

SWEDEN. INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Title of the inspection activities: **SAM-POL (Systematic OSH-management in politically controlled organisations).**

Two phases:

- **first step - Information to politicians in politically controlled organisations in the start of their term of office**
- **second step - Inspections on high-level and follow ups after the information**

Duration of the inspection activities: **The activity took place during a term of office, i.e., four years. This is to start Politician Information in connection with politicians starting their term of office in order to create the conditions at an early stage for politicians to raise awareness of their responsibility in OSH-management.**

Aim of the inspection activity: **The aim of informing politicians was to make politicians aware of their responsibility for the systematic work environment management in the organisations, which are municipalities and health care regions.**

The information is the first step of the activity and is given in order to achieve sustainable OSH management within these organizations by increasing

- **knowledge and understanding of how politicians should handle work environment issues,**
- **understanding of politicians' responsibility for creating a good working environment and thereby counteracting ill health,**
- **knowledge of systematic OSH management that pervades the entire organization,**
- **knowledge of the importance of making risk assessments when planning changes,**
- **knowledge of the Work Environment Act.**

It was also important that the politicians gain knowledge about their role in the follow-up of their own organization's systematic work environment management. The role, task and organization of the Swedish work Environment Authority (SWEA) as well as information on OSH-management as a focus area in supervision were also highlighted.

Scope of the inspection activities (description): **A four years lasting activity targeted to the politically controlled organisations mentioned above. The main issue to evaluate during the inspections has been the annual follow up of the organisations' own OSH management, according to section 14 in the Swedish provisions for Systematic Work Environment Management (AFS 2023:1). The SWEA has issued new provisions that became effective on January 1, 2025. We gradually update our website based on our new provisions during the spring 2025.**

Sector covered by the inspections: **Politically controlled organisations, e.g., municipalities including social care, education including kindergarten and preschools, technical departments for infrastructure etc., as well as health care regions.**

The number of establishments inspected in the framework of the activities: **In total 3,419 procedures (including information, inspections and follow-ups) were carried out at municipalities and regions during the activity. Of these 3,419 procedures, 309 consist of politician information for municipalities and regions.**

The number of labour inspectors involved in implementing the inspection activities: **During the implementation of the activity during these years, we involved approximately 90 inspectors in the activity as well as approximately 2 administrators, 3 experts, 2 communication officers, 8 lawyers. There was a project group for the activity.**

The number of persons involved in supervising the implementation of the inspection activities (including development of inspection documents and summarizing results of inspections): **We had approximately 10 people involved in the management of the activity during these four years in the five regions in Sweden. In addition to this we had the section managers who led the work in the regions.**

Short summary of the outcome of the inspection activities: **Of the workplaces we inspected, 90 percent received demands in inspection notices. Many employers had shortcomings in their annual follow-ups of their systematic OSH-management. It was both about carrying out the annual follow-up and/or in the procedures for the same. Some employers had not clarified the division of responsibilities regarding handling the results of the annual follow-up.**

The most common shortcomings with referral to provisions on systematic OSH-management:

- **the organizations had not carried out annual follow-up of the systematic OSH-management,**
- **the procedures for the systematic OSH-management had shortcomings in how the annual follow-up was to be carried out.**

12 percent of all municipalities that received an inspection notice, received an injunction which means that they did not remedy the deficiencies in time. The corresponding figure for regions (organising public health care) was 5 percent.

A good working environment is a matter of gender equality. The number of employees affected by this inspection is roughly 1.3 million employees, which is a quarter of all employed people in Sweden. Primarily women work within municipalities and regions. The shortcomings regarding Systematic OSH management procedures entail consequences for women's work environment within municipalities and regions. If these large organisations do not have comprehensive systematic OSH-management, there is a risk that many of these employees will become ill or get injured at work.

No.	question	yes/no	comment
Inspection activity			
A. Selecting priority areas for inspection			
1.	What sources of information did you use in selecting the priority area for inspection?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> inspectorate's own database of workplace accidents INES for learning from earlier projects (from womens' work environment, inspections in elderly care, schools, social care etc 2012-2019) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> external database of workplace accidents (please specify) Statistics from Swedish Social Insurance Agency (Försäkringskassan (FK) - national figures about sickness absence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> inspectorate's own database of occupational diseases Official statistics regarding reported work-related accidents and ill-health) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> analyses of causes of temporary and permanent inability to work conducted by research institutes (which ones?) AFA, Forte, and several universities in Sweden <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> proposals of stakeholders – employer organizations Swedish Municipalities and Regions (SKR) and the Confederation of Swedish Enterprises (SN) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> proposals of stakeholders – trade union organizations, others (which ones?) Kommunal, (LO) TCO, SACO were kept informed during the inspection process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> reports and scientific papers on actions undertaken in other countries (please specify) EU-OSHA

			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) The Swedish Government Strategy for a sustainable work environment 2016-2020
3.	What was defined as priority area?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> incompliance with legal requirements concerning labour relations/working conditions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) The priority has been that deficiencies in the working environment affect many people, mainly women
4.	What was the predominant aim of workplace inspections?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to provide the inspected entities with information on legal requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to provide the inspected entities with information on how to ensure compliance with legal requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to enforce compliance with the law in the inspected entities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) Inform the policymakers/politicians by inspection at high level and then check the compliance (sampling) at unit level and then report back to the top management. Where the requirements were also set
5.	How did you determine the number of entities to be inspected?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the percentage of all registered entities where the problem determined as the priority area was expected to surface (range: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> nearly 100 % of all registered entities) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other criteria (please specify) All municipalities and regions would receive politician information and be inspected during the activity.
6.	What was taken into consideration when determining the number of		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the hazard level as measured by the rate of workplace accidents;

	inspections to be carried out by individual field offices (regions):		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) The activity management stated that all municipalities and regions would receive politician information and then be inspected during the term of office. An important aspect considered was the high number of female employees and the high sickness absences figures among them. If needed, inspectors from other geographical regions supported the inspection offices who needed extra resources.
7.	Were IT tools used to identify the priority area in the described inspection campaign?	YES	A brief description of IT tools: INES (SWEAs own software for inspection support and registration system), internet browser to find addresses and individual data to make sure to address the appropriate receiver. The type of data: All municipalities and regions were approached in the same way – the annual evaluation of OSH management was the target of the inspections. I.e., no further tools needed.
8.	Were IT tools used to identify the target group of inspected entities in the described inspection campaign?	YES	A brief description of IT tools: Google used as tool to identify workplaces to be inspected. The type of data that was analysed to determine the target group of inspected entities: The target group was the highest decision level of municipalities and regions. By high level is meant the decision-making level both within politics (council, board,

			chairman) and civil servant level (administrative management) and then inspections were conducted at unit level – (mainly preschools)
B. Determining the time span of inspection activities			
9.	How was the breakdown of inspections planned? Were the inspections carried out:		
c)	other way (how?)	YES	First, the information to politicians were carried out at the beginning of the mandate period. The inspections were then started, all inspections were conducted remotely. This was an effect of the Covid-19 pandemic. The inspection setup consisted of a high-level pre-meeting, unit-level inspections and high-level feedback.
10.	What was the average duration of a workplace visit conducted in the framework of the programme implementation (the time it took to complete inspection activities at an individual establishment)?		Please choose the most appropriate answer: <input type="checkbox"/> within one day, no longer than 2 hours; Less than 2 h /visit
11.	What was the average duration of the activities carried out in the office of the labour inspectorate (excluding the penal and administrative sanctions)?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> within one day, between 4 and 8 hours;
C. Selecting establishments for inspection.			
12.	What criteria were used when selecting establishments for inspection?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> personal knowledge of labour inspectors who supervise particular workplaces (groups of workplaces) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sectoral criterion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify) The inspections are samples taken from the identified sector: preschools. Some of the

			preschools showed good practise which was important for our learning in the project.
13.	What sources of information were used when selecting establishments for inspection?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> inspectorate's own database INES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> labour inspectors' knowledge of workplaces <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> internet search engines
14.	Were IT tools used to select specific inspected entities in the described inspection campaign?	NO	
D. Provision of staff for carrying out inspections			
15.	What group of inspectors was involved in the inspection activities?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a select team of inspectors was involved based on their education and experience: <input type="checkbox"/> between 30% and 50% Resources required for the activity were extensive which made it difficult to keep desired knowledge level.
16.	How were inspectors prepared for the inspection activities (additional training)?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (please specify). All participating inspectors received training and attended an on-line start-up meeting before the activity started
17.	Were IT tools used to prepare labour inspectors to carry out activities within the described inspection campaign?	NO	Not more than a remote kick off session with use of MS Power Point.
18.	What materials were at the inspectors' disposal during the activities?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the rationale of the inspection activities; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> description of the inspection activities' objectives; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> description of the ways in which to implement the activities (tasks to be completed); <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> checklists; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> description of the reporting requirements;

			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> examples of reactive actions to be taken by inspectors upon identification of typical cases of non-compliance; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> others (please specify). A guide for inspectors was provided to support supervision. The inspectors had the opportunity to participate in reconciliation meetings where the steering group participated to provide guidance on the issues surrounding inspections.
19.	Did labour inspectors use IT tools when carrying out activities within the described inspection campaign?	YES	<p>A brief description of IT tools:</p> <p>INES was used in supervision. Ines is a case management system for booking and carrying out inspections.</p> <p>- IT tools were used:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for labour inspector's preparation for an inspection at a specific inspected entity</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> when performing inspection activities during the inspection</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> when summarizing and documenting the results of the inspection in a specific inspected entity</p> <p>- how did they support the labour inspector in (please provide a short description):</p> <p>INES contains information about the enterprise, the demands for the activity, registration of the inspection as well as documentation of the visit and the inspection notice.</p> <p>- preparation for an inspection?</p> <p>INES is used to announce the visit.</p> <p>- performing inspection activities?</p> <p>The system enables registration of the visit and documentation of the visit as well as inspection notices.</p>

			<p>- summarizing and documenting the results of the inspection?</p> <p>The system enables documentation of the results and the demands as well as follow up of the demands.</p>
E. Involvement of other regulators, institutions, authorities for labour protection and social partners in the implementation process.			
20.	Can other regulators, institutions, authorities for labour protection and social partners submit their proposals of inspection topics to the inspectorate's plan of work?	YES	<p>Which regulators, institutions and authorities for labour protection can submit their proposals?</p> <p>Union parties have the opportunity to report what signals they have caught to us at the SWEA. We also follow other authorities' statistics and knowledge compilations such as FK , Swedish Agency for Work Environment Expertise (SAWEE) and other interest organizations such as AFA insurances and SKR.</p>
21.	Was the inspection activity the result of a proposal submitted by another regulator, institution, authority for labour protection or social partner?	NO	
22.	Was there any cooperation between the labour inspectorate and another regulator, institution, authority for labour protection or social partner?	YES	<p>What was that co-operator?</p> <p>There was a direct cooperation with FK who participated in the inspections.</p>
23.	At which stage was the cooperation with another regulator, institution, authority for labour protection or social partner initiated?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> at the planning stage;
24.	What did the cooperation with another regulator, institution,		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> participation in inspection activities (e.g. as experts) – if so, in what role?

	authority for labour protection or social partner involve?		FK participants informed about the role of the Agency and what they can contribute with in order to support prevention of work-related ill-health.
25.	Are there any legal requirements obliging other regulators, institutions, authorities or social partners to make their data accessible to the labour inspectorate for inspection needs?	YES	We have the right to have access to what we need to be able to carry out the inspections. (There are no procedures where SWEA expects the employer to make information about the OSH-management public)
26.	Does the labour inspectorate have direct online access to information and data collected by other bodies, institutions and authorities?	NO	
27.	What information obtained in the above manner was used for implementing the inspection campaign?		The cooperating institutions and the type of data / information used in the described inspection campaign: FK participated in the inspections and provided information on sickness absence numbers as well as their role and what they can contribute in case of illness.
F. Supporting inspection activities with training provided for employers or workers (combining inspection and educational activities)			
28.	Were establishments covered by inspections provided with information or training prior to the commencement of the inspection task?	YES	All politicians were offered an information session before the inspections started.
29.	Is the effectiveness of prior information or training activities taken into account when evaluating the results of the inspections?	YES	How is the effectiveness of information and training activities assessed? Feedback from participants (politicians). What tools are used for that purpose?

			Verbal feedback to the inspector after the information meeting with politicians – no formal methods nor tools were used.
30.	Once the inspection activity is completed , are representatives of inspected establishments provided with recommendations and proposed corrective measures – in the form of guidance or training – regarding the identified compliance level in establishments operating in the field covered by inspection?	YES	<p>What form do they have?</p> <p>The high level was informed about the shortcomings and a talk was held about the possible measures.</p> <p>What percentage of establishments selected for guidance/training (or other forms of communication activities) actually attended?</p> <p>100% was provided with information</p>
G. Monitoring the implementation of inspection activities			
31.	Was the implementation of inspection activities in any way monitored and coordinated?	YES	<p>How many people were involved in monitoring and coordination of the inspection activity?</p> <p>Approximately 10 p participated in organising the activity (project group).</p> <p>What was the function of those persons in relation to labour inspectors who implemented the activity (fellow labour inspectors, immediate supervisors, national coordinator at the labour inspectorate's headquarters)?</p> <p>Project owners, project managers, project group members, experts and project administrators as well as immediate managers.</p>
32.	What was the scope of monitoring and coordinating actions regarding the inspection activity?		<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> monitoring the implementation level of the developed quantitative plan</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> monitoring the implementation level of the developed qualitative plan (how?)</p> <p>Follow-up of completed inspections and follow-up of requirements. A project group also existed for checking uniformity, which</p>

			included quality of the outcome of the inspections.
33.	Were IT tools used to carry out monitoring and coordination activities as part of the described inspection campaign?	YES	<p>IT tools were used to:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> monitoring the implementation level of the developed quantitative plan</p> <p>INES</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> monitoring the implementation level of the developed qualitative plan (how?)</p> <p>Monitoring and follow up of implemented measures was done with support of INES combined with manual monitoring and use of Excel sheets.</p>
H. Communicating the information about inspection campaign and its results.			
34.	Did you develop any plan to communicate the information about the inspection activities to:		
a)	stakeholders in the sector covered by the inspection activity?	YES	A press release has been issued about the report. The report has been sent to the parties and an oral review has been held for all parties
b)	the general public?	YES	Via press release to the media
35.	What was the scope of information communicated to:		
a)	stakeholders in the sector covered by the inspection activity?		The inspected enterprises got the information sent and was offered an oral presentation of it.
b)	the general public?		According to the principle of publicity any person who asks for information about the SWEA and other state agencies, will be offered this information.
36.	How was the information about the inspection activities communicated to stakeholders and the general public?		A press release was sent and the inspected enterprises got the information sent and was offered an oral presentation of it. The

			information is always available at the SWEA webpage as well.
I. Evaluating the results of the inspection activities. Evaluation methods and tools.			
37.	How were the results of inspection campaign evaluated?		
a)	based on a checklist	YES	How are the results of inspections evaluated by means of a checklist? The work has been compiled, analyzed and was presented in a final report.
b)	based on the number of legal measures issued	YES	The number is calculated and reported in a final report.
c)	based on the type of legal measures issued	YES	The number is calculated and reported in a final report.
d)	based on the number of implemented legal measures	YES	The number is calculated and reported in a final report.
e)	based on the type of implemented legal measures	YES	The number is calculated and reported in a final report.
38.	How was the information about the effects of inspection campaign obtained (e.g. about the elimination of irregularities, introduction of higher standards)?		
a)	information provided by the employer	YES	If so, what form did the information provided by the employer have? Inspection has been taken place at the high level and the random samples at the unit level to see how the procedures are functioning. An inspection notice was sent accordingly and follow-up has taken place at a high level after this. Was the information provided by employers randomly verified by labour inspectors? All cases are checked before closing them. Safety representatives participate in the inspections and have the opportunity to give their views on the information. What is the employer's liability for providing false information?

			<p>Difficult question. We expect true answers but we do not have any legal system to certify this.</p> <p>What is the ratio of information provided by the employer to the overall pool of information about the effects of inspections?</p> <p>As the information of the employer is the dominant source of information the importance of the participating safety representative has to be mentioned as well as the, in this case, planned sample at the preschool, which clearly show how things work in practise. Let's say 60/40 between employer and safety representative.</p>
b)	information provided by the labour inspector who conducted the next inspection at the workplace	YES	<p>If so, what form did the information provided by the inspector have?</p> <p>All inspections are documented with shortcomings and demands in INES, with reasons for the demands documented.</p> <p>So far, the next inspector has not been at the workplace yet. There is no information to be given.</p>
39.	What performance indicators were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the inspection campaign?		<p>Please list and briefly describe the indicators:</p> <p>We followed up the number of inspections, type and number of requirements and the employer's implementation of the measures.</p>
40.	Were IT tools used to assess the effectiveness of the inspection campaign?	YES	<p>A brief description of IT tools:</p> <p>Common tools like Excel and INES</p>
41.	How were the project effects evaluated?		
a)	Was any final summary evaluation of the inspection task (inspection campaign) made?	YES	<p>If so, what was the scope of such evaluation?</p> <p>A final report was written and the inspectors' documentation from the</p>

			inspections was used as well as their subjective assessment of the results of the inspections.
b)	Were partial assessments made during the inspection activity?	YES	<p>If so, what was the frequency and scope of such assessments?</p> <p>Only in terms of follow up of numbers of proceedings.</p>
c)	Did you prepare a formal document with evaluation of the inspection activity after its completion?	YES	<p>If so, was the formal evaluation document prepared by the labour inspectorate or an external evaluator?</p> <p>Please name the entities which conducted such external evaluation.</p> <p>The final report was written of the SWEA.</p> <p>If so, what aspects of the evaluation were included in the formal document? (Please specify and describe the evaluation shortly).</p> <p>Evaluation has taken place of the number of inspections, requirements and measures as well as the inspectors' assessment of the implementation.</p> <p>How were the report conclusions disseminated?</p> <p>A press release was sent about the report, the opportunity to get an oral review for all parties and it is published on our website.</p>
42.	How was the final document utilized in practice?		<p>The politicians need to take into account the learnings from the inspection activity for their further development of proceeding for OSH management. Also, stakeholders can develop supportive tools. SWEA learnings in the report are to be carried with us in the organisation.</p>