support the Member States’ implementation of the UNESCO cultural conventions and promote their greater involvement in national implementation activities;
• to foster freedom of expression and the right to knowledge in the cultural field;
• to support creators of living culture.

UNESCO’s cultural conventions are of global importance. UNESCO should work to maintain and uphold all aspects of the conventions and assist Member States in taking more responsibility for their implementation.

UNESCO should work on matters of global importance and on what unites us as human beings and citizens in order to bridge what divides us.

Living culture is dependent on the individuals who perform and produce cultural expressions and make them available. Without them, culture would only be a reflection of the past. UNESCO should work with its Member States to protect the freedom of expression of the creators, performers and producers and the individual’s access to culture and the right to take part in cultural life.

UNESCO should explore ways to support the creators of living culture in their efforts to organise to protect their rights.
Access to media and communication and the right to communicate in an inclusive knowledge society

Sweden’s priorities are:

- a consolidation of UNESCO’s leading role in the UN family in the promotion of freedom of expression and freedom of the media;
- support for UNESCO’s role as a provider of high quality policy advice on media development;
- promotion of dialogue between UNESCO and its Member States to strengthen freedom of information, freedom of expression and freedom of the media.

UNESCO should work on various aspects of communication to provide high quality policy advice to Member States, including the setting up of national media legislation and the promotion of the safety of journalists. The International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) is an important tool and should be enhanced.

UNESCO needs to implement and further develop the Media Development Indicators and Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media.

An inclusive knowledge society needs media-literate citizens. UNESCO’s media and information literacy initiatives are therefore of utmost importance. Freedom of expression and freedom of information is critical to achieving and sustaining poverty eradication and human rights.

Access to information and freedom of information, freedom of expression and the search for knowledge are to guide UNESCO’s work in the field of author’s rights and the promotion of books and libraries.

UNESCO’s efforts for the protection of documentary heritage – whether films, sound recordings, books, manuscripts or archives – need to be strengthened.
What is UNESCO’s role in the 21st century?
In Sweden’s view, UNESCO’s mission involves fostering cooperation to shape a peaceful, inclusive and cooperative future – with access to information and knowledge and the freedom of expression for all. We call this an inclusive knowledge society.

Overarching Swedish priorities
Sweden believes that UNESCO needs to focus on its core mission to be a strong voice for its ideals and strongly supports its ongoing reform process.

One of UNESCO’s core tasks is to support Member States by providing high quality policy advice within its fields of competence.

To be a strong actor and build an inclusive knowledge society, UNESCO needs to:
• focus on matters of global importance;
• work in closer cooperation with other organisations inside and outside the UN system;
• support Member States with high quality policy analysis and advice to benefit development and cooperation with other organisations;
• modernise and simplify its administration and focus on leadership and management;
• measure the impact rather than the number of its activities.

UNESCO's working methods
UNESCO needs to find new ways to disseminate information and new, modern and cost-effective methods for Member States and experts to communicate, hold meetings and take decisions.

UNESCO’s role in building an inclusive knowledge society
The goal of UNESCO’s work should be to promote sustainable development. There will be no sustainable development without knowledge.

Wide access to information and knowledge is a foundation of the inclusive knowledge society.

UNESCO should be an active partner with other organisations and the focus of its programmes should be on building an inclusive knowledge society.

For development to be sustainable and effective, a gender perspective must be integrated into all UNESCO policies and programmes.
Sweden is an international country – in so many ways

Sweden has enjoyed a long and peaceful period of stable development since its last war in 1814 and its borders have remained unchanged since 1905. The economy is largely based on exports. Of the 9.4 million inhabitants, approximately 20 per cent have family roots in another country, providing Sweden with a rich cultural and linguistic diversity.

Swedish development assistance amounts to more than 1 per cent of GNI (exceeding the UN target of 0.7 per cent). Sweden is involved in multilateral and bilateral development cooperation with a large number of countries and is one of the largest per capita donors of funds for development cooperation and humanitarian assistance.

Sweden cooperates closely with the other Nordic countries inside and outside international organisations and is an active member of many regional and international cooperation organisations.

Alfred Nobel (1833–1896) was a Swedish chemist, engineer and inventor. The Nobel Prize was posthumously established to honour men and women from all corners of the globe for outstanding achievements. The Alfred Nobel Family Archives is a documentary heritage included in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2007.