



The Swedish ambition: becoming “more like the rest of Europe”

A review of alcohol policy 2025 + narrative strategies for the road ahead

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On the Swedish “more like Europe”-narrative 2024/2025:

Jessica Rosencrantz's Post



Jessica Rosencrantz is in Europa.

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Nu gör vi Sverige lite mer som resten av Europa

Snart blir utelivet roligare och företagandet enklare. Regeringen tillsätter en snabbspårsutredning som ska föreslå hur restauranger och caféer ska kunna få serveringstillstånd även om de inte har sittplatser inomhus. Den utreder också hur företag och andra aktörer ska kunna servera alkohol utan kök och matservering.

Den Moderatledda regeringen tar ytterligare ett steg mot ett friare – och roligare – Sverige.





What the “more like Europe”- narrative entails:

- Introduction of farm sales of alcohol,
- Proposed removal of the food requirement for serving alcohol
- Initiatives regarding extended opening hours and more liberal serving requirements of alcohol outlets.





Introducing farm-sales of alcohol

- Legislation passed the 1st of June 2025
- Mirrors southern European vineyard traditions
- Producers can now sell limited amounts to visitors
- 30 minute tour and public health lecture required
- The Swedish alcohol monopoly remains intact - for now
- Mixed reception from the industry.





Removing the food requirement at bars and pubs

- The government has announced plans to abolish requirement to have kitchens and food menus at bars and pubs - enabling the sell of alcohol only.
- Ambition to mimic wine bars in for example Paris and Barcelona”,
- Removes cornerstone of Sweden's approach to responsible consumption.





Proposals for extended opening hours and more liberal serving policies

- Government proposal (M) to allow bars and restaurants to serve alcohol for longer than 01:00, and for the alcohol monopoly to have longer opening hours.
- Government proposal (M) to create “geographical” alcohol permits”.
- Fast-track inquiry on serving permits for restaurants and cafés with no indoor seating.

All intended to mimic models in other European states.





Looking beyond Sweden - are other states following?

As of today - no. Quite the opposite, interestingly enough.





What can we learn - and how to respond:

1. Recognising that this is not just a policy shift, it's a cultural rebranding of alcohol policy. We need to shift our own narrative to be the enablers of freedom, responsibility, equality, and health.
2. Showing that the Nordic model is quintessentially European.
3. Focusing on cooperation and knowledge-sharing between us partner organizations.





Questions and/or discussion points