Global Sustainable Buildings Index - Sweden

Green Certification

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# Is there a nationally adopted and recognized form of certification for buildings? What is it and is it mandatory for all new buildings and refurbished buildings?

There are no mandatory certifications in Sweden. However, the use of certifications for buildings is increasing. In 2015, Sweden was ranked 10th on a worldwide ranking of the use of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), measuring the amount of certified square meters and the amount of LEED projects. On a per capita measure, Sweden ranked fourth. The following are examples of classifications and certifications used in Sweden:

The classification "Environmental Buildings" is a system for classifying standards of building in relation to energy, interior environment and materials. There are three levels within this classification system: (i) GOLD; (ii) SILVER; and (iii) BRONZE. The classification system can be used both for existing and newly constructed buildings and, as of December 2022, there were more than 2,300 buildings certified or provisionally certified as Environmental Buildings.

The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM-SE) is used to certify new production buildings, and the building's environmental performance is assessed in several different areas, such as the building's energy use. GreenBuilding is a certification system with a focus on low energy use and energy efficiency. The Sweden Green Building Council (SGBC) controls both the BREEAM-SE and the GreenBuilding certifications. The GreenBuilding certification will be phased out due to increased investment in other certification schemes. A two-year phase-out began in 2023, and no new registrations will be made in the system. For existing projects, the last reporting dates will be January to April 2024. These reports will continue until 30 April 2025, after which GreenBuilding will be completely phased out. BREEAM-SE is used to assess the building's environmental performance in a number of different areas. For example, the building's energy use, indoor climate, water management and waste management are assessed and scored.

The SGBC has also introduced Citylab, an optional program for creating sustainable urban areas. It is the first certification system for sustainable urban development developed for Swedish conditions. Different organizations and companies participate in this program, and sustainability is top of mind throughout the development process. Within Citylab, two different certifications are possible: (1) certification of the planning process for the implementation of urban development projects and (2) certification of the sustainability of a city district.

Another classification is called KRAV, which is also optional and relates to energy consumption. This is intended particularly for tenants with store businesses. The classification requires that 100% of energy used in the store come from renewable energy sources and also addresses other issues to decrease the use of energy.

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