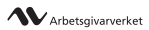




SAGE – The member organization for government employers

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Central government agencies are independently responsible for personnel organisation, financial and operational issues within budget frame appropriations determined by the Government. Accordingly, employer responsibility has been delegated from Government to agency level. Through their member organisation, the Swedish Agency for Government Employers (SAGE), agencies develop a common employers' policy for the government sector. SAGE is responsible for central negotiations with the unions in the central government sector. The central agreements provide a wide scope for local parties to negotiate individual salaries and working conditions within the needs and conditions of each agency. This has not always been the case. Until the mid-1990s

the Government and the Swedish Parliament were responsible for pay levels in the central government. This changed when the system of frame appropriations was introduced and SAGE was created. This structural reform was so important it has been compared to the reform that created an independent Central Bank. It also demonstrated the strength of the Swedish Model, where pay levels are determined by the independent parties in the labour market and not by legislators.



Göran Ekström Director General



Main responsibilities for the Swedish Agency for Government Employers (SAGE)

The Swedish Agency for Government Employers is an employers' organization whose members are the government agencies. Its main responsibilities include:

- Negotiation activities
- Employer development
- Safeguarding employer interests and opinion-building

Negotiations

SAGE's collective bargaining is based on the experiences and demands of member agencies, as well as analyses of the effectiveness of existing agreements. During negotiations, continuous contacts ensure that SAGE's bargaining position has the members' support. The board approves and finalises all major agreements and acts as a bargaining delegation during the round of negotiations. Central collective pay agreements (RALS) ensure industrial peace for the duration of the agreement. The central collective agreements create conditions for a stable long-term development of local pay and provide a wide scope for parties at the local level to adapt the terms to their specific needs and conditions in individual pay agreements. Regulations of working conditions etc. in central collective agreements can, by local agreements, be adjusted to the agencies' prerequisites. The terms can also be adjusted to the needs of individual employees within the demands of the business.

Specific central collective agreements regulate the terms of pensions, insurances, job security etc.

Employer Development

SAGE supports members in developing their employer policies. Each member has access to an advisor, specialised in the member organisations' sphere of activities. Advice can involve such issues as:

- Labour legislation
- Local agreements
- Pay levels and working hours
- Discontinuation of business and organisational changes

Advisory service is always available from SAGE's secretariat during office hours. The advisors are responsible for extensive meeting activities to coordinate the member's employer policies. Advisors can also represent members in labour-related disputes with unions at the central level.

SAGE's specialists in legal issues and labour provide in-depth knowledge on:

- labour legislation

- work environment
- social security
- pensions etc.

SAGE's lawyers can also represent members in disputes brought before the Labour Court.

Safeguarding employer interests and opinion building

As a member organization, and a national social partner for the Central Government Sector, SAGE safeguards member agencies' interests in relation to politicians, decision makers and other players. It is highly important that decision makers have good knowledge of the consequences of a particular decision on government sector employer policy. SAGE represents the members' collective views on government policy considerations, external agencies and public debate on employer policies. SAGE also represents the interests of government sector employers in the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN).

Employer Cooperation

SAGE's members cooperate to develop a common employer policy for the government sector. SAGE's board and the Employers' Council, the supreme governing bodies, coordinate and determine the direction for a common employer policy in the government sector.

SAGE's secretariat is located in Stockholm and supports member cooperation about employer policy. The secretariat has around 65 employees, mainly experts on negotiations, employer policies, labour market law and regulations by collective agreements. SAGE's activities are funded through membership fees.

Members discuss and develop a common employer policy in advisory delegations and sectoral meetings. These meetings also provide an opportunity to exchange experiences on government employer activities.

Member organisations are currently divided in the following sections:

- Infrastructure
- Work life, health and education
- Large and regionally organised government agencies
- Culture
- Country administrative boards and government administration
- Environment, Technology and Agriculture
- Legal agencies and economy
- Universities, colleges and research
- Commissions

Courses

SAGE provides further education for managers on issues concerning their role as government sector employers. Current courses can be found on our website. Training courses can also be designed according to the needs of individual members.

Pay statistics

SAGE provides pay statistics and software to develop data for comparisons and analysis in local negotiations and salary reviews.

Agreements and brochures

Central collective agreements and brochures on employer policies are distributed in limited numbers to all SAGE's members. Larger orders can be made at cost.

SAGE's website

Publications of agreements and brochures are available on the webpage to print or order. On the website you'll also find SAGE's position in current debates on employment policies. SAGE's members can also find pay statistics, support and advice on employer policy and a schedule of upcoming meetings.

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A member organisation

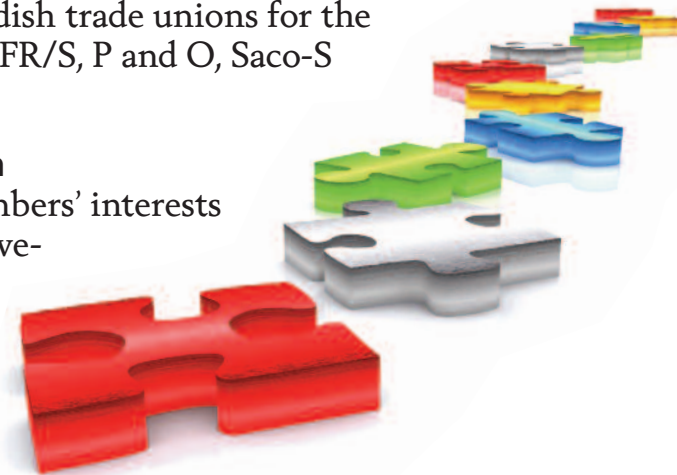
SAGE is an organization run by its members. SAGE's members are 270 government agencies and other employers connected to the government sector. Combined, they encompass some 240,000 employees.

Major negotiation party

SAGE is the central party in government sector negotiation and reaches central collective agreements with Swedish trade unions for the government sector (OFR/S, P and O, Saco-S and SEKO).

Interest organisation

SAGE safeguards members' interests and works towards developing and strengthening government sector employer policies.



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