

Sweden

Reported ODA: EUR 4630 million
0.79 % GNI (↓ from -13.40% in 2023)

Non-inflated ODA: EUR 4337 million
0.74 % GNI (↓ from -0.10% in 2023)

Total inflated ODA: EUR 293 million
6.07 % of total



“Many downward trends for a former leader in development cooperation”

CONCORD Sweden

Main trends

There are many downward trends in Sweden's development assistance: **decreasing ODA levels overall, decreasing resources for people in the most marginalised countries, decreasing gender equality spending, among others.** For now, Sweden remains one of the few countries still above the 0.7% of GNI for international aid, but on the current trajectory Sweden will fail to meet that commitment in two to three years. Except for the strong support for Ukraine, the only policy areas where both political energy and aid budgets have been consistently committed are in areas unrelated to development goals: migration control and export promotion.

In 2022, we welcomed an 8% cap imposed on in-donor country refugee costs in ODA, although such costs in Sweden should not be taken from the aid budget at all. However, in 2025 and onwards these costs have been artificially inflated, even though there are fewer people in the asylum system.

For decades, Sweden has been internationally recognised as a principled donor, the first country in the world to adopt a feminist foreign policy, a major contributor of multilateral core funding, and a big supporter of civil society, democracy, human rights and gender equality, even when these issues face resistance. **The current government has expressed continued support for similar priorities, but resource allocations lag behind. Climate financing increased but is being drawn from a shrinking aid budget.** Sweden is both following and co-creating the trend seen elsewhere in the EU, with a strong Europe-first and export promotion-driven logic.

Government's relationship with civil society

In many cases, Sweden contributes to positive change in multilateral negotiations and partnerships at country level and worldwide. In the last decades, Sweden could be described as a dialogue-oriented partner. However, in recent years there has been increased politicisation of decisions about the development budget. **In 2025, there has been parliamentary scrutiny of the government to discuss if undue political influencing of Sida has occurred on specific grants and processes outside the remits of political decisions.**

The current government has made changes to the financing model for civil society, leading to contracts being terminated without valid grounds and severely impacting many organisations' financial conditions by changes in grant volumes, funding and co-funding requirements, without prior analysis of the consequences. **In parallel, there was deteriorating dialogue and an absence of consultation processes with civil society organisations.** Changing funding criteria and rules late in the selection process has further impaired transparency, fairness and efficient use of time, commitment and resources.

Recommendations

- **Reverse development budget cuts as soon as possible**, with a clear path back to the one per cent of GNI commitment, supplemented by additional grants to fulfil Sweden's climate finance commitments.
- **Ensure that Swedish development assistance supports people living in poverty and under oppression to improve their lives**, especially in fragile states, conflict and post-conflict countries, and regions severely affected by climate change, and ensure that the support for Ukraine does not come at the expense of marginalised people in marginalised contexts.
- **Reforms should be implemented with evidence-based theories of change and comply with principles of effective development cooperation, human rights, and humanitarian principles and -law**, avoiding allocations based on export promotion and migration control purposes.
- **Increase the share of Swedish development assistance allocated to gender equality to reverse the current downward trend in this area, and ensure that Swedish priority areas** such as human rights and democracy, a strong civil society, child rights, health and SRHR, etc. are adequately resourced.