Focus on Sweden

Learning and Development
Global Sentiment Survey
2023

Sweden: mainstream or maverick?

Does Sweden follow the world in its opinions about L&D, or is it on its own, maverick path? The answer is a bit of both.

To explore this idea, consider the table to the right. It shows the 2023 L&D Global Sentiment Survey results for Sweden. Numbers in brackets are the global rankings for each option, while the coloured arrows show movement compared with the Swedish vote last year.

Several things jump out of this table. First, Sweden follows the world in the top two results. But the mainstream stops there. Sweden places Collaborative/social learning in third place, with the second-highest vote in the world for this option. And this is not a one-off, but a long-term Swedish trend. For more on this, see the next page.

Sweden places Showing value at #5, rather than #9 in the rest of the world. Again this focus on value is a longer term trend explored in more detail on page 2.

And while the world has been deeply excited about Skills-based talent management since it first appeared on the list of options last year, Sweden fails to share this enthusiasm. Globally, the option rose from #6 to #3 this year, but in Sweden it stayed stuck at #9, with the lowest vote among the 18 key countries supporting the poll. For more, see page 3.

And Sweden's reluctance to join trends can be seen at the bottom of the table. The Metaverse did not excite many people's passions in this year's poll, but in Sweden it almost failed to register. With just 1% of the vote, it stays firmly attached to the bottom of the table.

GSS 2023, Sweden	Δ%	
1. Reskilling/upskilling (1)	12.8%	↓
2. Artificial intelligence (2)	11.5%	↑
3. Collaborative/social learning (5)	11.2%	↑
4. Personalization/adaptive delivery (6)	9.6%	↑
5. Showing value (9)	7.7%	↑
6. Learning analytics (4)	7.7%	↓
7. Micro learning (10)	6.7%	↓
8. Consulting more deeply with the business (8)	6.4%	↑
9. Skills-based talent management (3)	5.8%	↑
10. Coaching/mentoring (7)	5.4%	↑
11. Performance support (12)	3.8%	↓
12. Learning experience platforms (11)	3.8%	↓
13. Virtual and augmented reality (13)	2.9%	↓
14. Other (16)	2.6%	↑
15. Mobile delivery (15)	1.3%	↓
16. The Metaverse (14)	1.0%	new
n = 107		

Figures in brackets show world rankings (n = 3,996)
Arrows show changes for Sweden since 2022 (n = 97)

About the survey

Polling for the L&D Global Sentiment Survey 2023 ran for 66 days in late 2022 and early 2023, collecting votes from 3,996 people in 100 countries.

Voters answered one obligatory question: **What will be hot in workplace L&D in 2023?** They could choose three options from a list of 16, including a free text option for their own suggestions. No definitions were given of the options or the word 'hot'. The format of this question has remained unchanged since the survey started in 2014.

In addition, there were two optional questions. The free text question 'What is your biggest L&D challenge in 2023?' was answered by 40% of respondents globally. The multiple-choice question 'Which of these best describes where you do most of your work?', by 86% of respondents. Most worked in Workplace L&D (49%), in Education (12%), for a Vendor (16%) or as a Consultant/freelancer (15%).

Voting is split across: Europe (34%), UK (16%), North America (9%), South America (7%), South-east Asia (11%), Africa (3%), South-west Pacific (7%), South Asia (3%),. Western Asia (7%). **18 key countries** together contributed 84% of the total vote.

Votes were canvassed via social media, email and direct LinkedIn messaging.

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Swedish sentiment over time

GSS 2021 Sweden	
1. Collaborative/social learning	12.4%
2. Personalization/adaptive delivery	12.0%
3. Reskilling/upskilling	11.7%
4. Micro learning	9.0%
5. Showing value	8.6%
6. Learning analytics	7.1%
7. Learning experience platforms	6.8%
8. Coaching/mentoring	6.0%
9. Consulting more deeply with the business	6.0%
10. Artificial intelligence	5.3%
11. Mobile delivery	3.8%
12. Virtual and augmented reality	3.0%
13. Performance support	2.3%
14. Neuroscience/cognitive science	2.3%
15. Curation	1.9%
16. Other	1.9%
n = 90	

GSS 2022 Sweden	
1. Reskilling/upskilling	17.0%
2. Collaborative/social learning	10.9%
3. Personalization/adaptive delivery	9.4%
4. Learning analytics	8.0%
5. Micro learning	8.0%
6. Showing value	7.2%
7. Artificial intelligence	5.8%
8. Consulting more deeply with the business	5.4%
9. Skills-based talent management	5.1%
10. Learning experience platforms	5.1%
11. Performance support	4.3%
12. Virtual and augmented reality	4.0%
13. Coaching/mentoring	3.3%
14. Curation	2.9%
15. Mobile delivery	2.2%
16. Other	1.4%
n = 97	

GSS 2023 Sweden	
1. Reskilling/upskilling	12.8%
2. Artificial intelligence	11.5%
3. Collaborative/social learning	11.2%
4. Personalization/adaptive delivery	9.6%
5. Showing value	7.7%
6. Learning analytics	7.7%
7. Micro learning	6.7%
8. Consulting more deeply with the business	6.4%
9. Skills-based talent management	5.8%
10. Coaching/mentoring	5.4%
11. Performance support	3.8%
12. Learning experience platforms	3.8%
13. Virtual and augmented reality	2.9%
14. Other	2.6%
15. Mobile delivery	1.3%
16. The Metaverse	1.0%
n = 107	

Sweden has posted significant numbers on the survey since 2020. What does that history of data reveal?

Reskilling/upskilling
Sweden #1, 12.8%, World #1, 12.0%
Sweden's approach to this option has been a violent roller-coaster ride. Introduced to the survey in 2021, it was well supported globally and topped the poll at 13%. In Sweden, however, it only made the #3 spot with 11.7%. The following year the vote fell globally, but in Sweden, it shot up to 17%, thanks to Pår Lager's *Upskill och Reskill* (Upskill and Reskill), published a few months before the survey was launched. In 2023, the vote dropped 4.2% to 12.8%, leaving it closer to the world vote of 12%.

Artificial intelligence
Sweden #2, 11.5%, World #2, 9.3%
Sweden has consistently voted higher than the rest of the world for AI, with the gap steadily growing over the years, from 0.7% in 2020 to 2.3%. Sweden has a vibrant EdTech startup scene - in 2022, Startup Blink ranked its startup ecosystem #2 in Europe and #5 in the world. Is the strong vote for AI part of a pro-tech Swedish culture?

Collaborative/social learning
Sweden #3, 11.2%, World #5, 7.5%
Since joining the survey, Sweden has ranked in the top 3 countries globally for this option. This may reflect a cultural factor: *folkbildning,* the Nordic tradition of adult learning outside formal education.

Skills-based talent management
Sweden #9, 5.8%, World #3, 9%
This is where Sweden diverges most from the rest of the world, with the gap in voting 2.1% last year and 3.3% this year. Sweden's vote is the lowest of the 18 key countries and lower than the major regional country groupings (see page 3).

Coaching/mentoring
Sweden #10, 5.4%, World #7, 7.4%
Since its introduction in 2020, global voting on this option has stayed unusually consistent, between 7.0% and 7.6%. In contrast, Sweden's vote has swung from 1.4% above the global vote in 2020 to 4.3% below last year, and this year it has stabilized at 2% below.

A continued focus on value

Over the years, Sweden's interest in showing the value of learning has risen. Two options track this sentiment: Consulting more deeply with the business and Showing value. In 2020, the average vote for these options globally was 6.6%. In Sweden it was 4.2%. By 2023, however, while the global average was almost unchanged at 6.5%. In Sweden it had risen to 7.0%.

The normal trend for all options is to decline in popularity over time. Unusually, globally, the vote for Showing value has remained fairly constant over the past 4 years, and in Sweden it has actually grown (see graph, right). Of all the trends in the Swedish results, this is most maverick.


Consistent, growing, support for Showing value over 4 years

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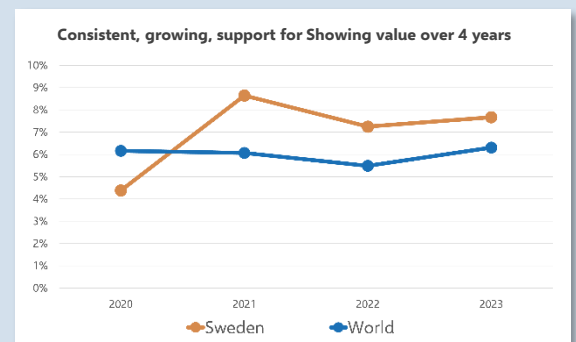
Focus on Sweden

Regional and global context

This chart shows voting results from Sweden alongside those from North America, the rest of the world and Europe (both excluding the Swedish results). Europe here does not include the UK. Results are shown in the order of the total votes cast globally.

Regional comparison of results

Legend:
- World
- Sweden
- N. America
- EUR-UK
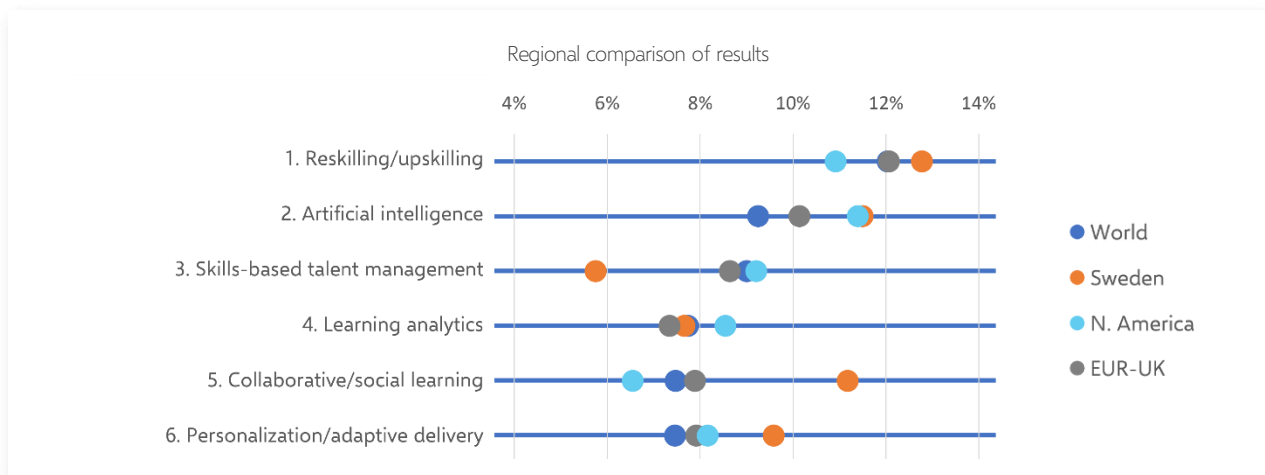
#1 Reskilling/upskilling

Last year's enthusiasm for this continued, putting Sweden ahead of all large regional groups. The strongest votes from any country for Reskilling/upskilling this year came from Malaysia and Ukraine, with Ireland and Spain sharing Sweden's vote of 12.8%.

#3 Skills-based talent management (SBTM)

Sweden does not share the rest of the world's enthusiasm for this. Introduced to the survey last year, SBTM rose from #6 to #3 globally, but in Sweden it remained at #9, with the vote rising marginally, from 5.1% to 5.8%, well below all major regions.

#5 Collaborative/social learning

The Swedish affection for collaborative/social learning continues – well ahead of the regions shown. Among the 18 key countries on the survey, Sweden's vote of 11.2% ranked it second, behind Brazil's 13.9%. Since joining the survey in 2021, Brazil has consistently put collaboration at #1, with votes in excess of 13.5%.

#6 Personalization/adaptive delivery

Sweden's vote outranks the regions' here, thanks to an unusually low vote of just 7.8% in the USA this year. From 2019 to 2022, the USA vote averaged 10.5%. Sweden was only outvoted by France (10.9%) and Brazil (10.5%) on personalization this year.

More information

Download the 2023 L&D Global Sentiment Survey report, reports from previous years, and other resources, here:

https://bit.ly/GSS23-summary