



Sweden

TERMS & NAMES

Riksdag
ombudsman
armed neutrality
hydroelectricity
acid rain
skerry

MAIN IDEA

Sweden offers its people a high standard of living, although it also faces environmental problems.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Modern Sweden is dealing with environmental issues that affect many countries around the world.

DATELINE

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN, DECEMBER 4, 2001—This week in Stockholm, Sweden's capital, hundreds of past winners of the Nobel Prize gather to celebrate the centennial, or 100th anniversary, of this award. Concerts, lectures, and banquets lead up to the award ceremony in Stockholm City Hall on December 10.

The first Nobel Prize ceremony was held in Stockholm in 1901. Since then, awards in physics, chemistry, economics, medicine, literature, and peace have gone to more than 700 people, representing every inhabited continent. Besides achieving worldwide honor and fame, the winners receive a medal and a cash prize. The award was established at the request of Alfred Nobel (1833–1896), a Swedish chemist and millionaire who invented dynamite.

Place • Stockholm, Sweden, hosts events celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Nobel Prize. ▲

Sweden's Government

Sweden is famous for the Nobel Prize, but it is also one of the most prosperous and beautiful countries in Europe. The Kingdom of Sweden shares the Scandinavian Peninsula with Norway in Northern Europe (see the map on page 179). The country is a constitutional monarchy, meaning that the Swedish monarch has only ceremonial powers. He or she cannot make laws. Instead, the people elect representatives to four-year terms in the Swedish parliament, called the **Riksdag** (RIHKS•dahg).



The Riksdag The 349 members of the Riksdag nominate Sweden's prime minister. They also appoint ombudsmen. **Ombudsmen** are officials who protect citizens' rights and make sure that the Swedish courts and civil service follow the law.

Swedish citizens vote to determine how many members of each political party serve in the Riksdag. Before 1976, the Social Democratic Labour Party had been in power for nearly 44 years. Today, the Swedish government includes four other parties.



Region •
Women are active in Swedish government. ►

Foreign Policy Since World War I, Sweden's foreign policy has been one of **armed neutrality**. This means that in times of war, the country has its own military forces but does not take sides in other nations' conflicts.

Even during peacetime, the Swedish government tries not to form military alliances. Unless Sweden is directly attacked, it will not become involved in war. The country is a strong supporter of the United Nations.

Reading Social Studies

A. Synthesizing
How does Sweden's neutrality affect its foreign relations?

The Economy and the Environment

Privately owned businesses and international trade are important to Sweden's economy. It exports many goods, including metals, minerals, and wood. Engineering and communications are major industries. The automobile industry also provides many jobs.



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting a Map

- 1. Location •** Which country shares the Scandinavian Peninsula with Sweden?
- 2. Region •** What is the national capital of Sweden?



The Swedish Labor Force After World War II, many Swedes left their towns and villages to find work in the large cities in the south. Today, more than 80 percent of the population lives in these urban areas. Much of Sweden's labor force is highly educated and enjoys a high standard of living.

Power Sources **Hydroelectricity**, or power generated by water, is the main source of electrical power in Sweden. Nuclear power is also widely used. The Swedish government is looking into other, safer sources of energy, which include solar- and wind-powered energy.

Acid Rain Sweden and its neighboring countries share similar environmental problems. One of the most severe problems is **acid rain**. Acid rain occurs when air pollutants come back to Earth in the form of precipitation. These pollutants may soon poison many trees throughout the region. Sweden and neighboring countries are working to clean up the environment by trying to control air pollutants produced by cars and factories.



Place • Many in Sweden's highly educated labor force work in the high-tech and engineering industries. ▲

Reading Social Studies

B. Clarifying
What causes acid rain?

Region •
December 13 is St. Lucia's Day, one of Sweden's most important Christian holidays. ▼



Daily Life and Culture

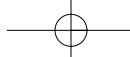
Culturally and ethnically, Sweden is primarily a homogeneous country. Ninety percent of the population are native to Sweden and are members of the Lutheran Church of Sweden. The majority of people speak Swedish.

Since World War II, immigrants from Turkey, Greece, and other countries have brought some cultural diversity to Sweden's population. Today, about one in nine people living in Sweden is an immigrant or the child of an immigrant.

Recreation Workers in Sweden have many benefits, including long vacations. The Swedes love taking time to enjoy both winter and summer sports. Sweden, with its cold weather and many hills and mountains, is a great place for cross-country and downhill skiing. Skating, hockey, and ice fishing are also popular.

Vocabulary

homogeneous:
the same
throughout



Place • Sweden's cold winters have made downhill and cross-country skiing popular. ►



Many small islands, called **skerries**, dot the Swedish coast. In the summer, many people visit these islands to hike, camp, and fish. Tennis, soccer, and outdoor performances such as concerts are popular as well.

Contributions to World Culture Sweden is well-known for its contributions to drama, literature, and film. The late-19th-century and early 20th-century plays of August Strindberg are produced all over the world. Astrid Lindgren's children's books, including *Pippi Longstocking* (1945), still delight readers everywhere. Ingmar Bergman is famous for the many great films he directed.

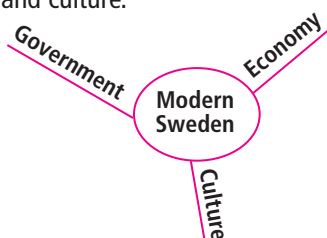
SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

Terms & Names

- 1. Identify:**
- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| (a) Riksdag | (b) ombudsman | (c) armed neutrality |
| (d) hydroelectricity | (e) acid rain | (f) skerry |

Taking Notes

- 2.** Use a spider map like this one to outline the major aspects of Sweden's government, economy, and culture.



Main Ideas

- 3. (a)** On which European peninsula is Sweden located? What other country shares this peninsula?
- (b)** What happened to the Swedish labor force after World War II?
- (c)** How has immigration since World War II changed the population of Sweden?

Critical Thinking

4. Evaluating Decisions

What do you think might be the advantages and disadvantages of armed neutrality for Sweden?

Think About

- ♦ Sweden's location
- ♦ the damage and expense of war
- ♦ the benefits of alliances

ACTIVITY -OPTION-

Reread the "Dateline" feature at the beginning of this section. Write a short **description** of which category you would like to earn a Nobel Prize in and why.