

## The Swedish Socio-Economic Classification: Rationale and Fields of Application

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In social and demographic studies it is almost mandatory to use classifications by socio-economic characteristics to describe different population groups. Such characteristics can provide key linkages between different statistical systems for studies of various sub-groups. Indicators of this kind have proved to be of value in predicting behaviours, attitudes, motives etc., e.g. regarding socialization process, educational selection and achievement processes, and occupational role performances.

In Sweden several socio-economic classifications have been used. This paper has as its prime purpose to disseminate the achievements made by Statistics Sweden in developing a new classification scheme, the 1982 Swedish Socio-Economic Classification. Furthermore, the paper contains examples of application of this scheme to various statistical materials – hereby illustrating in some sense social “class” structures (regarding, for instance organizational activities, party preferences) in the Swedish society today.

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### 1. Background and Aims

In social and demographic studies it is – more or less mandatory – to use a classification by socio-economic characteristics to describe different population groups. A few examples of global statistical frameworks and systems using concepts as “social class”, “socio-economic characteristics” are the following United Nation references: Towards a system of social and demographic statistics; A system of statistics on education. Another example where the concept “socio-economic status” is used, is the OECD list of social indicators.<sup>1</sup>

Socio-economic characteristics can provide key linkages between different statistical systems for studies of various sub-groups. Indicators of this kind have proved to be of value in predicting behaviours, attitudes, motives etc, for instance regarding the socialization process, educational selection and achievement processes, and occupational role performances.

It is apparent that a concept with such an “explanatory power” is used in national as well as international policies in setting goals, assessing outcomes for various policy measures. A wide range of political goals have bearings on conditions between “social classes” in a society. Children with different social background should have equal opportunities to education. Persons from different social quarters should receive equal treatment by various authorities etc. To be able to evaluate to what degree such objectives are reached, it is of prime

importance to have instruments which offer possibilities to observe and describe “classes”, “socio-economic groups” and the like.

In Sweden several socio-economic classifications have been used. Let it suffice here to mention that the value of socio-economic groupings applied to our 1960 census (built on ISCO) was highly questioned. Consequently Statistics Sweden (SCB) was compelled to put considerable efforts from the mid-sixties through the seventies into the development of a new classification scheme. The work was terminated in 1982 (as a result of an assessment study in 1980) with the SSEC<sup>2</sup>-version described in detail in this article.

Since similar work is being done elsewhere in the world today an exchange of experiences in this field could be beneficial to all the parties concerned.

The prime purpose of this article is to disseminate results of our achievements in classificational endeavours as regards socio-economic group – *as well as the application of the SSEC to various statistical materials*<sup>3</sup>. Secondly, this summing-up is thought to benefit non-Swedish agencies and other users in highlighting conditions (e.g. income distribution) within socio-economic “classes” in Sweden. A third reason for putting together material for this paper is to have a convenient “hand-out” for foreign visitors, in consultations and so forth.

### 2. A Short Historical Review

#### 2.1 Socio-economic classifications up to the seventies

During the first half of this century several different classifications were in use in the production of official statistics in Sweden. In censuses a classification into social classes was used, whereas in statistics on general elections the population was divided into social groups. Especially the latter classification – and variants of it – was to be applied in several quarters (e.g. by researchers) in a variety of studies. (Because of the frequent usages of the classification in social groups – and variants of it – the scheme became known.)

The social class scheme used in *censuses* was based on a division of the economically active population (and families) into entrepreneurs (företagare), officials (förvaltningspersonal) and workers (arbetarpersonal).

The classification into *social groups*, on the other hand, was originally used in an analysis of the general election in 1911 and – while still in use in some quarters – divided the population into the upper class, now called social group I; the middle class, now termed social group II; and the labour class, now called social group III.

(Social group I consists of professional people, owners of large business firms, senior managerial and executive employees in private business, and senior civil servants. Social group II consists of lower-grade white-collar workers, independent artisans, owners of small business firms, shopkeepers, and fulltime farmers. Social group III consists of farm and forestry workers, manual workers, and small part-time farmers. Social group I also includes university students, housewives married to men with occupations in that social group and pensioners retired from such jobs. Housewives and pensioners in the other social groups are classified accordingly.)

During the fifties, however, Statistics Sweden almost entirely ceased to use the social groups scheme. In accordance with international recommendations, a socio-economic classification of the entire population was carried out in connection with the 1960, 1965 and 1970 Swedish Population and Housing Censuses. In this classification a distinction was made between self-employed and employees, and these categories were in turn broken down by occupational group according to the first digit in the ISCO. Since aggregates defined by a socio-economic classification of this kind become very heterogeneous, there was little demand for tabulations. In various special studies, partly based on Census data, ad-hoc socio-economic classification systems were instead constructed and used<sup>4</sup>, with deficient comparability as a consequence. (These classification systems usually combined occupational data (at the ISCO 3-digit level) with data on educational level, to arrive at more homogenous groups.)

## 2.2 The 1980 assessment study

This state of affairs caused big problems not only to those who were to assess and evaluate the extent to which the politically established goals were fulfilled but also to social scientists. So in order to meet various demands, particularly external ones, for a more articulated and systematically constructed socio-economic classification, a working group at Statistics Sweden drafted a classification system which was presented in 1974. This classification was used in e.g. the Surveys of Living Conditions, Income Distribution Surveys, and Party Preference Surveys. In the light of experience the classification system was assessed in 1980 by Statistics Sweden and by then slightly revised. On the whole, though, the Swedish Socio-Economic Classification of today agrees with the 1974 draft. An extensive list of occupations has been added, as the classification work is based mainly on occupational data.

It is an important feature of this development work that there did not and does not exist an established and generally accepted international standard classification in this field. However, many countries use some kind of socio-economic classification system. As in Sweden, the basic principle of these systems is usually to classify various occupations in different categories in accordance with specific criteria. In some instances (though not in the Swedish system), economically active persons are assigned points depending on their "value" on a set of variables.

In the section that follows a brief account will be given of the 1982 version of SSEC, which evolved as a result of the 1980 assessment study. Presently this version is implemented in various surveys subsequently described.

## 3. The 1982 Version of SSEC

### 3.1 Classification structure

In sociological stratification research three dimensions have, roughly speaking, been stressed according to which stratification in a society can be undertaken. The

first is the position in the production process, where the most important distinction concerns the ownership or non-ownership of the means of production and place in the organizational structure. The second consists of resources such as education and work experience which the individuals make use of in order to obtain satisfactory conditions. The third dimension is the prestige which occupation and assets offer. The SSEC has laid hold of the first and second dimensions or characteristics, i.e. position in the production process and individual resources, obtained by means of information on employment conditions and occupations. The prestige aspect is not explicitly taken into account but the fact that the other characteristics are correlated with this aspect will make the socio-economic groups/classes show differences as regards prestige. In order to bring about a classification where the classes are homogenous in respect of the above-mentioned dimensions or class characteristics, the classification was built gradually by combining a number of measurable characteristics mainly coupled to the concept of occupation.

The most extensive SSEC-version is divided into two parts: economically active population and economically non-active population. The economically non-active are sub-divided into a number of categories e.g. housewives, old age pensioners and so forth. The economically active are split between self-employed and employees. The employees in occupations in which the holders usually are affiliated to LO i.e. the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions (the "blue collar" confed.) are called manual workers. Employees in other occupations are called non-manual employees. Both manual workers and non-manual employees are subdivided with respect to the education *normally required* for the occupation. Furthermore, manual workers can be split between the sectors of production of goods and of production of services, while non-manual employees can be split between those with and those without subordinates. Finally, self-employed can be divided into farmers and other entrepreneurs and also with respect to the size of the enterprise.

In its complete form the classification consists of eighteen groups which can be aggregated gradually. In its aggregated form the classification consists of the following six groups:

- 1 (11–12) Unskilled and semiskilled workers
- 2 (21–22) Skilled workers
- 3 (33–36) Assistant non-manual employees
- 4 (44–46) Intermediate non-manual employees
- 5 (54–60) Employed and self-employed professionals, higher civil servants and executives
- 6 (76–87) Self-employed (other than professionals)

These six groups have been formed by merging the eighteen basic categories of the *economically active population*:

#### *Socio-economic groups Delineations*

11–22	MANUAL WORKERS	Occupations normally organised by LO (the "blue-collar" trade union confederation)
11	Unskilled employees in goods production	Occupations involving the production of goods and normally requiring less than

12	Unskilled employees in service production	two years of post-comprehensive school education Occupations involving in service production and normally requiring less than two years of post-comprehensive school education	86	Small-scale farmers	Farmers with at most 20 hectares of arable land and at most 100 hectares of forest land
21	Skilled employees in goods production	Occupations involving the production of goods and normally requiring two years or more of post-comprehensive school education	87	Medium-scale farmers	Farmers with 21–100 hectares of arable land or 101–400 hectares of forest land
22	Skilled employees in service production	Occupations involving service production and normally requiring two years or more of post-comprehensive school education			These eighteen groups form the socio-economic classification for the economically active population. The <i>non-active population</i> is broken down into six groups: students, who are sub-divided according to the level of their studies, and five other groups sub-divided according to previous occupation or husband's occupation. The groups are:
33–57	NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES	Occupations normally organised by trade unions not affiliated to LO	101–103	Students	The three sub-groups are (01) comprehensive school level, (02) upper secondary school level and (03) post-secondary school level
33	Assistant non-manual employees, lower level	Occupations normally requiring less than two years of post-comprehensive school education	201–287	Housewives (or male equivalents)	The last two digits indicate the husband's occupation according to the above defined groups
34	Assistant non-manual employees, higher level, without subordinates	Occupations normally requiring two, but not three, years of post-comprehensive school education	311–387	Old age pensioners	The last two digits indicate the previous occupation
35	Assistant non-manual employees, higher level, with subordinates	Occupations normally requiring two, but not three, years of post-comprehensive school education	411–487	Sickness and disability pensioners	The last two digits indicate the previous occupation
44	Intermediate non-manual employees, without subordinates	Occupations normally requiring three, but not six, years of post-comprehensive school education	511–587	Long-term unemployed	Persons out of work for six months or more. The last two digits indicate the previous occupation
45	Intermediate non-manual employees, with subordinates	Occupations normally requiring three, but not six, years of post-comprehensive school education	601–687	Military conscripts	The last two digits indicate the occupation (equivalent) before entering military service
54	Professionals and other higher non-manual employees, without subordinates	Occupations normally requiring at least six years of post-comprehensive school education			The main structure of the classifying procedure is displayed in a flow chart format in Fig. 1. More about this in the section that follows.
55	Professionals and other higher non-manual employees, with subordinates	Occupations normally requiring at least six years of post-comprehensive school education			In the 1980 population census the following version of SSEC was used for the population aged 16–64:
57	Upper-level executives	Upper-level executives in private enterprises or organisations with at least 100 employees or upper-level executives in public service			
60–87	SELF-EMPLOYED				
60	Self-employed professionals	Self-employed persons in occupations normally requiring at least six years of post-comprehensive school education	11	Unskilled workers in the production of goods	
76	Self-employed without employees	Self-employed without employees, not including farmers or professionals	12	Unskilled workers in the production of services	
77	Small-scale entrepreneurs	Self-employed with 1–9 employees, not including farmers or professionals	21	Skilled workers in the production of goods	
78	Large-scale entrepreneurs	Self-employed with 10 or more employees or large-scale farmers with more than 100 hectares of arable land and/or more than 400 hectares of forest land (and not including professionals)	22	Skilled workers in the production of services	

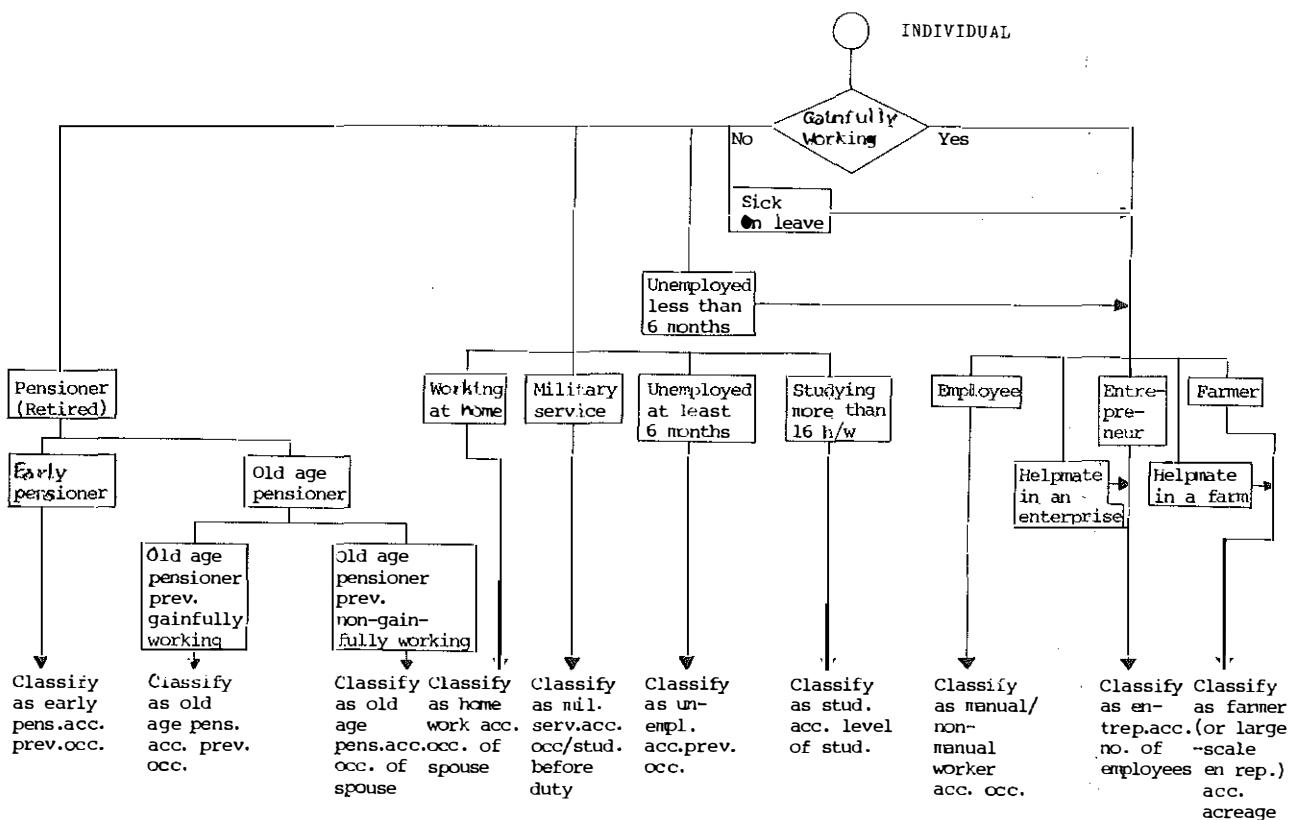


Fig. 1: Scheme for classifying individuals in socio-economic groups

### 3.2 Application

#### 3.2.1 Classification of individuals

The SSEC is primarily an instrument for classifying individuals but can also be used for classifying households by letting a member of the household represent it. Sometimes the need is felt of letting the household code determine the code of all the members. In the last case the classification still remains a classification of individuals but now applied according to the rules valid for the classification of the household. The general course to take for classifying individuals is shown in Fig. 1.

The basis for the classification consists of information on occupation and employment conditions. Classification based on information on occupation is effected by means of a list of occupations comprising some 3.000 coded denominations of occupations. The classification according to the complete form as regards the economically active population can be carried out with the help of additional information on self-employed versus employees, size of enterprise, and on the existence of subordinates. As regards the economically non-active population a question about relevant category for the individuals examined has to be included in the most extensive version.

Depending on the subject-matter to be elucidated there may be reasons to choose between different forms of SSEC-presentation. In the cases where the aim is to study e.g. the relationship between socio-economic group and individual income or educational level, it may be desirable to distinguish between gainfully working and non-gainfully working individuals.

In other cases e.g. when presenting political opinion surveys, it may be suitable not to separate non-gainfully working individuals but instead to group those working at home, old age pensioners, early pensioners and long-term unemployed individuals together with those gainfully working. The groups of non-gainfully working are then classified by means of information on husbands'/wives' occupation or own former occupation. In these cases instructions are issued on how to use the classification.

#### 3.2.2 Classification of households

The household is assigned the same socio-economic code as one of the adults in the household. As household is considered a single adult plus children, if any, or spouses/cohabiting plus children, if any, who share residence. Children living with the parents are included in the household of the parents. In Sweden the household of the residence and the family are practically identical. If there is only one adult in the household, this is assigned the same code as the adult. If there are several adults, the code of the household is determined by that occupation of the adults which has the highest position according to an order of dominance established for the socio-economic groups. This preferential order is shown in the following list.

##### Preferential order

57	Upper-level executives
60	Self-employed professionals with academic training
54-55 (= 56)	Professionals and other higher non-manual employees

87	Large-scale farmers
86	Small-scale farmers
78	Large-scale entrepreneurs
77	Small-scale entrepreneurs
76	Sole entrepreneurs
44-45 (= 46)	Intermediate non-manual employees
34-35 (= 36)	Assistant non-manual employees II
21	Skilled workers, producing goods
22	Skilled workers, producing services
33	Assistant non-manual employees I
11	Unskilled workers, producing goods
12	Unskilled workers, producing services
03	Students, post-secondary school level
02	Students, upper secondary school level
01	Students, comprehensive school level

## 4. The Application of SSEC in Various Surveys

### 4.1 Introductory remarks

The introduction of computer technology has drastically increased the possibilities of co-processing various registers. Particular interest has been focused on registers on individuals, in which each person is unambiguously identified by a number.

The Swedish civil registration system provides the most extensive *administrative* registers on individuals. Together, the county registers provide weekly up-dated population data on about 8.3 million people, i.e. data on births, deaths, migrations, immigrations, changes in marital status etc. These county registers are merged to provide a national register, which in turn provides the basis for several other registers on individuals. Changes in the national registers are also transferred weekly to some of the other registers, e.g. the SCB Register on the Total Population (RTB), which is further used for *statistical* purposes (solely – for current population statistics – or as a sample frame or through linkage routines, for instance with the Population and Housing Censuses).

Table 1 presents an outline of some statistic sources for Swedish welfare distribution policies. This outline, adopted from Wahlström (1986), shows how the various statistical sources can supplement each other. The Census and the Income and Wealth Statistics are both total surveys, while the others are sample surveys. The total surveys permit descriptions of small population groups, e.g. the population broken down by regions and municipalities. The sample surveys are more detailed and cover a wider field in their subject-matter contents.

In the section to follow next details will be given regarding the extent to which the SSEC is merged into these data sources, (with the exception of Statistics on Income and Wealth-survey). To broaden the picture we present similar details on two additional sources, i.e. Labour Force Surveys, and Party Preference Surveys. A few numerical examples are “fused” into the text, mainly to shed some light on socio-economic distributions for various subject-matters.

### 4.2 Detailed account of SSEC mergings

#### 4.2.1 Population and Housing Census

In the autumn of 1980 a Swedish census was performed.

The data on individual persons were reported by the public on questionnaire forms and housing data were collected from the 1981 Land Tax Assessment. Various supplementary data were also drawn from some administrative registers.

The questionnaire for personal data was to refer mainly to the situation during the week 8–14 September, 1980. It included data on

- gainful employment or other activity
- occupation
- name of employer and principal activity at the place of work
- address of the place of work
- size and composition of household

The data drawn from various administrative records, as specified in the Census Act, included

- locality classification of real estates
- coordinate number of real estates
- civil registration number, marital status, parish registration district, parish registration real estate, postal address, relationship to head of household, nationality and country of birth
- name and legal form of enterprise, number of establishments and their names, sector classification, address and economic activity classification.

After the completion of several processings individuals' occupation was automatically coded, i.e. the occupational data were entered in plain text and then matched against a computerized dictionary of occupations with associated codes.

The 1980 Population and Housing Census registers comprising SSEC classified information will be tapped extensively in the near future (e.g. on a contract basis). The table reproduced here as table 2 gives an overview of sex and age composition by certain main SSEC-categories<sup>6</sup>.

#### 4.2.2 Household Expenditure Survey

At the request of the Government the SCB has looked into the possibilities of making this kind of surveys more frequently than hitherto has been the case. The last one was conducted in 1978 and the last but one as far back as 1969.

In the 1978 Expenditure Survey a simplified variant of SSEC was applied. The next survey was carried out in 1985. In the presentation of results households in the sample have been reported at the highest level of SSEC aggregation<sup>7</sup>.

#### 4.2.3 Income Distribution Survey

This type of survey was developed in the 1970's as a result of the general political agreement on the need to improve statistics on living conditions. The objective was to survey – in conjunction with the Survey of Living Conditions developed in a parallel vein of thought – the consumption potential of the households as well as welfare aspects other than purely economic ones.

The gathering of data is done in two stages: directly from households through a mailed questionnaire, in

Statistics source	Subject-matter contents	Frequency	Unit	Census/ Sample	Panel approach
Population and Housing Census	Employment Housing (Income) (Education) (Commuting)	Every 5 years	Person Household	Total survey	Yes
Household Expenditure Survey	Detailed description of the consumption of goods and services Income	Intermittent	Household	A sample of 6 000 households	No
Income Distribution Survey	Income before and taxes and transfers. Most transfers are covered. The income concepts are adjusted to measure the disposable income (Wealth) Employment	Every year	Person Household	A sample of 27 000 persons 9 500 households	Yes
Statistics on Income and Wealth	Income, deductions according to assessments (computer registered by fiscal authorities) Wealth (net)	Every year	Person	Total survey	Yes
Survey of Living Conditions	Economic resources, material standard, education, employment conditions, distance to social service institutions, environment, social contacts, leisure activities, participation in political and trade union activities, health, exposure to violence and accident hazards	Every year	Person Household	A sample of 8 000 persons, 8 000 households	No (but panel appr. is considered)

Table 1: Outline of five statistical sources of importance for welfare distribution policies

Source: From S. Wahlström (1982) – but updated vis à sample sizes.

directly by using administrative registers in various government agencies/authorities. The questionnaire contains such items as the composition of the household, level of employment during the year, as well as queries on work-place and -tasks (these questions are basic in the classification of occupational, industrial, and socio-economic group). Information on various income sources – annual pay, earned income, factor income, disposable income – is collected by tapping registers.

(Within this contextual frame the SSEC is based on information on occupation, nature and degree of employment, collected through questionnaires as well as income-tax returns.)

In the Income Distribution Survey the most detailed level of SSEC appears in the stub of table 3, showing average disposable income (decils) per household and socio-economic group in 1981. – Results from the 1981 survey have been presented in three issues of the statistical reports series, Be<sup>8</sup>:

- 1 An overview of the survey (Be 1983: 4.1);
- 2 Income development for employees from 1973 to 1981 (Be 1983: 4.2).
- 3 Income distribution for households (Be 1983: 4.3)

#### 4.2.4 Survey of Living Conditions

As previously indicated this type of survey is continuously undertaken to provide information about the distribution and development of some central “welfare components” (“social concerns”). The statistics are intended to serve public debate and social reform work. The detailed surveys of many different aspects of living conditions provide unique possibilities for analysis of correlations and inter-relations between various kinds of welfare problems. All in all, the components are meant to give a picture of life in Sweden.

The components covered by this survey approach are listed in very broad terms in table 1. Statistics on these matters are based on regularly performed interviews and to some extent on administrative registers. In some years emphasis is put on the investigation of particular components while others are covered in lesser detail. (The following components, however, are surveyed in some measure every year: Health, employment, housing, education, economy, social relations, security, political resources.) Thus the main theme for the 1980–81 survey was the health component; in 1982–83 the environment was highlighted.

The results are published in “component” reports, mainly in the series Living Conditions, in which the survey variables of each component are given a standardized presentation against a number of basic background variables: Demographic, geographic, socio-economic. There are also reports that deal with correlations between various factors in the different components (e.g. education and employment), reports analyzing groups particularly exposed to problems (e.g. the conditions of low income earners, and living standard of students), and reports summarizing the findings of several surveyed fields (e.g. a social report on inequality, perspectives of welfare).

The coding of socio-economic status in Survey of Living Conditions is based on answers in interviews. Ac-

cordingly, the SSEC flow chart in Fig. 1 gives an adequate picture of the various decisions which have to be made in the coding process; this is usually done by the computer as a result of the programming of the SSEC variable (not in the coding itself).

How is the socio-economic classification used in the presentation of Survey of Living Conditions data? To answer this briefly we choose the publication Political resources 1978<sup>9</sup> which illustrates peoples’ socio-political activities and interest in political questions, in the wide sense of the term. The following fields are covered:

- Organizational activities
- Other activities to influence political decisions
- Mass media consumption
- Knowledge of civics, economic and consumer knowledge etc.
- Opinion about public services in some different fields
- Experiences of erroneous or unjust treatment
- Ability to make an appeal against a government decision

Table 4 on organizational activities is an excerpt displaying the most detailed format of SSEC published results<sup>10</sup>. (Please observe that an earlier version than the 1982 version of the classification is used.) Furthermore, from autumn 1984 onwards the Living Conditions results are reported in a slightly modified 1982 SSEC aggregation, implying that “home-workers” are classified according to occupation of the other spouse, and pensioners and long-term unemployed according to previous occupation.) In addition to this table socio-economic groups are presented in Political resources . . . with similar breakdowns in various tables within fields that are covered by the survey (cf. above).

(Also based on the Survey of Living Conditions extensive data on cultural activities 1982/83 in various socio-economic groups have been published in the volume Cultural Statistics 1980–1984<sup>11</sup>.)

At this point it may be appropriate to conclude this section by mentioning that the material in Survey of Living Conditions is very frequently processed on a contract basis by researchers, committees, institutions, organizations etc. Since most of the components are surveyed every year in more or less detail, the users have an abundant material for various kinds of analysis.

#### 4.2.5 Labour Force Surveys

The SSEC has not yet been applied to the Labour Force Surveys. However, from January 1st 1985, a revised version of the Nordic Occupational Standard Classification has been put to use (agrees with the 1958 version of ISCO). In conjunction with this event the introduction of SSEC-coding in Labour Force Surveys will be taken into consideration.

#### 4.2.6 Party Preference Survey

In November 1972 the SCB launched its first regular Party Preference Survey which since then has been carried out every May and November. In election years a survey has also been conducted in February<sup>12</sup>. The aims of the surveys are to estimate the results of a general election at the time of the survey, and the strength of the political parties in different sub-classes of the electorate. Grants to the SCB for conducting such surveys are allocated on the grounds that they constitute a base

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP	Age 16 – 24 years						25 – 44 years						45 – 64 years						TOTAL		
	BOTH SEXES			Number of individ.	BOTH SEXES			Number of individ.	BOTH SEXES			Number of individ.	BOTH SEXES			16 – 64	BOTH SEXES				
	M	F	%		M	F	%		M	F	%		M	F	%		M	F	%		
<b>MANUAL WORKERS</b>																					
Unskilled, in goods production	14.3	5.6	10.0	100360	11.1	4.4	7.8	183834	11.0	4.9	7.9	147736	11.7	4.7	8.3	431930					
Unskilled, in service production	11.6	20.7	16.0	161388	11.0	20.1	15.4	360970	9.2	23.4	16.4	306692	10.5	21.4	15.9	829050					
Skilled, in goods production	17.7	1.3	9.7	97678	19.9	1.1	10.8	251893	15.2	0.9	8.0	149066	17.8	1.1	9.5	498637					
Skilled, in service production	1.3	6.2	3.7	37395	1.4	4.5	2.9	68833	0.9	2.6	1.7	32668	1.2	4.1	2.7	138896					
<b>NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES</b>																					
Assistant, lower level (I)	2.3	8.0	5.1	51116	2.4	10.1	6.1	143569	3.2	8.5	5.9	110062	2.6	9.1	5.8	304747					
Assistant, lower level (II)	2.1	4.0	3.1	30870	6.5	9.1	7.8	182425	6.8	6.1	6.4	120578	5.8	7.0	6.4	333873					
Intermediate level	3.6	4.7	4.1	41515	17.2	14.3	15.8	370174	13.9	6.9	10.4	194244	13.4	9.8	11.6	605933					
Professionals/higher non-man. empl./upper level exec.	0.6	0.5	0.6	5949	10.3	4.8	7.6	179171	8.8	2.7	5.7	106756	7.9	3.2	5.6	291876					
<b>SELF-EMPLOYED</b>																					
Self-employed professionals	0.0	0.0	0.0	40	0.2	0.0	0.1	3300	0.3	0.0	0.2	2914	0.2	0.0	0.1	6254					
/Acad professions	1.0	0.4	0.7	7408	7.1	2.4	4.8	112817	7.3	2.7	5.0	93428	6.0	2.1	4.1	213653					
Entrepreneurs (excl farmers)	0.8	0.2	0.5	5217	2.1	1.2	1.7	39112	4.8	2.6	3.7	68484	2.8	1.5	2.2	112813					
<b>OTHERS</b>																					
Unclassifiable employees	0.5	0.3	0.4	4372	0.5	0.3	0.4	8501	0.5	0.3	0.4	7469	0.5	0.3	0.4	20342					
Pensioners	0.4	0.4	0.4	3993	1.2	1.3	1.2	28530	12.8	16.2	14.5	271924	5.1	6.6	5.8	304447					
Housewives etc.	0.1	3.5	1.7	17505	0.2	14.0	6.9	161910	0.2	15.3	7.8	146325	0.2	12.4	6.2	325740					
Students	31.3	33.6	32.4	326747	3.1	4.7	3.9	90646	0.2	0.5	0.3	6445	7.6	8.7	8.1	423838					
Part-time work	0.6	1.1	0.8	8557	0.3	2.4	1.4	31900	0.5	2.9	1.8	32827	0.5	2.4	1.4	73284					
Information missing	11.6	9.8	10.7	108243	5.4	5.3	5.3	125147	4.4	3.4	3.9	73106	6.3	5.5	5.9	306496					
SUM	100	100	100		100	100	100		100	100	100		100	100	100		100	100	100		
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS</b>	515508	492845	→	1008353	1201341	1141391	→	2342732	924615	946109	→	1870724	2641464	2580345	→	5221809					

Table 2: Total population (16–24 years) 1980, distributed by socio-economic classification, age and sex

Source: 1980 Population and Housing Census – manuscript table Y4.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP	Decil groups by disposable income (thousand SEK)												Average income (thousand SEK)	Number in sample
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	9,5-10			
<b>HOUSEHOLDS WITH AT LEAST ONE GAINFULLY WORKING</b>	28.9	43.0	49.7	58.3	72.5	87.1	100.0	113.4	130.1	177.4	204.5	86.1	8141	
<b><u>Households of manual workers and non-manual employees</u></b>	31.2	43.2	49.5	57.6	71.5	86.3	99.5	112.6	128.6	168.7	190.1	84.9	5363	
Households of manual workers	29.3	41.0	45.9	50.8	59.5	73.9	87.4	98.8	111.8	134.9	145.3	73.3	2193	
Unskilled	26.7	39.3	44.1	48.3	54.3	65.9	79.8	93.4	105.6	127.6	136.6	68.5	1387	
Skilled	35.6	44.8	50.2	58.8	75.0	87.6	97.4	108.4	120.9	144.7	155.8	82.3	806	
Households of non-manual employees	36.2	50.0	61.1	76.6	91.9	106.0	118.1	131.1	147.9	193.0	217.8	101.2	2991	
Households excl professionals														
etc	34.6	47.6	56.4	70.7	85.6	99.4	111.4	123.7	137.8	171.1	189.1	93.8	1971	
Assistant, lower level (I)	28.7	39.8	44.4	48.7	53.0	65.3	76.5	88.8	104.2	130.7	144.1	68.0	255	
Assistant, lower level (II)	34.3	48.5	58.5	73.8	86.4	97.5	109.5	119.5	130.7	165.6	182.8	92.4	550	
Intermediate level	39.5	53.2	66.1	84.8	99.9	111.4	122.8	134.1	145.7	180.6	201.6	103.8	1166	
Professionals and other higher non-man.employees	47.8	64.8	82.7	102.3	116.8	130.1	144.3	161.4	179.1	233.9	265.5	126.3	1020	
Unclassified households of manual workers and non-manual employees	23.6	36.8	42.3	47.7	51.8	57.1	62.0	74.8	101.6	145.0	164.8	64.3	179	
<b><u>Households of self-employed</u></b>	7.3	39.0	53.1	67.0	81.9	93.8	107.2	124.9	153.0	254.0	318.0	98.1	2778	
Farmers	8.3	32.2	41.5	49.7	60.8	76.6	93.0	113.9	146.6	264.7	323.1	88.7	1073	
Other entrepreneurs and self-employed professionals	7.8	47.2	63.1	77.9	89.7	99.2	112.3	129.3	155.4	248.2	310.7	103.0	1705	
<b>HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT ANY ONE GAINFULLY WORKING</b>	10.5	26.0	31.1	34.6	37.3	41.1	48.1	57.0	67.7	96.6	112.5	45.0	1484	
<b>ALL HOUSEHOLDS</b>	19.1	33.8	40.1	46.7	54.3	65.8	81.3	98.7	118.2	164.0	188.9	72.2	9625	

Table 3: Average income for all households in decil groups by disposable income per household and socio-economic group in 1981

Source: Income distribution for households (Statistical reports, series Be 1983:4.3 Table 25. Statistics Sweden)

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP	Has never attended any meeting with an association	Has attended a meeting during the last year	Has attended more than twelve meetings during the last year	Has spoken on some occasion at a meeting	Is a member of some association	Is a member of at least four different types of association	Participates actively in some association	Holds an office of trust in some association	Has contacted a responsible person in an association in order to influence the decision on some question	Number in population 16-74, thousands (appr.)
ADULT POPULATION	19.7	61.5	14.6	51.6	85.0	15.9	38.8	23.2	29.5	5 964.
MANUAL WORKERS										
Unskilled	23.2	58.4	10.3	41.8	88.6	12.7	33.3	16.5	19.6	545
Semiskilled	21.2	60.1	11.3	46.3	91.1	14.2	33.9	18.8	27.9	797
Skilled	16.4	64.0	11.6	55.6	92.8	14.7	42.3	24.0	35.1	654
All workers	20.2	60.9	11.1	48.1	91.0	14.0	36.5	19.9	28.0	1 996
NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES										
Assistant level	15.3	68.6	15.3	58.0	93.8	19.1	42.3	29.6	35.8	660
Intermediate level	7.1	81.5	23.5	75.6	96.7	30.0	56.3	41.4	48.1	578
Professionals and other higher...	8.3	82.1	28.2	79.4	93.8	36.9	59.6	43.7	60.4	391
All employees	10.7	76.4	21.3	69.3	94.8	27.2	51.4	37.2	45.8	1 629
SELF-EMPLOYED										
Farmers	14.4	67.7	16.9	56.5	86.4	24.2	49.6	37.4	25.6	132
Entrepreneurs	20.5	60.6	12.8	55.9	79.1	18.4	39.7	24.0	29.6	288
OTHERS										
Students	22.2	59.3	18.8	52.0	71.1	6.7	43.5	22.0	21.2	392
Working at home of which with a spouse in "manual workers"	31.8	47.5	10.1	33.9	68.9	5.2	25.3	10.3	8.1	418
" - " "non-manual employees"	36.2	45.6	7.4	28.7	67.1	3.7	21.1	9.3	6.4	161
" - "	24.3	53.9	13.9	45.2	73.9	6.9	33.0	15.8	10.8	115
Old age pensioners of which earlier manual workers	24.2	49.9	12.4	37.7	73.5	9.5	28.1	12.9	19.1	829
" - " non-manual employees	26.1	47.3	10.8	31.3	70.6	7.8	22.3	7.5	15.7	428
" - " farmers	16.3	54.0	16.3	57.9	83.2	13.6	41.1	24.3	32.3	189
" - " entrepreneurs	16.9	56.0	11.0	25.8	77.5	7.8	28.9	10.0	14.4	91
" - "	30.6	50.8	20.6	49.2	68.3	15.9	34.9	20.6	13.3	63
Early pensioners and long-term unemployed	36.9	34.1	7.2	31.4	67.6	5.2	15.8	6.8	19.7	223
Unclassifiable and non-response	31.5	52.6	18.6	38.9	70.9	6.8	37.0	16.4	19.6	58

Table 4: Organizational activities 1978. Percentages in each group

Source: Political resources 1978. (Living Conditions Report no 31, Table 2.1. Statistics Sweden.)

- Figures in last column are from table 2.2 in the aforementioned publication.

Socio-economic group	Centre party	Liberal party	Conservative party	Socialdemocrats	Communist party	Other parties	SUM
<b>MÄNUAL WORKERS</b>							
Unskilled, in goods prod.	12.0	2.0	7.3	72.5	3.7	2.4	100
Unskilled, in service prod.	11.7	4.8	11.9	65.0	2.6	3.9	100
Skilled, in goods prod.	7.2	1.4	9.5	75.4	3.4	3.1	100
Skilled, in goods prod.	5.7	5.7	15.8	61.7	5.7	5.3	100
All workers	10.2	3.3	10.4	69.4	3.3	3.4	100
<b>NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES</b>							
Assistant, lower level (I)	8.9	8.1	27.3	51.7	1.2	2.9	100
Assistant, lower level (II)	8.3	8.1	33.3	45.8	1.7	2.8	100
Intermediate level	12.2	10.5	36.3	32.3	4.4	4.3	100
Professionals and higher non-manual employees etc	9.6	13.5	45.5	18.1	6.5	6.8	100
All employees	10.2	10.2	35.8	35.9	3.7	4.2	100
<b>SELF-EMPLOYED</b>							
Self-employed professionals	18.3	7.0	41.7	27.0	1.7	4.3	100
Small-scale entrepreneurs	13.7	8.3	54.2	18.5	1.2	4.2	100
Large-Scale entrepreneurs (incl large-scale farmers)	34.0	6.0	48.0	12.0	0.0	0.0	100
All self-empl. prof and entrepreneurs	18.4	7.5	47.1	21.8	1.5	3.6	100
Small-scale farmers	66.5	0.0	14.2	16.1	0.0	3.2	100
Medium-scale farmers	69.1	1.5	22.1	3.7	0.7	2.9	100
All farmers (excl. large-scale farmers)	67.8	1.3	17.4	10.2	0.3	3.0	100
<b>OTHERS</b>							
Students	7.9	7.5	35.8	36.6	7.5	4.5	100
Others (house-wives, pensioners etc. (incl. non-response)	13.9	10.9	24.2	46.1	1.2	3.6	100
<b>TOTAL</b>							
<b>VOTING UNIVERSE a)</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>48.8</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5: The voting universe in May 1984 distributed by party preferences and socio-economic group. Percentages  
Source: Partisyrupatiundersökningen Maj 1984 (Party Preference Survey May 1985). Pressmeddelande 1984:225 (Pressrelease 1984:225) table 11. (Statistics Sweden)

– The source contains also interval figures to the point estimates above, however these supplementary measures have been omitted here for the sake of brevity.

a) That is, the whole electorate.

for decision-making among political parties and mass-media. The surveys can also furnish valuable information for political science research. Moreover, these surveys provide an alternative to the polls regularly published by private institutes<sup>13</sup>.

The large sample size (9,000 persons) makes it possible to estimate party preference distributions in several sub-classes.

The standard format in the publication of results on party preferences of the electorate according to socio-economic group is shown in Table 5.

#### Notes:

- 1 The categories are consistent with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) and UN Recommendations for the 1980 Censuses of Population and Housing in the EEC region.
- 2 Acronym (in Engl.) for the Swedish Socio-Economic Classification.
- 3 Hereby illustrating in some sense social "class" structures in the Swedish society.
- 4 As examples may be mentioned (a) Statistics on social background for students at universities and specialized colleges 1962/63–1972/73 (1972), and (b) An ongoing investigation of social background for students in higher education

1960–1982, where registers from the 1960 and 1970 censuses and the current higher education register will be used (1981).

5 Questions on occupation in the census were put only to those who were economically active.

6 Data on occupation and socio-economic status in the 1985 Population and Housing Census will appear in print as Part 7 in the Census series during 3rd quarter 1988.

7 E.g., a table on expenditures by socio-economic group, and one on expenditures by type of household and socio-economic group, in The Family Expenditure Survey 1985 (Statistics Sweden, Stockholm 1987).

8 Stands for Population and elections (Sw. *Befolknings och val*). — Results from the 1983 survey are now at hand but the initial writing of this article has been left unmodified.

9 Living Conditions Report no. 31 (Stockholm 1982). — This "component" was one of the main social concerns in the 1978 Survey of Living Conditions. Preliminary results from the 1984 Survey have appeared in print as Political Resources 1984 (Statistical reports, series Be 40 SM 8601. Statistics Sweden).

10 It has to be pointed out that the classifying (and coding) process as a rule is done in a complete way (implying that each individual "receives" a 2- or 3-digit code/cf section 3) even if the presentation of SSEC categories is summarized in some surveys/publications.

11 Statistics Sweden, Stockholm 1987. — For complementary data, cf. the publication Leisure. Living Conditions Report no. 56. Stockholm 1987.

12 For lack of grants the most recent survey was conducted in May 1981. However, grants are now provided for new series of surveys which have started with the May 1984, November 1984 and May 1985 surveys. — The November 1987 survey is the latest from which results have been published to date (Pressrelease 1987: 325.)

13 In Sweden the civil service, to which SCB belongs, is looked upon as unbiased and neutral of the political party or parties, whether in power or not. Accordingly, the results are available to all interested, regardless of economic means.

## References

- (1) Lennersand, B.M.: *Investigation of Social Background for Students in Higher Education by Use of Register Information*. Paper Meeting Sociol. Assoc., Research Committee on Social Stratification. Amsterdam, 1983. (Örebro).
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- (4) United Nations (UN): *Towards a System of Social and Demographic Statistics*. (ST/ESA/STAT/SER F, New York 1975).
- (5) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco): *A System of Statistics in Education (SSE)*. (Unesco/CES/AC. 23/20, Paris 1976).
- (6) Wahlström, S.: *The Economic Crisis and the Welfare Distribution Statistics*. *The Statistical Review* (1982) 3: 235–238. (National Central Bureau of Statistics, Stockholm).

- 1) References to sources for tables 2–5 in this article appears on these and are, accordingly, omitted above.

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