

THE SWEDISH NATIONAL MEDIATION OFFICE 2024

# Labour market organisations & collective bargaining

A brief introduction

# Employers' organisations

There are approximately 50 employers' organisations in Sweden. They represent employers in different sectors and industries. Most of them are affiliated to Swedish Enterprise.

## Swedish Enterprise represents employers' organisations in the private sector

Most Swedish employers' organisations are affiliated to the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise (Swedish Enterprise) (in Swedish, 'Svenskt Näringsliv'). It comprises 48 employers' organisations and business associations in the private sector. Some of the members are both employers' organisations and business associations.

These organisations represent approximately 60,000 businesses, employing a total of 1.8 million people. All businesses affiliated to these member organisations are also members of Swedish Enterprise.

In Sweden, collective agreements on wages and employment conditions are concluded at sector-level. Hence, employers' organisations affiliated to Swedish Enterprise conclude their own agreements on wages and employment conditions. Swedish Enterprise concludes cross-sector agreements (e.g., collective agreements on occupational pensions) on behalf of its members.

Most employers' organisations in the manufacturing industry are also signatories to the Industrial Agreement (Industriavtalet), a cooperation agreement between employer organisations and trade unions in the industrial sector. The collective agreements on wages and employment conditions signed by signatories to the Industrial Agreement act as a cost benchmark for the rest of the labour market.

Some of the employers' organisations affiliated with Swedish Enterprise are also members of the following organisations:

- Almega, which has nine members in the service sector
- Swedish Confederation of Transport Enterprises (Transportföretagen), which has seven members in the transport sector.

*All employers' organisations affiliated to Swedish Enterprise are listed in the table on the next page.*

Table 1 Employers' organisations affiliated to the Swedish Enterprise (by sector)

	Name in Swedish	Name in English	Other association
Industrial sector	Gröna arbetsgivare	Green Employers	Party to the Industrial Agreement
	Trä- och Möbelföretagen	The Swedish Federation of Wood and Furniture Industry	Party to the Industrial Agreement
	Teknikföretagen	Technology Industries of Sweden	Party to the Industrial Agreement
	IKEM	IKEM – Innovation and Chemical Industries	Party to the Industrial Agreement
	EFA	The Swedish Energy Employers' Association	
	Grafiska Företagen	The Swedish Graphic Companies' Federation	Party to the Industrial Agreement
	Livsmedelsföretagen	The Swedish Food Federation	Party to the Industrial Agreement
	TEKO	TEKO – textile and fashion industry	Party to the Industrial Agreement
Services	Industriarbetsgivarna	The Swedish Association of Industrial Employers	Party to the Industrial Agreement
	Almega Tjänsteförbunden	The Almega Service Employer Association	Almega
	Medieföretagen	The Media Industries Association	Almega
	Vårdföretagarna	The Association of Private Care Providers	Almega
	Almega Tjänsteföretagen	The Almega Service Association	Almega
	TechSverige	Swedish IT and Telecom Industries	Almega (until January 2025)
	Kompetensföretagen	Competence Agencies of Sweden	Almega
	Innovationsföretagen	The Federation of Consulting Engineers and Architects	Almega
	Tågföretagen	The Association of Swedish Train Operating Companies	Almega
	Säkerhetsföretagen	The Swedish Security Industry Association	Almega
Trade & hospitality	FAO	The Swedish Insurance Employers' Association	
	Svensk Handel	Swedish Commerce	
	Teknikgrossisternas Arbetsgivarförening TGA	The Swedish Energy Employers' Association	
Transport industry	Visita	Visita – the Swedish hospitality industry	
	Svenska Flygbranschen	The Swedish Aviation Industry Group	The Swedish Confederation of Transport Enterprises
	Biltrafikens Arbetsgivareförbund	The Swedish Road Transport Employers Association	The Swedish Confederation of Transport Enterprises
	Motorbranschens Arbetsgivareförbund	The Swedish Motor Trade Employers Association	The Swedish Confederation of Transport Enterprises
	Sjöfartens Arbetsgivareförbund	The Swedish Shipowners' Employer Association	The Swedish Confederation of Transport Enterprises
	Sveriges Hamnar	Ports of Sweden	The Swedish Confederation of Transport Enterprises
Construction & installation	Sveriges Bussföretag	The Swedish Bus and Coach Federation	The Swedish Confederation of Transport Enterprises
	Byggföretagen	The Swedish Construction Federation	
	Glasbranschföreningen	The Swedish Federation of Glazing Contractors	
	Installatörsföretagen	The Swedish Installation Federation	
	Maskinentreprenörerna	The Association of Swedish Earth Moving Contractors	
	Måleriföretagen i Sverige	Måleriföretagen – the painting industry	
	Plåt & Ventföretagen	Plåt & Ventföretagen – sheet metal and ventilation	

### Other employers' organisations in the private sector

A number of employers' organisations representing employers in the private sector are not affiliated to Swedish Enterprise.

These organisations are listed in the table on the right.

### SALAR and SAGE represent public sector employers

All of Sweden's 290 municipalities and 21 regions are members of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) (in Swedish 'Sveriges Kommuner och Regioner'). Municipalities and regions employ approximately 1.2 million people. SALAR and Sobona, an employers' organisation for municipally owned enterprises, conclude many collective agreements together.

Lastly, the Swedish Agency for Government Employers (SAGE) (in Swedish 'Arbetsgivarverket') concludes collective agreements on behalf of approximately 250 central government agencies and other closely associated organisations. SAGE handles negotiations with trade unions for close to 270,000 employees in the central government sector.

Table 2. Other employers' organisations in the private sector (in alphabetical order)

Name in Swedish (and in English, if available)	Sector
Arbetsgivaralliansen	For instance, non-profit organisations and sports as well as religious communities
BAO	Banking sector
Fastigo	Housing and real estate
Fremia	Co-operative and popular-movement-owned enterprisers as well as civil society organisations and partner owned enterprises
Frisörföretagarna	Hair dressers
Sinf	Manufacturing and service
Sobona	Enterprises owned by municipalities
Svensk Scenkonst (Swedish Performing Arts Association)	Performing arts
Svenska kyrkans arbetsgivarorganisation	Church of Sweden's parishes and dioceses
Sveriges Skorstenfejaremästares Riksförbund	Chimney sweeping companies

# Trade unions

There are approximately 50 trade unions in Sweden. They represent different groups of blue-collar and white-collar employees in different sectors. Most of them are affiliated to one of the three central organisations: LO, TCO and Saco. Collective bargaining is carried out by the unions themselves or through different negotiation organisations such as PTK.

## Different unions for blue-collar and white-collar workers

In Sweden, there are distinct trade unions for blue-collar and white-collar employees. Moreover, white-collar employees with academic education also have their own separate unions.

Collective agreements on wages and employment conditions are concluded at sector level. The negotiating parties are one or several trade unions on one side, and an employers' organisation or an employer on the other. As discussed below, trade unions can also participate in collective bargaining through various negotiation organisations.

Collective agreements concerning occupational pensions and other collectively agreed insurance schemes are mainly concluded at cross-sector level, for instance between Swedish Enterprise and the Swedish Trade Union Confederation LO, a central organisation for blue-collar employees.

## Most blue-collar workers are organised in LO-affiliated unions

As table 3 on the next page shows, most unions organising blue-collar employees are affiliated with LO. LO represents 13 trade unions that in total organise around 1.4 million blue-collar employees in both the private and the public sectors. With over 500,000 members, the

largest union affiliated to LO is the Swedish Municipal Workers' Union.

LO's member unions conclude their own collective agreements on wages and employment conditions. However, LO has a coordinating role in negotiations regarding wages and employment condition.

Additionally, LO concludes cross-sector collective agreements on occupational pension and other collectively agreed insurance schemes on behalf of its members. Another important task for LO is to promote the socio-economic interests of blue-collar employees.

Table 3 List of LO-affiliated unions and other blue-collar unions active in collective bargaining at sector-level (in alphabetical order based on the Swedish name,

## Other bodies

Some LO-affiliated unions are also affiliated to different collaboration bodies:

- The Swedish Unions within Industry is a cooperation platform for those trade unions that are parties to the Industrial Agreement.
- 6F collaborates in areas such as political advocacy, work environment and international affairs.

Affiliation to LO	Name in Swedish	Name in English	Main group of workers / sector	Other cooperation platforms
LO-affiliated unions	Fastighetsanställdas Förbund	The Swedish Building Maintenance Workers Union	Building maintenance workers as well as cleaners	6F
	GS Facket	The Swedish Union of Forestry, Wood and Graphical Workers	Woodwork industry and printing	The Swedish Unions within Industry
	Handelsanställdas förbund	The Swedish Commercial Employees' Union	Employees working in the retail industry	
	Hotell-och Restaurangfacket	The Swedish Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union	Hotels and restaurants	
	IF Metall	The Industrial and Metal Worker's Union	Manufacturing industry	The Swedish Unions within Industry
	Livsmedelsarbetarförbundet	The Swedish Food Workers' Union	Food processing industry	The Swedish Unions within Industry
	Musikerförbundet	The Swedish Musicians' Union	Musicians, studio and stage workers	
	Seko	The Union for Service and Communications Employees	Employees in telecommunications, transport, postal services, public administration, the energy sector and railways	6F
	Svenska Byggnadsarbetarförbundet	The Swedish Building Workers Union	Workers in the construction sector	6F
	Svenska Elektrikerförbundet	The Swedish Electricians' Union	Electricians	6F
	Svenska Kommunalarbetareförbundet	The Swedish Municipal Workers' Union	Mostly municipal employees (for instance employees in health care and elderly care)	
	Svenska Pappersindustriarbetarförbundet	The Swedish Paper Workers' Union	Workers in paper and pulp mills	
	Svenska Transportarbetareförbundet	The Swedish Transport Workers' Union	Truck drivers, taxi drivers and bus drivers and other groups in the transport industry	
Other unions	Brandmännens Riksförbund	The Confederation of Swedish Firefighters	Part-time firefighters	
	Svenska Hamnarbetarförbundet	The Swedish Dockworkers Union	Dockworkers	

## Trade unions for white-collar employees

Most unions organising white-collar workers are affiliated with either TCO, the Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees or Saco, the Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations.

TCO comprises 12 trade unions representing 1.2 million white-collar employees. With close to 600,000 members, the largest TCO-affiliated union is Unionen.

Saco, the Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations represents 21 unions organising around 1 million professionals with qualifications from higher education. The largest Saco-affiliated union is the Swedish Teachers' Union. It has approximately 300,000 members.

TCO and Saco promote the political and socio-economic interests of white-collar workers in Sweden. They do not participate in collective bargaining.

Collective bargaining is carried out by their member unions at sector-level or through the following negotiation bodies:

- PTK - the council for negotiation and cooperation organises 27 unions from TCO and Saco as well as the trade union Ledarna. It concludes cross-sector agreements (e.g. pensions) in the private sector.
- Akademikerförbunden (not included in table 4) is a negotiation platform for trade unions affiliated to Saco. It concludes agreements in the private sector in different constellations.
- The Public Employees' Negotiation Council OFR is a negotiation body for 13 trade unions organising employees in the public sector.
- AkademikerAlliansen concludes collective agreements on wages, employment conditions and collectively agreed pension and insurance schemes with its counterparts SALAR and Sobona. All of AkademikerAlliansens' 16 members are Saco-affiliated unions.
- Saco-S is a negotiation body for graduates working for the state. Its 19 member unions are affiliated to Saco.

Furthermore, two white-collar unions (Unionen and Engineers of Sweden) are affiliated to The Swedish Unions within Industry, a cooperation platform for trade unions that are parties to the Industrial Agreement.

*Table 4 on the next page lists white-collar workers and their affiliation to TCO, Saco and different negotiations or collaboration bodies.*

Table 4. List of unions organising white-collar employees (in alphabetical order based on the Swedish name)

Name in Swedish	Name in English	Main group of employees organised by the union	Affiliated to Saco or TCO	Affiliation to negotiations organisation or similar
Akademikerförbundet SSR	The Union for Professionals	Behavioural scientists, economists, HR specialists, social scientists, social workers	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, OFR
Akavia	Akavia	Economists, lawyers, social scientists, IT professionals, HR specialists, and communication professionals	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
DIK	DIK	Graduates in culture, communication, and the creative sector	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
Fackförbundet ST	the Union of Civil Servants	Civil servants	TCO	OFR
Finansförbundet	Finansförbundet	Banking and finance	TCO	
Forena	Forena	Employees at insurance companies, banks owned by insurance companies, or insurance brokers	TCO	PTK
Fysioterapeuterna	The Swedish Association of Physiotherapists	Physiotherapists	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
Försvarsförbundet	The Union of Civilian Employees in the Defence Forces	Non-military personnel working for authorities and organisations relating to the defence forces	TCO	OFR
Journalistförbundet	The Swedish Union of Journalists	Journalists	TCO	PTK
Kyrkans Akademikerförbund	The Church's Graduate Association	Academics employed by the Church of Sweden	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
Ledarna	Ledarna	Managers		PTK, OFR
Naturvetarna	Naturvetarna	Professional scientists	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
Officersförbundet	Swedish Association of Military Officers	Military personnel with employment in the Swedish Armed Forces and related authorities	Saco	OFR
Polisförbundet	the Swedish Police Union	Police officers	TCO	OFR
Reservofficersförbundet	The Reserve Officer's association	Reserve officers	Saco	OFR



Scen & Film	The Swedish Union of Theatrical Employees	Stage, film, and media industry professionals	TCO	PTK, OFR
Sjöbefälsföreningen	The Maritime Officers' Association	Maritime officers and other personnel in leadership positions	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
SRAT	SRAT	For instance audiologists, midwives, chiropractors, speech therapists, opticians, and dental hygienists	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
SULF	SULF	Teachers, researchers, Phd students, and other similar groups in higher education institutions and research institutes	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
Svensk Pilotförening	The Swedish Airline Pilot Association	Civilian professional pilots		
Sveriges Arbetsterapeuter	The Swedish Association of Occupational Therapists	Occupational therapists	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
Sveriges Arkitekter	The Swedish Association of Architects	Architects, interior architects, landscape architects, and planning architects	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
Sveriges Farmaceuter	The Swedish Pharmacists Association	Pharmacists	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
Sveriges Ingenjörer	Engineers of Sweden	Graduate engineers	Saco	The Swedish Unions within Industry, PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen,
Sveriges läkarförbund	The Swedish Medical Association	Medical doctors	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, OFR
Sveriges Lärare	The Swedish Teachers' Union	Teachers	Saco	PTK, OFR
Sveriges Psykologförbund	The Swedish Psychological Association	Psychologists	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
Sveriges Skolledare	The Swedish Association of School Principals and Directors of Education	Principals	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
Sveriges Veterinärförbund	The Swedish Veterinary Association	Veterinarians	Saco	PTK, Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
SYMF	The Swedish Federation of Professional Musicians	Musicians and singers	TCO	PTK
Tjänstetandläkarna	The Swedish Dental Association – SDA	Dentists and dental educators	Saco	Saco-S, AkademikerAlliansen
Tull-Kust	The Swedish Union of Customs' and Coast Guard Officers	Customs and coast guard personnel	TCO	OFR
Unionen	Unionen	White-collar employees in the private sector	TCO	The Swedish Unions within Industry, PTK
Vision	Vision	White-collar employees in municipalities, regions, and the church	TCO	PTK, OFR
Vårdförbundet	The Swedish Association of Health Professionals	Nurses, midwives, and biomedical analysts	TCO	PTK, OFR



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