

Sweden

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The country

Sweden is situated in northern Europe where the country occupies the eastern part of the Scandinavian Peninsula. It is bounded on the west and north by Norway, on the north-east by Finland, on the east by the Gulf of Bothnia and the Baltic Sea, and on the south-west by the Skagerak, Kattegat, and Öresund straits. Nowadays Sweden is connected with Öresund by a bridge to Denmark. The islands of Gotland and Öland in the Baltic Sea also belong to the Swedish territory. Sweden is the fourth largest country in Europe, with an area of 449,964 km². Stockholm with 750 000 inhabitants on the eastern side of the country is the country's capital and the largest city.

Sweden has a population of 8.9 million inhabitants which gives the country an overall population density of 20 persons per km². The great majority of the population lives in the southern half of Sweden, especially in the central lowlands, the plains of Skåne, and the coastal lowlands. Large areas of the northern mountains are sparsely inhabited. Some 83 per cent of the population are classified as urban. In the mid-1990s approximately 86 per cent of the Swedish people were Lutheran, adherents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, which was until 2000 the state church of Sweden. Church attendance is, however, quite low.

Sweden is an industrialised economy, heavily oriented toward foreign trade. The economy is primarily based on timber, hydropower and rich iron-ore deposits but during the later decades also on electronics industries. The engineering sector accounts for 50 per cent of industrial output and exports. Sweden has a modern distribution system with excellent internal and external communications. In the mid-1990s about 26 per cent of the population worked in the industrial sector, approximately 3 per cent in the agriculture and 71 per cent in the service sector.

Sweden is a hereditary, constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system. The chief of the state is the monarch with nominal powers. The executive power is vested in the cabinet, which is responsible to the national legislature, the Riksdag. The cabinet is composed of a prime minister, department ministers and ministers without portfolio. In 1971 the Riksdag, formerly bicameral, was changed to a unicameral legislature with 350 popularly elected members. The 1975 constitution reduced the number of members to 349 to prevent tie votes. Members of the Riksdag are elected for terms of four years by the voters under a system of proportional representation.

Sweden is divided into 21 counties. Each county has a governor and a state county administrative board. The governor, appointed by the central government, is the chairman of the board. The board members are elected by the county councils. County councils are mainly responsible for overseeing health services. Sweden is further divided into 290

municipalities. Municipal councils, elected by local voters, control local government including social welfare.

Alcohol production and trade

Sweden is not a major producer of alcoholic beverages. A large percentage of distilled spirits consumed in Sweden and almost all wine are imported (Hurst, Gregory and Gussman, 1997). Beer production fluctuated from 2.8 million hectolitres in 1960 to over 4 million hectolitres in the mid-1970s. The production of beer reached its peak in 1994 at 5.4 million hectolitres. In 1998 the production of beer had decreased considerably to 4.6 million hectolitres. The import of beer has been considerably larger than the export of beer. In the mid-1990s about 7 per cent of all beer consumed in Sweden was imported (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

In 1980 there were 71 breweries operating in Sweden, employing around 4,000 people (Davies & Walsh, 1983). By 1998 the number of breweries had decreased to 37. Since the 1980s, the Swedish brewing industry had been dominated by one company, Pripps, at times also owned by the state. In 1995 Pripps was merged with the Norwegian brewery Ringnes, and together they became the second largest brewery in the Nordic countries. In May 2000 yet another merger occurred when Pripps-Ringnes was merged with its biggest competitor, the Danish Carlsberg.

In 1994, Sweden produced 0.6 million hectolitres of distilled alcoholic beverages including imported spirits bottled in Sweden (Harkin, 1995). Absolut Vodka is Sweden's most important exported alcoholic beverage. In the mid-1990s the consumption of distilled spirits in Sweden was about 0.3 million hectolitres, the imports 0.2 million hectolitres and the exports 0.5 million hectolitres (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

In 1992, 29 billion Swedish crowns was spent on alcohol in Sweden, equivalent to 3.7 per cent of private consumer expenditure. Over 60 per cent of this came as revenue to the state (Harkin, 1995). The percentage of total government revenue from taxation of alcoholic beverages has decreased considerably during the last two decades. In 1980 the percentage of total government alcohol revenue was 5.2 per cent, in 1990 the percentage had decreased to 4.1 per cent, and in 1996 it was down at 2.6 per cent.

Alcohol consumption

Until recently Sweden had been predominantly a spirits drinking country since the beginning of the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the nineteenth century consumption of hard liquor may have reached as high as 20 litres per person annually. The high level of alcohol consumption led to alcohol-related problems, and the support for the temperance movement grew, making the temperance movement a powerful actor in the development of Swedish alcoholic beverage policy (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

Table 17.1. Consumption of alcoholic beverages by beverage categories in Sweden in litres of pure alcohol per capita and as percentages of total recorded alcohol consumption in the years 1955, 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1995, five years' averages

	1955	1965	1975	1985	1995
Total alcohol consumption	4.26	4.67	6.18	5.29	5.27
Consumption of distilled spirits	2.77	2.60	2.93	2.10	1.31
Consumption of wines	0.31	0.60	1.07	1.41	1.53
Consumption of beer	1.18	1.47	2.18	1.78	2.43
Percentage of distilled spirits	65	56	48	40	25
Percentage of wines	7	13	17	27	29
Percentage of beer	28	31	35	34	46

Sources: Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997; World Drink Trends, 2002.

Between 1954 and 1976, total recorded per capita alcohol consumption increased by more than 1.5 times, reaching a peak of 6.4 litres per person in 1976. After that the recorded alcohol consumption declined until 1985, after which it began to rise slightly. During the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the total recorded alcohol consumption again remained at a fairly constant level of about 5.5 litres per capita. In 2000, this level was 4.9 litres, about 15 per cent lower than it had been in 1980. The decrease in total recorded alcohol consumption can primarily be related to a decrease in the consumption of distilled spirits. In the mid-1970s, the consumption of distilled spirits was about 3 litres of pure alcohol per capita. It has since then fallen and in 2000 it was about 1 litre of pure alcohol per capita (World Drink Trends, 2002).

At the beginning of the 1960s the average consumption of beer in Sweden was about 37 litres per capita. It increased to about 60 litres per capita by the mid-1970s. Between 1976 and 1985 it fell to 45 litres per capita, but has since then increased again. In 2000 beer consumption was 56 litres per capita (World Drink Trends, 2002).

Throughout the study period, wine consumption, starting from a low level, has had a constant upward trend. At the beginning of the 1960s wine consumption was about 4 litres per capita. By 2000 it had reached a figure of 15 litres per capita (World Drink Trends, 2002).

Recorded data on alcohol consumption understate the real level of alcohol consumption because wine and beer may be produced legally at home. There is also a substantial quantity of distilled beverages that are produced illicitly. Since Sweden became a member of the European Union (EU), greater quantities of all alcoholic beverages may be brought into the country from abroad. This undoubtedly also increased the amount of unrecorded alcohol consumption. Also smuggled alcohol plays a part in the unrecorded alcohol consumption.

In 1990 the unrecorded alcohol consumption was estimated to be about 1.2 litres of pure alcohol per capita. About half of it constituted of travellers' alcohol imports. In the late 1990s the unrecorded alcohol consumption increased and by 2000 it had grown to 2 litres per capita. Over 70 per cent of it constituted of travellers' alcohol imports. Consequently, in 2000 total alcohol consumption in Sweden was about 7 litres per capita instead of the

figure of 4.9 litres shown in official statistics (see also Holder et al., 1998; Kühlhorn et al., 2000).

A slow shift that has operated over generations appears to have occurred in drinking patterns. This shift occurs as a slow disappearance of the older temperance-minded generation, and a respective rise of a younger and "wetter" generation. In Sweden, these changes have been smoother than in its neighbouring countries Finland and Norway (Simpura & Karlsson, 2001).

Abstinence rates have declined from between 25 and 35 per cent in the 1950s to the present level around 10 per cent. The women's proportion of alcohol consumption increased from a level of about 20 per cent in the 1960s to about 30 per cent in the 1980s and thereafter (Simpura & Karlsson, 2001). There are also differences in the type of beverage men and women prefer. Whereas about 50 per cent of men's alcohol consumption consists of beer, wine is the most popular alcoholic beverage among women, accounting for about half of the alcohol they consumed in 1992-1994 (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

In the 1960s, the age-group of 26-45 years had the highest alcohol consumption, but since then young adults have been the heaviest drinking group. Daily drinking is still rare, and very little can be said about the trends. In a study from 1999, 9 per cent of adult men and 2 per cent of women reported drinking at least 4 times a week (Simpura & Karlsson, 2001). Beer is the preferred beverage among young people, winning ground from the consumption of distilled spirits, which has been on the decrease during the past few decades. The increase in the popularity of wine primarily accounts for table wines. Their popularity has been increasing steadily for more than 30 years. (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997). Also bag-in-box wines have increased in popularity in recent years accounting nowadays for about half of the wine sales in Sweden.

While the per capita consumption of alcoholic beverages is nowadays about 75 litres in a year, the consumption of commercial non-alcoholic beverages goes up to 501 litres per capita. The per capita consumption of non-alcoholic beverages includes 220 litres of coffee, 120 litres of milk, 82 litres of soft drinks, 40 litres of tea, 22 litres of juices and 17 litres of bottled waters in a year. Since the mid-1980s the yearly consumption of soft drinks has increased by 30 litres, that of coffee by about 20 litres, that of juices by 11 litres and that of bottled waters by 8 litres. The consumption of tea has decreased by 6 litres and that of milk by 26 litres (World Drink Trends, 2002).

Administrative structure of preventive alcohol policies

The origin of the Swedish alcohol policy system can be dated back to the mid-nineteenth century, when Swedish Government banned the private distillation of spirits. This ban was a response to what some considered to be the period of the highest alcohol consumption in Swedish history (Frånberg, 1987). This law was an effort to eliminate private, small-lot distilling of alcohol and to concentrate the production of distilled spirits into fewer and larger units, which could be licensed and from which revenues could be extracted. Also the Gothenburg system, established in the 1860's was designated to clean up perceived abuses of public drinking related to restaurants. In this system local authorities granted a local monopoly to sell distilled spirits and profits went into public funds. In 1917 these

monopolies were granted exclusive rights to the sales of all wines and distilled spirits. At the same time, a monopoly on the manufacture, importation and wholesale of distilled spirits was established (Holder et al., 1998).

In 1917, instead of a prohibition, a unique system was introduced in Sweden, based on the principle that people who are able to drink without social damage should be allowed to purchase alcoholic beverages off the premises and those who cannot should not be permitted to buy them. This system became known as the Bratt system, named after its inventor Ivan Bratt. The system was based on a ration book that was provided to those authorised to purchase distilled spirits. In addition to the rationing system the sale of alcohol was very carefully controlled. Ordinary beer was available in grocery stores, but no strong beer was sold at all. Wine, which at the time only accounted for one per cent of the consumption, was not restricted. Ration books were issued to those who did not misuse alcohol and had a satisfactory financial position (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997; see also Sulkunen et al., 2000).

Generally ration books were issued only to men and very rarely to women. Married women were expected to share their husband's allocation. Unmarried women and young males had also smaller monthly rations than adult men which as a rule was set at four litres of distilled spirits per month. The minimum age limit for getting the ration book was 25 years. This ration book permitted to alcohol purchases in only one monopoly shop and in this book all purchases were recorded (Holder et al., 1998).

The Bratt system was eliminated in October 1955. Many aspects of the rigid alcohol control system were, however, retained. Local off-premise retail monopolies were merged into a national off-premise alcohol retail monopoly, Systembolaget, which was given the monopoly on off-premise sales of distilled spirits, wine and strong beer as well as wholesale of the same beverages to restaurants. The Central Wine and Spirits Corporation (Vin & Sprit) was given a monopoly on the domestic production of distilled spirits and the importing of distilled spirits, wine and strong beer.

The restructured alcohol control system still continued the historical principle of limiting the private profit motive in the sale of alcoholic beverages. In the 1960s, the approach to alcohol control was somewhat liberalised. In 1965 medium beer, alcohol content over 3.5 and at most 4.5 per cent by volume, was introduced in grocery stores, and in 1969 the purchasing age in monopoly stores was reduced from 21 to 20 years. Concerning on-premise sale of alcoholic beverages the fixed price system for alcoholic beverages was abolished in 1963. This ultimate goal of this system was to eliminate any profits from on-premise sale of alcoholic beverages. This basically ended restaurant price controls and increased the private profit motive and prices in on-premise alcohol sales (Holder et al., 1998).

The liberal period of the 1960s and early 1970s was replaced with more restrictive policies and legislation in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Holder et al., 1998). In the mid-1970s, the Swedish government appointed an Alcohol Policy Commission (APU). The Commission put forward many proposals for a new law, which was enacted in 1977 and came to form the Swedish alcohol policy for the next two decades. APU also emphasised that the alcohol issue must be viewed in the wider context of social policy (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

In 1977, the responsibility for alcohol policy in Sweden was transferred from the Ministry of Finance to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. At the same time the administrative responsibility was shifted from the National Tax Board to the National Board of Health and Welfare. After this, the primary objective of Swedish alcohol policy has been to reduce total alcohol consumption and the rate of alcohol-related diseases and injuries. In addition to taxation and other control policies, a variety of programmes related to alcohol and alcohol misuse have been undertaken in Sweden in the areas of research, education on alcohol and in treatment systems for alcoholics.

The new alcohol law of 1977 attempted to reduce alcohol consumption by reducing alcohol availability, restricting private profit interest and decreasing drinking among young people. Concrete measures to achieve a reduction in alcohol consumption included, for instance, the withdrawal of medium beer from grocery stores and discontinuing the production of medium beer in Sweden. In 1978 a new law was enacted banning almost all alcohol advertising. Four years later, in 1982, a decision was agreed upon to close the retail sales monopolies on Saturdays (Holder et al., 1998). Some of the retail monopoly stores opened their doors again on Saturdays in February 2000 as a part of an experiment lasting for one year, and as of July 2001 all the monopoly stores are open on Saturdays.

In 1981 a public campaign was launched to return to a system of rationing. In 1984, almost 30 per cent of all doctors and 50 per cent of the professors of medical faculties in Sweden signed an appeal calling for the use of rationing for at least a trial period of three years. This appeal did not, however, lead to any concrete measures to reintroduce the rationing system.

In 1985 the Swedish government approved the World Health Organization Regional Office of Europe's (WHO-EURO) target of cutting overall alcohol consumption by 25 per cent by the year 2000. This was followed by 1991 legislation, stating that the main goal of the Swedish alcohol control policy was to reduce alcohol consumption and alcohol abuse (Holder et al., 1998).

In order to reach the 25 per cent reduction in alcohol consumption by the year 2000, the National Health and Welfare Board suggested stricter enforcement of legal age limits, higher age limits in restaurants, an active price policy and better alcohol education and information. The government, however, instituted no changes in control laws, but asked authorities to intensify enforcement of the legal age limits. In addition, a new institute, the National Institute of Public Health, was created in 1991. Its work on alcohol-related issues began in July 1992. Its responsibilities include research and the development of methodology in the area of prevention of alcohol misuse, support for local preventive initiatives, as well as the production of information materials for schools and the public (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997). In 1994 the Alcohol Policy Commission (Alkoholpolitiska kommissionen, 1994) presented a pessimistic report on the prospects for maintaining Swedish alcohol policy and achieving the WHO's goal with Sweden's accession to the EU (see also Reuter & Tigerstedt, 1992). It also recommended that work creating new alcohol policy measures be carried out and guided by a representative body of central, regional and local authorities.

In June 1994, the National Institute of Public Health was commissioned to direct and coordinate intensified efforts for reducing alcohol-related harm and drug abuse. This was to be conducted with the aid of a national Steering Group under the Institute's chairmanship. As part of this assignment, a National Plan of Action was prepared and presented to the Government in June 1995 (Nationell, 1995). The plan was based on long-term strategies encompassing measures for the entire population and for groups at risk, and local mobilisation (see Arvidsson, 2000).

With Sweden's entry into the EU on January 1, 1995, a new Alcohol Act went into force. Monopoly control on production, import, export and wholesale, as exercised by the Vin & Sprit, was abolished. The National Alcohol Board was set up for the supervision and control of producers and wholesalers, while Vin & Sprit continued to operate as a state controlled company competing with other importers and distributors, who were allowed to sell directly to restaurants and bars. The off-premise alcohol retail monopoly, Systembolaget, was however continued even after the Swedish EU membership (Holder et al., 1998).

Prior to 1995 there was also an upper limit on the alcohol content of 5.6 per cent by alcohol volume for strong beer and 60 per cent alcohol by volume for distilled spirits. Based on EU regulations, Sweden had no choice but to abolish these limits on January 1, 1995. In 1994, following the recommendations of the Alcohol Policy Commission, municipal authorities were given the right to license the off-premise retail sale of lighter beers, as a means to increase local control of alcohol. Prior to this, the state administration was responsible for granting licences. The shift from state administration to municipalities occurred during a four-year period, between 1994 and 1998. After the shift in power the responsibilities of the state administrative boards at the county level are limited to the supervision and coordination of regional and local development. Since 1998, the licensing of restaurants and bars for alcohol sale has been the responsibility of local authorities. In practice, however, it seems that many local rejections of application for serving licences are overturned when the decision is appealed to the state administrative board (Holder et al., 1998).

As a new member of the EU, Sweden was granted derogation from the limits on travellers' private importation of alcoholic beverages until December 31, 1996. These limits were 1 litre of distilled spirits or 3 litres of intermediate products, 5 litres of wine and 15 litres of beer (See Chapter 2). In the autumn of 1996, these limits on travellers' alcohol allowances were renegotiated. In these negotiations Sweden agreed to keep its derogation until 30 June, 2000, when new negotiations would be held with the Commission on continuation of this derogation. In these new negotiations the Swedes agreed to gradually increase the limits on travellers' private importation of alcoholic beverages from other EU member states, so that the normal EU practice would come into force by the end of the year 2003 (Holder, 2000).

In 1997 a joint project between the Swedish Brewers' Association, the Ministry for Social Affairs, the National Institute of Public Health and several public actors was announced (OAS, Independent Alcohol Co-operation). The purpose of this co-operation was mainly to fight against the increase of unrecorded alcohol consumption. The co-operation was intended to be long lasting, but already in 1999 the parliament decided to cancel its

financing, and the last campaign against unrecorded alcohol consumption was implemented in June 2000 (OAS i framtiden, 1998; see also Tryggvesson & Olsson, 2002).

In September 1999, all European countries approved the Second European Alcohol Action Plan valid for the period 2000-2005. This plan, which was drawn up by the WHO-EURO, states that by the year 2005, all European countries should have introduced a tax policy which contributes to reducing alcohol-related injuries. Furthermore, on the initiative of several countries, discussions are currently under way about the need for a common public health strategy for alcohol in the European Union (See Chapter 2). The action plan also highlights the need for higher minimum taxes on alcohol in the EU as part of a public health strategy.

On 19 November, 1999, Swedish parliament approved certain changes in Swedish alcohol policy. These include better service in the shops run by the retail trade monopoly, an increase in the number of shops and more generous business hours. The special wholesale trading permit conferring the right to import alcoholic beverages was also abolished in order to facilitate commercial trading in alcoholic beverages, in accordance with the demands of the European Commission.

Sweden's present alcohol control policy builds on a balance between high taxes on alcohol, a retail trade monopoly, restrictions, information and treatment. The tax instrument is seen by far the most effective means of limiting consumption and the injuries caused by alcohol. However, Swedish alcohol tax levels are threatened by the generous travellers' allowances for imports from lower-tax EU countries.

As price policy loses importance, the focus of Swedish policy is shifting from restrictive measures to intensified efforts to disseminate information, mould public opinion and drinking habits and address high consumption at an earlier stage. In February 2001 the parliament adopted an alcohol action plan for the years 2001-2005. The implementation of the plan on the national level is coordinated by a national steering committee (Alcohol committee) and in the municipalities coordinators are appointed to take care of the implementation of the plan on the local level. The parliament granted over 500 million Swedish crowns for the implementation of the plan. In addition to this the municipalities themselves are expected to grant extra funds for the implementation of the plan, whose main objective is to reduce the overall level of alcohol consumption and subsequently the medical and social harms caused by alcohol.

Licensing policy

Alcohol producers as well as importers and wholesalers need a licence to operate in Sweden. Until 1995, however, the Swedish state had a monopoly on the production and wholesale of distilled spirits and wine, and Vin & Sprit produced all domestic distilled spirits. Wine, on the other hand, was produced by Vin & Sprit but also by private licensed producers, which emerged in the field in 1984. As the production monopoly ceased in 1995, the Swedish National Alcohol Board began to administer licences for alcohol production (Holder et al., 1998).

Before January 1, 1995, Vin & Sprit and Systembolaget were also the sole actors in wholesale of all distilled spirits and wine. Vin & Sprit sold all domestic and foreign-produced wine and distilled spirits to Systembolaget, who distributed them to the monopoly retail stores and licensed restaurants and bars (Holder et al., 1998). This practice changed when Sweden became a member of the EU in 1995. In an agreement between the European Commission and the Swedish government, it was decided that Systembolaget would retain its retailing monopoly if wholesale monopolies would be abolished.

Today, both domestic producers and private licensed importers have the right to distribute wine and distilled spirits. Systembolaget still continues as a wholesale distributor but cannot import any alcoholic beverages. The situation concerning the wholesaling of domestically produced beer is somewhat different. Wholesale of domestically produced beer has been from 1978 carried out by the licensed beer producers (Holder et al., 1998).

Licences granted for production, import or wholesale can be called back if the licence is not used, if the licence-holder breaks existing laws and rules, or if conditions that were valid when the licence was executed do not exist any more. The charge for a production licence was greatly reduced in 1995, and is currently at around 2,000 Swedish crowns. After the European Court of Justice's ruling in the Franzén case in 1997, the fees for a wholesale licence were dramatically reduced from around 25,000 to 2,000 Swedish crowns in 1997 (ECAS APQ, 1999).

Besides operating the monopoly store system, Systembolaget also employs sales agents or delivery points who arrange the purchase and delivery of the distilled spirits, intermediate products, wine and strong beer in sparsely populated areas where there is no alcohol monopoly store. In 1998 there were 397 monopoly outlets for the sale of strong beverages plus another 597 delivery points. In 1995 there were 7,400 outlets for the sale of lighter beer. No licence is required for the sale or serving of lighter beer, but outlets are subject to approval for food selling. For on-premise consumption there were 5,812 restaurants licensed to sell spirits, wines, medium and strong beers in 1995. There were 1,937 premises licensed to sell wines, medium and strong beers, 86 to sell only medium and strong beers and 6,000 licences to sell only medium or light beer.

During almost the whole study period up until 1995, however, the guiding principle for issuing licences was the need for the licence. The degree of the need within a community was decided by the local boards and authorities. Before granting a licence the county council had to solicit the opinions of the police, social welfare agencies, the regional temperance board and the local authority. For the sale of beer there was no community veto and the regional authority issued the licence. Before a licence to serve was granted the local board had to make sure that food was served at the establishment. Thus there were no bars or pubs in Sweden that were solely drinking establishments, at least in principle. Moreover, the licence was not granted to anyone who had a criminal record.

Special restrictions on alcohol availability

In 1955 the ration book or Bratt system, which had been in force since 1917, was abolished. As early as in 1957, due to the remarkable increase in the level of alcohol

consumption so-called black lists for identification of alcohol abusers were introduced in the monopoly stores. The black lists were not abolished until 1977 (ECAS APQ, 1999).

In the late 1950s age checking was compulsory and the control was rigorous in the monopoly stores. The age limit on purchasing of distilled spirits, wine and strong beer was 21 years. However, when medium beer was launched in grocery stores in 1965 an age limit of 16 years was set on purchasing that beverage (Mäkelä & Österberg, 1976). In 1970 the age limit was raised to 18 years. In 1969 the age limit on alcohol purchases in the monopoly stores was lowered from 21 to 20 years. In 1977 medium beer was completely removed from grocery stores leaving people's beer (folköl), a lighter beer of up to 3.5 per cent of alcohol by volume, as the strongest beer available in grocery stores with an age limit of 18 years.

Until July 1, 1982, monopoly stores were open on Saturdays and from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. The experiment with the closing of monopoly stores on Saturdays showed that there were fewer incidents of alcohol-related violence and domestic disturbances. The decision was then made in 1982 to close all the off-premise retail monopoly stores on Saturdays throughout the year (Holder et al., 1998). The stores remained closed on Saturdays until February 2000 when 172 of the approximately 400 monopoly stores opened their doors on Saturdays as a part of a one-year experiment. In July, 2001 all monopoly stores started opening their doors on Saturdays.

The usual business hours for the monopoly stores are from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Monday to Friday. On Saturdays the stores are open at 10 a.m. and close at 3 p.m. at the latest, depending on the type and location of the store. Since 1995, the monopoly stores have been rebuilt to become self-service establishments (ECAS APQ, 1999). In May 2001 there were 414 monopoly stores and about 580 local agents, from where alcoholic beverages could be ordered.

In the 1970s the off-premise sales hours for medium beer in grocery stores were from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Nowadays people's beer may be sold during the hours that ordinary grocery stores are open. Some stores are open as early as 7 a.m. and others as late as 1 a.m. Sunday sale is allowed if the licensed store is open. County councils have the possibility to temporarily close stores in special circumstances, such as during fairs or other similar events and happenings (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

The current legal age limits on on-premise sale of alcoholic beverages is 18 years for all beverage types. The age limits are strictly enforced, but not as strictly as in off-premise stores (ECAS APQ, 1999). The permitted hours for on-premise establishments have become more liberal throughout the study period. The municipalities have the right to make exceptions to the opening hours of the on-premise establishments and some are given the right to be open until 5 a.m. According to a proposal in June 2000, the serving of alcoholic beverages was to be restricted to 3 a.m. at the latest (Slutbetänkande från alkoholutredningen, 2000). The proposal was, however, withdrawn in 2001.

The number of on-premise establishments has also increased, especially in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1951 there were 842 licences for on-premise sale of alcoholic beverages. In 1962 the figure was 1,616 and 2,167 in 1973 (Lenke, 1987). During the 1980s and 1990s the number of licences for on-premise sale of alcoholic beverages increased very fast. In 1997

there were 6,535 on-premise licences for all alcoholic beverages and 1,760 for wine and strong beer only (Holder et al., 1998). In 1996 the number of on-premise licenses to sell people's beer was about 8,300.

Alcohol taxation

The current method of alcohol taxation varies depending on the beverage category (Table 17.2). For beer, excise duties are levied on the basis of hectolitre per degree of alcohol in the finished product, and they are applicable to beer with an alcohol content over 2.8 per cent by volume. For fermented still and sparkling wines, the excise duties are applied on the basis of hectolitres of the product with reduced rates for wines with an alcohol content less than 8.5 per cent by volume in three different alcohol content categories. For wines with an alcohol content of at most 2.25 per cent by volume no excise duties have been levied. Like wines, the excise duties on intermediate products are also applied on the basis of hectolitres of the product with reduced rates for fortified wines not exceeding 15 per cent alcohol by volume. The excise duty on distilled spirits is levied per hectolitre of pure alcohol in the finished product.

Table 17.2. Excise duty rates for alcoholic beverages in Sweden in the year 2000 in Swedish crowns and in euro

Alcoholic beverage category*	SKR	EUR
Beer, per hectolitre per degree of alcohol in the finished product		
- At most 2.8 per cent alcohol by volume	0.00	0.00
- Over 2.8 per cent alcohol by volume	147.00	16.81
Wine, and fermented beverages other than wine or beer, per hectolitre of the product		
- At most 2.25 per cent alcohol by volume	0.00	0.00
- Over 2.25 to 4.5 per cent alcohol by volume	934.00	106.83
- Over 4.5 to 7 per cent alcohol by volume	1,380.00	157.85
- Over 7 to 8.5 per cent alcohol by volume	1,898.00	217.10
- Over 8.5 to 15 per cent alcohol by volume	2,720.00	311.12
Intermediate products, per hectolitre of the product		
- Not exceeding 15 per cent alcohol by volume	2,720.00	311.12
- Over 15 per cent alcohol by volume	4,517.00	516.67
Distilled beverages, per hectolitre of pure alcohol in the finished product	50,141.00	5,735.00

*For details of the lower limits of alcoholic beverages and other EU rules concerning alcohol taxation, see Chapter 2.

Source: European Commission, DG XXI, Excise duty tables, November 2000.

Alcohol taxation as a control measure constitutes an important part of the Swedish alcohol policy and is one of the main instruments for controlling total alcohol consumption. During the whole study period alcohol consumption has been limited with a relatively high

taxation on alcoholic beverages (Armyr, Elmér & Herz, 1982; Holder et al., 1998). The greatest increase in the tax rates during the study period occurred in 1956. At that time the tax rates were raised in order to stop the increase in the alcohol consumption that occurred after the Bratt system was abolished in 1955 (ECAS APQ, 1999).

Before July 1, 1992, the amount of tax levied on alcoholic beverages depended on their alcohol content and their commodity value. The part of the tax related to commodity value was calculated as a percentage of the retail price exclusive of value-added tax. The percentage charge was higher for distilled spirits than for fortified wines, and higher for fortified wines than for table wines. Also the fixed part of the tax was constructed so that alcohol in the form of distilled spirits was taxed more heavily than in fortified wines, which in turn was taxed more heavily than that in table wines. However, because of the value-related charge inside a certain alcoholic beverage category, a more expensive drink containing less alcohol was often more heavily taxed than a stronger drink sold more cheaply. The tax for beer was set on a per litre basis inside a certain interval of alcohol content, the tax being much higher for stronger than lighter beers (Holder et al., 1998).

Since July 1, 1992 excise duties on alcoholic beverages have been based exclusive on the volume and alcohol content and not on the value of the beverages. Compared to the earlier system, the new system brought substantial tax and price reductions for beverages with very high purchase prices. Because a full adjustment of alcohol taxation would have meant a considerable reduction of the tax on strong beer, beers were divided into taxation categories. A lower tax was imposed on beer containing not more than 4.5 per cent alcohol by volume, and beers with an alcohol content less than 3.5 per cent were taxed less than medium beers (Holder et al., 1998).

In accordance with EU membership Sweden had to adapt its alcohol taxation system to EU regulations. This happened January 1, 1995 with the aim to keep the amount of collected alcohol tax revenues constant. The main change was that excise duty scales ceased to be progressive with respect to the alcohol content in a given beverage category. Consequently, excise duty rates for distilled spirits containing less than 40 per cent alcohol by volume were increased, while excise duty rates for distilled spirits containing more than 40 per cent alcohol by volume were lowered. Excise duty rates for wines containing less than 10 per cent alcohol were increased, but they decreased for wines near the upper limit of 15 per cent alcohol by volume. Beer with an alcohol content of at most 2.25 per cent continued to be free of taxes. Beer with an alcohol content between 2.25 and 3.5 per cent continued to be taxed less than stronger beers. This exception was secured during the EU membership negotiations but only for two years. After that the same excise duty rate had to be applied to all beers over 2.8 per cent alcohol by volume. Still in 1996 the excise duty rate for strong beer was nearly twice that applied to people's beer (Holder et al., 1998).

After joining the EU Sweden experienced an increase in cross-border trade of beer in southern Sweden. In this situation the adaptation of the Swedish taxation on beer in January 1, 1997 was done in such a way that the new taxes on strong beer came significantly closer to the old taxes on people's beer, while beer up to 2.8 per cent alcohol by volume became totally tax-free (Table 17.2). The decrease in the taxes of strong beer was 39 per cent and it led to a price decrease of strong beer of about 20 per cent. This in turn led to the situation that wines were taxed heavier than beer, which according to the EU commission favoured domestic beer compared to imported wines. After many discussions and especially after

getting a reasoned opinion from the Commission Sweden agreed to lower excise duty rates for wine in December 2001. The new excise duty rate for ordinary wine was set at 2,208 Swedish crowns per hectolitre of the product.

From the mid-1960s to the early 1980s average real prices of alcoholic beverages were almost constant (Leppänen, 1999). In the 1980s and 1990s, the prices of fortified wines and distilled spirits fluctuated somewhat and slightly decreased in relation to prices of other commodities. The real price of wine increased in the first half of the 1980s, after which it has decreased. The real price of strong beer rose until the late 1980s. Since then it was almost constant until 1997 when it decreased in connection to the decrease in excise duty rate for beer (ECAS APQ, 1999, see also Holder et al., 1998, 116).

Alcohol advertising

When the ration book was abolished, a ban on alcohol advertisements was implemented in 1955. This ban was, however, lifted as early as in 1957 (ECAS APQ, 1999). Since July 1, 1979, there has been a ban on advertising of strong and people's beer, wine and distilled spirits according to the Alcohol Act of 1978. Moderate marketing of alcoholic beverages is, however, allowed at sale points, i.e. retail monopoly stores and in restaurants. Advertising is also allowed in professional journals. Commercial broadcast advertising of any type of alcoholic beverages has never been allowed. Beer up to 2.25 per cent alcohol by volume has not been affected by the ban on advertising. Since light beer products have the same brands and nearly the same containers as stronger beers, this means that de facto there has been beer advertising in Sweden (see Karlsson, 1999; 2001).

The fundamental piece of legislation in the advertising field in Sweden is the comprehensive Marketing Practices Act. It came into force in 1996, but the new act is to a large extent founded on its predecessor, dating back to 1971. In fact, many of the new provisions reflect the 25 years of case law developed by the Market Court. The new act has retained the two general clauses on good marketing practice and consumer information. The former refers to good market standards, important parts of which are the norms laid down within the self-regulatory system, i.e. the ICC Codes on marketing. The general clauses are complemented by nine other substantive sections, containing specific bans or information requirements. These deal with identification of advertising, misleading advertising, misleading packaging, counterfeiting, different kinds of sales, inertia selling, fraudulent invoicing and sales promotions.

In 1996 the government set up a commission of inquiry to examine marketing regulations concerning alcohol. The commission gave its final report in 1998 (Alkoholreklam, 1998). The report did not, however, result in any great or immediate changes in the control and supervision of alcohol advertising.

The Consumer Ombudsman (Konsumentombudsmannen) acts as the prosecutor before the court in cases of infringement of the Marketing Practices Act. Companies and organisations may file certain types of cases directly with the court. The final decision rests with the Market Court. Apart from professional judges, the Court contains economic experts, some from the business sector. The Market Court also applies, among other laws, the Competition Act.

In Case C-405/98, Konsumentombudsmannen versus Gourmet International Products AB (See Chapter 2.), the Court of Justice of the European Communities was asked for a precedent on the case of advertising for alcoholic beverages in magazines. The Court ruled that the EC Treaty does not preclude a prohibition on the advertising of alcoholic beverages unless it is apparent that the protection of public health against the harmful effects of alcohol can be ensured by less extensive measures. Consequently, the national court was given the task to determine whether the Swedish prohibition of alcohol advertising met the conditions of proportionality and whether the ban was justified or not.

Education and information

Municipalities and county councils have always played a very important part in prevention of alcohol-related problems in Sweden. There are collaboration groups in many counties, including representatives of the county council, the municipalities in the counties, the police, schools, regional and local non-governmental organisations. Special funds are set aside by the government for education both within the school system and among the general public.

There are also informal national networks of professionals working with alcohol issues in the counties and municipalities, and informal annual meetings with these networks take place. There are local school-based and workplace alcohol education programmes. The retail monopoly supports information on alcohol-related harm and on the risks related to the use of alcohol in certain situations e.g. pregnancy, adolescence and driving.

In addition to its roles of supervisory authority for trade in alcohol and advisory body on alcohol policy, the National Board of Health and Welfare distributes government funds to municipal committees and organisations for information programmes. The Board coordinates information activities of other government agencies and provides information materials to schools. Alcohol education is given in Swedish schools as early as the first grade. Therefore, the training of teachers on questions about alcohol and drugs is considered to be of great importance.

The Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs operating in cooperation with the National Board of Health and Welfare, is monitoring and analysing developments in alcohol field and providing information on alcohol on behalf of the government and non-governmental organisations. This council publishes reports on alcohol consumption and produces information materials such as brochures, films and books for use by organisations and schools. It also arranges training courses for teachers and others, and organises conferences.

The government has given the National Institute of Public Health a mandate to form a National Executive Group for Prevention of Alcohol- and Drug- Related Problems. In June 1995 this group presented a National Action Plan for prevention of such problems to the government. The general directors of different relevant national boards and organisations, such as the National Board of Health and Welfare, the National Alcohol Inspection Board, the National Police Board, the central organisations of the county councils and the municipalities and the Customs Department are represented in the executive group. All

these authorities have a part of the responsibility for preventing of alcohol problems, together with the Institute of Public Health which has been given the leadership role at national level in this work. Also a campaign to spread information about the importance of alcohol-free traffic, alcohol-free pregnancies, alcohol-free workplaces and an alcohol-free environment for growing children has been launched in the mid-1990s.

The Swedish retail monopoly also conducts information programmes to promote moderate drinking habits and promotes non-alcoholic beverages which it is legally required to sell in its stores as alternatives to alcoholic beverages. Its programmes have included information campaigns aimed at teenage drinking, on alcohol consumption and safety at sea and on age control policies in monopoly stores.

On 9 January, 1997, the Government appointed a special committee to organise cooperation between trade organisations, insurance companies and relevant public agencies (OAS). The task of the committee was to promote cooperation with regard to various types of information activities about moderate drinking habits, and the risks related to the use of alcohol. It was also instructed to consider if and how cooperation might be organised in a more permanent form and to submit a proposal for a suitable organisational form and continued funding.

The OAS terms of reference accorded high priority to combat illegal dealings with alcohol, i.e. illicitly produced or smuggled alcohol and unauthorised sale of alcohol to young people. The terms of reference also stated that the OAS should pursue and coordinate activities designed

- to spread information about the medical and social impact of alcohol at various stages of life,
- to promote an alcohol-free environment for children and adolescents.
- to put a stop to the unauthorised sale of alcohol to young people,
- to seek to encourage moderate alcohol consumption among those who drink, and particularly among those who are at risk of becoming heavy drinkers,
- to promote alcohol-free pregnancies, workplaces, and traffic both on the roads and at sea, and
- to bring about a change in public attitudes with a view to reducing the consumption of illicitly produced or smuggled alcohol.

The OAS included members from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, the Swedish Brewers' Association, the National Institute of Public Health, the Association of Spirit and Wine Suppliers, the Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs, the Swedish Hotels and Restaurants Association, the National Road Administration, the National Alcohol Board, the Swedish Food Retail Association, the National Police Board, the Swedish Cooperative Union, the Swedish Alcohol Retailing Monopoly, the Swedish Insurance Federation, the Ministry of Finance, and the Swedish Customs Head Office. A State Secretary at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs served as Chairman of the Independent Alcohol Committee. The committee was, however, dissolved in 2000, as the cooperation between the government and the alcohol industries was not considered a success.

Under the auspices of the Alcohol Action Plan, which was adopted by the parliament in February 2001 a new Alcohol Committee became responsible for implementing

information and education efforts in the field of preventive alcohol policies on the national level. The Committee task is amongst other things to produce information and education material, which is then distributed to professionals and also to the public. In addition to this the committee is also responsible for coordinating education and information efforts with other relevant actors in the field of preventive alcohol policies.

Drunk driving

Drunk driving became a punishable offence in Sweden as early as 1920, when a law forbidding driving under the influence of alcohol was enacted. Regulations on blood tests were introduced in Sweden as early as 1941. At that time the highest allowed blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit in traffic was set at 0.08 per cent (Mäki, 1995). The BAC limit was lowered to 0.05 per cent in 1957 (ECAS APQ, 1999).

In 1994 the BAC limit was lowered again, making Sweden one of the strictest countries in the world concerning drinking and driving. Currently a BAC level of 0.02 per cent is applied. Despite this low level, Swedish researchers have suggested that the impact has not been great. Concern has been expressed about the heavy drinking drivers that have a BAC level many times higher than the legal limit.

Evidentiary breath testing was introduced concurrent with the lowering of blood alcohol limits in 1994. Breath testing had, however, been permitted already since 1977 in the case of pre-ordered road blocks, accidents and certain traffic offences (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997). In 1994, there were about 1.8 million tests made annually including random breath tests (Harkin, 1995).

Swedish drinking and driving legislation distinguished between the lesser offence of driving with a BAC between the legal limit and 0.15 per cent, and the more serious offence with BAC levels over 0.15 per cent. In September 1994 the limit for the more serious offence was reduced to 0.10 per cent. In the case of the lesser offence, fines and licence suspensions from six months up to one year are imposed. Prior to 1990 the more serious offence usually resulted in prison sentences. Nowadays, however, greater emphasis is put on the circumstances under which the offence occurred, such as the level of danger involved. The proportion of prison sentences has fallen from pre-1990 levels of around 75 per cent to 36 per cent in 1991, and the number of conditional sentences has risen from about 5 to 42 per cent.

A new system for dealing with drivers guilty of the more serious offence was also introduced in 1991. According to this programme, convicted drivers must see a physician and provide liver enzyme tests. After six months the driver may reapply for a licence, but must see a physician again in six months and in 12 months. Any evidence of excessive drinking results in licence revocation (Hurst, Gregory & Gussman, 1997).

The administrative structure of treatment for alcoholism

Sweden has had special legislation for the treatment of alcoholics since 1913, as part of the social legislation. The main responsibility for deciding the need of involuntary or voluntary

treatment has since then been with the municipalities. The state has, though, played a crucial part in the system through supervision and state subsidies. The third sector has also had an important role, both for the treatment policy and in the treatment provision (Stenius, 1999).

Until the Second World War and several years following it the alcoholism treatment was aimed only for those considered in need of involuntary treatment. The poor relief system could, though, as a preventive measure also give them warnings, probation or social support. After the Second World War, the responsibility of the municipalities was broadened to include also alcohol misusers in need of voluntary treatment, and the in- and outpatient treatment system expanded dramatically, while compulsory care was much criticised and less used (Rosenqvist & Kurube, 1992).

Since 1982, voluntary treatment of alcohol and drug abusers is regulated in the general Social Service Act. The municipal social service is responsible for giving adequate help to those with alcohol- or drug-related problems. The measures should be based on the principle of voluntary participation and decided in cooperation with the client.

In 1993, about 25 000 substance misusers were treated in voluntary inpatient units and in the beginning of the 1990s around 60 000 in outpatient units. Outpatient treatment has become more and more dominating during the last decades. On any given day, about 85 per cent of all persons in alcohol or drug treatment were found within the outpatient system (Holmberg, 2001)

Sweden has still quite extensive compulsory treatment. Compulsory treatment for adults is regulated in the Act on Care of Addicts in Certain Cases and the Act on Care of Young Persons gives the frames for compulsory treatment of young misusers. Compulsory treatment, maximum six months, should be decided if the person due to ongoing misuse risks his or her physical or psychological health, the security of him- or herself or intimate associates or destroys the prospect of his or her future, and the necessary intervention is not possible on a voluntary basis. Presently around 800 adults are undergoing involuntary treatment every year, in the state-run institutions.

Religious, temperance, client or other social organisations have been important for the provision of inpatient treatment during the whole nineteenth century. Profit-making institutions have since the 1980s had a growing role. Within outpatient treatment, though, the municipalities are completely dominating.

The mix of providers and the important role of third sector organisations within the treatment system are also mirrored in the fact that there is a great variety in the methods or treatment models used. Supportive therapy and social training are presently the most commonly reported, together with the Minnesota model, transaction analysis, motivation enhancing therapy and cognitive behavioural therapy (Holmberg, 2001). Social workers, nurses and addiction counsellors are the central professional groups. The central authorities presently put considerable resources on efforts to unify the assessment, treatment and evaluation methods within treatment.

Alcohol and drug abusers are also treated within the somatic and psychiatric systems, mainly providing detoxification but some also in outpatient care. Presently the bigger

Swedish cities have established specific addiction treatment branches of psychiatry and the division of labour between the health and the social service system is scrutinised.

Summary

In the twentieth as even in the nineteenth century alcohol control policies in Sweden have been founded upon the principle of limiting private profit motive by establishing alcohol monopolies and by enforcing other strict regulations. The Swedish speciality was the Bratt system with its ration book controlling individual drinkers in the 1917-1955 period. All these alcohol control policies have been dramatically changed in Sweden during the last fifty years. The latest major changes have been associated with Sweden's membership in the EU in 1995.

Alcohol control measures have been very detailed. The reader may, for instance, have had difficulties in following Swedish alcohol control measures with respect to beer. Still in the early 1950s, during the last years of the Bratt system, strong beer was not sold at all in Sweden. The sale of strong beer started in Sweden in 1955 but only in the monopoly stores. In 1965 Sweden introduced medium beer which was sold in grocery stores. Medium beer was weaker than strong beer but stronger than the beer already sold in grocery stores and divided in three different tax categories. In 1977 Sweden discontinued the sale of medium beer in grocery stores as well as its production in Sweden. However, even after 1997 imported medium beer could be sold in Sweden but only in monopoly stores on the same terms as strong beer. Instead of medium beer the Swedes invented in 1977 people's beer, weaker than the former medium beer but stronger than the beers sold in grocery stores in the 1950s. These beers like strong beer and people's beer were taxed but in 1988 the lightest beer under 2.25 per cent alcohol by volume was freed from excise duty. In 1997 also beer at most 2.8 per cent by volume was freed from alcohol excise duty but not the people's beer between 2.8 and 3.5 per cent alcohol by volume. So in reality Sweden today has three different kinds of beer. Beer at most 2.8 per cent by volume, sold in grocery stores free of alcohol excise duty, beer over 2.8 but at most 3.5 per cent alcohol by volume, sold in grocery stores but taxed as other stronger beers, and finally beer over 3.5 per cent alcohol by volume, sold only in monopoly stores, including those beers called in 1965-1977 period strong beer or medium beer depending of their alcohol content. This picture could be made even more complicated by taking into account that there were an upper alcohol content limit for beer before Swedish EU membership. All the above may sound like making jokes of Swedish alcohol policy, but an ordinary Swede or other Nordic citizen could easily understand these regulations. On the contrary, an ordinary Nordic citizen was very surprised when he was served in some foreign country a bottle of beer with no information of its alcohol content.

The abolition of the Bratt system in 1955 was followed by a period of strict alcohol control. The old idea of the elimination of the private profit interest was realised in alcohol monopolies and the Swedes even tried to make alcohol sales in restaurants profit free. The mid-1960s saw a new wave of liberalisation, but again in the late 1970s alcohol control system was made tighter. It can be claimed that Sweden has been the country most eager to follow the idea of controlling total alcohol consumption in order to combat alcohol-related problems. It can also be claimed that the Swedes did not quite realise how the EU membership would affect their national alcohol control policy. Or to put it otherwise,

especially the Swedish temperance movement had great fears of the effects of the possible membership in the EU but even they believed that things could be solved by negotiations and derogations. Some of them even were quite sure that other EU members would rather buy the good Swedish model for controlling alcohol-related problems than force Sweden to abolish parts of it.

It would be unfair not to mention that even in Sweden there were commercial and public interest willing to get a more liberal alcohol control system which was also the outcome of the Swedish membership in the EU. Nowadays only the off-premise retail alcohol monopoly is left from the old Swedish comprehensive alcohol monopoly system, and Systembolaget has become more and more customer-oriented. The Swedish alcohol field is nowadays more competitive than ever with private alcohol producers, importers and wholesalers motivated by profit interests.

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