

Innovation performance (OECD Reviews of Innovation Policy: Sweden 2012)

This chapter reviews Sweden's innovation inputs and outputs and compares them as far as possible with those of other advanced OECD countries. In terms of inputs, Sweden stands out internationally for its high levels of investment in research and development (R&D) (in both absolute and relative terms), the high share of industry in R&D performance and the high share of business R&D funding by multinational enterprise affiliates. Evidence on innovation expenditures suggests that Swedish firms operate at the European technology frontier and that innovation is central to their activities. However, among countries with higher than average R&D intensity, Sweden is the only one to have experienced a notable decline in R&D intensity over the last decade. Business finances a smaller share of higher education R&D expenditure than the OECD norm. In terms of outputs, several indicators confirm Sweden's position as an international centre of scientific excellence and technological leadership. Sweden has more scientific publications and international patents per capita than most OECD countries. However there are indications that formerly dominant sectors are undergoing moderate decline and that Sweden's position is weaker in service innovation and in some measures of impact.

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