

## Work-related language learning in

# Sweden

### Majority language learning (L2) for newly-arrived migrants

There is a legal right to study Swedish as a second language through the Sfi programme: *Svenska för invandrare* / Swedish for immigrants. Sfi is publicly-funded through the Swedish Migration Agency, the Employment Service Agency and Sweden's 290 municipalities. The Sfi programme goes up to CEFR level B1 and is delivered by municipalities. It is free to any migrant (excluding Norwegians and Danes) aged 16 and over who lacks basic knowledge of Swedish and is registered with their local authority (though in practice most newly arrived migrants have to wait for their permanent permission to stay before they start an Sfi course).

Practice examples include: Language learning provided by the [Swedish Red Cross](#) and other voluntary organisations; language provision in migrant reception centres (arranged by the Migration Agency); and [Kompis Sverige](#), an organisation that promotes integration by connecting migrants with locals on the basis of shared interests, focusing on relations which help develop language competences.

### Work-related L2 provision for employees/workers

There is no specific right for employees to have work-related L2 training, though providers of Sfi courses are required to help learners establish contact with working life. Where learning is supported, it is generally supported by the Employment Service Agency and/or the municipalities. Practice examples include the projects [SpråkSam](#) and [ArbetSam](#).

### Work-related L2 provision for job seekers, unemployed

Work-related L2 is incorporated into Sfi, Swedish for immigrants. In addition to this, training and projects are also undertaken the Employment Service Agency, sometimes in cooperation with the municipalities and the Social Insurance Agency, sometimes with funding from the European Social Fund.

### Work-related L2 provision for specific occupational purposes

The National Board of Health and Welfare assesses registered doctors, nurses etc. with qualifications from countries outside the EU and demands L2 on a C1-C2 level for registration in Sweden. No language requirements exist for those with recognised European qualifications; in such cases language requirements are at the discretion of the employer. Responsibility for supporting this sort of language learning is not clear. Sometimes the Employment Service organises the training, sometimes the employer commissions (and pays for) training in order to recruit specific staff.

Practice examples include [Sfx, Svenska för yrkesutbildade / Swedish for qualified workers](#), which offers language training for specific jobs, e.g. bus drivers, nurses, doctors, teachers, and engineers. This is an ongoing project in the Stockholm region run by the municipalities and supported by the County Board.

## Work-related literacy provision for low-literate L1/L2 adults

The Employment Service and the municipalities have a shared responsibility for work-related literacy provision for low-literate L1/L2 adults.

### *Practice examples of interest*

[Sfi bas](#) [Swedish for immigrants basics], an adult basic education programme offered by municipalities in the Stockholm region in partnership with the County Board. Low literate adults receive training in L2, mathematics and civic orientation.

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## **Further information**

[Council of Europe surveys](#) on member state policy and practice relating to the linguistic integration of adult migrants

[European Web Site on Integration country information sheets](#)

[German government information service \(Bundeszentrale für politischen Bildung/bpb\) country profiles](#) on migration in Europe and beyond

[CEDEFOP VET in Europe project country reports](#)

[European Migration Network country fact sheets](#)

[Migration Policy Institute](#)

[Global Forum on Migration and Development Migration Profiles Repository](#)

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### **Sweden profile acknowledgement: Kerstin Sjösvärd (LfW Network member and LfW Workshop participant, 2015)**

Participants at the Language for Work Workshop held at the ECML in Graz on 24-25 June 2015 were asked to prepare a brief review of policies and practice in their own country/region relevant to work-related language learning for migrant/ethnic minority workers and/or low-literate majority-language speaking workers. Reviews were completed for Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy (Emilia-Romagna), Kosovo, Macedonia, Malta, Norway, Romania (Bucharest), Sweden.