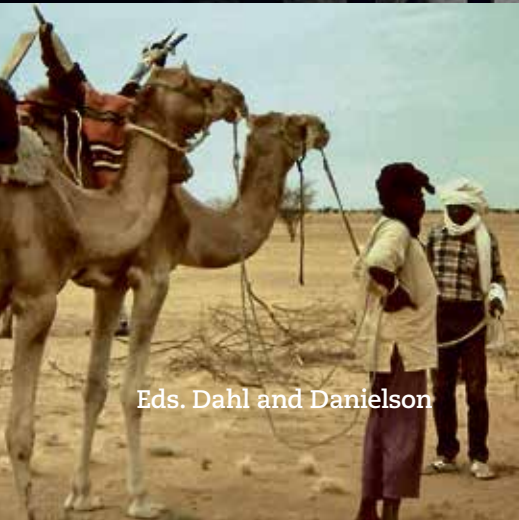




Faculty of Social Sciences Stockholm University 1964 – 2014



Eds. Dahl and Danielson



STOCKHOLMS
UNIVERSITET
+
Stockholm
University

Swedish Institute for Social Research

Eskil Wadensjö

THE FORM OF the organization of research financed by the state differs markedly between countries. In some countries, like in Sweden, it is carried out mainly in universities, but in other countries the majority of institutions are outside academia. In Russia, social science and other research is carried out predominantly in separate research institutes. In Germany, the Max Planck Institutes are very important for social science research. It should be emphasized that, in addition to publicly funded research institutions, there are in most countries those that have their core funding through private sources.

The Nordic countries have different models. Norway has a large sector of publicly funded institutes outside the universities, while Sweden only has a small one. There is a trend towards more research being done at universities in the Nordic countries. In conjunction with a major university reform in Denmark a few years ago, several of the university inde-

pendent institutes have now instead become part of a university. One exception is the SFI (the Danish Centre for Social Research), which is largely engaged in research in the same fields as SOFI. SFI is still an independent institute. In Norway, the previously independent NOVA (Norwegian Social Research Institute) became part of the Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences from January 1, 2014. This could be part of a new development in Norway.

During the last decade some independent research institutes in Sweden have either been closed down, such as the Centre for Working Life Studies (*Arbetslivsinstitutet*), or become part of a university, such as the Stress Research Institute. That some institutes have been shut down or become part of a university does not mean that the number of institutes has decreased – on the contrary, the number of institutes is increasing, but usually as parts of universities. So what are the government's arguments for the

creation of new institutes? Why not just give the departments at universities more resources instead? The explanation is likely that the government wants to have more knowledge in some specific areas and therefore wants sector institutes, and that it wants more research in areas where the topic will be studied by several disciplines. The formation of institutes would thus be an effort to increase research in some areas and increase collaboration between different disciplines and even across faculty boundaries. There is a strong belief in the need for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research. The emergence of SOFI can be seen in this light. Arguments for linking these research institutes to universities perhaps above all reflect a double desire to ensure a synergy between research and teaching, and to see to it that sector research is of high scientific quality.

The Social Science Research Institute – a forerunner

The two oldest institutes operating within the Faculty of Social Sciences at Stockholm University are IIES (Institute for International Economics) and SOFI. However, there have been other social science research institutes at Stockholm University (or rather its predecessor, the Stockholm University College – *Stockholms högskola*) long before the advent of IIES and SOFI. The most important precursor was the Social Science Re-

search Institute, which was founded by Gustav Cassel already in the early 20th century but gained momentum only when Gösta Bagge became professor of economics two decades later. Bagge was a very successful academic entrepreneur. He built up both the Social Science Research Institute and the Social Institute (the Institute for Social Policy and Local Government Education and Research), a professional educational institution that focused mainly on training personnel for a variety of municipal services, such as counsellors and municipal administrators.¹ The Social Institute (*Socialinstitutet*) later received the name the School of Social Work (*Socialhögskolan*) and is now the Department of Social Work within the Faculty of Social Sciences at Stockholm University.

The Social Science Research Institute conducted primarily, but not exclusively, economic research. The development of the system of national accounts, macroeconomic theory, and demographics were important areas. Many scholars who later became well-known researchers of the so-called Stockholm School participated in the work.² Funding was primarily by the Rockefeller Foundation, an American research fund, and by that the re-

1 See Andreen and Boalt (1987) for an interesting study of Bagge's efforts to start and develop the two institutes.

2 See Jonung (ed.) (1991) for several contributions on the start and further development of the Stockholm School.

searchers participated in various functions in a comprehensive public inquiry, the Unemployment Commission.³ The Rockefeller Foundation had decided to build up European social science research and provided support to universities in several countries.⁴ Stockholm and the Social Sciences Institute received one of the larger grants. The largest went to LSE (London School of Economics) in London. The Rockefeller Foundation grants funded, for example, a new building for the institute's activities, which was inaugurated in October 1932 (the address was Odengatan 61, next to the Stockholm Public Library), and a social science library.⁵ Gradually, the activities of the Institute became less extensive. Bagge came to devote himself to politics instead. He became leader of *Högerpartiet* (the conservative party) and cabinet minister in the coalition government during World War II. The Rockefeller Foundation was prepared to inject more funds into the institute, but the institute refrained from applying. The Social Science Research Institute was closed down and the dif-

ferent parts of the institute came instead to be part of various departments, and among other things, to form the foundation of the Department of Sociology.

Institute for Labour Studies

In 1966, the Swedish Parliament decided to grant funds for the formation of an Institute for Labour Studies. It became an independent entity formally and directly under the University Chancellor Board (UKÄ) but tied in various ways to Stockholm University. Rudolf Meidner, a noted economist working at LO, became its director. The Institute had a small budget but started nonetheless different ambitious projects such as the development of a very extensive bibliography regarding labour market research in Sweden and a series of lectures on the labour market issues that were open to the public and various research projects. Meidner was simultaneously chairman of EFA (The Expert Group for Labour Market Studies), which funded labour market research. There was a close cooperation between the two entities. In 1969, the Institute also started AKPA, a set of courses on the undergraduate level concerning labour market studies and personnel management. *Arbetsgivaren* (Swedish Employers' Association's Journal) had on February 21, 1968 a full-page article with the headline "Undergraduate course prepared in the Labour Institute's auspices." I will return to these activities in basic education later on.

3 See Wadensjö (1991) for a presentation of how Bagge integrated the work in the Unemployment Commission with that in the Social Sciences Research Institute. The Unemployment Commission was active between 1927 and 1935.

4 See Craver (1991) for a thorough study of the role of the Rockefeller Foundation for the development of the Social Science Research Institute.

5 See Andreen and Boalt (1987) for a description of the four areas that the support from the Rockefeller foundation contributed to.

A new institute with a broader mission

The Institute for Labour was small and started having serious problems when Meidner left the institute after a conflict with the government. Meidner was responsible for the governmental commission on low incomes (*Låginkomstutredningen*) when the minister who was responsible for labour issues within the government decided to close down the commission earlier than planned and before a planned final report was completed and published. Meidner was upset and did not just leave the governmental commission on low incomes but also the presidency of the EFA and the directorship of the Institute of Labour Studies. He returned to his former employer, LO.

An investigation into social policy research was commissioned by the Ministry of Education and carried out by Bo Södersten, professor of economics at the University of Gothenburg, who acted as secretary in the investigation, see (Utbildningsdepartementet 1971:4). It resulted in a professorship in social policy being established from January 1, 1972. This chair was to be added to a reconstituted and expanded Institute of Labour Studies named the Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI). The directorship that Rudolf Meidner left became a professorship in labour market policies, and the level of living standard research that had been started within the work of the governmental

commission on low incomes was continued within the new institute. A position as associate professor in the level of living standard research was also set up.⁶ The Institute came to administratively lie under UKÄ (University Chancellor Board). It was intended to in different ways interact with Stockholm University and the School of Social Work, not least regarding education. The importance of the role of professors in the supervision of research students was especially stressed.

Three professorships were simultaneously announced, but specified according to field of research and not according to discipline. Many people from different disciplines applied for the positions. The holders became: Gösta Rehn (labour market policy; economist), Walter Korpi (social policy; sociologist) and Sten Johansson (welfare and living standard research; sociologist). It was thus researchers in economics and sociology who became professors. That meant ultimately that SOFI became an institute where those who work as researchers are almost all from these two disciplines, even today.

The gradual expansion of the Institute

During the 1970s, SOFI's budget allocation was too low compared to the purpose of the institute, according to SOFI's board. Instead,

⁶ See Kungl. Maj:ts propositioner 1971:36 and 1971:41 for details.



Entrance to SOFI from the elevators, at the furthest end of *Södra huset* – at the 9th floor in Building F. (Photo: Mats Danielson)

additions to the activities came to a large extent via various external grants. SOFI's board therefore asked to get a budget increase of 50 percent in the budget process for the year 1978/79 to UHÄ (The Authority for Universities and University Colleges, the sequel to UKÄ). It did not receive such an increase. Instead, a public inquiry, the FOSAM investigation, was appointed. In February 1979 (DsU 1979:4), the committee came with a report that included a proposal for a major expansion, but also a radical reorganization of the SOFI. Ac-

cording to the proposal, SOFI would become an institute outside the university world and change its name to the Institute for Social and Labour Market Policy (ISAF). It would be headed by a director, having a very large board, accommodate the EFA secretariat, and manage research projects from the Swedish Inheritance Fund (*Allmänna arvsfonden*) and the Delegation for Social Research (DSF). Administration would become a very large part of the activities. Many of those who participated in the investigation in various functions made a reser-

vation or delivered separate opinions regarding this proposal. Many of the statements of those who had the report submitted to them for consideration were also not in favour of the proposal. I myself wrote a critique of the report on behalf of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Lund University. The proposal of the committee was not accepted, and instead SOFI became an autonomous institute within Stockholm University from January 1, 1981 (outside any faculty and with the budget set by the parliament). It was granted a somewhat but not a particularly large increase in resources on this occasion. Much later, on July 1, 1994, SOFI became part of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The government granted on three occasions additional permanent increases to the budget to SOFI: one for a professorship in labour market policy evaluation research, one for a professorship in social policy, and one for general reinforcements. In between and afterwards, there has been a gradual erosion of the budget, common to the whole university sector, as budget increases have been lower than price inflation and wage growth. After Gösta Rehn's retirement and Sten Johansson's appointment as director general of Statistics Sweden, positions as professors were announced without specifying a scientific discipline, only research areas. Eskil Wadensjö and Robert Erikson became holders of the two professorships. Subsequent positions as professors have all been announced

as professors in economics or sociology with an indication of a specified topic in a respective discipline.

The professorships announced later have thus all been in economics or sociology with a focus on SOFI's various research areas. The new professors were Anders Björklund and Markus Jäntti in economics, as well as Thor Norström, Michael Tåhlin, Jan O. Jonsson and Sten-Åke Stenberg in sociology. In addition, a professorship in migration and ethnic studies, of which the holder (Per Lundborg) was an economist, was transferred from CEIFO to SOFI. The list of these appointments shows that all who have been employed as a professor after the announcement of a professorship have been male. However, three women have been promoted from lecturer to professor. This applies to Åsa Rosén, Ann-Charlotte Ståhlberg and Marianne Sundström. Four men have also been promoted from lecturer to professor, viz. Tomas Korpi, Matthew Lindquist, Ola Sjöberg and Bill Sund.

Very important for the business have been large several-year grants of funding for research on immigration and integration (SULCIS) from the Swedish Research Council, and funds from FAS/Forte. Also important concerning research that covers large parts of SOFI's activities is the three-year funding for specific research projects from various research councils, post-doc positions for those who have presented very good

PhD theses (Wallander scholarships) and post-doc positions for external recruitment of young qualified researchers. Contributions have also come to SOFI for the purpose of funding researchers who take part in various public inquiries. Several of the researchers have been on leave for various external duties, thereby releasing resources for hiring other researchers.

Researchers at SOFI have very often been commissioned as experts in the scientific community, such as faculty opponents on PhD examinations, members of PhD examination committees, experts in the recruitment of professors at other universities, experts in assessments of docent applications and of applications to be promoted to professor, in addition to members of various research council boards and research council priority groups.

The Institute has gradually grown from about ten people at the time of the Institute for Labour Studies to about 25 in the mid-1970s, 60 at the turn of the century and now somewhere between 80 and 90 employees. The increase in the early stages was especially high among PhD students. Later, expansion has mainly been regarding postdoctoral researchers. The number and proportion of administrative personnel has decreased continuously. Computerization has led to some tasks having disappeared or become reduced in scope. There has been a lively discussion in the institute regarding what the optimal size is for an institute

of SOFI's nature. A spin-off was made by research in medical sociology that was first transferred to the Department of Sociology and later to the research institute CHES.

Economics and sociology – research at SOFI

As mentioned earlier, SOFI's researchers and teachers have with few exceptions been economists or sociologists. The exceptions among postdoctoral researchers have been one each in statistics, economic history and history. The directorship for the institute has also alternated between economists and sociologists.

There are three research areas and three units at SOFI: labour economics, social policy and level of living studies. The first is pursued by economists and the other two by sociologists. There are no watertight compartments between the three units. The economists do research not only on the labour market but also on social policy and often use data from the level of living surveys for their studies. The sociologists do research on various labour market issues. Researchers from the different units and disciplines work together on different studies.

Within the labour economics unit many different topics are dealt with such as unemployment, education, income distribution, intergenerational income mobility, immigration and integration, the effects of various social securi-

ty schemes and self-employment. If we look at the dissertations and scientific articles we find besides these mentioned areas studies in economic theory and on types of labour markets other than Western European ones, such as for example those of Mexico and the Soviet Union. Most of the studies use econometric methods and different types of register data, but also, as previously mentioned, data from various interview surveys, such as the level of living surveys.

In the social policy group, many studies are based on a research program on social policy in 18 different OECD countries from the 1930s onwards (SCIP, the Social Indicator Program), but also studies about various parts of Swedish social policy. In this area there has been collaboration with the Department of History at the University. There have been many other comparative studies, especially studies in which the various Nordic countries were compared. Also, other databases have been developed and used for various studies. For example, there is a level of living survey about the unemployed, and a longitudinal database that is based on many different types of data concerning those born in Stockholm in 1953, a follow-up to the much debated Metropolitan project. In the social policy section, there is also social science research on alcohol consumption and its effects.

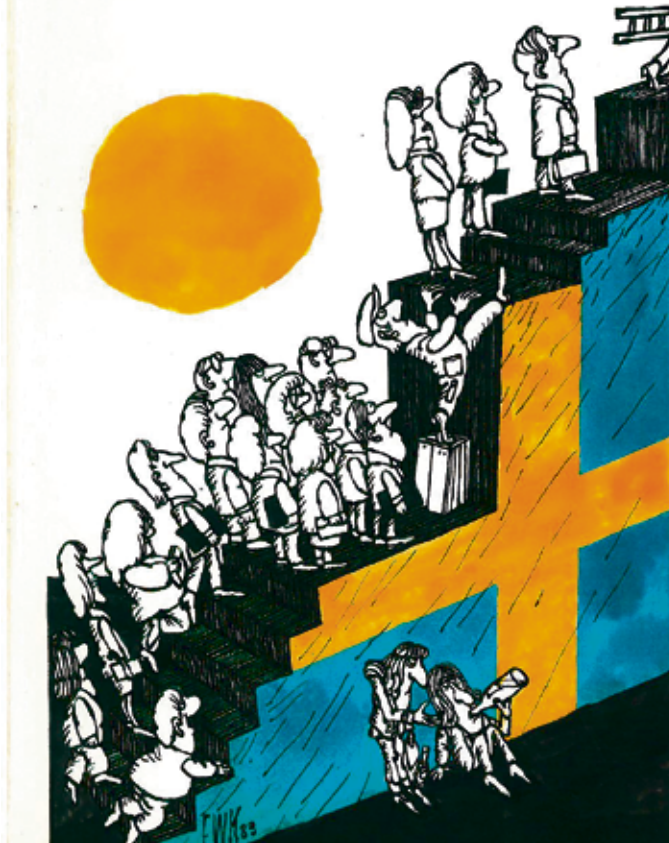
The first of level of living survey (LNU) was conducted in 1968 as part of the governmental commission on low incomes. Subsequently,

such surveys were conducted in 1974, 1981, 1991, 2000 and 2010. They are surveys of a random sample of the Swedish population aged between 18 and 75 years. The surveys are panel studies, but the panels are updated with random samples of those added to the survey population from the previous surveys (by young people who have reached the age when they are covered by the sample and by newcomers to Sweden). The interviews are supplemented with register data. The interviews have gradually been expanded in various ways such that children of interviewees aged between 11 and 18 years also answer questions (child-LNU) and the interviewees present their employment biographies. In recent rounds, the level of living surveys have also been conducted among persons older than 75 years – a task now in the charge of the research institute ARC (Aging Research Centre). In the last round, a separate survey of living standards among foreign-born and their children (LNU-UFB) was also conducted. It has been led by SULCIS, whose collaboration is mainly between economists at SOFI and researchers at the Departments of Economics and Sociology.

The graduate program

Professors at SOFI and also other researchers there have been involved in the graduate programs in economics and sociology at the Uni-

ROBERT ERIKSON RUNE ÅBERG (red.)
**VÄLFÄRD
I FÖRÄNDRING**
LEVNADSVILLKOR I SVERIGE 1968-1981



'Welfare in change: Living Conditions in Sweden 1968–1981', Prisma Publications. A major research involvement for the Swedish Institute for Social Research has been comprehensive analyses of living conditions in the country.

versity, especially since the mid-1980s. They have given different courses and not least been supervisors for many students. Already in the 1970s, PhDs were granted to a few doctoral students working at SOFI, however enrolled at another university and with the supervisor at a university other than Stockholm University, but graduate student supervision expanded dramatically in the 1980s.

There was, at the beginning of the 1980s, a few graduate students at Stockholm University whose focus was in the areas that were central to the SOFI's research. It was therefore important to get students interested in the field. One method used was to provide courses and supervise at different educational levels. Pretty soon, the number of PhD students increased. This has continued over the years. In the SOFI dissertation series there are now 91 theses (40 in economics, one in economic history and 50 in sociology). Two of these dissertations have been presented at other universities and with tutors from other universities, but written by graduate students who have worked at SOFI for a longer period. On the other hand, there are three PhD theses for which the supervisor was at SOFI but the theses were published in a form other than the SOFI dissertation series. These theses demonstrate the breadth of research activities at SOFI. They cover a wide field of research in economics and sociology (and one thesis was, as mentioned, in economic history).

In the early 1980s, most being granted a PhD were men, but gradually the distribution between male and female graduate students has become more equal. So, for example, I have myself been the principal PhD supervisor for 16 women and 14 men who successfully defended their theses.

Some students have stayed for a long time as researchers at SOFI after they have received their PhDs. Others have directly or a short time after the defence of their PhD at SOFI moved on to other jobs. Not a few have gone to positions at the Departments of Economics and of Sociology at Stockholm University, while others have been employed as a researcher at various research institutes within the university, such as CHESS (Centre for Health Equity Studies), ARC (Aging Research Centre) or the Institute of Latin American Studies. Others have gone on to other universities or to research institutes outside the university, such as FOI and IFAU. Many people have found work at a ministry or some of the various central agencies, such as the Labour Market Administration, the Social Insurance Board, the Authority for Higher Education, Sveriges Riksbank (the Central Bank of Sweden), Statistics Sweden or the National Agency for Education. Still other have gone to labour market organizations such as the Swedish Agency for Government Employers, LO (the central blue-collar association) and SACO (the central organization for



AKPA is an educational unit belonging to the Swedish Institute of Social Research, particularly offering insights into the workings of the labour market. (Photo: Mats Danielson)

university educated employees). Some have gone to work outside Sweden in places such as the EU, the EU's investment bank, and research institutes in Finland and the US.

AKPA – SOFI's undergraduate educational program

In 1969, during the period of the Institute for Labour Studies, undergraduate courses were launched at Labour Relations and Human Resources (AKPA). The training was aimed both at

those who wanted a more vocational conclusion to their academic training and to working professionals who wanted to deepen their knowledge regarding the subjects treated in the courses. It was part of a program for vocational courses at universities called YRK or DYRK courses. The institute was a pioneer in this type of course. Courses on the same topic started at other universities with AKPA as a model (I helped to start such a course at Lund University), but YRK courses were also started in other fields.

The AKPA courses were mainly based on knowledge from the research available within the two disciplines represented at the institute: economics and sociology. However, there have always been courses also in labour law within AKPA, partly with internal and partly with external teachers. The courses garner a great deal of interest from the students' side and only a small proportion of those applying can be accepted. AKPA is also involved with courses included as part of a broader educational study program.

Highly competent scientists have sought and received lectureships at AKPA. In recent years, all AKPA lecturers have been promoted to professors (in history, economics or sociology). The teachers have often been on leave of absence from a portion of their teaching for conducting research funded mainly by external grants. This has made it possible for PhD students and young postdoctoral researchers to gain teaching experience, an experience that is very important for those who want to continue with research and teaching in academia and need to qualify in order to get a teaching position.

The third task

The third task – contact with the surrounding society – has been a central part of SOFI's activities since its inception. Researchers at SOFI contribute in several ways. They participate in various

government investigations, write background reports to various authorities and hold many presentations and lectures outside the university. Among the many studies for public inquiries, two concerning gender equality could be mentioned: The Report on Women Power (*Kvinnomaktutredningen*) and the Delegation for Gender Equality in Working Life (*Delegationen för jämställdhet i arbetslivet*). Reports to different authorities include reports to the National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) and the Fiscal Policy Council (*Finanspolitiska rådet*). Among the many external presentations, those during the Almedalen weeks could be mentioned.

SOFI as part of the Faculty and the University

The Swedish Institute for Social Research, SOFI, is one of now six research institutes in the Faculty of Social Sciences. SOFI is in several ways a part of the activities of the faculty. Apart from its own successful AKPA courses, there is close cooperation at various levels with the Departments of Economics and of Sociology: in basic education, with graduate courses and through mentoring of graduate students. In research, there is close collaboration with the same departments but also with some of the Faculty's other research institutes. Researchers at SOFI have also for many years been involved in the faculty administrative work through membership in the Faculty Board, for my part three pe-

riods (nine years) as dean, and by SOFI researchers being members of various committees within the Faculty. The different forms of cooperation are very important for SOFI part and also, we believe, for the Faculty, and they are very much facilitated by the fact that SOFI is a part of the University and of the Faculty of Social Sciences.



- Andreen, Per G. and Gunnar Boalt 1987. *Bagge får tacka Rockefeller* (Bagge must thank Rockefeller), Report from the School of Social Work 30, School of Social Work, Stockholm University.
- Björklund, Anders (ed.) 2002. *SOFI 1972–2002. En jubileumsskrift*. (SOFI from 1972 to 2002. An anniversary publication).
- Craver, Earlene 1991. Gösta Bagge, the Rockefeller Foundation, and empirical social science research in Sweden, 1924–1940. In Lars Jonung (ed.), *The Stockholm School of Economics Revisited*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ds U 1979:4. *Ett institut för social- och arbetsmarknadspolitisk forskning*, Delbetänkande avlämnat av Forskningssamverkanskommittén (Fosam) (An Institute for Social and Labour Market Policy Research, Partial report delivered by the Research Committee (Fosam)), February 1979.
- Institute for Social Research (various years), Annual Reports.
- Jonung, Lars (ed.) 1991. *The Stockholm School of Economics Revisited*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kungl. Majt:s proposition 1971:36 angående social utbildning och forskning (The Swedish Government's bill 1971:36 regarding social education and research).
- Kungl. Majt:s proposition 1971:41 angående ett institut för social forskning (The Swedish Government's Bill 1971:41 regarding an Institute for Social Research).
- Utbildningsdepartementet 1971:4. Mål och riktlinjer för verksamheten vid ett institut för social forskning. Förslag avgivet av organisationskommittén för ett institut för social forskning, Stockholm 1971.
- Wadensjö, Eskil 1991. The Committee on Unemployment and the Stockholm School. In Lars Jonung (ed.), *The Stockholm School of Economics Revisited*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Entry to *Södra huset* from the south, close to SOFI.
(Photo: Mats Danielson)





Stockholm
University