



THE STATE OF NATIONAL URBAN POLICY IN SWEDEN

Name of national urban policy	No national policy but a <i>National Platform for Sustainable Urban Development</i>
Date of national urban policy	Not applicable
Explicit or partial	Not applicable
Legal status (e.g. act of the legislature, executive order, administrative guidance, etc.)	Not applicable
Previous/secondary policies	<i>National Negotiation on Housing and Infrastructure</i> ; urban environment agreements
Stage of development	Not applicable
How developed (e.g. through a participatory/stakeholder process, or act of parliament, etc.)	Not applicable
Implementing body	Urban issues are handled by the Ministry of the Environment and Energy and the National Platform is co-ordinated by the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning (<i>Boverket</i>)
Government system	Centralised
Type of national urban agency	General national planning authority
Implementation mechanism (e.g. committee, involvement of multiple agencies, national-local co-ordination)	Not applicable

Current national urban policy

Sweden does not have a national urban policy, but it does have several national initiatives that focus on urban development. Chief among them is the *National Platform for Sustainable Urban Development*, which was launched in 2014. It is co-ordinated by the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning (*Boverket*), with the involvement of the Swedish Energy Agency (*Energimyndigheten*), the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (*Naturvårdsverket*), the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (*Tillväxtverket*) and the Swedish Transport Administration (*Trafikverket*). One of the aims of the Platform is to increase co-operation, co-ordination and sharing of knowledge and experience among players in different sectors and at different levels regarding sustainable urban development. One area of focus includes how to improve co-ordination between sectors. The Platform also supports efforts for sustainable urban development within the regional structural fund programmes. The Platform is an ongoing assignment with no end date (Boverket, 2015; OECD, 2015).

Other national urban initiatives include the *National Negotiation on Housing and Infrastructure*, which seeks to build the first high-speed railway for trains between Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö. The government has also announced plans for public transport-related investments to improve urban environments (“urban environment agreements”), which are currently being prepared by the government offices. Finally, the national government supports municipalities in their efforts to combat segregation, and

provides grants to increase and facilitate refurbishment and energy efficiency in apartment buildings in vulnerable residential areas (OECD, 2015).

The Ministry for the Environment and Energy oversees urban development. The role includes co-ordinating sustainable urban development within the government. Responsibility for grants within the area of housing, planning and building; and laws and regulations concerning planning and construction, as well as regional policy is handled by the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation.

Sweden's regional policy, *Sweden's National Strategy for Sustainable Regional Growth and Attractiveness*, released in 2015, will be used as a framework to guide investment. The Strategy provides a policy framework for the development of all regions in Sweden, and focuses on investing in enabling factors utilising a place-based approach. The national strategy for regional growth provides a framework for investing in regions including urban areas. The national policy goal for regional development is to develop the potential in all parts of the country with stronger local and regional competitiveness (Government of Sweden, 2015).

Previous national urban policy and developments

The *Storstadspolitiken Program*, between 1998 and 2010, was a support programme joining the national level and local level governments, aimed at the integration of immigrant populations and increasing economic activity in deprived areas. From 2008 to 2010, the national government implemented a national strategy for integration. One major aim of this strategy was the minimisation of exclusion in urban areas (UN-Habitat, 2015).

Bibliography

Boverket (Sweden National Board of Housing and Planning) (2015), "Platform for Sustainable Cities", 3 December 2015, Boverket, Karlskrona, Sweden, www.boverket.se/en/start-in-english/planning/platform-for-sustainable-cities/ (accessed 16 June 2016).

Government Offices of Sweden (2015), *Sweden's National Strategy for Sustainable Regional Growth and Attractiveness*, 25 April 2015. <http://www.government.se/information-material/2016/04/swedens-national-strategy-for-sustainable-regional-growth-and-attractiveness-20152020---short-version/>, (accessed 16 June 2016).

OECD (2015), "Regional Outlook Survey Results: Sweden", unpublished.

UN-Habitat (2017, forthcoming), "NUP Regional Report: Western and Eastern Europe and North America." Nairobi: UN Habitat.