



Regional Public Transport Fares in Sweden and the EU **Summary**
Report 2014:15

Regional Public Transport Fares in Sweden and the EU **Summary**
Report 2014:15

Transport Analysis

Address: Torsgatan 30

SE-113 21 Stockholm

Phone: 010 414 42 00

Fax: 010 414 42 10

E-mail: trafikanalys@trafa.se

Webaddress: www.trafa.se

Publisher: Brita Saxton

Publication date: 2014-12-01

Summary

The price trend over the last 15 years has been upward. Prices have risen the most for single tickets, although monthly passes have increased in price as well. Public transport fares have increased significantly more than the prices of other goods and services in Sweden.¹ As a result, travel by public transport is accounting for a greater share of riders' total expenses.

Public transport fares vary dramatically from one county to another. A large share of these differences, particularly for county passes, can be explained by factors such as population density. On the other hand, single ticket prices do not appear to be affected to the same extent by geographical location. This could be because in counties where travel by public transport is uncommon, there is a tendency to lower the thresholds to induce more people to try taking public transport. In other counties, there may be more of a point in quickly making it economical for riders to obtain monthly passes rather than occasionally purchasing single tickets.

The increase in fares for all studied ticketing options has been relatively robust for a number of years, considerably outstripping CPI. Public transport has experienced heavy and rapid cost increases due to an increased supply and higher standards in terms of convenience and accessibility for people with disabilities. This has probably had an impact on fares as well.

As a rule, commercial actors' fares are higher than those of publicly subsidised services. This is not surprising, as commercial public transport services earn nearly all of their income from ticket sales, while their publicly subsidised counterparts obtain about half of their income from subsidies. The commercial services remain limited, and those that do exist are individual lines complementing, rather than competing with, publicly subsidised services. There are some opportunities to compete with the public actors in terms of single tickets. However, it is not possible for commercial actors to compete in terms of volume discounts or monthly passes.

From a European perspective, relative to the public transport prices in EU capitals, Swedish single ticket fares are high, while monthly passes are more comparable in price. The fares in the EU vary greatly, probably attributable to differing economic and geographical conditions.

The most important conclusion from this survey is that the dramatic increase of fares for public transport entails the long term risk of reducing people's incentive to choose public transport. Dramatically rising prices will also make it more difficult for the industry as a whole to achieve its goals in terms of both increased travel, and having public transport account for a higher share of total travel. It is consequently in the interest of riders, society, and the industry that this trend be halted.

¹ As measured by the consumer price index, CPI (Statistics Sweden)



Transport Analysis is a Swedish agency for transport policy analysis. We analyse and evaluate proposed and implemented measures within the sphere of transport policy. We are also responsible for official statistics in the transport and communication sectors. Transport Analysis was established in April 2010 with its head office in Stockholm and a branch office in Östersund.