

0.86% GENUINE AID/GNI

1.01% TOTAL AID/GNI

SWEDEN



“We continue to stay with the goal of spending 1 percent of GNI on aid, which we think is very important at a time when formerly like-minded donors are decreasing their funding. But we focus on both quantity and quality of aid, in line with the principles that were decided in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation — which means emphasizing the importance of local ownership and coordination with others.”

Ulrika Modéer, Sweden's secretary of state for international development

MAIN CHANGES IN 2017

Swedish ODA increased in 2017 from 2016, reaching 1% of GNI. Thematically, there were few changes in the government's priorities from the previous year. The government developed various thematic aid strategies, including strategies on democracy, human rights and the rule of law, gender equality, sustainable social development, and sustainable environmental development and climate. Assignments to the national development agency Sida included supporting partner countries to reach climate commitments, and counteracting the closing democratic space for civil society and other actors. Sweden continues to mobilise support to compensate for the large funding gap left when the United States withdrew funds for sexual and reproductive health and rights. In the negotiations on the EU's new European Consensus on Development, Sweden promoted a clear focus on reducing poverty. Some EU members wanted more integration of aid and military interventions, which Sweden opposed.

TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS FOR 2018 AND BEYOND

September 2018 is the time for Sweden's parliamentary elections, so the future of Swedish development cooperation is hard to predict. A likely outcome of the elections is a weak minority government, which might affect decision-making ability. The right-wing opposition parties want to replace the current aid policy framework, as well as the new action plan to implement the 2030 Agenda. Regardless of which type of coalition takes government after the elections, there is likely to be internal negotiations on development policy. In quantitative terms, 2018 seems a record year, with the highest Swedish aid budget ever. Some items receiving a high relative increase are: peace and conflict prevention, global efforts for sustainable development and the capital to the development finance institution Swedfund. The increase meant an additional half a billion Swedish Krona in the aid budget. Also, because fewer refugees can reach Sweden with the temporary migration policy, less than half of in-donor refugee costs were deducted from the aid budget in 2018 compared with 2017. The government's review of Sweden's model for reporting

in-donor refugee costs as aid is ongoing since late 2016, and no public information is yet available. Sweden's funding to and through multilateral institutions has increased over several years and this trend continues in 2018 and beyond. Some strategies for multilateral support were also reviewed in 2018.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

- Continue to dedicate 1% of GNI to international aid.
- Put people living in poverty and oppression at the centre of the priorities for aid. Among other things, this means long-term support for gender equality, democracy, human rights and support to people's own initiatives to organise, as well as a strong child-rights perspective.
- Ensure all actors who implement development efforts, whether public agencies, organisations or private companies, live up to the same standards of transparency, respect for human rights, the environment, decent working conditions and development effectiveness. Mitigate risks of negative effects caused by development efforts.
- Uphold the focus on ending poverty in aid's definition, as agreed in the OECD DAC, and work against attempts to weaken this focus. Continue to abide by the principles on effective development cooperation.
- Phase out the counting of in-donor refugee costs as aid. Meanwhile, apply the most conservative interpretation of OECD DAC guidelines to minimise deductions from aid programmes.
- Do not allow aid to be used for military purposes or attempts to limit migration to the EU, or to be conditional on donors' military, economic or migration agenda. This is important not least in the negotiations on the next long-term budget of the EU.

SWEDEN - GENUINE AND INFLATED AID
(€ million, constant 2016)

