

**SVERIGE – A COUNTRY IN LINGUISTIC TURMOIL**  
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**2007**

Major groups of refugees admitted to Sweden, 1943–1980.	
Approximate figures	
30 000 Baltic nationals	during and after WW2
25 000 refugees from Eastern Europe	average of 1 000 refugees selected annually 1950–1973
8 000 Hungarians	the Hungarian revolt of 1956
3 000 Czechs	Prague 1968
4 000 Poles	disturbances/persecution of Jews from the late 1960s onwards
800 American deserters	in connection with the war in Vietnam
10 000 Greeks	during the period of Junta rule, 1967–1974
1 000 Ugandans	during the persecutions in Uganda in the 1970s
12 000 Assyrians and Syrians	emigrants from Turkey, Lebanon/Syria and Iraq, starting in 1967
11 000 Latin Americans	from Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay etc.
2 000 “boat people”	refugees from Vietnam, mostly of Chinese descent

Statens Invandrarverk



Göransson



Oakes

1.1 Foreign language use in different domains \*

“Besides Swedish, the full-status languages for dissertations are: Danish, Norwegian, English, French, and German. Especially within medicine and technical and natural sciences, English is used nearly exclusively as the written language of dissertations, and the use of spoken or written French or German is relatively rare... The position of English as the international language of instruction is rapidly growing since Sweden took up membership in the European Union (EU).” [in 1995.]

1.2 Language in mass media \*

“The spoken official standard is the variety of well-educated people living in the capital region as well as the nation in general. Up until the 1980s, newscasters and journalists in radio and TV were the dominant role models of the spoken standard. This meant that in practice that communities who had problems adapting to the standard were in general unable to hold public positions in the broadcast media (as well as in schools of drama). People on the periphery of central Sweden, Skåne and the Finnish-speaking region, speak a distinct variety, clearly audible even in the standard mode. In official domains in local communities, a local standard has emerged; i.e. a variety with preserved intonation and prosodic<sup>a</sup> features of the vernacular reflecting the local substrate vernaculars.

However, during the 1980s a more tolerant attitude developed where regional standard varieties of Swedish were accepted in the media. Even a slight Finnish accent is currently sometimes acceptable.”

1.2.1 Language in mass media \*

”The Swedish Parliament has, in general terms, defined the rights of minority languages in the public media. Sami, Finnish and Meänkieli are languages with special status in the agreement between the state and the Swedish Radio Broadcasting Corporation, (SR)...”

1.3 Some Language-Related Swedish Government Agencies

Swedish Academy (*Svenska Akademien*)

Swedish Language Council (*Språkrådet*)

National Agency for Education

Swedish Radio Broadcasting Corporation (*Sveriges Radio*)

Centre for Technical Terminology (*Tekniska Nomenklaturcentralen*)

2.1 First sentence of J.H. Khemiri’s ‘Ett Öga Rött’

In Halim’s language:

<sup>a</sup> The stress and intonation patterns of an utterance. (dictionary.com)

\* Quote from Dr. Birger Winsa of Stockholm University.

"I dag **det var** sista sommarlovsdagen och därför **jag hjälpte** pappa i affären."

In Correct Swedish:

"I dag **var det** sista sommarlovsdagen och därför **hjälpte jag** pappa i affären."

### 3.1 Acquisition Planning \*

"The Swedish Radio Broadcasting Corporation has an agreement with the state to broadcast major immigrant and minority languages, and to provide language courses. . . The Immigrant Institute was founded by immigrants and immigrant associations in 1973 and receives state subsidization (INV rapport, 1997) Its aim is to serve as an office and publishing company for immigrant authors and artists, as well as to collect information on immigrant issues.

### 3.2 Acquisition Planning – Mother Tongue Instruction \*

"Since 1977, all pupils with a foreign home language have had the right to request mother tongue primary school and *gymnasium*<sup>b</sup> according to need." Also, "The total instructional time in the home language should not exceed seven years within the public school system... The rule does not apply for Tornedalian, Sami, or Roma pupils... Finnish has a special position in the regulations for *gymnasium* where it can be the language of instruction in a whole programme... Detailed regulations on how classes are formed within MTI have been abandoned since the early 1990s, and each municipality may define its own policy for language teaching of immigrants."

## 4.1 Modern Swedish Pronunciation charts

### Dropping the final g sound

spelling	pronunciation	meaning
törstig	"törsti"	thirsty
sömnig	"sömn <i>i</i> "	sleepy
hungrig	"hungri"	hungry
ledig	"ledi"	free
i dag	"ida"	today
jag	"ja"	I
middag	"midda"	dinner
goddag!	"godda"	good day!

### Dropping other final consonant sounds

spelling	pronunciation	meaning
det	"deh"	it
och	"ä"	and
med	"meh"	with
är	"e"	am

### Sentence Examples:

"**Jag äter-middag på eftermiddagen när jag är hungrig och törstig.**"  
I eat dinner in the afternoon when I am hungry and thirsty.

"**Vad är-det för någonting?**"

What is that?

### Dropping stops (in the middle of a word)

spelling	pronunciation	meaning
någon	"nån"	one
något	"nåt"	one
några	"nåra"	some
eftermiddagen	"eftermiddan"	afternoon
sedan	"sen"	then
ledsen	"lessen"	sad
staden	"stan"	the city

### ~Fun Fact~

These are standard pronunciations of Swedish words, but the increased usage of SMS texting has brought about a resurgence of pronouncing words very archaically again! This is mostly in the youth population.

(Lazarova, 2007.)

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<sup>b</sup> High school.

\* Quote from Dr. Birger Winsa of Stockholm University.