



Country report Sweden

Describe recent developments of your organization

Studieförbunden represent 10 study associations (studieförbund) on the national level. During 2017 the two main priorities have been Democracy and Integration of immigrants. No major developments of the organization have been conducted during 2017. In 2016 the organization changed names from Folkbildningsförbundet to Studieförbunden. Much of the focus communication wise has been on consolidating our public position as an old organization under a new name. In 2016 our IT department ("Gustavgruppen") moved in with the rest of the office, and 2017 has been a year of merging the two branches of Studieförbunden into a functional unit.

Describe the political situation in your country regarding adult education

Government funding for study associations has been relatively stable over a course of years. The funding from the local and regional levels have at the same time been in constant decline. Studieförbunden are currently preparing a report investigating why the local authorities have chosen to cut down the funding for the study associations. This report will be presented in September.

On September 9th there will be elections to local, regional and national parliaments. According to polls there will likely be difficult to form a stable government, as the nationalist party Sverigedemokraterna (Sweden democrats) might become the second or third biggest party in the elections. If Sverigedemokraterna in some way get to influence the future government there will be threats to both the funding and the independence of the study associations. Sverigedemokraterna have declared that they will not accept funding for organisations that work with equality and multicultural perspectives. They have stated that they are in favor of folkbildning as such, but they also state that the folkbildning funded public means should promote Swedish culture and Swedish values.

One of the study associations with an islamic profile, Ibn Rushd, has suffered quite a lot of criticism from policy makers and media profiles during 2017. According to the criticism Ibn Rushd is not clearly enough taking a stand against islamistic extremism. The negative opinions on Ibn Rushd affects all study associations. This is a concern for Studieförbunden that we monitor closely.

One long term policy development that all civil society organizations must adjust to, is that the government clearly has stated that the funding for civil society to a greater extent will be directed towards certain purposes rather than in form of general funds that the organizations can use freely. Examples of that is that the general funding for the folkbildning har not

increased but special funds have been directed towards language courses for immigrants, and activities for immigrant women.

New knowledge or research in the field

Studieförbunden have published the following reports during the past year:

[https://studieforbunden.se/app/uploads/2017/11/Studieforbunden Tillstandet-i-demokratin_webb.pdf](https://studieforbunden.se/app/uploads/2017/11/Studieforbunden_Tillstandet-i-demokratin_webb.pdf)

<https://studieforbunden.se/rapporter/vi-erovrar-demokratin-varje-dag/>

<https://studieforbunden.se/rapporter/bildning-behovs-for-en-levande-demokrati/>

<https://studieforbunden.se/rapporter/svenska-fran-dag-1/>

<https://studieforbunden.se/rapporter/lat-de-tio-studieforbunden-delta-i-etableringen/>

<https://studieforbunden.se/rapporter/studieforbunden-de-unga-arbetsmarknaden-och-framtiden/>

https://studieforbunden.se/app/uploads/2017/11/SF_valid_150x180_w_.pdf

The national organization Folkbildningsrådet has a government mandate to distribute government funds between the 10 study associations and 154 folk high schools (Folkhögskolor). Folkbildningsrådet also publish evaluation reports for the government on different aspects of folkbildning. Some examples of reports are:

http://www.folkbildningsradet.se//globalassets/rapporter/regeringen/2018/fbr_sb2018_w_ebb.pdf?epieditmode=true

<http://www.folkbildningsradet.se//globalassets/rapporter/regeringen/2018/folkbildning-med-asylsokande-20171.pdf?epieditmode=true>

<http://www.folkbildningsradet.se//globalassets/rapporter/regeringen/2017/manskliga-rattigheter-inom-folkbildningen-2014-2016.pdf?epieditmode=true>

http://www.folkbildningsradet.se//globalassets/rapporter/utvarderingar/2017/fbr_cirkelrapport_webb2.pdf?epieditmode=true

Together with DAEA , Vofo, Bildningsalliansen and four research partners, we are going to map relevant research environments in Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark. The project is starting in June 2018 and is partly funded by Nordplus.

Examples of activities and projects

During 2017 the two main priorities have been Democracy and Integration of immigrants.

Studieförbunden have received designated government funding for working with language training for immigrants, activities to promote immigrant women's inclusion in society and support for parents of socially challenged groups.

In 2018 Studieförbunden concluded a three-year project on validation of generic competences for the labor market. During the three-year project about 2 500 people have had their skills and competences validated.

In 2017 Studieförbunden initiated a debate on the threats for democracy as such. On result of this is that Studieförbunden in 2018 have launched the project "Vi måste prata" together with a large group of publishers, authors, scholars and policy makers. The aim of the project is to, via the study associations, promote a serious discussion on democracy and human rights all over Sweden

Common themes in your country

The upcoming elections challenge the political landscape of Sweden. The traditional left and right alternatives have been challenged by the nationalistic party Sverigedemokraterna. In Finland, Norway and Denmark you have experiences from nationalistic parties in government or with influence over the government. Studieförbunden propose that we discuss mutual experiences from nationalistic parties influencing public policy. Should the folkbildning organizations of the Nordic countries have a mutual strategy for safe guarding the principles of human rights and openness?