

A Leader in Lifelong Learning Folkuniversitetet



Folkuniversitetet offers a wide range of adult education courses throughout Sweden and in several European countries. Developments in pedagogy and teaching methodology are of particular interest to us. We have a long tradition of successfully introducing new teaching methods into adult education, including the latest developments ICT.

Education for adults

The organisation consists of five regional offices attached to the Universities of Stockholm, Uppsala, Gothenburg, Lund and Umeå. Each region has a board of directors appointed by the local university.

Co-operation with universities

Through its links with universities, Folkuniversitetet is able to provide the general public, businesses and organisations with the best available knowledge drawn from current research.

A long tradition of international involvement

Folkuniversitetet runs a considerable number of internationally oriented activities, both in Sweden and abroad. Examples include our extensive range of language courses and our language schools in Europe, as well as numerous other projects with an international focus.

Through our co-operation with other international language institutes, we can also offer the opportunity to combine studies in Sweden with studies abroad.

International projects

Folkuniversitetet has many years' experience of operating as a partner or co-ordinator in numerous international projects. The ethos that guides our national activities is also at the heart of our international projects. This focus



can be categorised as lifelong education for all citizens in order to promote active citizenship.

We are particularly committed to development projects that aim to test new forms and methods of making study and creative activities readily available to everyone.

Folkuniversitetet has a strong profile in vocational training, languages and forms of artistic impression. In the past decade, more than 25 cross-border projects were launched, chiefly as part of the EU's programme for lifelong learning and Nordplus.



We run language courses in about 40 different languages at levels ranging from beginners' to advanced level. Our courses are adapted to the needs and requirements of the students and are designed to equip them with practical language skills.

A major language training organisation

We have been involved for many years with international language examinations and assessment. We are also an authorised centre for the Cambridge and IELTS examinations in English. A further service we provide is the assessment of individual language proficiency. Here, a candidate's ability in a language is represented in the form of a language profile corresponding to the Council of Europe's level of attainment scale.

Open to all

Folkuniversitetet runs both credit courses and non-credit courses. A growing number of courses are EQF-validated. We welcome students from all backgrounds and age groups. Our activities are based on the principle that everyone has a lifelong right to freely pursue their quest for knowledge and take an active part in their community. When planning and running our activities, we are always guided by the needs of the individual.

IT and E-learning

Folkuniversitetet runs online courses in languages and administrative skills, and focuses particular attention on IT-assisted studies in various subjects. Information on all courses and educational programmes is available on our website, www.folkuniversitetet.se.

Courses in Swedish as a foreign language

Folkuniversitetet has a long tradition of organising courses in Swedish as a foreign language for foreign students, academics and immigrants. We are especially committed to studies that strengthen the position of immigrants on the labour market. An example of this is our special Swedish language programme for immigrant medical and health care staff to enable them to use their professional skills in Sweden.

Another type of course that has grown in popularity in recent years is one designed for people who are only in Sweden for a limited period of time.

Folkuniversitetet offers an international examination in Swedish as a foreign language, Swedex. This exam, which can be taken in Sweden or abroad, corresponds to the European Framework of Reference and is developed in co-operation with the Swedish Institute and the European Commission.



Folkuniversitetet has a wide range of courses in arts subjects. Some of these courses run just a few hours a week, but there are also part-time and full-time study programmes in subjects such as photography, art, handicrafts, textiles, music, drama and dance.

Art, Music and Drama

Folkuniversitetet's Balettakademien comprises professionally oriented schools of dance that offer introductory courses, programmes for professional training and international summer school programmes.

Cultural activities

Folkuniversitetet organises a broad spectrum of cultural activities that includes seminars and lectures in the history of art, literature, drama and music. The wide variety of subjects offered encompasses everything from Sweden's own historical heritage to present-day international perspectives on Europe and the world. Folkuniversitetet works closely with associations in order to offer a diverse range of courses open to everyone.

Popular science

Through our extensive programme of lectures, seminars and debates, we are able to make information from the world of research more readily available to the general public.

Higher vocational education

Folkuniversitetet is one of Sweden's largest providers of higher vocational education and offers programmes in several fields. Common to all these vocational programmes is that they involve no fees, they entitle the student to a grant and that they are conducted in close co-operation with working life. Students are thus able to combine useful practical experience with theoretical knowledge of the kind that is in demand in the labour market.

Secondary schools and folk high schools

Folkuniversitetet operates independent upper secondary schools (also known as high schools) all over Sweden. These schools offer a wide range of programmes and are designed to prepare students for studies at college or university level. Many of our schools operate international exchange programmes. We also operate four folk high schools, each with a different profile.



Our vision is to provide people with the best possible prospects for a richer life, both privately and professionally, by enabling them to continuously add to their knowledge and develop their skills through a variety of creative activities.

Our pedagogical approach

Our underlying approach to teaching is that the methods used should be adapted to the particular requirements of the students. In addition, we aim to provide our students not only with a greater knowledge of the subject matter, but also with a broader intellectual outlook in general. Finally, we believe that the knowledge and skills acquired by students should be of practical use.

Our teachers and instructors almost always have practical working experience in their subject area to complement their in-depth academic knowledge. They also have considerable experience of teaching adults.

Activities for people with special needs

We organise a wide range of educational and cultural activities for people with mental and physical disabilities. This is one example of our commitment to furthering the well-being of all citizens.

Labour market orientation

Much of the educational training offered by Folkuniversitetet targets people who need new knowledge and skills for use in professional and/or labour market contexts. The teaching methods employed by Folkuniversitetet are adapted to individual needs. Government services, public authorities and the business sector also turn to us for assistance with specialised training courses.

A brief history

Folkuniversitetet first emerged as a national organisation in 1942, but its origins can be traced back to 1917 and the creation of an association for the development of a people's university.

By the 1930s, university students and teachers were organising evening courses and lectures for people lacking formal qualifications.

In 1947, Folkuniversitetet was established as a state supported organisation within adult education, an open university in the true sense of the word. During the fifties and sixties, we rapidly developed as the main supplier in Sweden of foreign language courses and Swedish for immigrants.

In the 1970s and 1980s Folkuniversitetet became a leading actor in lifelong learning.



Folkuniversitetet has five regional offices with over forty local branches all over Sweden.

Folkuniversitetet in Sweden

Folkuniversitetet consists of five legally independent trusts, regional offices, with local branches throughout Sweden. The national office is located in Stockholm. Every year, we welcome over 140,000 students to a variety of lectures, short courses or full-time study programmes with a duration ranging from six months to two years. Folkuniversitetet receives a certain degree of public financial support, but most activities are financed by course fees from private individuals, businesses and funding from the public sector. Our annual turnover is approximately EUR 120 million.

We employ around 400 teachers on a full-time basis and a further 6,000 part-time. An administrative staff of some 500 people takes care of administration and development.

Folkuniversitetet abroad

Folkuniversitetet operates in the UK, Germany, Spain, France, Estonia and a number of other countries around the world, where we offer courses either at our own schools or in other schools with whom we cooperate. The International Schools organisation IS, is a foundation affiliated to Folkuniversitetet offering language training abroad at a number of locations, including Barcelona, Düsseldorf, Brighton and Aix-en-Provence.



- Regional offices
- Local branches

For further information please contact our regional offices or visit www.folkuniversitetet.se/inenglish

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