



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice

Government reshuffle, 27 July 2017

Published 27 July 2017

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven today announced a government reshuffle. Three ministers have chosen to leave their posts, two new ministers have been appointed, and two ministers have been entrusted with revised areas of responsibility.

Ministers Anna Johansson, Anders Ygeman and Gabriel Wikström are leaving their posts.

Newly appointed ministers

Minister for Infrastructure Tomas Eneroth

Minister for Migration, and Deputy Minister for Justice: Heléne Fritzon

Changes by ministry

Ministry of Justice Minister for Justice and Home Affairs: Morgan Johansson

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs Minister for Health and Social Affairs: Annika Strandhäll



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Employment,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President Jean-Claude Juncker to host Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth

Published 23 January 2017 Updated 23 January 2017

Together with President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will host a Social Summit in Gothenburg on 17 November 2017, focusing on promoting fair jobs and growth.

The Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth will gather heads of state and government, the social partners and other key players to work together to promote fair jobs and growth. Well-functioning and fair European labour markets, effective and sustainable social protection systems and the promotion of social dialogue at all levels will be at the heart of these discussions.

In spite of recent improvements in economic conditions, the legacy of the worst economic and social crisis in recent times has been far-reaching. The world of work and our societies are changing fast, with new opportunities and new challenges arising from globalisation, the digital revolution, changing work patterns and demographic developments. We share a responsibility and an interest in working for a more prosperous and 'future-proof' Europe, where economic and social developments go hand-in-hand.

The Summit will be an opportunity for key stakeholders to discuss the policy priorities and initiatives set at European level and to see how the European

Union, the Member States and social partners at all levels can deliver on their shared economic and social priorities.

President Jean-Claude Juncker said: “Since the start of my mandate, I have made clear that I wanted a more social Europe. We have taken important first steps to achieve that. This year will be crucial. Following the broad public consultation, it is time to establish the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Social Summit in Sweden will help us to deliver the momentum and put social priorities where they belong: at the top of Europe's agenda.”

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven said: “In these challenging times, we need to show that we can deliver results in peoples’ everyday lives. A more social Europe, with fair working conditions, effective labour markets and a strong social dialogue, should be a priority for all of us. I trust we can take important steps towards this goal at the Social Summit in November.”



Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Swedish campaign for relocation of the European Medicines Agency from the UK to Sweden

Published 08 December 2016 Updated 08 December 2016

Today, Thursday, the Swedish Government decided to actively work for the relocation of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) to Sweden, and to the Stockholm-Uppsala region. The process leading up to the decision by the Government was started after the British people's decision to leave the EU.

- With one of Europe's top national medicines agencies, an excellent climate for research and life science as well as good conditions for an efficient relocation, Sweden is a good future home for the EMA, says Gabriel Wikström, Minister for Health Care.

The Government will now establish a special secretariat tasked with planning and organizing Sweden's candidacy for locating the EMA to Sweden. Their mission will be to actively seek dialogue with other Member States.

- As a consequence of Brexit, operations will move from the UK. The Government will try to attract the EMA, the European Medicines Agency, to be located in Sweden. It would create many jobs and attract more investments, says Ann Linde, Minister for EU Affairs and Trade.

Overall reasons for the Government to believe that Sweden is best suited as host country for the EMA:

- Swedish Medical Products Agency is one of the main regulatory

authorities in the EU and one of the national authorities that the EMA usually hires.

- Sweden has distinguished education and research within this area as well as a good climate for the life science sector. We have a long tradition in pharmaceutical development, production and a well-established cooperation between industry and academics.
- Sweden is recognized to be transparent and effective in the way we work with agencies and organizations. The relocation needs to be done while maintaining operations within the Agency.
- Sweden has experience of locating a European agency. We will use the experience gained from locating the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, ECDC.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Budget reforms for increased welfare and security

Published 26 September 2016 Updated 26 September 2016

The Budget Bill for 2017 was presented on the 20th of September. Improvements in sickness and activity compensation, the establishment of a gender equality agency and better dental health for older people are some of the reforms in the areas for which the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is responsible. The Budget Bill for 2017 is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.

Sweden must have quality welfare services we can rely on. This is why the Government has made major investments in health, education and social services. As Sweden's population grows, strengthening welfare becomes particularly important. The Government continues to prioritise welfare services in this budget and proposes that SEK 10 billion a year be made available to municipalities and county councils in general government grants.

"We are continuing the important work to close the health gaps and develop the Swedish model. This is being achieved not least through the welfare billions, investments in better dental health for older people and additional resources to the Health and Social Care Inspectorate for supervisory activities. We are also increasing access to care for traumatised asylum seekers and new arrivals," says Minister for Health Care, Public Health and Sport Gabriel Wikström.

Several of these budget investments also affect the more vulnerable groups in society and target in particular single women, families with children on low incomes and people receiving sickness and activity compensation.

"People feeling safe is an important part of building our society. Our common insurance schemes were very badly looked after during eight years of a government led by the Moderate Party. This is why I am very pleased to support investments that strengthen the Swedish model and build up our social insurance system again," says Minister for Social Security Annika Strandhäll.

The Government also intends to establish a gender equality agency that will become active at the beginning of 2018 to ensure that political priorities gain traction in government agencies and activities.

"Our feminist policy must have a clear impact and make a difference to people's lives. To ensure the effective implementation of gender equality policy, a special gender equality agency is needed. The Government will also prioritise preventive action to combat men's violence against women in a new national strategy with an action plan for the period 2017–2020," says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

Below is some brief information about all reforms at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs under each Minister's areas:

Reforms in Gabriel Wikström's areas

Doubling of the general dental care subsidy for people aged 65–74

The general dental care subsidy will be raised for people aged 65–74 from currently SEK 150 to SEK 300 per year. The increase will take effect on 1 July 2017.

Additional funding to the National Board of Health and Welfare for validation

The National Board of Health and Welfare will be allocated additional funding amounting to SEK 5 million for 2017. This is in addition to an earlier investment of SEK 42 million per year for validation of foreign health and medical care training.

Reinforcing the Health and Social Care Inspectorate

The Health and Social Care Inspectorate will be allocated temporary additional resources for the processing and supervision of homes for care or residence due to the large number of unaccompanied refugee children. The

Health and Social Care Inspectorate will receive SEK 40 million in 2017 for this initiative. The Inspectorate will also receive permanent additional resources of SEK 70 million per year for staffing costs and to strengthen its supervision and licensing for personal assistance providers.

Investment to combat mental ill health among traumatised asylum seekers and new arrivals

SEK 40 million per year will be allocated to the care and treatment of asylum seekers and new arrivals who have had traumatic experiences, such as war, famine and torture, so as to combat mental ill health among this group.

Teams for long-term unemployed people to strengthen sports, outdoor activities and public health

The Swedish Sports Confederation will receive funds to create work teams of long-term unemployed people in five district sports associations. These work teams are to strengthen sports, outdoor activities and public health by organising activities, preparing walks, renovating facilities, etc.

Sports associations to receive stimulation for sports and youth leaders in socially vulnerable areas

SEK 14 million per year will be provided up to 2019 to enable more sports activities, leadership development, etc. in socially vulnerable areas. SEK 18 million per year will be provided during the period 2020–2025. These investments are expected to contribute to democratic values and physical activity.

Additional resources for sports activities for asylum seekers and new arrivals

The autumn amending budget contains an additional SEK 20 million for 2016 for asylum seekers' sports activities.

Reforms in Annika Strandhäll's areas:

Increased appropriation to Försäkringskassan

The appropriation to Försäkringskassan (the Swedish social insurance agency) will increase by SEK 130 million in 2017. These resources are to be used for the increased volumes in several social insurance benefits resulting

from the increased number of new arrivals. Moreover, the resources are to be used for reforms to sickness and activity compensation and financial support to families. The resources are also for improving the quality of investigations and strengthening efforts to combat benefit fraud in the area of assistance allowance.

A trial period for studies while maintaining activity compensation

The Government proposes that a person who has received activity compensation due to reduced working capacity for at least twelve months should be able to try studying while still receiving activity compensation payments for a period of at most six months. It is proposed that this amendment enter into force on 1 February 2017.

Greater security to people entitled to hold sickness compensation dormant while working

A monthly amount equivalent to 25 per cent of the sickness compensation that has been declared dormant can be paid each month for a period of 24 months when sickness compensation is held dormant while a person is in gainful employment. It is proposed that this amendment enter into force on 1 February 2017.

Full sickness compensation from 19 years

The age limit for when full sickness compensation can be granted will be brought down to 19. This only applies to full compensation and to people who will probably never be able to work at all. People with serious disabilities will receive secure compensation whereas young people receiving activity compensation can expect measures to help them develop their work capacity. It is proposed that this amendment enter into force on 1 February 2017.

Increased guarantee compensation in sickness and activity compensation

The guarantee level for full sickness compensation and activity compensation will be raised by 0.05 price base amounts, which for people receiving full guarantee compensation means an increase of SEK 187 per month before tax per year, using the 2017 price base amount. It is proposed that this amendment enter into force on 1 July 2017.

Increased housing supplement for people receiving sickness and activity

compensation

The compensation rate in the housing supplement will be increased from 93 to 95 per cent. This increase will provide at most an additional SEK 100 in housing supplement per month.

In total, the increase in guarantee compensation and the increase in the housing supplement mean that approximately 200 000 people will receive on average just over SEK 2 000 per year from 2018.

It is proposed that this amendment enter into force on 1 January 2017.

Raised income thresholds in housing allowance

It is proposed that the income thresholds in housing allowance provided to families with children be raised from SEK 117 000 to SEK 127 000 for single people and from SEK 58 500 to SEK 63 500 for couples. It is proposed that this increase enter into force on 1 January 2017.

Increased maintenance support for older children

The Government intends to submit legislative proposals for differentiation in the amount of maintenance support received by increasing it for children who are 15 and older.

Combined with the increase in maintenance support for older children, the Government will also look into increasing the basic income tax allowance for parents required to pay maintenance.

These increases are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2018.

Increased large-family supplement

The Government proposes an increase in the large-family supplement for the third child of SEK 126 per month. It is proposed that this increase enter into force on 1 January 2017.

Increased level for adoption allowance

The Government intends to raise the adoption allowance to SEK 75 000. This will mean that the allowance will cover 33 per cent of parents' average costs. It is proposed that the amendment enter into force on 1 January 2017.

Modernised support for parents living apart

The Government intends to introduce a new special allowance in the housing allowance for children who live alternately with both parents. This means that a certain form of housing is not favoured and that the child's registered residence does not determine his or her right to support.

Reforms in Åsa Regnér's areas

Plans to establish a gender equality agency in 2018

The Government intends to establish a gender equality agency, to be operational from the beginning of 2018. For the Government to ensure that gender equality policy priorities are reflected in the management of government agencies and activities, a permanent structure at national level is needed.

National strategy to combat men's violence against women

Before the end of the year, the Government will present a new national strategy to combat men's violence against women in the Government Communication on gender equality policy. The range of measures to prevent and combat men's violence against women comprise over SEK 900 million for the period 2017–2020.

Reinforced appropriation to the National Board of Institutional Care

The National Board of Institutional Care needs to expand the number of places available in its activities due to increased demand. The Government proposes increasing the appropriation by SEK 40 million in 2017 and estimates that the appropriation should increase by an additional SEK 10 million from 2018, which means a total of SEK 50 million per year.

National knowledge centre for unaccompanied minors

The Government intends to set up a national knowledge centre at the National Board of Health and Welfare for issues concerning unaccompanied minors. The aim is to disseminate knowledge, successful methods and effective processes to the municipalities, county councils and responsible agencies that implement measures for unaccompanied minors. The National Board of Health and Welfare will receive SEK 10 million per year in 2017 and 2018 for this initiative. It will then receive SEK 5 million per year in

2019 and 2020.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Government takes initiative for bill on compensation for people sterilised in connection with changes of gender

Published 29 April 2016 Updated 29 April 2016

Until 2013, the Act concerning recognition of gender in certain cases required people who wished to change their legal gender to be sterilised. The Government is now to produce a bill under which people who were sterilised in connection with a change of gender can apply for compensation from the state. The bill will be drafted as a ministry memorandum at the Government Offices.

"Requiring those who wished to change their legal gender to be sterilised was an expression of an outlook that society and the Government today feel is wrong, and condemn. For this reason, we also want those affected by the requirement to be able to apply for compensation," says Minister for Health Care, Public Health and Sport Gabriel Wikström.

The precise details of the legislation, including the scale of compensation, will be examined at the Government Offices and presented in the ministry memorandum. The aim is for the legislation to enter into force in July 2018.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance

Published 26 May 2015 Updated 26 May 2015

Today the World Health Assembly, in Geneva, adopted the first ever Global Action Plan to combat the growing threat of antibiotic resistance, and other forms of antimicrobial resistance.

Antibiotic resistance makes it difficult, and sometimes even impossible, to treat common infections. Resistance spreads across borders and countries therefore need to cooperate and exchange experiences between them. Work must take place at all levels: internationally, regionally and nationally

- I am very happy that the World Health Assembly has adopted a Global Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance, including antibiotic resistance. Resistant bacteria represent a global and increasing challenge which crosses all borders and therefore the solutions must also involve us all, says Gabriel Wikström, Minister for Health Care, Public Health and Sport.

Sweden has a long history of active engagement in the international work against antibiotic resistance and has been leading in making the global action plan come about, under WHO leadership. Sweden, together with the UK, initiated the resolution that commissioned the WHO to develop the plan in consultation with Member States, UN organisations and other actors. Sweden also supports WHO in the establishment of a global programme for antimicrobial surveillance, as laid out in the Global Action Plan.

Last week during the World Health Assembly, Sweden and the UK hosted a ministerial breakfast with the aim of launching an Alliance of Ministers of Health against antimicrobial resistance, including antibiotic resistance. The meeting resulted in a Call to Action, committing the ministers to the global action plan against antimicrobial resistance. The call to action was signed by

14 ministers, i.a. from USA and China.

About the Global Action Plan

The overall goal of the action plan is to ensure, for as long as possible, continuity of the ability to treat and prevent infectious diseases with effective and safe medicines that are quality-assured, used in a responsible way, and accessible to all who need them.

To achieve this overall goal, five strategic objectives have been identified:

- improve awareness and understanding of antimicrobial resistance;
- strengthen surveillance and research;
- reduce the incidence of infection;
- optimize the use of antimicrobial medicines;
- ensure sustainable investment in countering antimicrobial resistance.

The plan also contains a framework that presents the actions that Member States, the Secretariat and international and national partners need to take in order to attain the goal and meet the objectives of the global plan. 11 Member States are urged to have in place, within two years of the endorsement of the draft action plan by the Health Assembly, national action plans on antimicrobial resistance that are aligned with the global action plan. These national action plans should provide the basis for an assessment of the resource needs, take into account national and regional priorities, and address relevant national and local governance arrangements.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Minister Gabriel Wikström to take part in UN conference on gender equality in New York

Published 13 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

On 14–15 January, the Barbershop Conference will take place in New York on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration. The purpose is to engage men and boys to become active advocates of gender equality. There will be a particular focus on men's violence against women and girls – one of the critical areas highlighted in the Declaration.

Minister for Health Care, Public Health and Sports Gabriel Wikström will speak at the high-level meeting on the second day of the conference, 15 January. He will talk about his own experiences of, and commitment to, gender equality. After the meeting a press briefing will be held and there will be an opportunity to ask questions.

Focus on the role of men

Attitudes and behaviour patterns need to change if we are to influence the current unequal power relations between women and men. The organisers of the conference want to discuss how men can mobilise and motivate other men to address stereotypes about masculinity and how male leaders can advance the gender equality dialogue.

The conference is a joint initiative of Iceland's and Suriname's Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York. The initiative is linked to the gender equality campaign HeForShe, which generated a great deal of

interest. Mr Wikström will also open a #HeForShe photo booth, of which Sweden is one of the sponsors.

Programme

15 January

10.30–11.00

Opening of a photo booth, Minister Gabriel Wikström will open a photo booth in which male ministers and delegates will have the opportunity to have their photo taken and join the HeForShe campaign.

Venue: UN Headquarters, New York

11.00–13.00

High-level meeting, Mr Wikström will speak at the meeting.

Venue: UN Headquarters, New York

13.30–14.30

Press conference (the Barbershop Conference)

Venue: tbc

15.30–16.00

Meeting with Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Sweden contributes medical care efforts in the fight against Ebola in West Africa

Published 16 October 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

The Government has decided to contribute an additional SEK 100 million in humanitarian support to efforts to combat the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

The new funds are to be channelled through the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency for planning and implementing medical care efforts and coordinating voluntary Swedish health workers. The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency will also contribute in other relevant ways, such as with logistical assistance.

“Sweden is now responding to the UN request for more personnel and other resources. The number of people infected in West Africa is doubling every two to three weeks. Sweden has many competent people who want and are able to contribute effectively the fight against Ebola. It is essential that all actors do their utmost. Ebola is now a global security issue,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin.

In addition to health workers, other personnel, materials (for example trucks) and logistical assistance have also been requested for the construction of accommodation for international relief workers and personnel involved in the UN-led efforts.

Swedish humanitarian support to combat the Ebola outbreak now amounts to SEK 239.3 million.

“Many people want to help, and the Government has now approved a number of decisions to step up Sweden’s efforts. A key issue is that Swedish

personnel who want to go are granted leave from work, and here I think the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions has sent positive signals that people are to be granted leave,” says Minister for Public Health Gabriel Wikström.



Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Increased measures to help relieve the Ebola epidemic

Published 09 October 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

Today, the Government took several decisions to help relieve the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. The National Board of Health and Welfare has been instructed to implement measures to make it easier for Swedish health care professionals to travel to areas affected by the Ebola outbreak.

- More health care professionals are needed on the ground and Sweden can do more. This is why we have today taken a number of decisions to quickly ensure that it is easier to get Swedish health care professionals on the ground,” says Minister for Health Care, Public Health and Sport Gabriel Wikström.

Previously the Government allocated a total of SEK 145 million in humanitarian support.

- Sweden is now continuing to take action together with the rest of the world to curb the spread of the virus and ensure that those affected receive medical care. Strong and coordinated cooperation by the international community is crucial if we are to achieve success,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin.

Coordination by the National Board of Health and Welfare

The National Board of Health and Welfare is to coordinate increased

resources and possible measures to evacuate people with a confirmed Ebola infection or who are suspected of having contracted the virus. There is a need for training to make things easier for Swedish personnel. The National Board of Health and Welfare will therefore make an inventory of what measures are needed and, if necessary, quickly implement them or support their implementation. The National Board of Health and Welfare is also to provide an economic guarantee for costs incurred in connection with any evacuation.

- Being able to offer medical evacuation from the affected areas is essential if personnel recruited for relief efforts are to feel safe,” says Mr Wikström.

- We are closely following developments and monitoring the need to quickly take additional decisions to make it easier for personnel to take part,” he adds.

Extra funds allocated

SEK 12 million is being allocated to the National Board of Health and Welfare.