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Welcome to  
your new job!

RIGHTS, OPPORTUNITIES AND OBLIGATIONS  
FOR THOSE WHO ARE NEW  
TO THE SWEDISH LABOUR MARKET

Annika Creutzer



# WELCOME TO YOUR NEW JOB!

Rights, possibilities opportunities and duties for those  
who are new to the Swedish labour market

*By Annika Creutzer*



# Foreword

A new job is much more than just a salary. It means having co-workers and the possibility of being part of a community. It is a way forward. After a first employment it becomes easier to go on to other jobs or to continue your education.

The insurances that come with an employment also gives you security. This security increases if your workplace has a collective agreement. Collective agreements also provide security in the form of pension benefits. In this book, you can learn more about collective agreements.

If you are new to the Swedish labour market, there is a lot you need to know. The purpose of this book is to make it easier for you to understand how salary, insurance and pension go together. If you have knowledge of pensions you are also able to make wise decisions regarding it.

Maybe you are one of the thousands of people who have come to Sweden as a refugee, and who is now starting your first job. Or maybe you are young and therefore new to the labour market. Everyone has a place and everyone has the same rights, opportunities and obligations.

It is important for all of us that you and everyone else gets a job. Having many people working is good for the whole of society and it contributes to the country's economy. It makes Sweden a rich country in more ways than one.

## TO

help you see what applies at different stages in your life, the most important information is written on a pink background.

## MANY OF

the new jobs that will become available are in the education sector and the health and social care sector. This means that they are regulated by the collective agreement for municipalities, county councils and regions. There is specific information written on a green background that clarifies what applies if you get a job in one of these sectors.



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# I.

## You have got a job

### *Employment contract*

When you get a job you receive an employment contract. Your employment contract that you sign together with your employer must state:

- The name of the employer
- The address of the workplace and the corporate identity number
- The number of hours you work per day or week
- Your salary
- Your compensation for working overtime or inconvenient working hours
- Your tasks
- Possible deductions for food and housing
- Term of notice
- Type of employment
- Your starting date and your final date (if you are employed for a specific period of time)
- The terms for holiday leave and how many days off you may use

The type of employment is important information. This shows how you are employed. One type of employment is **employment for an indefinite period**. This is also called having a permanent employment. When you have this type of employment, there are certain rules for termination and for handing in your notice. The law that applies to all workplaces is called the Employment Protection Act (LAS). There can also be collective agreements in place that regulate the terms. You can read more about collective agreements later in this section.

## ALWAYS

make sure to sign an employment contract!  
Without a contract, you can be cheated out of  
both the job and your salary.



Another type of employment is called fixed-term employment. There are a number of different fixed-term employments:

- **General fixed-term employment (AVA).** You are informed of when your employment starts and ends. If you come into work to fill hours when needed, you are employed by the hour. You can also be employed for specific days of the week. Always save your salary specifications (the paper stating your salary given to you by your employer every month) to receive sickness benefits if you become ill, you may need to show how many hours you have worked to the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (Försäkringskassan).
- **Temporary employment.** You are informed of when your temporary employment starts, who you are filling in for and when the temporary employment ends. Temporary employment can sometimes be extended if the person you are filling in for is absent for a longer period of time than expected.
- **Seasonal employment.** You are informed of when your employment starts and ends, and you are employed for a specific period of time and for a specific reason. The employment is terminated when the season is over. The work is often tied to the time of the year in some way, for example working as an outdoor swimming pool attendant or doing snow clearance work.
- **Probationary employment.** A probationary employment can last for a maximum of six months. The work you do shall be the same as what you will continue to do if you are given a permanent position afterwards. You can be terminated from your job during the probationary period, and there are rules for how this may be done. If the employment is not terminated it automatically turns into a permanent employment.
- **If you are aged 67 or over.** The employer may give you a special contract that does not need to follow the regulations for permanent employment.

## Working hours

The employment contract shall state your working hours. A full-time employment usually means that you work 35 to 40 hours per week. A part-time employment can be defined as a percentage of a full-time employment, for example as 80 per cent or 50 per cent. It can also be defined as a certain number of hours or days per week or per month.

The law regulates how many hours you can work every twenty-four hours, every week and every year. There are also regulations for taking breaks and resting. For example, you must always have time to eat and you have the right to a certain number of hours for sleep and rest before you start a new work shift.

## *You get a salary!*

### **The salary**

The employment contract shall state your salary. There are different forms of salaries. They can be:

- A fixed monthly salary
- An hourly wage
- A salary with a variable part that is a piece rate, commission or bonus.

You may also be entitled to extra compensation for working weekends and nights. The payment for working such inconvenient hours is called "ob-ersättning".

**Unlike many other other countries, Sweden has no law that regulates minium wage.** But most workplaces have collective agreements. Such an agreement means that a minimum salary has been set for different positions, tasks and ages. This is known as having a **contractual salary**. But there is nothing that prevents the employer from giving you a higher salary.

**Workplaces with no collective agreement in place has no minimum level for salaries. The employer can set the salary level as low as they like.** You can read more about collective agreements later in this section.

Salaries are usually paid around the 25th of every month. The salary is paid to the bank account that you have reported to your employer.

The salary deposited into you bank account is your salary after taxes. In other words, the employer first deducts the income tax that you have to pay. This is called **tax at source**. The employer finds the amount of tax that needs to be deducted in the tax tables provided by the Swedish Tax Agency. More information at [skatteverket.se](http://skatteverket.se).

**The employer** also has to pay a tax on salaries, a payroll tax. The payroll tax is money set aside for your pension, if you become sick, become a parent or suffer a work-related injury. Another part is tax going to the central government. If you were born before 1952, the payroll tax is lower (since 2018). It is therefore cheaper for the employer to hire someone older.



## *Collective agreements*

Most workplaces in Sweden have collective agreements. They are agreements between employers and employees about salaries and terms of employment. The terms apply to all employees – the collective. It is the employers' organisations and the employee trade unions who sign the collective agreements.

There are trade unions for most occupations. Depending on the job you have, the tasks you do and your education, different trade unions may be suitable for you. There are federations of trade unions that are also called trade unions or simply unions.

### **EVERYONE**

who works in the public sector have collective agreements. There is one agreement for all municipal and county council employees and one for government employees.

### **THE MAJORITY**

of those working in the private sector have collective agreements. The private sector offers a number of collective agreements, but two of these are the largest. One is for those who are usually called salaried employees and the other is for those usually called manual workers. If you work in the private sector, you may ask the trade union, the payroll department or your employer about which collective agreement that applies to you.



Only those who are members of a trade union have the possibility of affecting which issues the union shall pursue during new negotiations. For example, negotiating for higher salaries or longer holiday leave. If you are a member of a trade union, you pay a union fee that includes several other benefits such as cheaper insurances and the possibility of attending courses.

The central collective agreement applies throughout the country. It is the basis for the local collective agreement. In the local collective agreement, there may be additional benefits such as free work clothes or regulations for how a work schedule shall be drawn up.

A collective agreement gives you more than what is required by law when it comes to your pension or if you become sick for example. Workplaces with no collective agreement may lack certain insurances.

The collective agreement at your workplace has regulations for:

- Type of employment
- Salaries and other
- Working hours
- Time off in addition to the statutory holiday leave
- Termination of employment
- Occupational pension

It also contains insurances if you:

- Become sick
- Suffer an accident or an injury
- Become unemployed

The insurances included in the collective agreement are called collectively agreed insurances. Your employer pays money into your occupational pension and various insurances. You can read more about this in section 3.

## THE PARTIES

who negotiate the collective agreement are the municipalities, the county councils and regions. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL), is the employer who concludes the agreements with the central trade unions for roughly 1.1 million employees in municipalities, county councils and regions. SKL is the largest employers' organisation in Sweden. For the municipal companies and municipal associations that are members of the employers' organisation Pacta, Pacta signs the equivalent collective agreement.

The Swedish Municipal Workers' Union (Kommunal) is the largest trade union in Sweden with its 500 000 members. Other large trade unions are the Swedish Association of Health Professionals (Vårdförbundet) and Vision. There is also the Academic Alliance (Akademikeralliansen), which represents 17 different academic unions within the Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations (Saco).



## IF THERE IS

no collective agreement in your workplace, it is important that you find out what you get instead. Are you insured? What happens when you become sick? Does the company pay money into a pension saving scheme for you? Companies trying to keep their costs as low as possible may not bother about these things. In that case, you are the one who pays if you suffer an injury or become sick, and in the future you may also receive a lower pension.



## *Termination of employment*

If you have a permanent employment, your employer cannot terminate your employment without valid reason. The Employment Protection Act, **LAS**, regulates when you might lose your job and how your employer has to go about it. LAS applies to all employees up to the age of 67. Your employment can be terminated due to **labour shortages**. These could be due to the company struggling or not having enough work for everyone, or there is a reorganisation or restructuring of the company that leads to your job not being available anymore.

Your employment can also be terminated due to **personal reasons**. Possible reasons might be if you misbehave, if you are often late for work or if you do not perform your given tasks. But you have to receive warnings beforehand, and usually the possibility of transferring you to another position shall be looked into before terminating your contract.

If the employer has to lay off employees due to labour shortages, then it has to be in a certain order of priority. Simply put, the principle of “last in, first out” applies. The person who has been employed for the shortest amount of time is therefore the first one who has to leave. But there can be exceptions from this principle if there are employees who have competencies and knowledge that the company needs.

LAS regulates your term of notice. Your term of notice refers to the period where you are still working and receiving a salary even if you have been given notice of termination. The term of notice is at least one month. If there is a collective agreement in place then the term of notice may be longer. Your age may also affect the notice period.

You can also terminate your own employment if you would like to change jobs or move to another town. There are rules on how many months in advance you have to give notice if you would like your employment to end on a specific date. Usually you have to work during your term of notice.

## *If you become unemployed*

Once you have a job it is good to consider what might happen to your financial situation if you become unemployed. One way of protecting yourself is to become a member of an unemployment benefit fund.

If you are a member of an unemployment benefit fund, you can receive benefits while you are looking for a new job. The unemployment benefits are based on your previous income. You receive 80 per cent of your income, with a maximum amount of SEK 910 kr per day during the first 100 days. After that, you receive 70 per cent of your income, with the maximum amount then being SEK 760 per day.

There are close to 30 different unemployment benefit funds for different lines of business and educations. If you are unsure of which unemployment benefit fund is suitable for you, you can contact a trade union, visit a-kassa.net or Arbetsförmedlingen's website [arbetsformedlingen.se/a-kassa](http://arbetsformedlingen.se/a-kassa), where you will find information in twelve different languages apart from Swedish.

If you are a member of a trade union, it is likely that you are also a member of an unemployment benefit fund. The trade unions and the unemployment benefit funds co-operate. But you do not have to be a member of a trade union to be a member of an unemployment benefit fund. When you are a member of an unemployment benefit fund, you pay a fee which usually amounts to a little over SEK 100 per month.

To receive financial benefits if you become unemployed, you will have to register with Arbetsförmedlingen and be able to take a job. It is your unemployment benefit fund that pays out your benefit.

If you are not a member of an unemployment benefit fund, you can receive a basic benefit. You must then be 20 years old, and the maximum amount per day is SEK 365. Unemployment benefits and basic benefits are paid out for a maximum of 300 days. If you have children who are under the age of 18, you receive more days.



## Leave

### Holiday leave

Everyone who works are entitled to holiday leave. However, you are not entitled to take your holiday leave whenever you like. You must **apply for holiday leave** with your employer. The employer can say no, in other words deny your request, if it does not fit with the work load or the other employees' holiday periods. If the employer says yes, it means that your holiday leave is granted.

Under **the Annual Leave Act**, you are entitled to a continuous holiday leave of four weeks (main holiday) between June and August. But there may be exceptions stated in your employment contract. For example, if you have a job where most of the work is carried out during summer.

Your holiday is usually made up of a number of days off. During your leave you receive **holiday pay**. But if you have a job that lasts for less than three months, you will instead receive your days off as payment in the form of **holiday compensation**.

In other words, you do not get a salary when on holiday leave, but you do get holiday pay, which is more or less equal to your salary. It is usually called paid holiday.

Under the Annual Leave Act, every employee is entitled to 25 days of holiday. At a workplace with a collective agreement in place you may be entitled to more than 25 days of holiday.

#### THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT FOR

municipal and county council employees offers more than 25 days of holiday for older employees.

Age	–39 years	40–49 years	50– years
Days of holiday	25	31	32



### Part-time

Part-time means not working full-time. It could be because your job is not a full-time job. It could also be because you have reduced your working hours from a full-time job. Working part-time for a long time does not only affect your salary. It could also make it more difficult to receive new tasks in the workplace or further training, which in turn could lead to missed opportunities for interesting assignments and better salary.

Considerably more women than men work part-time in Sweden. The reasons are many. Women working part-time to such an extent is also one of the major reasons that women have lower incomes and pensions than men.

If you want work more or fewer hours, you have to speak to your employer. Sometimes you have to fill out a form to apply. Apply in good time! If you change your working hours it could, for example, affect other employees' schedules and tasks. If you were employed for a full-time job or had more hours before you went on to part-time, you are entitled to go back to your previous number of hours.

### **Shorter working hours for parents**

You are entitled to parental leave if you become a parent. You can read more about this in section 4.

Under the Parental Leave Act, you are also entitled to reducing your working hours by one-fourth until the child has turned eight. In some collective agreements the age limit is higher, usually set at age twelve. If you work eight hours per day, you are therefore entitled to work six hours instead. The salary is then reduced accordingly. You are entitled to go back to the number of hours you worked previously at any time.

### **Study**

You are entitled to a leave of absence from work, without losing your job, if you want to study. It is called study leave. You will not receive a salary during your leave.

You must apply for leave with your employer in good time before your studies begin. You need to have worked for a certain period of time to be entitled to go on study leave.

### **Other reasons**

If you need to go on a leave of absence you need to ask your employer. It is the employer who denies or grants your request. Usually a sum is deducted from your salary during your leave.



## 2. If you are insured



### *If you become sick*

If you are ill and unable to work, you can receive sickness benefit instead of a salary. It is not enough to simply be sick or have an injury, you must also have an **incapacity for work**, that is to not be able to work. In everyday language it is usually called being **on sick leave**. Incapacity for work also depends on the line of work you are in. You can still drive a truck even if you have a cold, but if you work in the health care sector you cannot be at work and you will have to report sick.

Your incapacity to work does not have to be total. You can receive partial benefit for one-fourth, half or three-quarters incapacity for work. At half incapacity you work half of your usual hours and receive sickness benefit for the other half.

If you are absent from work for more than a week due to being reported sick, you will have to provide your employer with a **doctor's certificate**. The certificate is issued by the doctor who has examined you. The employer is also entitled to request a certificate earlier on if you have been absent a lot during a short period of time.

When you are ill and are reported sick, you receive sickness benefit. Included in the sickness benefit is both the benefit you receive from Försäkringskassan and the sick pay you receive from your employer. You may also receive sick pay covered by a collective agreement from your employer, which can greatly affect your financial situation if you become sick.



## VISIT

ersattningskollen.se and use Ersättningskollen to help you check your monthly income if you should become sick.



If you are reported sick for over a year, you may receive benefits from Försäkringskassan, and if you have a collective agreement you will receive additional benefit. The payroll department or Försäkringskassan can provide you with more information.

If you are unable to work for a longer period of time, maybe for the rest of your life, you can receive **sickness and activity compensation** from Försäkringskassan. Sickness and activity compensation is based on your previous income.

If you are under the age of 30 you receive activity compensation, and if you are over the age of 30 but under the age of 65 you receive sickness compensation. Both compensations are given as  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$  or full compensation, depending on the extent of your incapacity for work. If you have a collective agreement, you receive money in addition to the money you receive from Försäkringskassan. Speak to your trade union or your payroll department if you would like to know more.

## Help to get back to work

If you have **become sick or suffered a work-related injury**, your employer must by law help you get back to work. Work-related injuries are accidents at work, accidents traveling to and from work or as part of work, and sickness or infection suffered when at work.

The employer receives support from Försäkringskassan, which in turn puts together the different ways you can get help.

If you are in rehabilitation to get back to work it is called being in vocational rehabilitation. You may then receive rehabilitation allowance from Försäkringskassan. The amount is equal to the sickness benefit.

## IT IS

important to get help as soon as possible if you need rehabilitation. The longer you are on sick leave, the more difficult it will be to get back to work. This can range between anything from feeling left out of the community in the workplace to not receiving the running in-company training necessary for your line of work.

## Note

## IF YOU HAVE

a **collective agreement** you may receive help in many different ways if you suffer an injury at work. Visit [ersattningskollen.se](http://ersattningskollen.se) to check how much you can receive according to your collective agreement.

## Note

## EVERY

municipal and county council employee has an insurance for work-related injuries that provides extra benefits. The work injury insurance is called TFA-KL. If you suffer a work-related injury, you shall report this to AFA Insurance. The easiest way to do this is via [afa.se](http://afa.se) using electronic identification. The payroll department can help you.

In some union fees, an insurance that provides additional benefits if you are unable to work is included. Check with your central trade union or at your workplace.





### 3.

## You earn pension by working

We pay towards our pensions during our entire working life. Every person pays towards their own pensions.

#### BY WORKING,

money goes to your pension in two ways – to your retirement pension and your occupational pension.

Your pensions are often compared to a pyramid.

- The base of the pyramid is made up of your statutory retirement pension which is paid out by the Swedish Pensions Agency.
- The middle is made up of your occupational pension which is provided through your job and is paid out by an insurance company. The occupational pension is in most cases regulated by collective agreement.
- The top of the pyramid is made up of your individual pension savings.



The pension pyramid

- Individual pension savings
- Occupational pension, sometimes called agreement pension
- Retirement pension, which is income pension
- Retirement pension, which is premium pension

## Occupational pension

Your retirement pension is administered and paid out by the Swedish Pensions Agency. Your retirement pension consists of three parts – **income pension, premium pension and guarantee pension**. When you work and have an income, you start earning towards your income pension and premium pension. The same applies if you receive sickness benefit, parental benefit or unemployment benefit. Guarantee pension is a supplement pension for those who have had little or no earned income, and most of those who receive guarantee pension have also earned some income pension and premium pension.

There are certain terms for receiving guarantee pension, and if it should become very low there is additional security in the form of **income support**.

### IF YOU

would like to know more about guarantee pension – visit the Swedish Pensions Agency's website at [pensionsmyndigheten.se](http://pensionsmyndigheten.se). You can also contact their customer service on 0771-776 776. There are separate phone numbers you can call during certain hours for assistance in other languages than Swedish. To receive help and information you can also visit the Swedish Pensions Agency's service offices, which they run with Försäkringskassan and the Swedish Tax Agency.



### Income pension

Every year you work, 16 per cent of your pensionable income is set aside for your income pension. Your pensionable income is 93 per cent of your salary before tax. If you earn SEK 20 000 per month before tax, roughly SEK 3 000 goes towards your income pension, which amounts to SEK 36 000 per year.

### Premium pension

Money for your premium pension is set aside in the same way as your income pension. Every year you work, 2.5 per cent of your pensionable income is set aside for your premium pension. If you earn SEK 20 000 per month before tax, roughly SEK 500 go towards your premium pension, which amounts to SEK 6 000 per year.

The money is invested in mutual funds at the Swedish Pensions Agency. You may choose to invest in up to five different funds and you may change them at any time without cost at [pensionsmyndigheten.se](http://pensionsmyndigheten.se).

But you do not have to select a fund. AP7 SÅfan is a fund portfolio for those who do not want to or simply have not selected any funds. A lot of people also invest in AP7 SÅfan because it has given high returns so far.

Contact the Swedish Pensions Agency for more information about the different funds. If you want to learn more about saving in mutual funds, you may also visit [fondkollen.se](http://fondkollen.se).

For both the income pension and the premium pension, you can only receive pension on income up to SEK 42 031 per month (SEK 50 4375 per year/2018). You do not receive a higher income pension or premium pension if you earn more than this amount.

## Guarantee pension

Your retirement pension provides basic social security in the form of guarantee pension. As its name suggest, it is a guarantee for receiving a minimum retirement pension. If you have not worked much, worked part-time or not worked at all, you may be entitled to guarantee pension. Many of those who receive guarantee pension receives it as a supplement to their income pension and the premium pension. This applies if your combined income pension and premium pension are lower than approximately SEK 10 000 per month.

But there are conditions for receiving guarantee pension. In order to receive **full guarantee pension**, you must have lived in Sweden for at least 40 years between the age of 16 and 65. In order to receive **some guarantee pension**, you must have lived at least three years in Sweden before you turn 65. If you have previously lived in any other country in the EU or in Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein or Switzerland, you may include that time to fulfil the three-year condition. The Swedish Pensions Agency can help you work out if you are entitled to guarantee pension.

If you have been granted a residence permit in Sweden as either a **refugee or person in need of protection**, you may include the time spent in your native country. But you must have resided in Sweden the year before your turned 65. You may also include the time spent in Sweden since you applied for a residence permit. If you have **immigrated as a relative**, you cannot include the years spent in your native country. If you receive a pension from another country, your guarantee pension in Sweden may be lowered.

## Other forms of support for pensioners

In addition to your pension, you may be entitled to **housing supplement** when you have turned 65. If you have a very low pension, you may also be entitled to a **special housing supplement**. If you do not reach a "reasonable standard of living" despite the housing supplement, you may receive **income support for the elderly**.

## Which forms of support and benefits contribute to your pension?

If you are new to the Swedish labour market, you may have received different forms of support and benefits. Some benefits pay towards your pension, while others do not. In some cases, you earn hours, which in turn entitle you to guarantee pension.

A simple rule of thumb is that if you pay tax on the support and benefits you receive, money goes towards your income pension and premium pension.

### WHAT IS

pensionable in Sweden?

Asylum seeker .....	Not entitled to Swedish pension
Granted residence permit.....	Entitled to guarantee pension
Labour market assistance.....	Not pensionable
Development allowance .....	Not pensionable
Activity grant .....	Pensionable
Income support .....	Not pensionable
Child allowance .....	Not pensionable
Housing allowance .....	Not pensionable
Parental benefit.....	Pensionable
Unemployment benefit.....	Pensionable
Sickness benefit.....	Pensionable
Sickness and activity compensation.....	Pensionable

Source: Min Pension/the writer

## Child-care years

You should not receive a lower pension because you have become a parent. You therefore receive pension rights during your child's first four years called child-care pension rights. The parent with the lowest income for each year receives this benefit. There are a number of ways to calculate pension rights, and the Swedish Pensions Agency will help you find the best way.

If both parents are asylum seekers, the child-care years start from the date when one of the parents is granted a residence permit and ends when the child is four years old.



## Study

If you study at a university or similar institute with study allowance from the National Board of Student Aid (CSN), your pension contributions are paid by the central government. But it only amounts to a very small pension. At the most, it amounts to the pension you would receive if you would earn SEK 35 000 per year.

## *Occupational pension*

Your occupational pension is paid towards by your employer. If you are a municipal, county council or government employee, you always receive occupational pension. If you are employed within the private sector, you usually receive occupational pension. Nine out of ten employees in Sweden receive occupational pension.

### IF THERE IS

a collective agreement in place in your workplace, you can be sure that you will receive occupational pension.



There are also employers in the private sector who do not have collective agreements, but they still pay toward your occupational pension.

The size of your occupational pension is based on how much you earn and how many years you work. It makes no difference whether you have a fixed monthly salary or an hourly wage. The occupational pension is based on your income before tax.

The most common practice is that your employer pays in an amount equivalent to 4.5 per cent of your salary before tax. If you earn SEK 20 000, SEK 900 will be paid towards your occupational pension. But if you have a higher income your pension will be higher. The limit is set at SEK 39 000 for a monthly salary (2018) For the amount of your salary that exceeds this limit, money is payed towards your occupational pension to what equals 30 per cent of your salary.

Today, many collective agreements also include an extra pension payment called a flex pension. There may also be local agreements that could increase your pension benefits.

Your occupational pension plays a significant part in your financial situation when you become a pensioner. Especially if you join the Swedish labour market later in life and therefore do not earn enough for your retirement pension.

## You choose how to invest – if you want to

In every collective agreement there are a number of insurance companies to choose from. The alternatives are carefully selected and the fees are reduced to a very low level. With low fees, more money is set aside for your pension.

### YOU DO

not have to choose! All of the biggest collective agreements have great default alternatives so you do not have to feel any pressure to choose. You can feel completely safe.

If your employer is paying towards a private occupational pension, you also get a number of alternatives, but they are often fewer. The fees are usually higher as well. If you do not receive occupational pension, you have to make sure to save towards your pension yourself if your financial situation allows it.

### ASA

municipal or county council employee you have a default alternative, which is a traditional insurance with KPA Pension. It is called traditional because professional fund managers handle the investments in, for example, shares, bonds and properties, and it also comes with a guarantee. This guarantee means that there is a guaranteed pension amount. The traditional insurance with KPA Pension has increased a lot more in value than that, and the pension will probably be higher than the guaranteed amount.



Every occupational pension covered by a collective agreement has a **selection centre** where you can find more information and make your choices. You will find a list at the back. You may also ask the trade union or the payroll department about the selection centre.

## Everything in one place

Most people finish their working lives with a number of different occupational pensions. At [minpension.se](http://minpension.se) you get an overview of all of your pensions. If you have any questions, you can contact Min Pension's customer service on 0771-89 89 89. Their customer service works with the Swedish Pensions Agency's customer service which means that you can receive assistance in other languages than Swedish.



## 4.

# Children and employment

If you become a parent, Sweden has a support system in place that offers financial support and time with your child. You are entitled to go on parental leave for eighteen months. And when you get back to work you are entitled to working with the tasks you had before your leave.

But you also have duties. You have to let your employer know that you will become a parent at least two months before the child is born. And you and your employer have to plan how long your leave of absence will be. This applies for both mothers and fathers.

When the child is born, both parents are entitled to stay at home with the child for ten days. These days are called days of leave in connection with the birth of the child.

If you become a parent, you receive parental benefit from Försäkringskassan, and this is based on your income and how long you have worked. If you have a collective agreement, you receive more **parental leave pay/parental benefit supplement**. With the additional benefit, you usually receive 90 per cent of your salary, no matter how high your salary is. You usually receive parental leave pay for six months and it is paid out the same way as regular salary.

### IF YOU

want to know the amount of parental benefit and supplement covered by your collective agreement you will receive, you can visit [knegdeg.se](http://knegdeg.se) to calculate the rough estimates. They may vary depending on the agreement.



If you move to Sweden with young children, you are also entitled to parental benefit. If the child is younger than one year old, you will receive the same number of days with parental benefit as parents of children who were born in Sweden or adopted. If the child is between one and two years old when you move to Sweden, the parents receive a maximum of 200 days with parental benefit. If you move to Sweden when the child has turned two years old, the maximum number of days with parental benefit is 100. Contact Försäkringskassan for more information about the parental insurance. At Försäkringskassan's website you will find **Föräldrakollen**. The service lets you and the other parent plan your parental leave and divide your days with parental benefit. If you want to know how much parental benefit you can receive from Försäkringskassan you can visit **Kassakollen** on their website.

## SHARING

the parental leave equally is often the best alternative. If the parents receive the supplement covered by the collective agreement, it is often most favourable for the family if both parents take out six months of parental leave each. If the parent with the lower income stays at home most of the time, the family might miss out on large amounts of money.

You are entitled to stay at home and take care of your child if they become sick. It is called care of a sick child (VAB). At Försäkringskassan's website there is more information about parental benefit when you take care of a sick child. If you have a collective agreement, the compensation is higher.





## 5.



# Protection if you die

In Sweden, there is financial support for families if one of the parents die. It is called **survivor's pension**, and it applies even if you are not employed. It is administered by the Swedish Pensions Agency.

If you have a job, your family may also be protected through various insurances. That is always the case if there is a collective agreement in place. If an employer does not have a collective agreement, they can still have insurances for their employees. If you are working for someone who does not have a collective agreement, it is important that you find out if your employer has an insurance that provides protection for your family if you die.

### DO YOU

need more information about what to consider when a relative dies? Visit [etterlevandeguiden.se](http://etterlevandeguiden.se). The website has information from the Swedish Pensions Agency, the Swedish Tax Agency and Försäkringskassan.

If your workplace has a collective agreement in place, you are covered by an insurance called **occupational group life insurance (TGL)**. The insurance provides your family with a one-off payment of between roughly SEK 45 000 and roughly SEK 270 000 if you die. An extra payment for the funeral is also paid out.

If you are a municipal, county council or government employee, there is a special **survivor's pension**. This protection is not available if you work for an employer in the private sector.

Many trade unions, for example the Swedish Municipal Workers' Union (Kommunal), have a **group life insurance** that gives your family financial support if you die. The insurance from the Swedish Municipal Workers' Union provides your family with roughly SEK 300 000.

The trade unions also offer a very favourable group life insurance for you to purchase. The terms of the insurance are the same for all members, the whole group, and the insurance is therefore not that expensive.



## 6. When you get older

There is **no fixed retirement age** in Sweden. But there are fixed ages for social insurances and pensions. An overview of your pensions can be found at [minpension.se](http://minpension.se). On the website you can also see at which age you can claim your pension benefits and for how long.

You are entitled to keep your employment until you have turned 67 years old. This is stated in the Employment Protection Act (LAS). Sometimes you can keep working after you have turned 67, but you will then have to sign a new employment contract and in that case you are not covered by LAS.

### THE EARLIER

you claim your pension, the longer the pension period becomes. The payments are then spread out over a larger number of years. If you keep working, more money goes towards your pension.



If you receive unemployment benefit, sickness benefit or if you are on sick leave, you will no longer receive these benefits when you turn 65. Instead, you may receive guarantee pension. In other words, the idea is to replace benefits with pension. Contact the Swedish Pensions Agency to claim your guarantee pension. When you have turned 65 you may also be entitled to **housing supplement and income support for the elderly**.

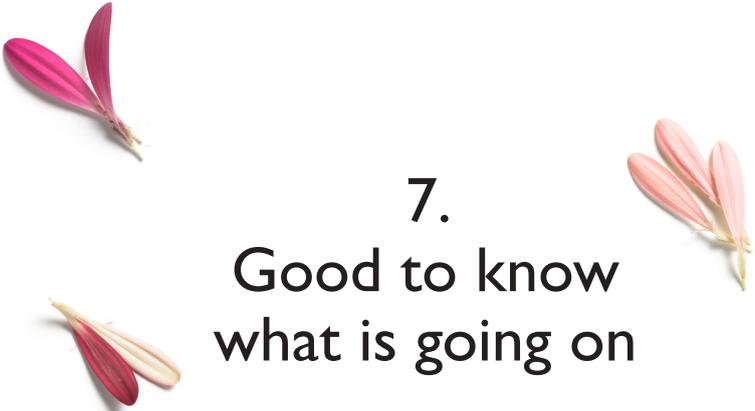
The tax rates on pension incomes are different if you are younger or older. From the year you turn 66, you receive the lower tax rate. At age 66, the tax rate on income from work is also lowered, and it becomes cheaper for an employer to employ you.

Perhaps you are thinking about moving from Sweden when you finish your working life. It is then to good to know the rules for moving to and registering your residence in another country.

If you only spend time in another country at times, you are still considered a resident of Sweden. You still receive your pensions and pay your taxes in Sweden. For more information, contact the Swedish Tax Agency.

You may be entitled to **pension from another country** if you have lived and worked there during parts of your adult life. Contact the Swedish Pensions Agency in good time before you claim your pension. When it comes to occupational pensions, you have to find out yourself what you are entitled to from previous employments in other countries.





## 7. Good to know what is going on

There are many places you can turn to if you need help with salaries, pensions or other questions.

### Agencies

Every government agency has a website. You can often register and update your information at these websites with the help of electronic identification, which you can get from your bank.

You can also visit a local **service office**. These offices house the Swedish Pensions Agency, Försäkringskassan and the Swedish Tax Agency. Here, you will get a overall picture of your case all under one roof. There are over 100 service offices in Sweden.

You can also call the customer services of any agency if you need help. If you need an interpreter, it may be a good idea to let the agency know in advance, or to let someone who speaks Swedish book an appointment.

**Försäkringskassan:** [forsakringskassan.se](https://forsakringskassan.se), phone 0771-524 524

**The Swedish Tax Agency:** [skatteverket.se](https://skatteverket.se), phone 0771-567 567

**Arbetsförmedlingen:** [arbetsformedlingen.se](https://arbetsformedlingen.se), phone 0771-416 416

**The Swedish Pensions Agency:** [pensionsmyndigheten.se](https://pensionsmyndigheten.se), phone 0771-776 776



### The municipalities

The municipalities are responsible for different forms of social support and income support. Applications are usually handled by the social services in the municipality.

The municipalities have budget and debt advisers who can give advice, support and ideas on how to sort out your personal finances. It is free of charge to meet with a budget and debt adviser and they are bound by professional secrecy. Unfortunately, there can be queues in some municipalities and there may be some waiting time. Therefore, contact the municipality in good time if you need assistance. At the website **Hallå Konsument**, [halkonsument.se](http://halkonsument.se), you can see what are reasonable household expenses and also calculate your own expenses.

## **The trade unions**

You can receive advice and assistance from the trade unions. The assistance is mainly for the members of the trade union. You can speak to your local representative at your workplace or contact the central trade union. If you would like to become a member you can speak to your co-workers about which union might be a good fit for you.

The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) has a phone number that originally was for holiday workers but which now also offers assistance for anyone who is not a member of a trade union. It is now possible to contact them all year round. At Fackets Hjälptelefon 020-65 00 65, you can ask questions about various short-term jobs. You can also send in questions at [www.ung.lo.se/facketshjalptelefon](http://www.ung.lo.se/facketshjalptelefon).



## *Useful websites*

**Ersättningskollen**, [ersattningskollen.se](http://ersattningskollen.se), calculates how much money you can receive if you become sick or suffer a work-related injury.

**Fondkollen**, [fondkollen.se](http://fondkollen.se), teaches you about savings in mutual funds and helps you pick which ones are suitable for you. For example, funds for your premium pension, occupational pension and other forms of savings.

**Föräldrakollen** helps you and your child's other parent to divide the number of days on parental leave between yourselves. Kassakollen calculates the amount of parental benefit and other benefits you may receive from Försäkringskassan. Visit [forsakringskassan.se](http://forsakringskassan.se) and search for Föräldrakollen and Kassakollen.

**Knegdeg**, [knegdeg.se](http://knegdeg.se) helps those who work in the private sector to calculate the benefits you receive if you become sick, suffer a work-related injury, become a parent and so on. The website has been created by PTK, the council for negotiation and cooperation, in co-operation with 26 trade unions.

**Sunt arbetsliv**, [suntarbetsliv.se](http://suntarbetsliv.se), provides help and inspiration for municipal, county council and regional employees to ensure a sound workplace. Here you can find suggestions for how to solve work environment problems.

**Arbetsmiljöupplysningen**, [arbetsmiljoupplysningen.se](http://arbetsmiljoupplysningen.se), offers information on work environment and the role of safety representatives and the occupational health service. Here you will find suggestions on where to turn if you need further assistance.

**Fackförbunden**, [fackforbunden.se](http://fackforbunden.se), is a website that matches your occupation with a suitable trade union. Here you will also find links to various trade unions, and you can compare different unemployment benefit funds and income insurances.

**Min Pension**, [minpension.se](http://minpension.se). Here you get an overview of all of your pensions with a prognosis of how much pension you will receive. You can also check how your pensions will be affected if you work fewer or more hours, or if you claim your pensions earlier or later in life.

**Verksamt**, [verksamt.se](http://verksamt.se). This website will help if you are thinking about starting your own business or if you are already running one. There are also e-services available and contact options for various agencies. Verksamt is a cooperation between the Swedish Tax Agency, the Swedish Companies Registration Office and the Swedish Public Employment Service.

**The Swedish Consumers' Insurance Bureau and the Swedish Consumers' Banking and Finance Bureau**, [konsumenternas.se](http://konsumenternas.se). Here you can learn about savings, loans and insurances. You can also compare different accounts, child insurances, occupational pensions and much more. The two bureaus also give advice by email or telephone free of charge.



## Selection centres for occupational pensions

**Pensionsvalet** (pv.se) for municipal, county council and regional employees.

**Valcentralen** (valcentralen.se) for municipal, county council and regional employees, as well as for employees in banking, finance and so on.

**Collectum** (collectum.se) for salaried employees in the private sector with ITP occupational pension.

**Fora** (fora.se) for employees in the private sector with SAF-LO Collective Pension Insurance.

**The National Government Employee Pensions Board** (spv.se) for government employees.

## Pension providers

Contact information for the insurance companies that manage your pensions can be found on the certificate of pension benefits sent to you every year. You can also find this information at the selection centres.

### IF YOU HAVE

If you have pension insurance with KPA Pension or have any questions about the occupational pension in municipalities, county councils and regions, you may call the customer service on 020-650 500. Assistance is available in 17 different languages. The same applies if you need to contact the insurance company Folksam, phone 0771-950 950.



## Well worth reading

KPA pensions collaboration with Annika Creutzer has resulted in many books well worth reading, and you can download all of them at [www.kpa.se/bok](http://www.kpa.se/bok). Two of them are also available in short versions which have been translated into a number of different languages.

- **Ta makten över din pension – tio fällor du som kvinna ska undvika (Take control of your pension – ten traps for women to avoid).**  
The book describes ten traps you must avoid all through life in order to receive the best possible pension when it is time.
- **Dags att lägga pensionspusslet – så tar du som kvinna ut pension på bästa sätt (Laying the pension puzzle – the best way to take out your pension as a woman).**  
The book is aimed towards people aged 55 and over, and it gives an in-depth look at what is important to think about when it comes to your pension.
- **Din trygghet i jobbet – försäkringar och annat stöd för dig som är anställd i en kommun, ett landsting eller en region (Your job security – insurances and other support for municipal and county council employees).**  
As the title suggests, this book is for those working with pension issues. The purpose is to offer support in your contact with colleagues.



## **Annika Creutzer**

is one of our most well-known experts on private finances. She is an economist, a journalist and a columnist who has previously worked for Aftonbladet and Privata Affärer. Annika Creutzer is also a well-known lecturer and moderator, and she is often heard in the Swedish Radio P1 programme Plånboken where she gives sound financial advice. Today she has her own company called Creutzer & Co.

## **KPA Pension**

KPA Pension is the leading pensions company for municipal and county council employees. KPA Pension is entrusted with the occupational pensions of over 1.6 million people, both current and former municipal and county council employees.

We invest your savings in secure and ethical pension funds, while taking human rights and the environment into consideration. Therefore, we never invest in arms, tobacco, gambling or alcohol. We also charge one of the lowest fees on the market.



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Maybe you are one of the thousands of people who have come to Sweden as a refugee, or you have moved here to be with the one you love, and now you are starting your first job. Or you are young and therefore new to the labour market. A new job means much more than just a salary. It is also an opportunity to be part of a community. But it also involves different rights and duties.



The purpose of this book is to make it easier for you to understand how salary, insurance and pension go together. The insurance that comes with an employment provide great security. This security becomes even greater if your workplace has a collective agreement in place. But what is a collective agreement? This book explains not only that but a lot more in a way that makes seemingly difficult issues easy to understand.

Annika Creutzer, well-known expert on private finances, is often heard in the Swedish Radio PI programme Plånboken where she gives sound financial advice. In her book, she shares her expertise and knowledge, and explains what to consider when you start working.



Recommended price SEK  
59 including VAT