

FEDERATION OF THE SISTERS OF ST JOSEPH OF CANADA

RESOURCES FOR

THE GLOBAL COORDINATING GROUP CALENDAR

We listen to the heart of the world and hold in our prayer the Sisters of St. Joseph and the people of **SWEDEN**.



Sweden borders Norway to the west and north and Finland to the east, and is connected to Denmark in the southwest by a bridge-tunnel across the Öresund, a strait at the Swedish-Danish border. At 450,295 square kilometres (173,860 sq mi), Sweden is the largest country in Northern Europe, Sweden has a total population of 10.2 million of which 2.4 million has a foreign background.

Germanic peoples have inhabited Sweden since prehistoric times. Southern Sweden is predominantly agricultural, while the north is heavily forested. Sweden is part of the

geographical area of Fennoscandia. Today, the sovereign state of Sweden is a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy, with a monarch as head of state, like its neighbour Norway.

The capital city is Stockholm, which is also the most populous city in the country. Sweden is divided into 21 counties and 290 municipalities.

An independent Swedish state emerged during the early 12th century.

The last war in which Sweden was directly involved was in 1814, since then, Sweden has been at peace, maintaining an official policy of neutrality in foreign affairs. The union with Norway was peacefully

dissolved in 1905. Sweden was formally neutral through both world wars and the Cold War, albeit

Sweden has since 2009 openly moved towards cooperation with NATO. After the end of the Cold War, Sweden joined the European Union on 1 January 1995, but declined NATO membership, as well as Eurozone membership following a referendum. It is also a member of the United Nations, the Nordic Council, the Council of Europe, the World Trade Organization and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).



Sweden maintains a Nordic social welfare system that provides universal health care and tertiary education its citizens. It has the world's eleventh-highest per capita income and ranks highly in numerous metrics of national performance, including quality of life, health, education, protection of civil liberties, economic competitiveness, equality, prosperity and human development. (graphics and information from Wikipedia)

Church

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Stockholm, founded in 1953, covers all of Sweden's territory, has more than 100,000 members and is one of Sweden's largest religious denominations. In 1998, the Catholic Church in Sweden got its first Swedish bishop since the Protestant Reformation, Anders Arborelius.

Environment

Recognizing a loss of limited natural resources, Sweden was the first country to establish an environmental protection agency, in 1967.

In 1972 Sweden hosted the first UN conference on the environment, which led to the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the leading global environmental authority to this day. Sweden was also one of the first nations to sign and ratify the international climate change treaty Kyoto Protocol, in 1998 and 2002 respectively.

The Stockholm Convention (2001), a global treaty aimed at phasing out the production and use of persistent organic pollutants, was largely a Swedish initiative. Waste management, acid rain prevention, sustainable city planning and recycling are other environmental areas in which Sweden have made progressive headway and challenged the status quo.

Perhaps what sets Sweden apart is a combination of citizen engagement, high ambition levels and international solidarity. Largely this comes from a public that is keenly aware of and concerned with environmental issues and used to stand up for its own clean water and air. In the 2015 Standard Eurobarometer survey, 26 per cent of Swedes note environment and climate change as a main concern, compared with 6 per cent at EU level.

Sweden's goal to reduce GHG emissions compared with 1990 by 40 per cent by the year 2020, and to have a vehicle fleet completely rid of fossil fuels by 2030 are stepping stones to the overarching goal of a society with no net GHG emissions by the year 2050. Besides moving to less carbon-intensive means of producing energy, efficiency has been a major focus in Sweden. By 2020 the government goal is to make energy use 20 per cent more effective compared with 2008. One move first introduced in 2005 has been to offer tax reliefs to power-intensive industries in exchange for their drawing up energy plans and taking steps to reduce energy use. Another way in which Sweden is trying to lead the way to a more sustainable planet is through innovative sustainable solutions

According to the OECD Environmental Performance Review 2014, Sweden is one of the most innovative countries when it comes to environment-related technology: biofuels, smart grids and carbon capture and storage. In 2014, Sweden ranked fourth in the Global Cleantech Innovation Index. (Information from Tourism, Sweden)

Sisters of St. Joseph in Sweden

The Chambéry Congregation has 3 Sisters and 5 Associates in Sweden ministering in pastoral care and working with refugees.

*United in prayer the Global Joseph Family, 11,000 sisters in 54 countries,
listening to the heart of the world.*

