

# Join the club!

## **Club`s and associations in Sweden are large, active and varied**

Why is this? What makes people join and become active in clubs and associations? How does a club work? This information booklet provides some answers to these questions.

## **Club activities – a wonderful way to meet other people**

Club's activities are open to everyone. Everyone has the right to join a club or association. Here is a chance to be active in something you feel is important, interesting or just fun. At the same time, you will meet many other people who share your interests.

## **Club activities are voluntary**

This means that active members, adults as well as children, who work in a club are volunteers, contributing their spare time without receiving monetary compensation.

## **Parents are important to a club**

In order for a club to continue to provide activities for children and teenagers, parents and other adults must sometimes help out. This can mean driving teenagers to a hockey game or a swimming tournament, or participating in a children's trip to the forest. These efforts are really appreciated in a club whose members volunteer their spare time.

## **Active leaders and coaches**

Whether it's a horseback riding, camping or chess club, there are always leaders or coaches who support and activate young people. They give of their time, and assume the responsibilities that go with leadership. By doing so, coaches and leaders serve as important role

models for our youth, and occupy a central role in our clubs and associations.

## **A club or association survives only because of its members**

The commitment and activities of the members is the real heart of a club or association. Since equipment, rental and other expenses all require money, annual membership and activity fees are important to the finances of a club or association. Sometimes, these are supplemented by subsidies from the municipality or other institutions.

## **The members make the decisions**

Non-profit clubs and associations have a democratic organisation. This means that as a member, you can discuss club activities and participate in making the decisions. Once a year, the club or association holds an annual membership meeting at which the members decide on activities and financial matters. In addition, this meeting elects the members of the Board of Directors of the club, who are then responsible for ongoing operations until the next annual membership meeting. The Board of Directors makes sure that the club follows the by-laws, which are the written rules of an organisation.

## **Sweden offers a rich variety of non-profit clubs and organisations**

There are some associations in Sweden which have existed for more than a century, and others that are much more recent. Sports is the area with the most clubs and associations, and virtually every sport is represented. There are also many cultural associations, engaged in theatre, music and dance. Finally, there are outdoor clubs and religious associations, as well as associations which promote human rights, the rights of children and environmental issues.