

Conseil des Ministres du Commerce et de l'Industrie : Nouvelles "routes de la soie" et relations commerciales avec la Chine, coopération ou protection?

Pays : Suède

Sweden is today a parliamentary monarchy. Since the adoption in 1974 of a new Constitution, King Carl XVI Gustav has had an honorary function as Head of State. The Parliament consists of a single chamber of 349 seats, the members of which are elected by direct and proportional suffrage for four years.

Sweden is the 1st Nordic country by the size of its economy (GDP of \$ 551 billion in 2018, for a population that exceeded 10 million inhabitants in January 2017), and one of the countries of the European Union more dynamic with an average growth of 3% between 2014 and 2018. The country enjoys a very competitive production system, combining an old industrial base, built around raw materials and industry, and a leading presence in NICT, life sciences, green technologies and creative industries. The innovation ecosystem plays a significant role in Swedish growth and the visibility of its major players (Spotify, Mojang, King, iZettle and Klarna) sometimes gives Stockholm the title of "Silicon Valley of Europe". Sweden is one of the member countries of the European Union, which spends the majority of its gross domestic product on research and development, placing it in 1st place on the European Commission's European Innovation Scoreboard in 2019.

In 2013 China's President Xi Jinping launched the "One Belt, One Road" (OBOR) initiative, later renamed the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which involves China undertaking to make infrastructure investments worth billions of US dollars in the countries along the old Silk Road connecting China with Europe. While commonly seen as an infrastructure initiative aimed at strengthening the Chinese economy, it is also a political project with far-reaching strategic aims. The rise of China is one of the greatest global changes since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Today, China has a global presence and growing influence, which presents a number of new implications for Sweden and the EU. China's development presents both opportunities and challenges that concern an increasing number of the Government's policy areas. How China develops, and how its ties to the rest of the world develop, will have repercussions for Sweden and for developments in Europe. The economy and trade are affected, along with foreign, security and defence policy, the environment and climate, Sweden as an innovation and knowledge nation, Sweden's neighbourhood, and multilateral cooperation. The Government's approach to China is holistic, taking the benefit to Swedish society as its focal point while safeguarding Sweden's security in all relevant areas. This approach is based on the 2016 EU Strategy on China and describes how it is implemented nationally. It is of key importance to Sweden that the EU pursues a common and clear policy on China. It is through the EU that Sweden can achieve the greatest impact. Joint action at the EU level on, for example, trade policy, environment and climate issues and respect for human rights is a strength. Our policy towards China is therefore formulated together with other EU Member States and in close dialogue with other like-minded countries. The Government adheres to the EU Strategy, which establishes that we must stay true to our own values and interests in our relations with China. This Communication outlines the Government's views on China's development and the repercussions this development has for Sweden. It considers a number of areas that are crucial to Sweden, based on the opportunities and challenges that have arisen and on Sweden's interests. It describes bilateral relations between Sweden and China. Enhanced action on matters relating to China requires strengthened knowledge and increased dialogue between government agencies, business and civil society. The Communication concludes that engagement will require investment in knowledge-enhancing measures. The Government will thus begin work on establishing a national knowledge centre on China.