



Diluting the Partnership Potential? Knowledge-gaps and Views on India in Sweden

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Executive summary

- Using data from the latest round of the national SOM public opinion survey, this report finds Swedish views of India largely unchanged from the 2021 survey. The Swedish public continues to have mixed views about India, a rising power which is currently the world's fifth largest economy and a prioritised partner for the Swedish government.
- The public expressed a lack of knowledge about India. This is echoed by equivalent data showing that many Swedish businesses feel they know little about India. The public's narrow knowledge of India may in part be the result of media reporting on the country, which has been limited, and since February 2022 has been focused heavily on India in relation to the war in Ukraine.
- The Swedish public has mixed perceptions about India. They increasingly recognise that India has a developed economy and that it will be a more important global actor in the future. Yet, only just over a third agreed that Sweden should expand cooperation with India. For questions on cooperation, over forty percent of people answered, "don't know", which suggests that there is room for a shift in attitude.
- Overall, this report suggests that political efforts to accelerate cooperation may be slowed down by ignorance and preconceptions about India in Swedish society. This is partly because risks and challenges could be overemphasised.
- Based on the findings presented in this report, we propose steps to increase knowledge across sectors, fostering better informed perceptions with regards to India.



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Introduction

India is the world's fastest growing major economy, even if it remains limited by the restraints that come with being a lower middle-income country.¹ It is becoming central to several main developments currently reshaping the global order. The country is actively promoting the emergence of a multipolar world, where countries and regions rising within the international system aspire to take their place among traditional great powers such as the United States (US) and its European partners.² India has a growing ambition to act on its interest and to shape international norms. It is also an integral part of the Indo-Pacific region, which is becoming central to global economic activity, production networks, and technological innovation.

Given this, governments across Europe have begun to pay greater attention to India. The Swedish government has been clear in its prioritisation of the country. In a recently published strategy document on international trade, investments, and global competitiveness, it announced a pivot to Asia and gave India special attention.³ The German Federal Government has been even more proactive about India. In mid-October 2024, it presented a strategic document on India, which intends to guide a levelling up of engagements.⁴ In this document, it noted that for the partnership to reach its potential, there must be a shift in perceptions about India in "German business, academia, and among the general

public" along with increased "in-depth understanding of India and its political tradition, culture and history".⁵

The political level in several European countries is therefore sending a clear signal: as rising powers and regions outside the West increasingly share centre stage with transatlantic powers, we will need to expand cooperation with nations other than traditional western partners. This is just as much true for Sweden. It is important for securing Sweden's own economic future. However, the efforts of Sweden's political leaders and individual companies to expand cooperation with India could be slowed down by attitudes and knowledge gaps among the public and businesses. Given the results presented in this UI report, Swedes seem undecided and even unprepared regarding the evolutions in policy, and the embrace of partnerships such as that with India, required by current transformations of the global economic and political landscape.

The shape of public opinion and the level of ignorance about India in Sweden could be significant in two ways. First, it could impact the domestic policy space available for the Swedish government when working with India. Swedish Foreign Minister Maria Malmer Stenegard recently mentioned the need for policy, including foreign policy, to find anchorage in public opinion and

¹ Debroy, B., Mohan, R. C. & Tellis, A. J. (2022). *Grasping Greatness: Making India a Leading Power*. London: Penguin.

² Suryanarayana, P. S. (2021, December 20). India's Quest For Multipolarity. *The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies*. <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/rsis-publication/rsis/indias-quest-for-multipolarity/>

³ Utrikesdepartementet. (2023). *Strategi för Sveriges utrikeshandel, investeringar och globala*

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<https://www.regeringen.se/rapporter/2023/12/strategi-for-sveriges-utrikeshandel-investeringar-och-globala-konkurrenskraft/>

⁴ Federal German Foreign Office. (2024). *Focus on India*. <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/resource/blob/2680288/8909ac2c501ab85d55defff7d1b8b75d/241016-fokus-indien-data.pdf>

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 5.



sentiments.⁶ Second, and more importantly, it could affect processes of engagement with India across different sectors of Swedish society, including industry. Research indicates that low levels of knowledge or biased attitudes in a society may impact the willingness to engage with another country.⁷ For example, studies have shown that when making decisions about purchasing from foreign countries, individuals are affected by the image of these countries that they hold.⁸ The image people have of foreign countries might therefore be a drag on political ambition as cooperative processes are slowed down or stalled, funding calls or initiatives go unanswered, risks become overemphasised, and early mover opportunities are lost. Based on a recognition of India's future importance, this report provides a mapping of Swedish public opinion about the country. This offers a more detailed examination of the results for India from UI's recently published Asian Barometer 2024.⁹ It is based on data from the 2023 round, and the previous 2021 round, of the National SOM public opinion survey.¹⁰ The report also gives analysis of how public views about India may affect the potential for the partnership to strengthen. It then

offers recommendations for steps that could be taken to narrow knowledge gaps.

How views about a country are formed

The role which public opinion plays in facilitating or hindering the development of international partnerships makes it vital to understand how those opinions are being formed. It is worth noting in this regard that a larger Swedish footprint in India is not only linked to the attitudes about Sweden held by people in India, but also to the views of India that are held by people in Sweden. In order for exchange and cooperation to flourish across sectors, positive perceptions on either side are crucial. Perceptions which people hold about a foreign country have also been referred to as a 'country image', where this is defined as "the sum of beliefs, attitudes, and impressions that a person or group of persons has of an object".¹¹ People hold three types of attitudes about foreign countries: Functional judgements about the country's economic competence, normative judgements about its integrity and adherence to values, and aesthetic judgments about its cultural attractiveness. When making these judgements, people tend to simplify complexity by producing

⁶ Malmer Stenegard, M. (2024). *En utrikespolitik för svenska intressen*.

<https://regeringen.se/tal/2024/12/linjetal-utrikespolitiska-institutet-11-december--en-utrikespolitik-for-svenska-intressen/>

⁷ Rhee, K., Crabtree, C. & Horiuchi, Y. (2024) Perceived Motives of Public Diplomacy Influence Foreign Public Opinion. *Political Behavior*, 46, 683–703.

⁸ Kang, M., & Yang, S. U. (2010). Comparing effects of country reputation and the overall corporate reputations of a country on international consumers product attitudes and purchase intentions. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 13(1), 52–62.

<https://doi.org/10.1057/crr.2010.1>

⁹ Olczak, N. (2024). *Asian Barometer 2024: Trends in Swedish views of China, India, and*

Japan. Utrikespolitiska Institutet (UI).

<https://www.ui.se/globalassets/ui.se-eng/publications/ui-publications/2024/ui-report-no.1-2024.pdf>

¹⁰ The data was collected in collaboration with the annual National SOM Survey (Den Nationella SOM undersökningen), which is sent every year to systematic probability samples of 3750 people aged between 16 and 85 years from across the country. Nine questions about India were inserted into the one wave of the 2023 survey. The questionnaires were sent out on 18 September 2023 and the collection of results was concluded at the end of 2023. In total, 1771 people completed the survey. For more information see the Asian Barometer.

¹¹ Buhmann, A. (2016). *Measuring Country Image*. Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.



stereotypes that fit these countries into specific categories. They also may base their judgements of foreign countries on ideas they want to reinforce about their home country.

A recent report has usefully separated the process through which individuals form perceptions of foreign countries into three stages: 1) information acquisition, 2) information organisation, and 3) perception formation.¹² In the second stage, role theory and construction of identity comes into play. People will tend to organize the information they have about a foreign country based on the kind of identity they want to ascribe to their own nation. For example, to reinforce a notion of their own country's economic development, members of the public may perceive other countries to be economically lagging, or they may suggest that their democratic system has less flaws than other similar systems. In both the second and third stage, the use of stereotypes is also significant.

Most important in the formation of perceptions is the first stage and the acquisition of information about a country, because without this, individuals cannot begin to form attitudes. There is a range of different sources by which people could possibly get information regarding a country, including education, cultural works, the media, work interactions, word of

mouth, and personal experience. Of these, it is likely that the exposure of the Swedish public to Indian cultural works and to the country through their education is quite limited. While some Swedes may interact with Indians privately or in work settings, or have had personal experience of travel to India, the numbers compared to the population writ large, are likely to be relatively small.

Knowledge gaps and ignorance in Sweden with regards to India

In this regard, it is pertinent to note that there exists a wide information deficit with regards to India in Sweden. Many of the Swedes responding to the SOM survey expressed a lack of knowledge regarding the country. Respondents answered "don't know" to a high degree for all nine of the survey statements (Figure 1). Compared to the previous SOM survey from 2021, the proportion of respondents answering "don't know" to the different questions has increased slightly. A survey of over 600 Swedish businesses with interests outside of the EU, carried out by the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, found that these similarly spoke about a lack of knowledge regarding India. It concluded that this knowledge gap could negatively impact the views which respondents had about India.¹³

¹² Svenska Institutet. (2023). *Mechanisms underpinning perception*. https://si.se/app/uploads/2023/05/ppmi_mechanisms-underpinning-perception.pdf

¹³ Ahuja, A. & Isakson, H. (2024) *Bridging markets: Swedish business perspectives on*

policies to expand economic collaboration with India. https://www.svensktnaringsliv.se/sakomraden/internationell-handel/bridging-markets-swedish-business-perspectives-on-policies-to-exp_1224137.html

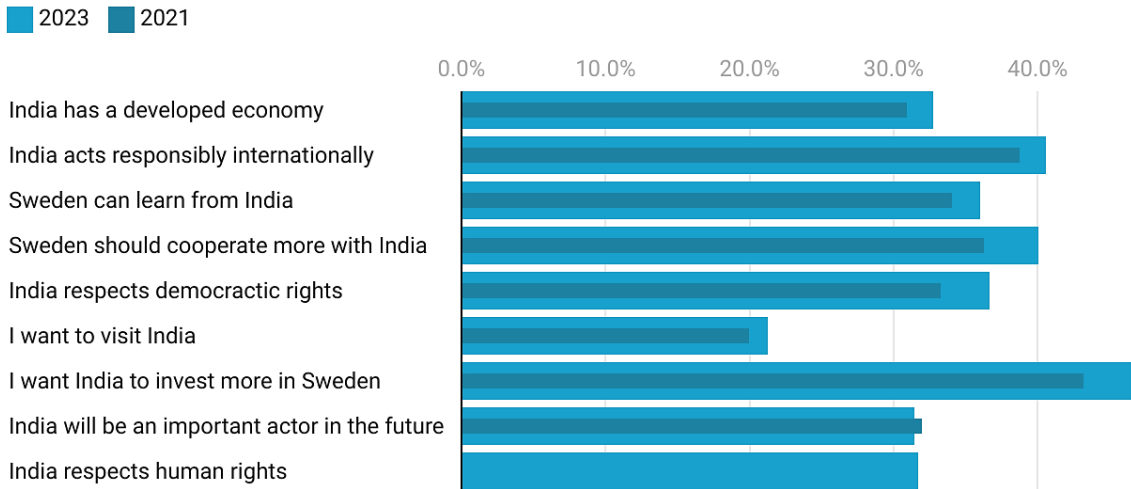


Figure 1: Percentage of respondents answering "don't know" to each of the nine questions about India in the 2023 and 2021 SOM surveys.

Coverage of India in Swedish print and online media

In general, research has indicated that traditional and social media form the most important sources of information about foreign countries.¹⁴ This is particularly the case when the foreign country is geographically removed and is a place with which individuals will have limited personal contact, as is true for Sweden and India.

Because of the limited extent of other sources of information about the country, we could therefore expect that much of the information the public acquires regarding India is through media channels. Attention to India in Swedish media grew steadily

between 2000 and 2015 but has largely been on a downward trajectory since and has further dropped in the past few years. Attention to India is lower than that given to the two other Asian countries considered in the Asian Barometer, particularly China (Figure 2).¹⁵ While both China and Japan saw a large increase in coverage during the pandemic, the upsurge in reporting on India was much less pronounced. This relative lack of media attention to India could be connected to the challenges related to obtaining visas that Swedish journalists currently face when wanting to take up correspondent roles where they are resident in India. This limits the amount of wider, contextual reporting about India that Swedish media agencies can produce.

¹⁴ Dell'Orto, G., Dong, D., Schneeweis, A., & Moore, J. (2004). The impact of framing on the perception of foreign countries. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 25(2), 294-312, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02560054.2004.9653299>

¹⁵ The number of articles where the word "Indien" was mentioned in the full text published

in 13 main Swedish media outlets between 2000 and 2024. The sources were: Aftonbladet (Web), Aftonbladet (Print), Dagens Nyheter (Web), Dagens Nyheter (Print), Dagens Nyheter (Premium), Expressen (Web), Expressen (Print), Expressen (Premium), Svenska Dagbladet (Web), Svenska Dagbladet (Print), Svenska Dagbladet (Premium), di.se, and Dagens Industri.

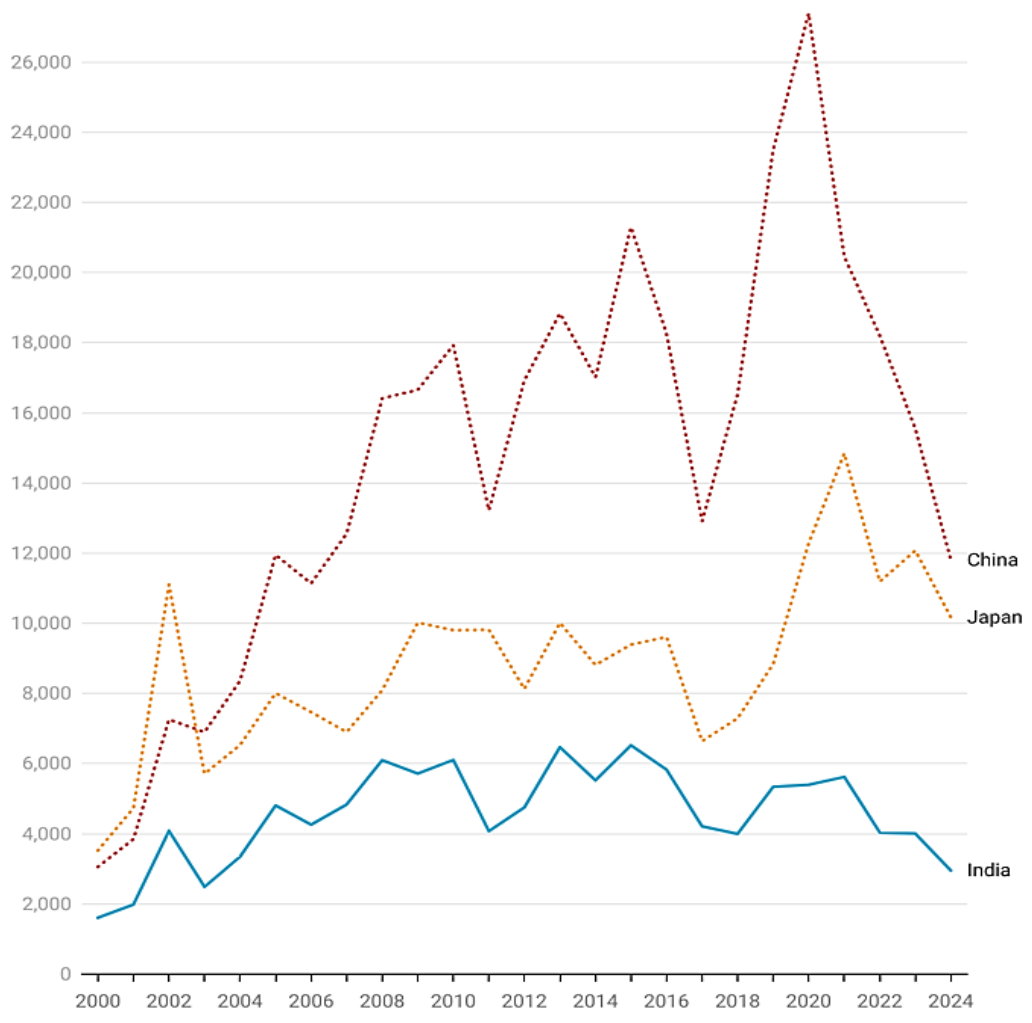


Figure 2: The number of articles mentioning “India” in 13 main Swedish media outlets between 2000 and 2024.

There have been moderate changes in the focus on different topics over time in the Swedish media coverage of India (Figure 3). There was a steadily increasing number of articles focused on “trade” and “cooperation” up until 2021/2022. The number of articles focusing on India and “climate” and “democracy” has remained relatively constant, however, and there is overall less focus on these kinds of issues.

Similarly, only a small number of articles appear to discuss India in connection with “investment”. From 2022, with the start of the war in Ukraine, there was a very marked surge in the number of articles about India in relation to Russia.

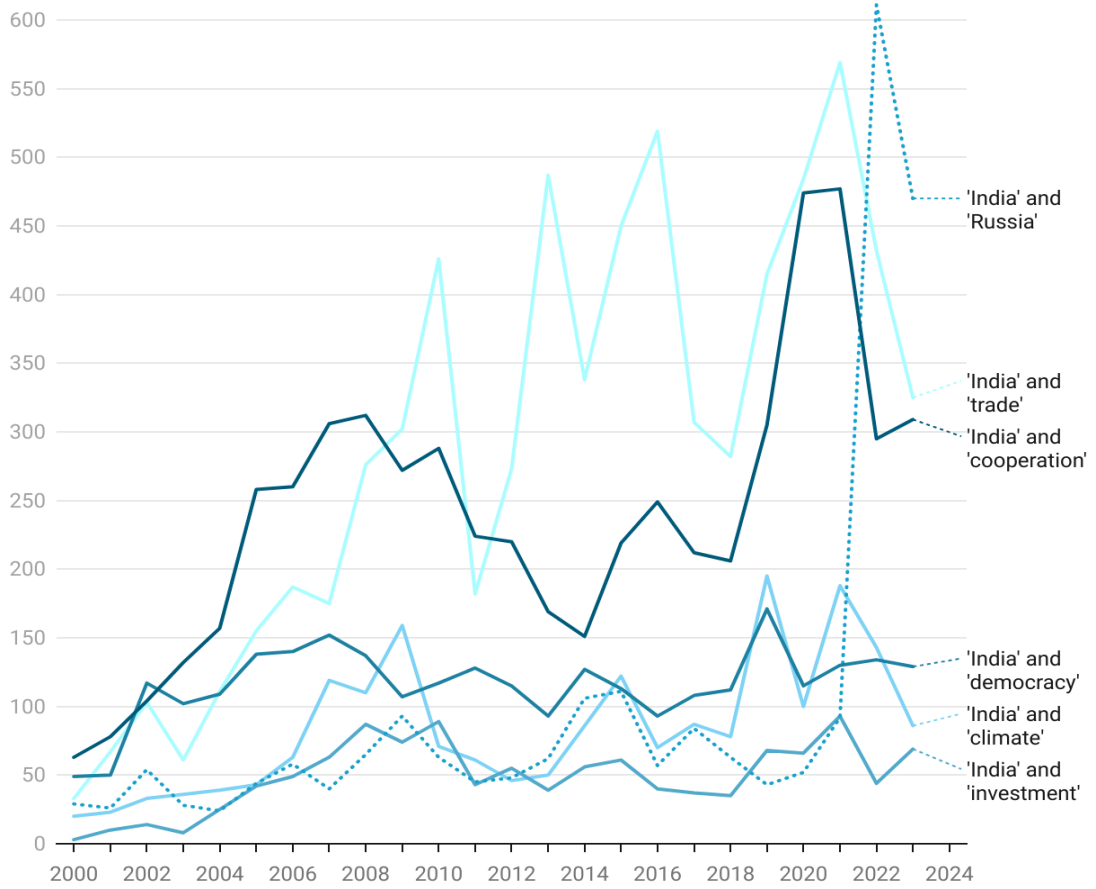


Figure 3: The number of articles mentioning "India" and chosen keywords in 13 main media outlets in Sweden between 2000 and October 2024.

We also carried out a closer examination of the content of more recent Swedish media coverage about India, looking at a sample of 3190 articles.¹⁶ This showed that the country is frequently discussed in connection to Russia (in 22% of the articles), and also often in connection with China (in 33% of the articles). India is discussed most frequently in connection with the US (in 35% of the articles).

Overall, the keywords most frequently mentioned in all of the articles about India

are related to the war in Ukraine (including references to "sanctions", "oil", "Putin" etc.). There is also some mention of the "election" which occurred in India during the later months of the period analysed. Keywords about other issues are discussed in some articles but much less, for example "emissions" (4% of the articles) and "rights" (5% of the articles). See Figure 4.

¹⁶ We collected all the articles published in print or online by eight main Swedish newspapers with the keyword "Indien" between June 2022

and June 2024. This was Dagens Nyheter, Expressen, Svenska Dagbladet, Aftonbladet (both print and online) and totalled 3190 articles.

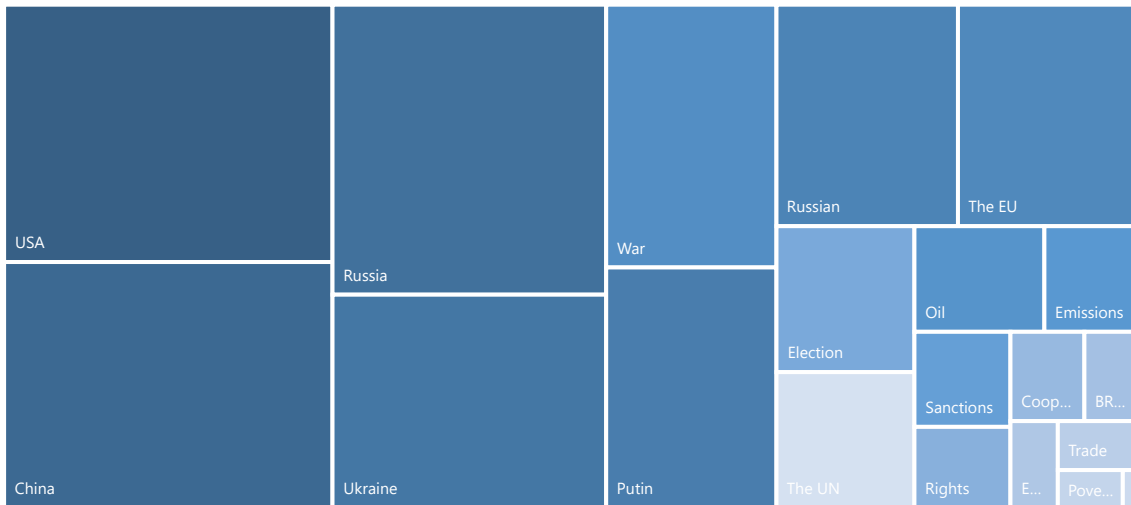


Figure 4: A representation of the number of times selected keywords are mentioned in Swedish newspaper articles about India published between June 2022 and June 2024. The size of the rectangles corresponds to the number of times each word was mentioned.

The Swedish publics' views on India

Although the Swedish public expressed an overall lack of knowledge about India, many did still offer opinions in the survey. We now turn to an examination of the most recent SOM data from the public opinion survey carried out in the autumn of 2023. This data is compared with that from a previous round of the survey conducted in 2021. The titles in italics below refer to the statements about which members of the public were asked to say whether they agreed or disagreed in each of the nine survey questions.

India will be an important global actor in the future

Many members of the Swedish public said they thought that India would become an important actor in the future. The share of respondents agreeing to this statement has increased since the 2021 survey (Figure 5). How India is being discussed in connection to major powers, and in relation to major events in international affairs such as

Russia's invasion of Ukraine, war in the Middle East, or summits of the UN General Assembly, UN Conference on Climate Change, G20, or BRICS+, could contribute to the image of a country with agency on the global stage. While slightly more than half of the members of the Swedish public surveyed now recognise the growing importance of India in world affairs, this figure still might be seen as relatively low given the developments we outlined in the introduction to this report.

The proportion of people responding "don't know" to the statement remained relatively high at just over thirty percent. It suggests that the public may be unprepared for the global transformations currently underway and the consequences of these.

There was not large variation between respondents in different age groups regarding India's future importance. However, respondents with higher levels of education and those with higher incomes appear to believe more in the future importance of India than those who are less educated and have lower incomes.

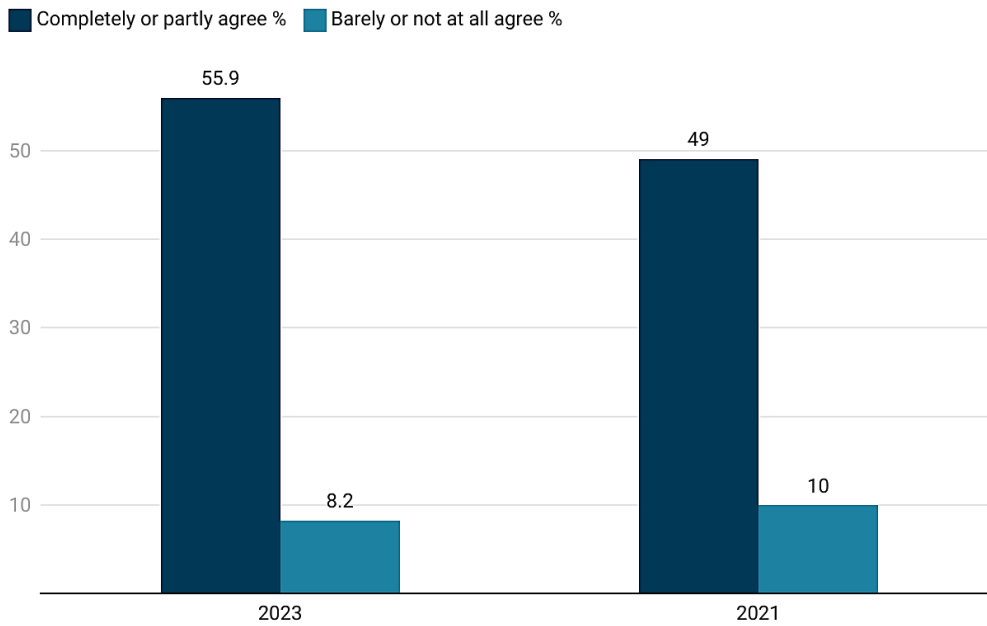


Figure 5: Responses to the statement “India will become an important actor in the future” in 2023 and 2021.

India has a developed economy

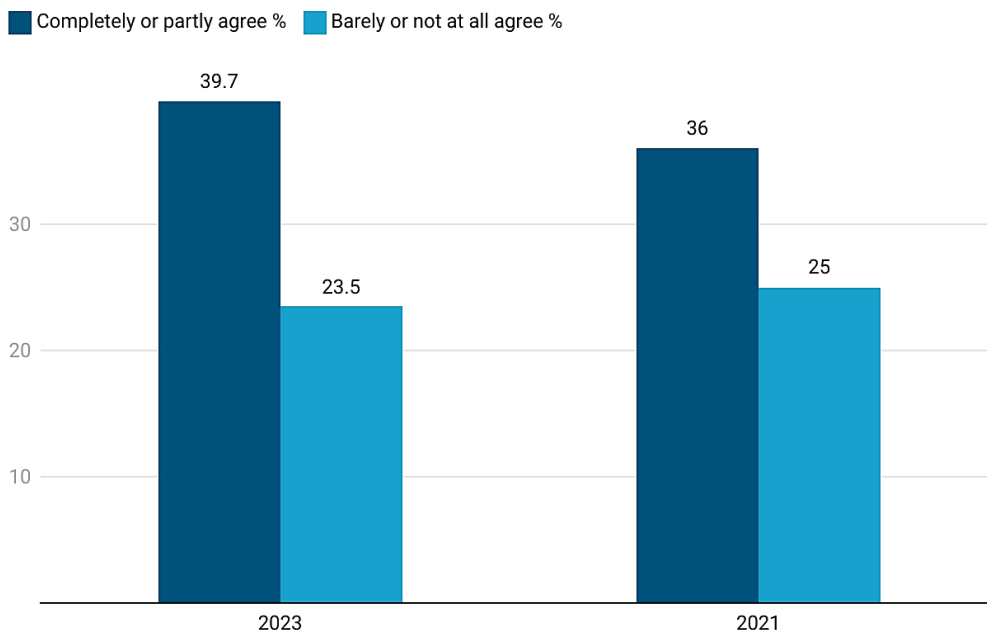


Figure 6: Responses to the statement “India has a developed economy” from the 2023 and 2021 surveys.

More respondents agreed than disagreed with the statement that India has a

developed economy (Figure 6). The number of respondents that agreed to this



statement has increased compared to the 2021 survey. There is a notable difference in results for different age groups, education levels, and income levels. Respondents with higher income and a higher level of education more frequently said they saw India's economy as developed. The proportion of younger people who said they did not view India's economy as developed was larger than the equivalent proportion of those who were older. This suggests young people hold different views of India's economy.

However, it is difficult to assess exactly what these answers reflect about public understanding of India's status. India's economy presents a complex story. It is officially categorised as a lower-middle income country but is also the world's fifth largest economy. Based on the survey responses, it is hard to say whether members of the Swedish public generally see India's economy as one which has developed extensively and now provides considerable opportunities, or whether they feel India should get the preferential treatment granted to developing economies. Such lack of understanding about developments in India's economy could mean that Swedes active in a variety of sectors are uncertain about what benefits economic cooperation with India could bring.

India acts responsibly internationally

This question asked whether respondents agreed that India acted responsibly internationally. For this statement, a large number of people answered with "don't know" (41%). This suggests a lack of broader awareness in Sweden about India's international actions. The proportion answering "don't know" was highest

¹⁷ These negative views were similar to the results of the question in the 2021 survey asking respondents whether they believed India

amongst the oldest (49%) and youngest (45%) groups who took the survey.

When compared to the previous round of the survey, there was a slight decline in the proportion of people who agreed that India acted responsibly internationally (from 16% in 2021 to 13% in 2023). There was an increase in the proportion who disagreed with this statement (from 37% to 41%). There is not much variation in the results for different age groups, education levels, or income. However, the groups of respondents who are most highly educated and who have higher incomes contained the highest numbers who disagreed with the idea that India is a responsible actor. Younger people also disagreed with this in greater numbers. The increased number of media reports associating India with Russia's war in Ukraine, and with China, could have had a negative effect on perceptions of India's international activity. Yet in the survey data views about India's international responsibility did not appear closely related to newspaper consumption.

India respects human rights

The 2023 round of the SOM survey included a new question which asked members of the Swedish public whether they thought India, China, and Japan respected human rights. With regards to India, responses to this were quite negative, with only 10 percent of respondents agreeing that India respected human rights and a substantial 53 percent disagreeing about this.¹⁷ Broken down into different demographics, we see that those who are middle-aged, have a high level of education, and are high earners appear to be most negative about India's human rights record.

respected democratic rights (12% agreed and 47% disagreed).



Swedish views on relations with India

Sweden should cooperate more with India

It is highly likely that views held by Swedes across society will inform their attitudes to increased cooperation between Sweden and India, which is a political priority. Considering their overall views on India, most respondents seem undecided whether they want Sweden to cooperate more with India (Figure 7). The amount of people who answered “don’t know” to this question

climbed to 40 percent in the 2023 survey from 36 percent in the 2021 round. These results suggest that the public does not feel they have enough information to make a judgement about whether or not cooperation with India is good for Sweden, or that the information at hand makes them uncertain with regards to the benefits of deepened cooperation. This, in turn, indicates that there is plenty of room for movement either way in public opinion. Of those who have a view on the question, more tend to agree to increased cooperation than disagree, however this is still only just over a third of all respondents who support cooperation.

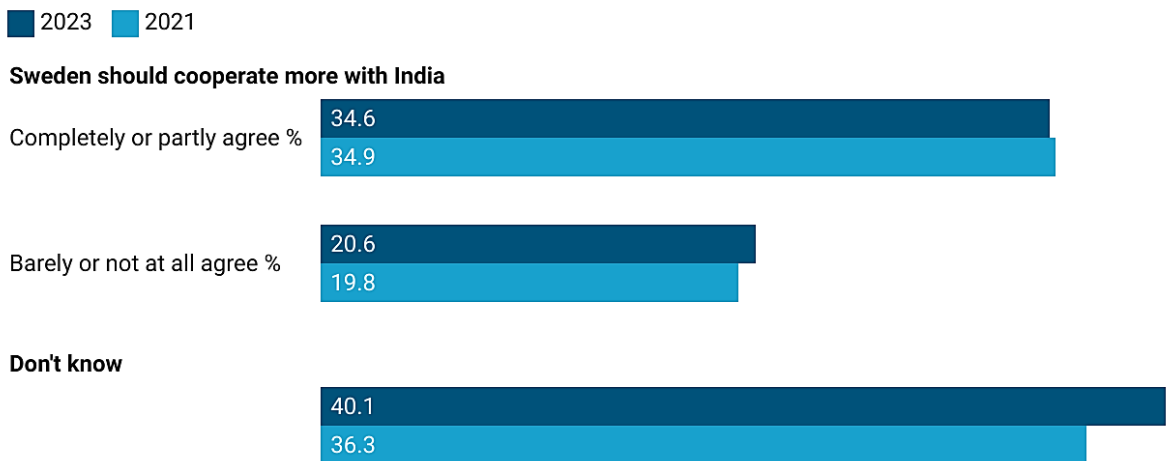


Figure 7: Responses to the statement “Sweden should cooperate more with India” from the 2023 and 2021 surveys.

There are quite large differences in views depending on what kind of political party is preferred by the respondents. Those respondents who prefer the right-wing party Sverigedemokraterna (SD) agree and disagree in almost equal proportions about increased cooperation with India (30% and 29%). Views on cooperation between Sweden and India have become more positive among those preferring SD, when compared with the results of the 2021 survey. For those who prefer Kristdemokraterna (KD), only a slightly

higher proportion agree with increased cooperation than disagree (27% to 22%).

Meanwhile, the groups of respondents who most support increased cooperation with India are those who prefer the Liberalerna (L) and Moderaterna (M) parties. While those favouring L were already positive about cooperation in the 2021 round of the survey, those favouring M view cooperation more favourably now compared to two years back. Amongst the respondents who prefer Socialdemokraterna (S), Sweden's



largest political party, and who prefer the left-wing party Vänsterpartiet (V), a substantially higher proportion agreed to increased cooperation than disagreed about this. In a way similar to that seen in the 2021 survey round, those respondents who prefer the Miljöpartiet are in favor of increased cooperation with India (38% to 13% that disagree). This result indicates a similarity in views across party supporters on cooperation with India.

Breaking the results down by other demographics, it is seen that a larger proportion of those who are older, more highly educated, or have a higher income agreed with more cooperation with India. Meanwhile, amongst younger, less educated, and lower earning respondents, a smaller proportion agreed that Sweden should enhance its cooperation with the country.

Results from the recent survey by the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise showed that, among those companies with activities outside of the EU, there is currently a large scope for increasing interest in developing cooperation with India.¹⁸ The many different reasons expressed are often connected to the circumstances of the individual company, but again, lack of previous exposure to, and knowledge of, India was frequently mentioned in open text replies.

India is a country I want to invest more in Sweden

There was little change in the results from the previous round of the survey in 2021, with Swedes continuing to be quite negative

about Indian investment into the country. A larger proportion disagreed than agreed with this statement (29% to 19%). When broken down, the results showed that slightly larger numbers of middle-aged and highly educated people supported increased Indian investment into Sweden, although the numbers against this remained greater even in these groups. Views about Indian investment also vary quite a lot depending on work function (Figure 8). A larger proportion of those who are company owners and those who are civil servants in leadership positions support more Indian investment. Those who are company owners, for instance, are the only category where a larger proportion agree with more Indian investment than disagree.

One reason for this negativity regarding Indian investments into Sweden may be a lack of knowledge about the country. The number of respondents choosing “don’t know” for this question was very high (47%). Lack of knowledge about a country, or the perceived foreignness of the country, might cause indecisiveness and reluctance to seek investments from it. The media analysis presented above showed that very little of the media coverage of India discusses the country’s investments in Sweden.

There also may be hesitancy regarding these investments because of ongoing political discussions taking place in Sweden. Foreign investments into Sweden are increasingly surrounded by debates about national economic security and risks. Given geopolitical uncertainty, the Swedish public might view investments by lesser-known international partner countries in a negative light.

¹⁸ Ahuja, A. & Isakson, H. (2024) *Bridging markets: Swedish business perspectives on policies to expand economic collaboration with India*.

https://www.svensktnaringsliv.se/sakomraden/internationell-handel/bridging-markets-swedish-business-perspectives-on-policies-to-exp_1224137.html

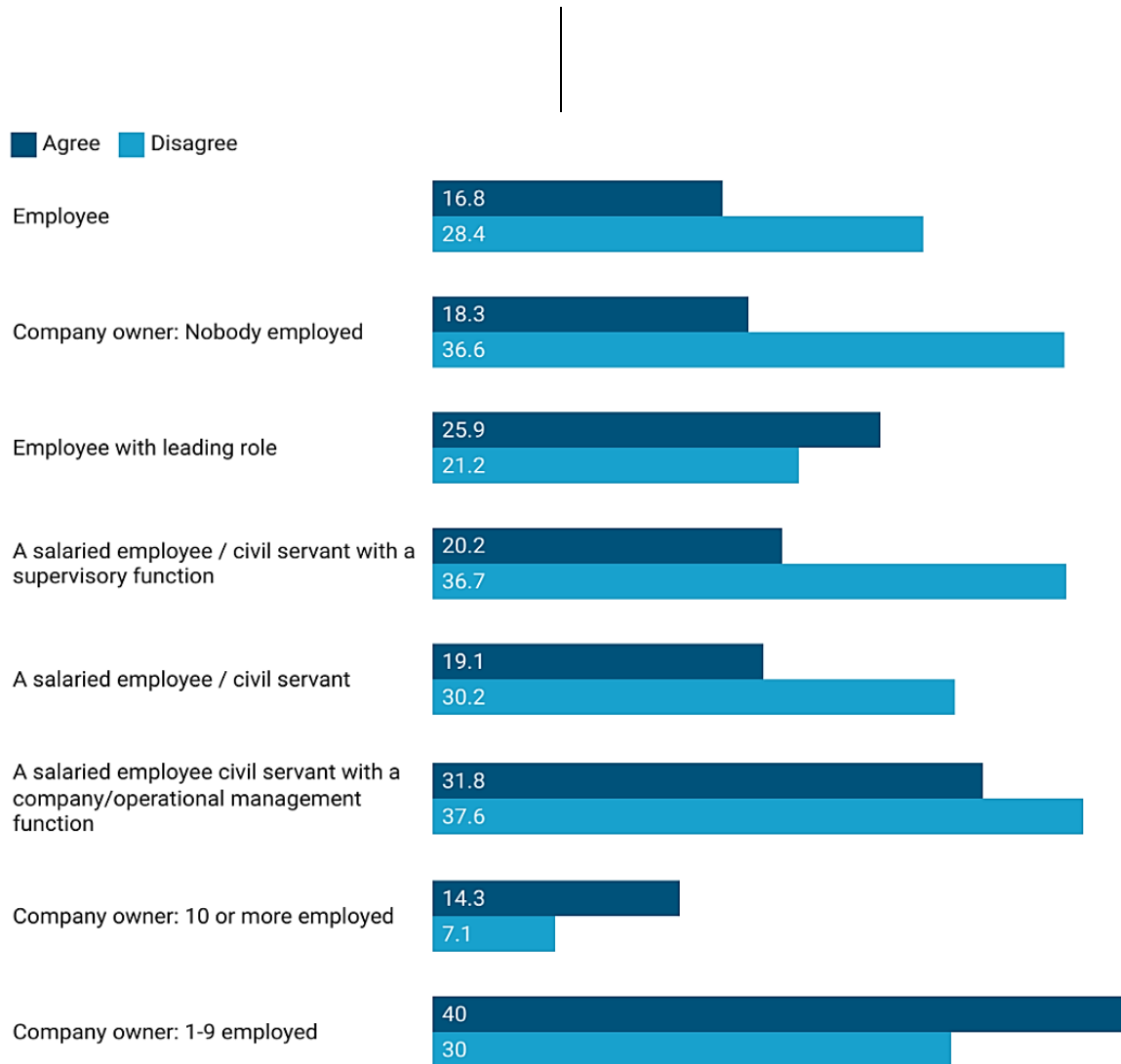


Figure 8: Views about Indian investment by work function in the 2023 survey.

Exchanges with India through travel and learning

India is a country that Sweden can learn from

India is positioning itself at the forefront of the development of critical technologies and scaling up innovation from partners in Europe. India’s indigenous space programme and its public-private model of digital infrastructure for payments and public services delivery, for example, are internationally acclaimed efforts that are

showcasing the country’s capabilities and talent pool. At the same time, the Indian government hopes to promote the country’s traditional cultural heritage of yoga, ayurveda, and classical music and dance. Yet, there was little change in views among the Swedish public about India as a place from which Sweden could draw knowledge or ideas. A slightly increased number of respondents disagreed with the idea that Sweden could learn from India, when compared to the previous survey (Figure 9). When broken down by different demographics, we see that younger people or those with a higher income tended to feel



India was a place that Sweden could learn from in greater numbers. However, all

demographics disagreed with this statement in higher proportions than they agreed.

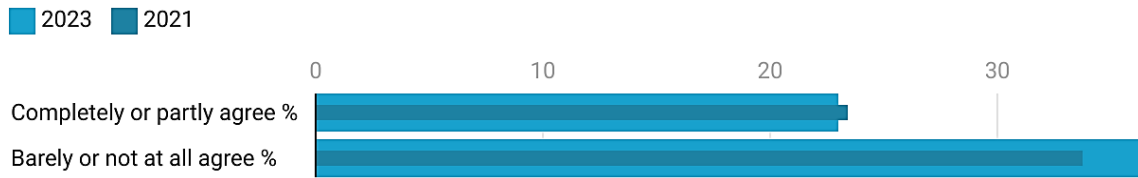


Figure 9: Views about India as a place Sweden can learn from in the 2023 and 2021 surveys.

India is a country I would like to visit

The Swedish public continues to be relatively ambivalent about visiting India. The proportion of respondents saying they did not want to visit the country slightly increased from that in the 2021 round of the survey. These results are similar to those for China, which saw a slightly larger shift in

opinions between the two surveys. However, views about visiting India are more negative than those about visiting Japan. Broken down by different demographics, those who were younger or with higher levels of education tended to express desire to visit India in slightly higher numbers, as did those with a higher level of income.

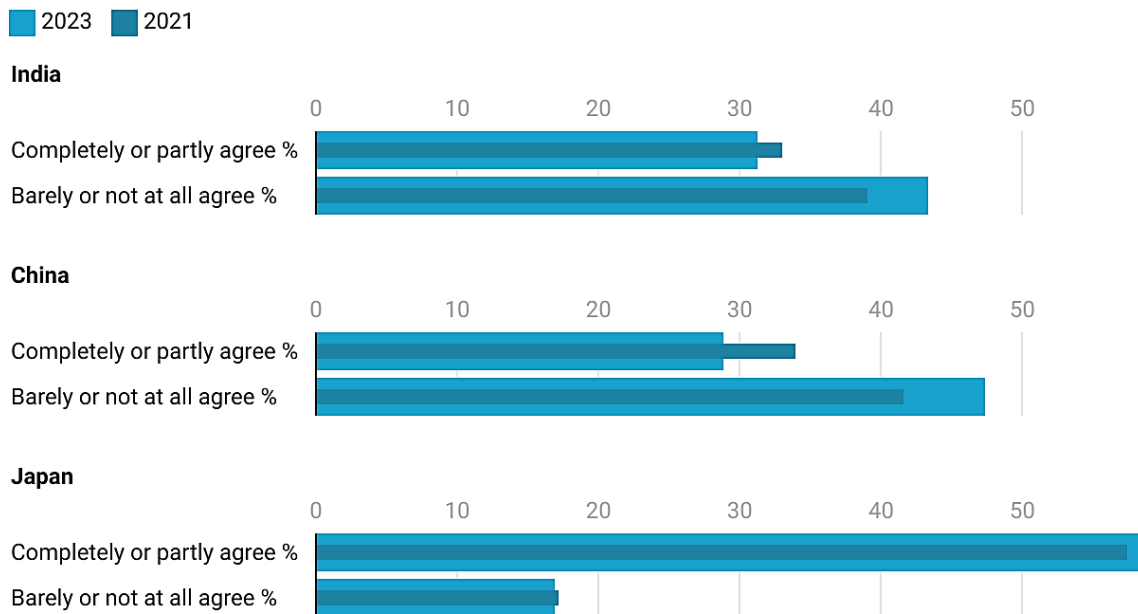


Figure 10: Views about visiting India from the 2023 and 2021 surveys.



Conclusions

As economic and political power shifts in the international system, non-western powers will increasingly influence the direction of global politics and economics. It has been projected that four out of five of the largest economies in the world will be outside the transatlantic region by 2050. Geopolitical and global economic trends, as well as domestic developments, enable India to move to centre stage in international affairs.

The Swedish government, like others across Europe, currently views relations with India as a priority and is engaged in efforts to foster greater cooperation with the country, particularly enhanced business ties. Yet, these efforts risk being slowed down by low levels of knowledge and potentially negative preconceptions about India in Swedish society. Drawing on data from the SOM public opinion survey, this report has shown that Swedes both lack knowledge about India and hold quite ambivalent perceptions regarding cooperation with the country.

Over a third of respondents to the survey answered “don’t know” to many of the questions posed about India. The members of the Swedish public surveyed particularly expressed a lack of knowledge regarding questions about Sweden-India cooperation. This points to a significant knowledge gap amongst the Swedish public when it comes to India, echoing the findings of other recent surveys such as that conducted amongst Swedish businesses. When they did express views about India, many respondents stated that they increasingly saw it as a country that is not acting responsibly internationally, and which has a problematic human rights record at home. Perhaps connected to these perceptions, they tended to state that they do not support greater Indian investment into Sweden, and they expressed only limited support for increasing overall cooperation between Sweden and India.

It is likely that the views of many members of the Swedish public are shaped by Swedish media reporting about India. The Swedish media was found to report on India much less than other major Asian countries, particularly China. Examining the content of news reports found that they focus largely on India’s involvement in the war in Ukraine, and to a lesser extent on domestic problems related to human rights within India. There was very little reporting about other topics, such as Indian business or outward investment.

Overall, the Swedish public’s lack of knowledge about India, and mixed perceptions, risk putting the brakes on efforts being made by the Swedish government to accelerate cooperation. On the other hand, the current lack of knowledge implies plenty of room for movement in public opinion. To enable the implementation of the government’s current plans for deepening the partnership with India, steps could be taken to address knowledge gaps and develop more informed perceptions. We recommend that the Swedish government, with the support of Swedish industry and other relevant stakeholders, could:

- Encourage sub-national levels of exchange between Sweden and India. Steps could also be taken to enable decentralised connections between Swedish regions and India’s regional states in order to develop a more geographically spread knowledge base. There could also be initiatives to further promote contacts between delegations of Indian decision makers and Swedish local authorities, business chambers, and higher education institutions.
- Establish a National Node for India Studies. This should be given a mandate to: (i) carry out analysis and



share knowledge of India and its footprint as a rising economic and political power; (ii) create synergies by cooperating with existing research environments relevant to the priorities of the Sweden-India partnership; (iii) facilitate knowledge exchanges between academia, business and government; (iv) work with already existing coordinating networks and functions within the Swedish Government Offices and public agencies, such as Team Sweden India, to also raise knowledge levels within the Swedish bureaucracy about geopolitical and geoeconomic issues where India has a footprint; (v) connect and partner with Swedish industry to provide capacity building and analytical support for strategic decision making

with regards to India; and (vi) inform the public through outreach activities and media presence. The National Node for India Studies should seek the active involvement of organisations across societal sectors in advisory roles. Accessible analysis should be prioritised.

- Create opportunities for exchanges between Indian and Swedish journalists. These exchanges might involve journalist programmes in higher education, as well as the FOJO media institute, and the Swedish Institute. Both governments should seek to facilitate visa procedures for journalists in both directions.



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