Regional disparities in terms of GDP per capita have slightly increased in Sweden over the last sixteen years, with North Middle Sweden having GDP per capita equivalent to 57% of the GDP per capita in Stockholm in 2016. However, Sweden remains a country with low regional disparities, as only two out of 30 OECD countries with comparable data report lower regional differences in GDP per capita.

With a productivity growth of 1.7% per year over the period 2000-16, Stockholm had the highest productivity growth, as well as the highest level of productivity among Swedish regions. Central Norrland, where productivity growth was the lowest at 1% per year in 2000-16, has increased the productivity gap with Stockholm.

South Sweden has the highest youth unemployment rate (21.1% in 2017), seven percentage points higher than in Småland and above the OECD average.
Relative ranking of the regions with the best and worst outcomes in the 11 well-being dimensions, with respect to all 402 OECD regions. The eleven dimensions are ordered by decreasing regional disparities in the country. Each well-being dimension is measured by the indicators in the table below.

Compared to other OECD countries, regional well-being is high and regional disparities are generally low in Sweden. The widest regional gaps are found in safety and community, although in the case of safety the low performing region is close to the OECD median region. All eight Swedish regions rank in the top 25% of the OECD regions in civic engagement.

High and low performing Swedish regions fare better than the OECD median region in all the 13 well-being indicators, with the exception of the perceived social network support, unemployment rate and rooms per person. About 97% of households in the high performing regions and 89% in the low performing ones have access to broadband connection.

Notes: (1) OECD regions refer to the first administrative tier of subnational government (large regions, Territorial Level 2); Sweden is composed of eight large regions. (2) Household income per capita data are based on USD constant PPP, constant prices (year 2010).
In Sweden, 57% of the population lives in cities of more than 50,000 inhabitants. The share of population in cities with more than 500,000 people is 40% compared to 55% in the OECD area.

The metropolitan areas in Sweden account for 47% of national GDP and 42% of employment. Between 2000 and 2016, the three Swedish metropolitan areas generated 57% of national GDP growth, with Stockholm alone being responsible for 42%.

In terms of GDP per capita, the metropolitan area of Stockholm is among the richest 10% of the 327 OECD metropolitan areas.

When considering PM 2.5 levels, the metropolitan areas of Stockholm and Gothenburg are in the 20% least polluted OECD metropolitan areas.

Source: OECD Metropolitan Database. Number of metropolitan areas: 12 in Sweden and 1138 in the OECD.

* Note: Cities are defined here as functional urban areas, which are composed by high-density urban centres of at least 50,000 people and their areas of influence (commuting zone). For more information, see: http://www.oecd.org/cfe/regional-policy/functionalurbanareasbycountry.htm.

Updated the 5th of March 2019
Subnational government expenditure by function
As a share of total subnational government expenditure, 2016

**Sweden**
- Health: 27%
- Social protection: 27%
- Education: 21%
- General public services: 11%
- Other: 8%
- Economic affairs: 6%

**OECD average**
- Health: 18%
- Social protection: 14%
- Education: 25%
- General public services: 14%
- Other: 15%
- Economic affairs: 14%

Subnational expenditure per capita: **USD 12,238** compared to **USD 6,817** in Sweden. In Sweden, this is equivalent to 56% of total public expenditure and 25% of GDP. In comparison, across the OECD, subnational government expenditure accounts for 40.4% of total public expenditure and 16.2% of GDP. Health and social protection are the two largest spending items for subnational governments in Sweden. Together they represent 54% of subnational expenditure compared to 32% in the OECD area.

Role of subnational governments in public investment
Subnational government public investment per capita, 2016

In **Sweden**, 50.3% of total public investment was carried out by subnational governments (SNG) compared to an OECD average of 56.9%.

Source: OECD Subnational Government Structure and Finance Database.
Note: The function ‘Other’ includes housing and community amenities, recreation, culture and religion; environment; public order and safety.

OECD Regions and Cities at a Glance 2018

The 2018 edition of OECD Regions and Cities at a Glance shows how regions and cities contribute to national growth and the well-being of societies. It updates its regular set of region-by-region indicators, examining a wide range of policies and trends and identifying those regions that are outperforming or lagging behind in their country.

Consult this publication on line: [https://oe.cd/pub/2n9](https://oe.cd/pub/2n9)