



## PR2 – INTERACTIVE AND NETWORKING TOOL STATE OF THE ART & BEST PRACTICES IN SWEDEN



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## 1. Introduction

There is currently no legislation specifying the details of the most common third sector legal form in Sweden, 'ideell förening' ('ideell' association) and there are no requirements for formal registration in order to give the association legal personality.

The absence of the sector on the legal map in Sweden is interesting but can only be explored in a speculative way. One important difficulty in the drafting of legislation on 'ideell' associations is that existing associations are extremely varied in character.

Another reason is probably that political parties and labour market organisations, which are normally organized as 'ideell' associations themselves, have resisted limits on their own freedom of action. One must realize that many third sector organisations in Sweden are of a lobbying nature, and thus, have a decisive impact on the legislative process in this field.

Until now one could talk about reluctance in the third sector in general and especially in the area of welfare when it came to regulation. The lack of regulation and thus of public control has therefore been a policy like a sort of gentlemen's agreement between the public and third sector. The dominant argument has been that nobody really gains from regulation, while the third sector has been seen as something positive in itself.

During the 1990s, the third sector and especially the umbrella organisations worried that the lack of legal framework meant that they could not compete with the private sector and they therefore started to be active in the public debate. This concern was visible in relation to the recent case on VAT, in which umbrella organisations worked hard to convince the Ministry of Finance that third sector organisations needed an exemption.

Sweden has a rich history of active citizenship and volunteering, dating back to the 1600s. Over time, the country has fostered a strong tradition of non-profit organizations and foundations, which play a vital role in Swedish society.

In the early 19th century, Sweden embraced the British concept of private philanthropy to address social needs. This led to the establishment of charities dedicated to supporting the vulnerable and disadvantaged. In addition, popular mass movements emerged in the late 19th century, inspired by similar movements in other countries, with the aim of instigating societal change.

Despite the comprehensive provision of social services by the Swedish welfare state, non-profit organizations and foundations continue to hold significant importance. They complement the welfare state's efforts by providing additional support and services to various sectors of society.

Voluntary activities in Sweden are characterized by a strong focus on membership within organizations. This membership-based approach has been encouraged by state policies, resulting in a large percentage of the Swedish population being members of voluntary organizations.

Studies have shown that employed individuals are more likely to volunteer than unemployed individuals in Sweden. Furthermore, higher income levels correlate with a higher propensity for engaging in voluntary

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activities among both men and women. Additionally, membership in different trade unions has been found to influence volunteering behaviour, with trade union members more likely to volunteer.

The Swedish population demonstrates a significant commitment to volunteering, with over 50% of individuals aged between 16 and 85 engaging in some form of no-profit work for at least 14 hours per month.

Charitable work has evolved over time and different types of legal entities have provided it. Non-profit associations in Sweden can be categorized into three main types, each with distinct characteristics:

1. Associations that do not engage in commercial activities but strive to promote a non-profit objective through alternative means.
2. Associations with a clear intention to generate funds for their members, although they do not involve themselves in commercial activities to achieve this goal, such as trade unions.
3. Associations that conduct commercial activities but have a non-profit objective, wherein the funds received are not distributed to members but used for other purposes.

Despite the importance of no-profit organizations there is no legal definition of a charity and no specific body of law governing it in Sweden. The reference to voluntary organizations in the legal context primarily relates to taxation rules.

## 2. Good Practices

<b>GOOD PRACTICE 1</b>	
Name of the Good Practice	Providing a safe space for young people to share their concerns and difficulties
Name of the Provider	BRIS - Children's Rights in Society
Short Description (50-70 words)	The foundation was established in 1971 in order to combat and make illegal the violence that was being perpetrated on children by their own parents at that time. They stand for Children's rights in society providing support to them at the Bris receptions, via phone, chat, email and in group support.
Level (Regional, Local, National)	National
Tools/Resources/ Services	Receptions, phone, chat, email, social networks and group support.
Link/ Website	<a href="http://www.bris.se">www.bris.se</a>

<b>GOOD PRACTICE 2</b>	
Name of the Good Practice	Funding cancer research and supporting cancer patients
Name of the Provider	CANCERFONDEN – The Swedish Cancer Society
Short Description (50-70 words)	The Cancer Fund was founded as a reaction to the poor prognosis for cancer that prevailed in Sweden in the 1950s. The lack of knowledge about cancer limited the ability to treat and prevent the disease. Their good practices include investing in research to find new and better treatments for cancer and supporting patients and their families through various initiatives such as patient counseling and support groups.
Level (Regional, Local, National)	National
Tools/Resources/ Services	Investments and support, social networks
Link/ Website	<a href="http://www.cancerfonden.se">www.cancerfonden.se</a>

<b>GOOD PRACTICE 3</b>
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Name of the Good Practice	Online chat assistance and support; Stockholm-based counseling facility; legal advice; educational programs
Name of the Provider	Föreningen Storasyster
Short Description (50-70 words)	Storasyster is a non-profit and non-governmental feminist organization that aim to assist victims of sexual violence. Since 2012, they offer support via chat, calls, legal advice, psychological assistance and support groups. Through training and reports they aim at raising awareness and diminish the occurrence of sexual abuse in society.
Level (Regional, Local, National)	National
Tools/Resources/ Services	Website, support groups, legal advice, reports
Link/ Website	Website: <a href="https://storasyster.org/">https://storasyster.org/</a> Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/foreningenstorasyster">https://www.facebook.com/foreningenstorasyster</a> E-mail: <a href="mailto:kontakt@storasyster.org">kontakt@storasyster.org</a>

**GOOD PRACTICE 4**

Name of the Good Practice	Second Hand for Good
Name of the Provider	Stockholm Stadsmission
Short Description (50-70 words)	Stockholm Stadsmission is a non-profit organization that works to alleviate poverty, homelessness, and social exclusion in Sweden. Their "Second Hand for Good" program is a social enterprise that collects and sells second-hand goods to generate revenue to support their social mission, by also providing an environmentally friendly way for people to dispose of unwanted goods, while giving others the opportunity to purchase quality used items at affordable prices.

Level (Regional, Local, National)	National
Tools/Resources/ Services	Website, clothes, food banks, counseling services, employment support, housing assistance
Link/ Website	Website: <a href="https://www.stadsmissionen.se/">https://www.stadsmissionen.se/</a> e-mail: <a href="mailto:info@stadsmissionen.se">info@stadsmissionen.se</a> Facebook: <a href="https://www.stadsmissionen.se/om-oss/sociala-medier">https://www.stadsmissionen.se/om-oss/sociala-medier</a> Instagram: <a href="https://www.stadsmissionen.se/om-oss/sociala-medier">https://www.stadsmissionen.se/om-oss/sociala-medier</a>

<b>GOOD PRACTICE 5</b>	
Name of the Good Practice	Ready for Crisis
Name of the Provider	Röda Korset - The Swedish Red Cross
Short Description (50-70 words)	The Swedish Red Cross is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1865. Today, they are the largest humanitarian volunteer organization in Sweden. To this end, the Swedish Red Cross has developed a program called "Ready for Crisis" (Krisberedskapspaketet) which provides guidance and tools to help individuals and families prepare for emergencies. The program includes information on how to create an emergency plan, what supplies to have on hand, and how to stay informed during a crisis. The program also provides training for volunteers who can assist during emergencies and disasters.
Level (Regional, Local, National)	National
Tools/Resources/ Services	Guidance, information on how to create an emergency plan, supplies, training for volunteers.
Link/ Website	<a href="http://www.rodakorset.se">www.rodakorset.se</a>

### 3. Conclusion

In conclusion, non-profit organizations and foundations in Sweden continue to be instrumental in promoting active citizenship and addressing social needs. They work in conjunction with the welfare state, with a membership-based approach and increasing individualization of volunteering preferences. The Swedish population's commitment to volunteering, influenced by employment status, income levels, and trade union membership, contributes significantly to the overall social fabric of the country.