

37 Sweden

This country profile benchmarks recent trends in entrepreneurship and self-employment by women, youth, seniors, immigrants and people with disabilities in Sweden relative to the European Union average. It also highlights recent policy actions and current policy issues related to inclusive entrepreneurship.

Recent trends in inclusive entrepreneurship activities

The entrepreneurship conditions appear to be similar to most European Union (EU) Member States. Business entry and exit rates are about equal to the median and about half of the population report having entrepreneurship skills. There were about 475 000 people who are working on a new start-up or managing a business over the period 2018-22. This accounts for more than 7% of the adult population (i.e. TEA rate), which is slightly above the EU average. Women and seniors (50-64 years old) are under-represented among early-stage entrepreneurs but both groups are slightly more likely to be active than the EU average. If everyone was as active in business creation as 30-49 year old men, there would be an additional 130 000 early-stage entrepreneurs. Virtually all of these “missing” entrepreneurs would be women.

Self-employment rates in Sweden are declining, similar to the overall trend across the EU. The self-employment rate among immigrants (-18%) and youth (20-29 years old) (-27%) declined to the greatest extent. The self-employed in Sweden were more likely than the EU average to have employees. Nearly 40% of the self-employed created jobs for others. The proportion was particularly high among self-employed immigrants (38%).

Recent policy developments

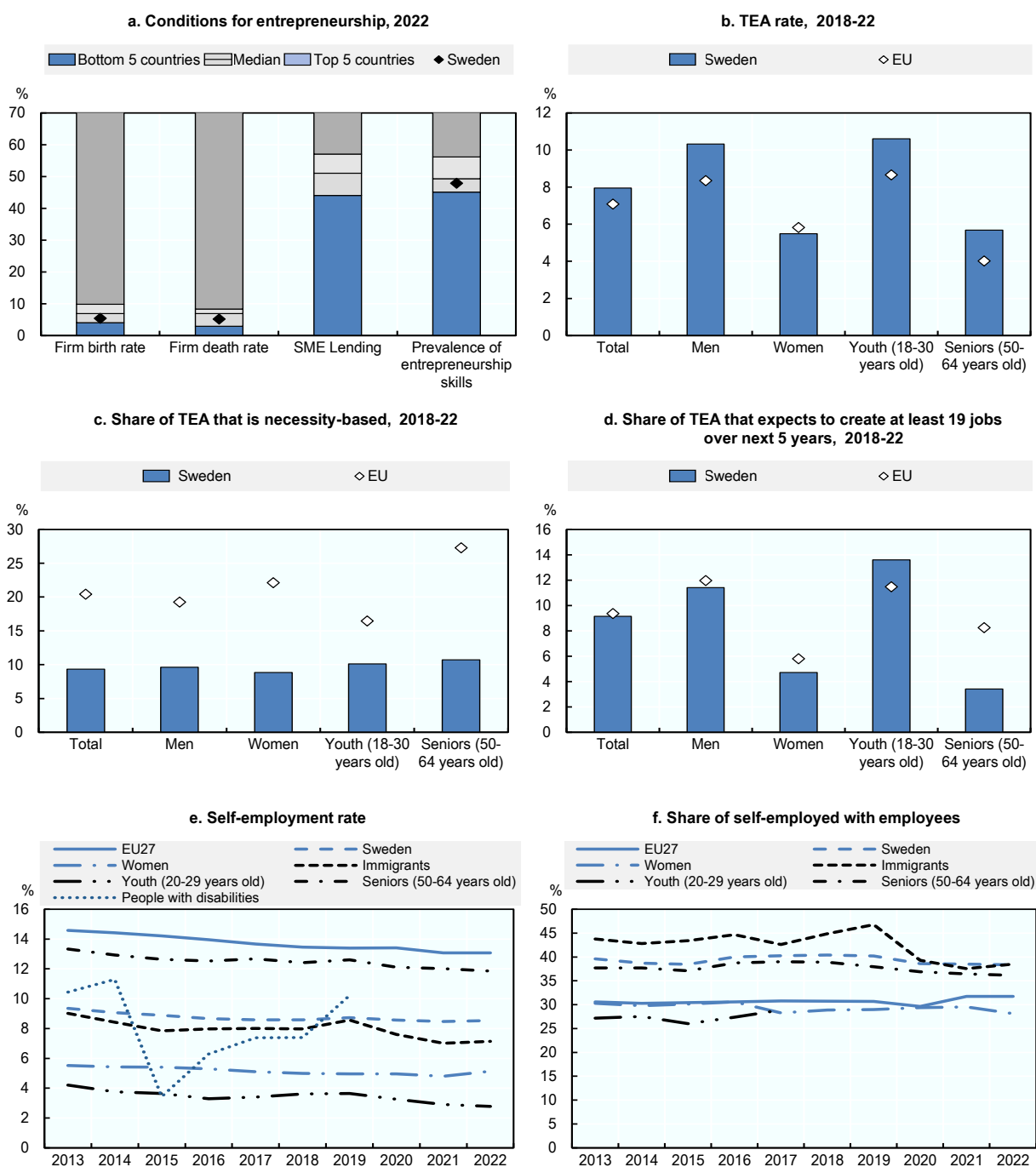
No major inclusive entrepreneurship policies or schemes have been implemented since 2020. In general, entrepreneurship policy has recently focused on promoting innovation and sustainability. However, a small number of new initiatives also contribute to boosting diversity in entrepreneurship. For example, *Tillväxtverket* launched an initiative to support municipalities in strengthening their local business environment, notably including start-up support for immigrants.

Hot policy issue

There has been an influx of Ukrainian refugees since 2022. Several entrepreneurship initiatives for Ukrainian refugees have been launched, including for example the ESF-funded CARE for DIGIPRENEURS project managed by Linnaeus University. It will support 40 entrepreneurs from the Ukraine to help them build trade and business relationships between Sweden and Ukraine. This training programme is offered in English. More generally, the private sector is also actively supporting these efforts and some large organisations such as business Sweden are opening offices in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Inclusive entrepreneurship indicators

Figure 37.1. Entrepreneurship and self-employment data for Sweden



Note: In Panel a, the data for the EU median for SME lending excludes the following countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, Malta and Romania. The EU median for the entrepreneurship skills indicator excludes: Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia and Malta. In Panels b-d, the data for the EU average refers to a population-weighted average and excludes Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia and Malta. Please see Chapter 10 for detailed notes on the figures.

Source: (Eurostat, 2023; GEM, 2023; OECD, 2023). Please see Chapter 10 for full citations.



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