

OECD Regulatory Policy Outlook 2015

Country profile

SWEDEN



Access links

- **OECD Regulatory Policy Outlook 2015:** www.oecd.org/publications/oecd-regulatory-policy-outlook-2015-9789264238770-en.htm
- **Indicators of Regulatory Policy and Governance and the underlying data:** www.oecd.org/gov/regulatory-policy/measuring-regulatory-performance.htm
- **Regulatory policy in Sweden:** www.oecd.org/regreform/regulatory-policy/sweden.htm
- **Regulatory Policy Outlook country profiles:** www.oecd.org/regreform/regulatory-policy/outlook-country-profiles.htm
- **OECD regulatory policy website:** www.oecd.org/governance/regulatory-policy/

Overview

Sweden has long placed regulatory simplification, and with it stakeholder engagement, at the centre of its Regulatory Reform agenda. Public consultation is a routine part of developing regulations. The principle of public access in Sweden entitles the general public to access official documents with a few exceptions, e.g. documents that are subject to secrecy. Draft regulations are often first analysed and evaluated by a committee of inquiry, whose final report is then referred to relevant stakeholders for consideration, before the joint draft procedure continues within the Government Offices. The Council on Legislation provides a check of conformity with existing legislation before a bill is submitted to the Parliament.

In 2012 the former Government announced five priority areas and seven targets for broadening the work on Better Regulation. The current Government is now reviewing the set Better Regulation targets and focus of its work. A Better Regulation Team at the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation co-ordinates the work on Better Regulation across the Government Offices. Other key players include the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth, which carries out a broad range of projects, and the Better Regulation Council, an independent decision making body within the Agency that examines and issues opinions on the quality of RIAs. A key challenge regarding RIAs is to improve the articulation and calculation of regulatory proposal's economic impacts.

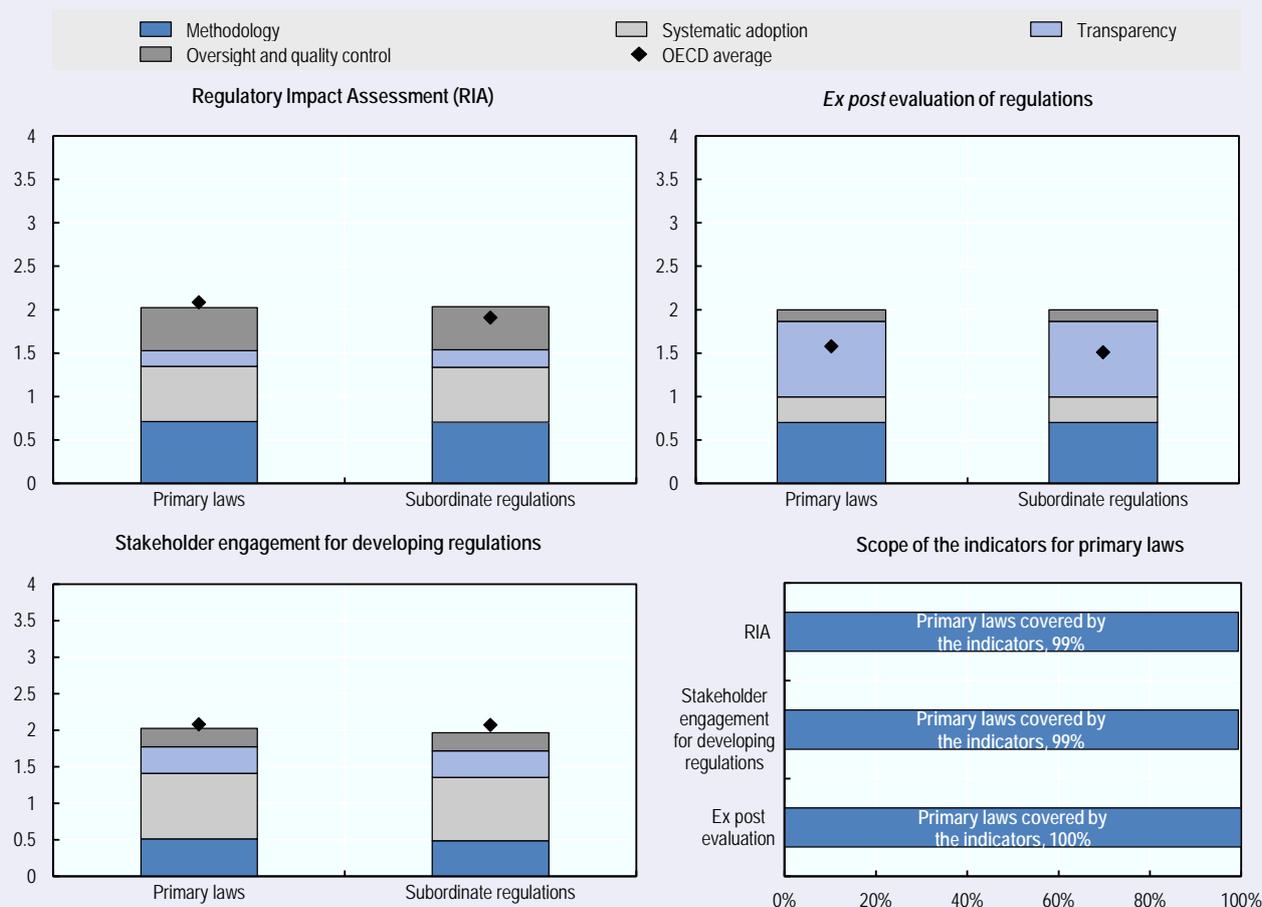
Ex post evaluation frequently occurs on an ad hoc basis in Sweden and is, as regards government agencies, regulated in the Ordinance on Impact Assessment (SFS 2007: 1244). The Swedish Government may wish to consider carrying out comprehensive in-depth reviews to evaluate the potential for regulatory reform in particular sectors.



Spotlight: “Regulations calculator”

In 2014, the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth improved the computational tool “*Regelräknaren*” (“Regulations calculator”; www.enklareregler.se/verkytyg/regelraknaren.html) to support officials/rulemakers/legislators when estimating the costs for business when carrying out RIAs. The Government believes that this tool can contribute to improving the calculations used within RIAs for regulatory proposals and amendments to regulation.

Indicators of Regulatory Policy and Governance 2015



1. The figures display the aggregated scores from all four categories giving the total composite score for each indicator. The maximum score for each category is one and the maximum score for each aggregated indicator is four.
2. The information presented in the indicators for primary laws on RIA and stakeholder engagement only covers processes of developing primary laws that are carried out by the executive branch of the national government. As in Sweden approx. 99% of primary laws are initiated by the executive, the indicators on RIA and stakeholder engagement cover approx. 99% of primary laws. There is no formal requirement in Sweden for consultation with the general public and for conducting RIAs to inform the development of primary laws initiated by parliament. The information presented in the indicators for primary laws on *ex post* evaluation covers processes in place for both primary laws initiated by parliament and by the executive. The percentage of primary laws initiated by parliament is an average between the years 2011 to 2013.

Source: 2014 Regulatory Indicators Survey results, www.oecd.org/gov/regulatory-policy/measuring-regulatory-performance.htm.

Statlink: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933263341>

Indicators of Regulatory Policy and Governance (iREG)

The three composite indicators provide an overview of a country's practices in the areas of stakeholder engagement, Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) and *ex post* evaluation. Each indicator comprises four equally weighted categories:

- Systematic adoption which records formal requirements and how often these requirements are conducted in practice.
- Methodology which gathers information on the methods used in each area, e.g. the type of impacts assessed or how frequently different forms of consultation are used.
- Oversight and quality control records the role of oversight bodies and publically available evaluations.
- Transparency records information from the questions that relate to the principles of open government, e.g. whether government decisions are made publically available.



The composite indicators are based on the results of the *OECD 2014 Regulatory Indicators Survey*, which gathers information from all 34 OECD countries and the European Commission as of 31 December 2014. The survey focuses on regulatory policy practices as described in the 2012 *OECD Recommendation on Regulatory Policy and Governance*. The more of these practices a country has adopted, the higher its indicator score. Further information on the methodology is available online at www.oecd.org/gov/regulatory-policy/measuring-regulatory-performance.htm.

Whilst the indicators provide an overview of a country's regulatory framework, they cannot fully capture the complex realities of its quality, use and impact. In-depth country reviews are therefore required to complement the indicators and to provide specific recommendations for reform.

OECD Regulatory Policy Outlook 2015

The *OECD Regulatory Policy Outlook* (www.oecd.org/publications/oecd-regulatory-policy-outlook-2015-9789264238770-en.htm) provides the first evidence-based, cross-country analysis of the progress made by OECD countries in improving the way they regulate. Findings are based on the results of the *OECD 2014 Regulatory Indicators Survey*.

Key findings:

- Laws and regulations are essential instruments, together with taxes and spending, in attaining policy objectives such as economic growth, social welfare and environmental protection. OECD countries have generally committed at the highest political level to an explicit whole-of-government policy for regulatory quality and have established a standing body charged with regulatory oversight.
- Implementation of regulatory policy varies greatly in scope and form across countries. While RIA has been widely adopted, few countries systematically assess whether their laws and regulations achieve their objectives. Stakeholder engagement on rule making is widespread in OECD countries, taking place mostly in the final phase of developing regulation.
- The national executive government has made important progress over the last decade to improve the quality of regulations. Parliaments, regulatory agencies and sub-national and international levels of government need to be more engaged to ensure that there are evidence-based and efficient laws and regulations for stimulating economic activity and promoting well-being.
- The impact of regulatory policy could be further improved by addressing shortcomings in the implementation and enforcement of regulations and by considering new approaches to regulatory design and delivery such as those based on behavioural economics.

Contact information:

Christiane Arndt, Head of Programme, Measuring Regulatory Performance, christiane.arndt@oecd.org and Céline Kauffmann, Deputy Head of Division, Regulatory Policy, celine.kauffmann@oecd.org