

Trend reversal – Sick leave decreases among Swedish companies

During 2024, absenteeism in the business sector decreased, primarily due to fewer short-term sick leaves. At the same time, the gap between women's and men's sick leave rates continued to widen. This is shown in Avonova's recurring compilation of absenteeism among the company's clients.

Sick leaves dropped by 0.3 percentage points last year compared to the full year of 2023, and the figure was even lower than that of 2022.

"It is obviously positive that absenteeism is being pushed down, as it is an important part of creating a more sustainable working life. At the same time, longer-term sick leaves have remained essentially unchanged, which indicates that there is more work to be done. Above all, it is about preventive measures," says Fredrik Sparring, a company doctor at Avonova.

Development of sick leave among Swedish companies 2022–2024

	Full year 2024	Full year 2023	Full year 2022
Total sick leave	4.9%	5.2%	5.0%
Share of short-term sick leave (days 1–14)	45.0%	47.7%	59.0%
Share of long-term sick leave (day 14+)	55.0%	52.3%	41.0%
Total sick leave – men	4.2%	4.4%	4.4%
Total sick leave – women	6.2%	6.3%	5.9%

Source: Avonova's analysis based on MedHelp's statistics database on sick leave in Sweden 2022–2024. Values in percentage.

The gap between women's and men's sick leave is increasing

The compilation shows that differences in sick leave rates between women and men continue to grow. The gap has clearly widened since 2022 and is now at 2.0 percentage points.

"This is a trend that must be reversed, and targeted health interventions for women should be considered. Both employers and political decision-makers have a responsibility here," says Fredrik Sparring.

Some reduction in parental sick leave

The analysis also takes a closer look at specific absences related to childcare. The statistics indicate a slight decline in parental sick leave during 2024, with the proportion of working time decreasing marginally to 0.74 percent. While reductions were observed for both women and men, women's parental leave remains 54 percent higher than men's over the year.

About the compilation

Avonova conducts a recurring analysis of absenteeism within the business sector, based on MedHelp's statistics database. The compilation includes data from 500 Swedish companies with a total of 200,000 employees.

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About Avonova

Avonova is Nordic's leading provider of occupational health services and is the only Nordic occupational health services provider with a fully integrated hybrid digital/physical delivery model.

Avonova offers a comprehensive range of services to promote well-being and reduce absences, among employees of companies and institutions of all sizes and in all industries. It is leading in preventive evidence based occupational health services in highest impact areas, such as presenteeism, vaccination, and drug testing and rehab.

Avonova has its main offices in Larvik, Norway and Stockholm, Sweden and delivers its services digitally and from 166 locations in Norway and Sweden, by about 1 100 employees – mainly physicians, psychiatrists, nurses, and workplace engineers. For more information, visit www.avonova.se/no/fi.