

'Nordics more economically free than the UK'

Written by Tim Worstall

Friday, 21 January 2011 07:18 - Last Updated Thursday, 20 January 2011 11:58



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- ['Swedish model' outranks 'American dream'](#)
- [Sweden the most competitive EU nation](#)
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Sam Bowman [points us](#) to the new Index of Economic Freedom statistics. And I want to just point to something originally noted by [Scott Sumner](#), something which can be gleaned from these statistics. That something is that in many ways, the Nordics, those icy social democracies so adored by the British left, are in fact more economically free than we in the UK are.

Flick back and forth between the pages for [Denmark](#), [the UK](#) and [Sweden](#). Yes, the first and last have eyepopping marginal tax rates and the government is an even larger portion of the economy than our own is of our money. But look at some of the other measures: both Sweden and Denmark have higher protections of property rights than we do. Both have higher business freedom than we do. Both have less corruption than we do. Denmark has both higher financial freedom and higher labour freedom than we do.

And in other matters not in those statistics, both of them have lower corporate and capital taxation than we do.

It's not for nothing that Professor Sumner has been shouting for years that underneath the tax rates, Denmark is actually the freest, most classically liberal, of all the major economies.

Which is, as I've noted before, something which our lefty friends really do need to think upon. If those Nordics really are the societies which you admire, then shouldn't you all be campaigning to make us more like them? Campaigning to increase property rights, increase business, labour, and financial freedom?

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Well, yes, actually, they should, they should be singing from exactly the same hymn sheet as us here at the [Adam Smith Institute](#) . Once we've reached that nirvana of a truly free and liberal society, that classically liberal desirable economy, then we can have the further argument about whether the votestealers should be confiscating 50% of our money or 25%.



At which point no doubt we shall differ again: but let's get the underlying structure right first, eh?

Tim Worstall,
English writer and [blogger](#) .