

# Municipal Energy- and Climate Counsellors

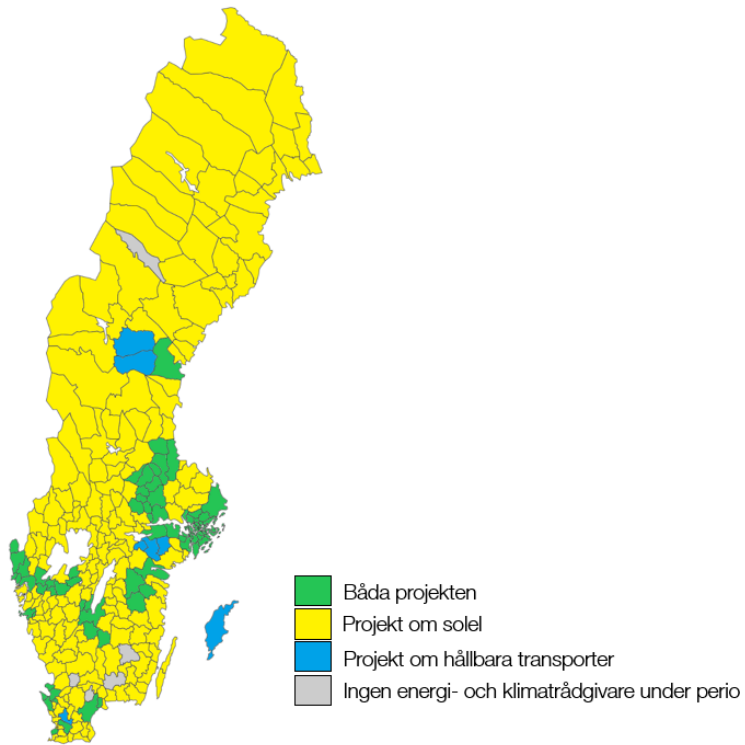
A Swedish approach since 1997



# Stated Purpose

- To guarantee all inhabitants in all municipalities throughout Sweden an opportunity to get advice free of charge on energy issues in a technologically and commercially neutral way.
- The system was initially created in 1997, but it has undergone several changes.
- One purpose has also been to create channels for the spread of information from the Swedish Energy Agency in the entire country, and to have local energy experts even in smaller and distant municipalities.

# Geographical coverage



Sweden's municipalities. This map depicts where the counsellors have participated in certain projects.

- Sweden covers a large area with significant differences in climate. From a climate similar to continental Europe in the South to subarctic conditions in the North. At the coasts the climate is often maritime, while in the Western inland there are mountain conditions. Moreover, there are also many inhabited islands.
- From this follows that there can be no "one-size-fits-all" policy for municipalities. Instead, policy needs to allow for variation.
- In total, there are 290 municipalities.

# The Counsellors

- 289 out of 290 have an energy- and climate counsellor, all 15 regional energy agencies involved
- Advice households, non-profit organisations and SMEs about energy efficiency measures and renewable energy
- The counsellors can give personal advice via telephone, email or during a physical visit. Moreover, the counsellors also have outreach tasks, such as visiting schools.
- The training of counsellors is the responsibility of the Swedish Energy Agency, which is also financing them, but they are employed by their local municipality.
- In some cases the original counsellor has remained and is consequently today a highly experienced professional in local energy issues. In other cases new counsellors have repeatedly been trained.
- All counsellors have annual (or more frequent) occasions for further training or simply a get-together.

# Results

- It is, of course, difficult to measure the impact of the counsellors in terms of, e.g. kWh saved, because they give advice to people who voluntarily visit them and whom they may never hear from again. However, the counsellors keep record of how many people have paid a visit or have been otherwise advised.
- During 2023 a survey was sent out to individuals who have contacted the counsellors as well as to counsellors
  - Feedback from advice-seekers confirms that the contact contributes to increased knowledge and competence
  - The feedback also confirms that the contact does contribute to concrete measures, and towards that advice-seekers feel more secure in their decisions
  - In general people that seek advice and initiate contact themselves are more likely to take concrete action while outreach tasks leads to increased knowledge and competence

# A Few More Observations

- The main task of the counsellors has remained to provide neutral information on energy-related issues, which commercial providers of energy solutions naturally cannot be expected to do.
- It should be pointed out that energy efficiency is only a part of the counsellors' portfolio, the other parts being other energy use ( e g renewables) and issues related to climate change.
- In some cases it has been adequate to strenghten cooperation between the councellors in a certain region. Therefore regional offices have been created, but they are technically within another administrative structure.

# A Few More Observations (continued)

- Based on surveys and random encounters, we know that the counsellors have a significant positive effect on energy efficiency, but we are not able to quantify it, especially when it's difficult to separate it from other aspects, such as the use of renewables.
- As a consequence, the effect the counsellors have is not listed separately in Sweden's report on article 8-measures.
- Their role was for example of great importance when heat-pumps were installed on a large scale in single-family dwellings.

# Development opportunities for the Energy- and climate Advisor programme

The Swedish Energy Agency are currently tasked to:

- Analyse how the programme could be developed with regard to the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) and the Renewable Energy Directive (REDIII)
- Look over the current programme regulations
- Suggest how the programme can reduce vulnerability of homeowners, organizations and SME:s to, for example, high energy prices





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