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Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Division for Social Services and Disability Policy

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Economic security

Poverty is usually described as a situation where an individual (or household) lacks the resources that enables a standard of living that is generally accepted in society. The Swedish Government uses a set of indicators to measure this development. These indicators are defined according to the definitions in the common EU social indicators.¹

The Swedish Government Offices and Statistics Sweden follows the economic and social situation closely, and a great number of indicators related to demography, labour market, poverty, health etc. are available on Statistics Sweden's homepage. Furthermore, the 2021 pension adequacy report, highlighted the situation among all EU member states. In addition to this the 2021 Long-term care in the EU highlighted the state of play of long-term care provision and key challenges across the EU. Both reports included a comprehensive list of comparable statistics across all EU countries.

The Social Insurance Code (2010:110) regulates the fundamentals of entitlement for coverage by social insurance in Sweden. The national old age pension system is part of this social insurance system. It covers everyone who has worked and lived in Sweden. The core of the system is the income-based pension which is the principal means of support for most pensioners. The income-based pension is a contributory benefit, it is paid out to everyone who has paid income tax in Sweden and thereby earned their pension entitlement. If necessary, the income-based pension is supplemented by guarantee pension, a benefit offering basic cover for those with low or no income-based pension. Around 80 percent of those who receive guarantee pension

¹ [EU social indicators - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&plugin=1)

are women. Guarantee pension is based on how many years an individual has lived in Sweden. To be entitled to full guarantee pension, 40 years of residency in Sweden is required.

The basic cover for old-age pensioners also include housing supplement and maintenance support for the elderly. Maintenance support for the elderly is the ultimate safety net, it is intended to guarantee a reasonable living standard for everyone over the age of 65 years. Those who may be eligible for maintenance support are mainly pensioners with no earned pension and no guarantee pension (due to a short period of residence in Sweden).

Income-based pension, guarantee pension, housing supplement and maintenance support for the elderly are supposed to secure an adequate standard of living for older persons. The benefits are administered by The Swedish Pensions Agency (Pensionsmyndigheten).

An elderly person who is not satisfied with a decision made by the Swedish Pensions Agency is able to appeal. It is made to an administrative court, which deals with disputes between private individuals and authorities. A complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen (JO) can also be made by a person who feels that she or he has been treated wrongly or unjustly by a public authority or an official employed. The Parliamentary Ombudsmen are appointed by the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag) to ensure that public authorities and their staff comply with the laws and other statutes governing their actions.