**Sweden** ([Swedish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish_language): *Sverige* [[ˈsværjɛ]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA/Swedish) ([About this sound](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sv-Sverige.ogg)[listen](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/59/Sv-Sverige.ogg))), formal name: the **Kingdom of Sweden** (Swedish: [About this sound](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sv-Konungariket_Sverige.ogg)[*Konungariket Sverige*](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0d/Sv-Konungariket_Sverige.ogg) ([help](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Media_help" \o "Wikipedia:Media help)·[info](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sv-Konungariket_Sverige.ogg))), is a [Scandinavian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scandinavia) [Nordic country](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nordic_country) in [Northern Europe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Europe).[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweden#cite_note-UNGEGN-12) It borders [Norway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norway) to the west and north and [Finland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finland) to the east, and is connected to [Denmark](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denmark) in the southwest by [a bridge-tunnel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%98resund_Bridge) across the [Öresund](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%98resund" \o "Øresund), a strait at the Swedish-Danish border. At 450,295 square kilometres (173,860 sq mi), Sweden is the largest country in [Northern Europe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Europe), the third-largest country in the [European Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union) and the [fifth largest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_European_countries_by_area) country in [Europe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Europe) by area. Sweden has a total population of 10.2 million[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweden#cite_note-population-3) of which 2.5 million have a foreign background.[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweden#cite_note-:0-13) It has a low population density of 22 inhabitants per square kilometre (57/sq mi). The highest concentration is in the southern half of the country.

[Germanic peoples](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germanic_peoples) have inhabited Sweden since [prehistoric times](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prehistoric_times), emerging into history as the [Geats](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geats" \o "Geats) (Swedish Götar) and [Swedes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedes_(Germanic_tribe)) (Svear) and constituting the sea peoples known as the [Norsemen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norsemen). [Southern Sweden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Sweden) is predominantly [agricultural](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agriculture), while [the north](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norrland_terrain) is heavily forested. Sweden is part of the geographical area of [Fennoscandia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fennoscandia). The [climate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweden#Climate) is in general very mild for its northerly latitude due to significant maritime influence, so that in spite of its latitude it still retains warm continental summers. Today, the [sovereign state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sovereign_state) of Sweden is a [constitutional monarchy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy) and [parliamentary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliamentary_system" \o "Parliamentary system)[democracy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy), with a [monarch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarchy_of_Sweden) as [head of state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Head_of_state), like its neighbour [Norway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norway). The [capital city](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capital_city) is [Stockholm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm), which is also the most populous city in the country. [Legislative power](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legislature) is vested in the 349-member [unicameral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unicameral) *[Riksdag](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Riksdag" \o "Riksdag)*. [Executive power](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Executive_(government)) is exercised by the [government](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government_of_Sweden) chaired by the [prime minister](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Sweden). Sweden is a [unitary state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unitary_state), currently divided into [21 counties](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counties_of_Sweden)and [290 municipalities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Municipalities_of_Sweden).

An independent Swedish state emerged during the early 12th century. After the [Black Death](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Death) in the middle of the 14th century killed about a third of the Scandinavian population,[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweden#cite_note-14)[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweden#cite_note-15) the [Hanseatic League](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanseatic_League) threatened Scandinavia's culture, finances and languages.[[*dubious*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Accuracy_dispute#Disputed_statement)*–*[*discuss*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:Sweden#Dubious)] This led to the forming of the Scandinavian [Kalmar Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalmar_Union) in 1397,[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweden#cite_note-16) which Sweden left in 1523. When Sweden became involved in the [Thirty Years War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirty_Years_War) on the Reformist side, an expansion of its territories began and eventually the [Swedish Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish_Empire) was formed. This became one of the [great powers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_power) of Europe until the early 18th century. Swedish territories outside the [Scandinavian Peninsula](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scandinavian_Peninsula) were gradually lost during the 18th and 19th centuries, ending with the annexation of present-day Finland by [Russia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Empire) in 1809. The last war in which Sweden was directly involved was in 1814, when Norway was militarily forced into [personal union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_between_Sweden_and_Norway). Since then, Sweden has been at peace, maintaining an official policy of [neutrality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish_neutrality) in foreign affairs.[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweden#cite_note-17) The union with Norway was [peacefully dissolved](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dissolution_of_the_union_between_Norway_and_Sweden) in 1905. Sweden was formally [neutral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish_neutrality) through both world wars and the [Cold War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold_War), albeit Sweden has since 2009 openly moved towards cooperation with [NATO](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NATO).