



Article from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Sweden's national life sciences strategy and COVID-19

Published 12 November 2020

Sweden's national life sciences strategy was launched in late December 2019 to strengthen the long-term competitiveness of Sweden as a life sciences nation.

Life sciences contribute to improving health and quality of life of the population, ensuring economic prosperity, advancing the country as a leading knowledge nation and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Data-driven innovative solutions and scientific advances will have a fundamental impact on developments in prevention, diagnostics, treatment, monitoring, habilitation and rehabilitation, paving the way for personalised care – or precision medicine.

Sweden's research and innovation is of the highest international standard, and the life sciences industry is one of the nation's basic industries. However, international competition is intensifying. To harness the potential in the sector, a national life sciences strategy – setting out clear objectives and outlining a strategic and integrated approach – was seen as essential. Cross-sectoral collaboration between national, regional and local levels was regarded as a particularly important factor for regional responsibility for health care planning and delivery, and for coordinating and facilitating regional development.

Based on input from sector stakeholders, the Government outlined objectives in eight priority areas in which change was considered particularly important:

1. Structures for collaboration
2. Unlocking the potential of health data for use in research and innovation

3. Responsible, secure and ethical policy development
4. Integration of research and innovation into care delivery
5. Assistive technologies for increased independence, participation and health
6. Research and infrastructure
7. Skills supply, talent attraction and lifelong learning
8. International attractiveness and competitiveness

The COVID-19 pandemic, which struck shortly after the launch of Sweden's national life sciences strategy, has demonstrated the importance of life sciences and cross-sectoral collaboration in crisis management and societal resilience. The COVID-19 experience has also provided additional support for the relevance and timeliness of the strategy's eight priority areas.

The Government is firmly committed to ensuring that Sweden is an attractive investment destination in a global, digital and knowledge-based world by offering an environment that includes world-leading universities, an innovative and high-quality health care system and government agencies mandated to contribute to policy development and systemic innovation. The Life Sciences Office at the Government Offices connects the Government and sector stakeholders; these include the cross-sectoral health and life sciences innovation partnership programme and the health and life sciences partnership group, which advises the Life Sciences Office and the innovation partnership programme.



Article from Ministry of Education and Research

The Government's work in the area of education in response to the coronavirus

Published 30 March 2020 Updated 17 April 2020

With the outbreak of the coronavirus which causes the illness COVID-19, the Government is following developments carefully and is in continuous contact with the responsible authorities. The Government is taking the decisions that are necessary to help curb the spread of the coronavirus and combat the effects of the virus spreading through society. Below is a summary of the work being done in the policy areas of the Ministry of Education and Research.

To meet an increased need for training and transition in the labour market and to make it easier to study throughout the country, the Government has proposed initiatives including in adult education, liberal adult education and higher education.

A new act allows the Government to temporarily close preschools, schools, out-of-school centres and other educational activities. The act also gives the responsible entity the right to temporarily close an educational activity in some cases. There are currently no plans to close compulsory schools and preschools. The Government has made preparations to ensure – should the situation change – that care is available for children and pupils whose parents work in areas vital to society.

The Government has decided that schools that must be closed following a decision by an expert agency may adapt their educational activities to, for

example, remote or distance learning. It is recommended that Sweden's upper secondary schools, municipal adult education, vocational adult education and higher education institutions provide distance learning until further notice.

The Government considers that student loans that have been granted should not have to be paid back if no teaching is provided. To enable health and medical care students to work in the health care sector without their student aid being reduced, the Government proposes that the income ceiling for all those receiving student aid be temporarily removed in 2020.

The Swedish Council for Higher Education (UHR) has decided that the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test will not be conducted in spring 2020. The Government is reviewing how this should be dealt with ahead of the autumn's intake.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Education and Research

More teachers in classrooms

Published 09 May 2019

Listen to Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for Higher Education and Research, talk about her new role and how she wants to address important challenges.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Defence

Sweden's new Government

Published 09 July 2021

Today in the Riksdag, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven announced the ministers who will serve in the Government. The change of government will take place at a Council of State at the Royal Palace presided over by His Majesty The King. The Council of State will begin at 14.15.

Sweden's new Government consists of the Prime Minister and 21 ministers.

Prime Minister's Office

Prime Minister

Stefan Löfven

Minister for EU Affairs

Hans Dahlgren

Ministry of Employment

Minister for Employment

Eva Nordmark

Minister for Gender Equality and Housing, with responsibility for urban development, anti-segregation and anti-discrimination

Märta Stenevi

Ministry of Finance

Minister for Finance

Magdalena Andersson

Minister for Public Administration

Lena Micko

Minister for Financial Markets and Deputy Minister for Finance

Åsa Lindhagen

Ministry of Defence

Minister for Defence

Peter Hultqvist

Ministry of Infrastructure

Minister for Infrastructure

Tomas Eneroth

Minister for Energy and Digital Development

Anders Ygeman

Ministry of Justice

Minister for Justice and Migration

Morgan Johansson

Minister for Home Affairs

Mikael Damberg

Ministry of Culture

Minister for Culture and Democracy, with responsibility for sport

Amanda Lind

Ministry of the Environment

Minister for Environment and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister

Per Bolund

Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation

Ibrahim Baylan

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Minister for Health and Social Affairs

Lena Hallengren

Minister for Social Security

Ardalan Shekarabi

Ministry of Education and Research

Minister for Education

Anna Ekström

Minister for Higher Education and Research

Matilda Ernkrans

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ann Linde

Minister for International Development Cooperation

Per Olsson Fridh

Minister for Foreign Trade and Nordic Affairs

Anna Hallberg



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Matilda Ernkrans takes part in UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development

Published 17 May 2021

On 17–19 May, Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans will lead Sweden’s delegation at the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development.

The aim of the Conference is to establish a framework for Education for Sustainable Development, mobilise Education for Sustainable Development efforts and strengthen collaboration globally. Ms Ernkrans will meet with top UNESCO education official Stefania Giannini to discuss the importance of Education for Sustainable Development as an integral part of UNESCO’s work on education. In connection with the conference, Ms Ernkrans will also meet separately with representatives from other countries to exchange experiences.

“With a little less than nine years left until 2030, it’s high time to raise the bar for sustainability work at national and global level. A sustainable future must be based on education and research, and education is therefore crucial for sustainable development. To succeed in this, all of society must actively contribute – which is why Sweden’s delegation is made up of representatives from civil society and academics who have long been behind the incredibly important Education for Sustainable Development work in Sweden,” says Ms Ernkrans.

The delegation also includes representatives from the University of

Gothenburg, the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations, the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, the National Agency for Education, the United Nations Association of Sweden, Uppsala University (SWEDESU) and the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF).



Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Matilda Ernkrans takes part in event marking start of UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

Published 03 February 2021

Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans is taking part in a high-level meeting today, Wednesday 3 February. Participants have been convened by UNESCO to mark the start of the UN's Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, which starts in 2021.

Tid: 3 februari 2021 at 16.15

Plats: Digitally via the UN Decade of Ocean Science website

This year, 2021, is the first in the UN's Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. The Decade will require strong engagement from the UN Member States. On several occasions, UNESCO has pointed to Sweden as a country that is doing a great deal for the 2030 Agenda and for ocean and climate issues – not least via the education sector. In the Research and Innovation Bill, the Swedish Government will also propose a new national research programme on the oceans and water. Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans has now been invited to support and represent the Decade of Ocean Science.

“Sweden is and will remain a driving force on issues related to sustainable development and research in the area of the climate and environment. By

participating in this initiative, Sweden can continue to strengthen its engagement for clean oceans and for achieving the 2030 Agenda,” says Ms Ernkrans.

The UN’s Decade of Ocean Science, which is led by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, is a global initiative to boost research and education so as to achieve the sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

Considerable boost for Swedish research

Published 21 December 2020

The Government's Research and Innovation Bill outlines the direction of Sweden's research policy over the next four years. The resources will increase considerably already next year to tackle major societal challenges and safeguard freedom of research. The aim is for Sweden to be one of the world's foremost research and innovation countries and a prominent knowledge nation. The appropriation will increase by SEK 3.4 billion in 2021. The estimated investments in 2022, 2023 and 2024 are around SEK 3.2. billion, SEK 3.3 billion and SEK 3.75 billion respectively. Research and innovation are needed to restart the economy and build skills, competitiveness and welfare.

Freedom of research reinforced and safeguarded throughout the country

The Government is presenting initiatives to safeguard freedom of research. This includes funds to universities and higher education institutions for research and third-cycle programmes. The aim is to enable institutions to prioritise strategically and take responsibility for high standards in their activities, including issues such as gender equality and secure employment conditions. Through reinforcements that will be scaled up to SEK 900 million in 2024, the Government wants to strengthen research at universities and

higher education institutions in parallel with a historical expansion of higher education throughout the country. Further investments in freedom of research will be made via additional funding to the Swedish Research Council. The Government also proposes that the Higher Education Act be amended to safeguard academic freedom.

Research and innovation will tackle major societal challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly demonstrated the importance of research and knowledge in tackling crises and societal challenges. Such challenges will be tackled by investing in high-quality strategic research and innovation initiatives. The Research and Innovation Bill focuses on five major societal challenges: climate and the environment, health and welfare, digital development, skills supply and working life, and a democratic and strong society. The research investment will give rise to new ten-year national research programmes (in the areas of oceans and water, viruses and pandemics, mental health, digital development, crime, and segregation) and reinforce existing programmes (in the areas of climate, sustainable community development, food, antimicrobial resistance, and working life). In addition, there will be a number of special research initiatives, many related to handling the consequences of the pandemic.

The investments will be made at graduate schools with a focus on higher education teachers in health care and teacher training programmes, where they will make an important contribution to enhancing the quality of these programmes. The national research programme on working life, which is receiving additional funding, includes issues related to the skills supply challenges in working life. The Government has announced that education programmes for regulated professions should be steered based on the number of graduates and with a view to the major need for trained teachers and nurses in the welfare system.

Amendments to the Higher Education Act

The Government proposes a range of amendments to the Higher Education Act (1992:1434) both to reinforce and clarify higher education's responsibility for collaboration, internationalisation and lifelong learning, and to promote and safeguard academic freedom. It is proposed that the legislative amendments enter into force on 1 July 2021.

Gender equality and secure conditions

The governance of higher education institutions will be developed so as to more clearly promote gender-equal higher education institutions with good working conditions. Among other things, the Government intends to prioritise institution-specific goals for the proportion of women among new professorial recruits. The Government also intends to issue an agency mandate to review the incidence of successions of fixed-term employment contracts.

Research infrastructure reinforced

Various types of research infrastructure, such as large research facilities, are needed to contribute new knowledge to tackle global challenges facing society. For internationally competitive research to be possible, Sweden's research infrastructure needs to be reinforced. The Swedish Research Council will receive a considerable increase in funding for research infrastructure. Vinnova (the Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems) will receive increased funding for research infrastructure of particular value to the business sector. There will be a specific investment in the world-leading research facility SciLifeLab. The European Spallation Source (ESS) and MAX IV in Lund will also be allocated funding.

Investments in the innovation system

The innovation system will be strengthened through investments in strategic innovation programmes, research institutes, test and demonstration environments, lower thresholds for uptake and commercialisation, etc. These investments will contribute to tackling societal challenges, uptake of research findings and strengthening Sweden as a knowledge nation.

Mälardalen University

As part of the continued development of strategic research policy and to strengthen Sweden as a leading research and innovation country, the Government intends to establish a new university in Mälardalen. Mälardalens högskola will become Mälardalens universitet in 2022, and SEK 130 million will be allocated to give the institution possibilities to develop into a university. The Government will verify that the institution has consolidated its quality assurance work before the decision on university

status is taken.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Matilda Ernkrans attends European Higher Education Area ministerial conference

Published 19 November 2020

Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans is attending a ministerial conference on the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) today, Thursday 19 November. The agenda includes discussions on higher education in Europe and the adoption of the Rome Ministerial Communiqué. Ms Ernkrans will also deliver a speech.

“The Rome Ministerial Communiqué not only attaches great importance to factors such as equitable access to education and sustainable development, it also highlights important areas such as democracy and gender equality. At a time when anti-democratic winds are blowing, it is important that we jointly safeguard academic freedom,” says Ms Ernkrans.

The ministerial conference is part of the Bologna process, which is based on the 1999 Bologna Declaration and aims to make Europe a coherent higher education area. Italy is hosting the digital conference.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Matilda Ernkrans attends ministerial conference on European Research Area

Published 20 October 2020

Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans is attending a conference on the future European Research Area (ERA) today, Tuesday 20 October. The agenda includes the ERA, freedom of research and the adoption of the Bonn Declaration. Ms Ernkrans will attend digitally.

“Freedom of research is important to Sweden. I’m also delighted that Sweden, along with France and Czechia as part of the incoming Presidency trio, has been asked to speak about how the message of the ERA fits in the national context,” says Ms Ernkrans.

The agenda of the conference – organised by Germany, which counts the ERA among the priorities of its Presidency of the EU – includes a discussion on the new ERA, freedom of research as a basis for international cooperation, and the adoption of the Bonn Declaration on freedom of research. The European Commission recently published a communication on the future ERA, and Council conclusions on research are currently being negotiated.

The ERA is an internal market for knowledge and research and is intended to strengthen Europe’s competitiveness and help make Europe a leading knowledge-based society.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Matilda Ernkrans participating in TEDxUNEP on role of higher education in addressing climate transition

Published 13 October 2020

Today, Tuesday 13 October, Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans is participating in a digital event organised by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Ms Ernkrans will participate in a panel discussion about what universities and other higher education institutions can do to address climate change and promote sustainable development.

It is the first time that UNEP has hosted a TEDx event. The theme is higher education and reduced environmental impacts, and the event is part of the global ‘Race to Zero’ environmental campaign.

“Universities and other higher education institutions have a key role in the work for a just climate transition and in living up to the Paris Agreement. The Government has tightened the follow-up of sustainability efforts and a framework has been introduced to contribute to climate transition in accordance with the Paris Agreement. This work still needs to be taken extremely seriously,” says Matilda Ernkrans.

Time: 20.00 (14.00 EST)

The event will take place online via:

<https://www.unep.org/events/webinar/tedxunep-racing-zero-higher-education>



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

National knowledge centre for nuclear disarmament to be established

Published 08 October 2020

In an increasingly uncertain world, the risk of nuclear weapons being used is greater than it has been for a long time, and education, research and information for the public are needed in this area. The Swedish Research Council has now been tasked with collecting expressions of interest and proposing a university or other higher education institution to receive funding for the establishment of a national knowledge centre for nuclear disarmament.

The purpose of the knowledge centre is to engage in education and research in areas relevant to nuclear disarmament, to guarantee future expertise and to provide cross-disciplinary support for policy work in the area. The knowledge centre is also intended to raise public awareness about nuclear disarmament and, in doing so, contribute to a public debate about the challenges of disarmament work.

“Our common security is threatened by nuclear weapons. In Sweden, we have long had leading research and expertise about nuclear disarmament, and we will continue to be a strong actor in this work. The Swedish Research Council has now been tasked with proposing a higher education institution that will establish a national knowledge centre for nuclear disarmament,” says Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans.

A report is to be presented by 2 December.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

The Government decides on an additional investment in the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in view of COVID-19

Published 07 July 2020

The University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) is being strengthened to meet educational needs and fight unemployment due to the COVID-19 crisis. SLU will receive additional funding that will enable it to offer more places on educational programmes in shortage occupations and for lifelong learning.

SLU has already been allocated an additional SEK 3.3 million for 2020 for educational programmes in shortage occupations. The decision also means that the increase will be permanent at SEK 6.6 million from 2021 onwards for educational programmes in shortage occupations.

In addition, SLU will receive SEK 1.7 million as a one-off investment in lifelong learning. This investment will enable more people with previous work experience to enrol in short programmes for further education and training, and to prepare them for their transition in the labour market.

“This is an ambitious investment in education to fight the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. We will benefit from SLU’s educational capabilities as a basis for the transition to a sustainable society in a changing world. We need to educate and train for a range of key skills needed in the green industries

and to mitigate the effects of COVID-19, such as safeguarding food security,” says Minister for Rural Affairs Jennie Nilsson.

“The impacts of the COVID-19 virus on the economy and the labour market have led to a record number of people applying to study. The major investments in education we have made so far this year will offer more people the opportunity for a securer future after the crisis,” says Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans.

Earlier this year, the Government presented an investment in education, which for SLU meant an investment of approximately SEK 7 million in 2020. A decision has already been made to provide SEK 8 million in 2021. One hundred new places were created on the summer courses, and the foundation year was strengthened with the equivalent of 37 full-time places in autumn 2020 and 74 full-time places in 2021.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

New places at Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences to meet increased need for transition in wake of COVID-19

Published 24 April 2020

The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences is increasing the number of student places. One hundred new places are already being created for summer courses this year and the number of places in the foundation year is being increased. The aim is to meet the increased need for education and transition in the labour market as a result of the effects of the COVID-19 virus.

A considerable investment in universities was presented on 30 March by Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson in connection with the major labour market package. For the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, the investment entails around SEK 14 million. One hundred new places are now being created on the summer courses, and the foundation year is being strengthened with the equivalent of 37 full-time places in autumn 2020 and 74 full-time places in 2021.

“I am delighted by this investment in higher education. The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences educates students in the key skills that are needed to mitigate the effects of COVID-19, such as securing the important supply of food,” says Minister for Rural Affairs Jennie Nilsson.

“The investment in foundation year places may also inspire more young people’s interest in – and alert them to the opportunities to study at – the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, and get an education in the sector,” says Ms Nilsson.

The effects of the COVID-19 virus are creating an increased need for education and transition in the labour market. This investment is aimed at facilitating this transition.

“We are already seeing considerably more people applying for courses in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. It is important for us to be able to meet this need through an increased number of student places across the country,” says Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for Higher Education and Research.



Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Extension of the exemption from application and tuition fees in the event of a no-deal Brexit

Published 18 October 2019

A temporary exemption from application and tuition fees at institutions of higher education was previously introduced for certain British citizens to mitigate the consequences of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union without a withdrawal agreement. The UK's withdrawal has since been postponed until 31 October 2019, and the Government has therefore decided to extend the temporary exemption from application and tuition fees.

To alleviate the consequences if the UK leaves the EU without an agreement, a temporary exemption from application and tuition fees at universities and higher education institutions was introduced in March this year for British citizens and in some cases their family members. As the withdrawal was postponed until 31 October, the temporary exemption is now being extended.

“Sweden as a leading knowledge nation benefits from having foreign students at our universities and higher education institutions, and we need to be able to retain qualified students at our seats of learning. The exemption is considered to be positive, as British students are contributing to continuing internationalisation of higher education in Sweden,” says Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for Higher Education and Research.

It is as yet unclear how the UK’s withdrawal will be and whether there might

be further deadline extensions. The time-limited exemption is therefore based on the date the actual withdrawal occurs and applies for the intended period of time, regardless of when withdrawal actually takes place.

It is proposed that the legislative amendments enter into force on 1 November 2019.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans to open STS forum in Japan

Published 05 October 2019 Updated 05 October 2019

Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans travels to Japan Friday, 4 October. Her programme will include holding an opening address at the Science and Technology in Society (STS) forum on Sunday. The majority of the visit will take place in Kyoto and Tokyo, and the political focus will be on the climate and the environment.

The STS forum is an annual meeting gathering leaders in research, business, public authorities, media and policy for cross-border discussions on research and innovation. Ms Ernkrans is this year's keynote speaker at the forum, and will hold an opening address.

“We need to take joint responsibility to ensure that research reaches more people. Quite simply, we must be better at spreading and communicating research to the public, to counter ‘fact resistance’ in various contexts,” says Ms Ernkrans.

Date and time: Sunday 6 October, 11.00 – Speech at the opening of the STS forum

Place: Kyoto International Conference Centre, Japan



Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Matilda Ernkrans to visit Japan with focus on climate and environment

Published 04 October 2019

Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans will travel to Japan today, 4 October. Her programme will include a meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and holding the opening address at the Science and Technology in Society (STS) forum on Sunday. The majority of the visit will take place in Kyoto and Tokyo, and the political focus will be on the climate and the environment.

Japan is a prominent research nation, and for many years Sweden has had a great deal of exchange with higher education institutions and companies, particularly on sustainability. In addition to following up on contacts with higher education institutions and companies, Ms Ernkrans will be a keynote speaker at a major international research policy conference.

“My task is to convey the importance of free research. We need to take joint responsibility to ensure that research reaches more people – quite simply, we must be better at spreading and communicating it to the public, to counter ‘fact resistance’ in various contexts. As a representative of a feminist government, I also want to contribute to boosting Japanese women students and researchers,” says Ms Ernkrans.

The STS forum is an annual meeting gathering leaders in research, business, public authorities, media and policy for cross-border discussions on research and innovation.

Excerpts from the programme

Saturday 5 October

11.30 Speech at the EU-Japan Science Policy Forum, Kyoto

Sunday 6 October

08.00 Breakfast with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Kyoto

11.00 Speech at the opening of the STS forum, Kyoto

12.00 Round-table discussions on international cooperation and challenging research and development, Kyoto

15.30 Meeting with Thai Minister for Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Suvit Maesincee, Kyoto

16.00 Meeting with Japanese Minister for Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Koichi Hagiuda, Kyoto

Monday 7 October

08.00 Meeting with AstraZeneca, Kyoto Century Hotel, Kyoto

10.00 Visit to the Research Institute for Sustainable Humanosphere, Kyoto University, Kyoto

12.00 Meeting with women students and researchers at Kyoto University, Kyoto

Tuesday 8 October

08.00 Breakfast with the Swedish Chamber of Commerce, Tokyo

10.00 Visit to Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG), Tokyo

13.30 Visit to Tokyo University, Tokyo

Wednesday 9 October

10.00 Visit to the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), Tsukuba



Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

New rules on residence permits for research and higher education studies

Published 24 September 2019

The Government will soon present a government bill to the Riksdag containing proposals for new rules on residence permits for research and higher education studies. The proposals will implement the European Union's 'Students and Researchers Directive'. An important aim of the proposals is to attract more students, researchers and other highly qualified people to Sweden, and make it easier for those who have studied in Sweden to stay in the country to work.

“The Government’s proposals strengthen Sweden’s attractiveness and competitiveness for highly educated and sought-after foreign citizens who can contribute with their knowledge. The proposals are therefore an important part of the work to improve skills provision opportunities for Swedish companies,” says Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for Higher Education and Research.

The new rules will mean that researchers and higher education students will be granted a residence permit for at least one year, or a shorter period corresponding to the duration of their research or studies, and that the permit period for researchers and students can be extended. Researchers and higher education students will also have the opportunity to remain in Sweden for up to one year following the completion of their research or studies to seek work, or examine the possibility of conducting business activities in the country.

In addition, the Government is proposing that the maintenance requirement for researchers and students be refined so that both funds the applicant has access to at the time of application, and proof of future access to funds, may be considered in the individual case.

The government bill also proposes that a person who has a residence permit for research or higher education studies issued by another EU Member State will, in certain cases, be allowed to stay in Sweden on the basis of that permit to conduct part of their research or studies.

“Research is international in nature. Therefore the purpose of the new rules is to make it easier for more people to conduct research and studies in several EU Member States.” says Ms Ernkrans.

The government bill also proposes new rules on residence permits for internships related to higher education, volunteering within the framework of the European Voluntary Service and au pairing.

The proposals implement Directive (EU) 2016/801 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing (the ‘Students and Researchers Directive’) in Swedish law.

It is proposed that the legislative amendments enter into force on 1 January 2020.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Matilda Ernkrans to visit Hannover Messe and meet German Minister of Education and Research

Published 29 March 2019

On Sunday 31 March, Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans will travel to Germany to visit Hannover Messe, the world's largest trade fair. Ms Ernkrans will meet Germany's Minister of Education and Research Anja Karliczek and others.

Sweden is Partner Country of this year's Hannover Messe and several Swedish higher education institutions and research institutes will be there to present their activities.

Ms Ernkrans will visit the fair and take part in a walkabout together with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Germany's Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and Germany's Minister of Education and Research Anja Karliczek. During the fair, there will also be a meeting between Ms Ernkrans and Ms Karliczek for talks on cooperation on research infrastructure, environment and climate research, innovation and artificial intelligence.

There will be time for an interview – please contact Sofia Johansson.

Selection of programme points

Sunday 31 March

18.00 Participation in opening event

Monday 1 April

09.00 Participation in opening of the Swedish pavilion

09.30 Participation in walkabout with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Germany's Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and Germany's Minister of Education and Research Anja Karliczek

11.05 Visit to the Royal Institute of Technology's stand, showcasing collaboration with the Research Institutes of Sweden (RISE)

12.45 Participation in roundtable talks with business representatives on collaboration between public authorities, academia and business

14.30 Visit to Chalmer's University of Technology's stand

16.15 Meeting with Mälardalen University and visit to the Swedish Exhibition Centre's and Automation Region's stands



Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

British citizens to be exempt from tuition fees after Brexit

Published 22 March 2019

A temporary exemption from application and tuition fees at institutions of higher education will be introduced for certain British citizens to mitigate the consequences of the United Kingdom leaving the EU without a withdrawal agreement.

Within the European Economic Area (EEA), British citizens are exempt from application and tuition fees for studies at higher education institutions in Sweden. If the United Kingdom leaves the EU on 30 March without a withdrawal agreement, British citizens will become subject to the rules applying to third-country nationals. A temporary exemption from the provisions for application and tuition fees at institutions of higher education will therefore be introduced for certain British citizens to mitigate the consequences of withdrawal.

“As a leading knowledge nation, Sweden benefits from foreign students studying at higher education institutions. It is important for Sweden to be able to keep qualified students who contribute added value to Swedish higher education institutions, not least in light of the internationalisation of higher education that is happening in Sweden,” says Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for Higher Education and Research.

It is proposed that the legislative amendments adopted today should come into force on 30 March 2019. If withdrawal occurs on a later date, the provisions will be applied after withdrawal.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release

The ministers' press contacts

Published 22 January 2019

Here are the contact details for the ministers' press secretaries.

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Ministry of Culture

Press Secretary to Minister for Culture and Democracy, with
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Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Government Offices

New state secretaries at the Government Offices

Published 22 January 2019

The Government today appointed 31 state secretaries at the Government Offices. Former state secretaries have been dismissed from their positions. Most of the state secretaries have previously held corresponding positions at the Government Offices.

Prime Minister's Office

The Government has appointed Nils Vikmång as the Prime Minister's State Secretary. The Government has also appointed Madeleine Harby Samuelsson and Karin Wallensteen as state secretaries to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The Government has appointed Paula Carvalho Olovsson as State Secretary to Minister for EU Affairs Hans Dahlgren.

The Government has appointed Mats Andersson and Maria Ferm as state secretaries in the coordinating committee at the Prime Minister's Office.

Ministry of Employment

The Government has appointed Annika Dahl as State Secretary to Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson.

The Government has appointed Karin Strandås as State Secretary to Minister

for Gender Equality, with responsibility for anti-discrimination and anti-segregation, Åsa Lindhagen.

Ministry of Finance

The Government has appointed Max Elger and Leif Jacobsson as state secretaries to Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson.

The Government has appointed Ulf Holm and Elin Olsson as state secretaries to Minister for Financial Markets and Housing, Deputy Minister for Finance, Per Bolund.

The Government has appointed Alejandro Firpo as State Secretary to Minister for Public Administration Ardan Shekarabi.

Ministry of Defence

The Government has appointed Jan-Olof Lind as State Secretary to Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist.

Ministry of Infrastructure

The Government has appointed Mattias Landgren as State Secretary to Minister for Infrastructure Tomas Eneroth.

The Government has appointed Sebastian De Toro as State Secretary to Minister for Energy and Digital Development Anders Ygeman.

Ministry of Justice

The Government has appointed Catharina Espmark and Lars Westbratt as state secretaries to Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson.

The Government has appointed Elisabeth Backteman as State Secretary to Minister for Home Affairs Mikael Damberg.

Ministry of Culture

The Government has appointed Helene Öberg as State Secretary to Minister for Culture and Democracy, with responsibility for sport, Amanda Lind.

Ministry of the Environment

The Government has appointed Eva Svedling and Gunvor Ericson as state secretaries to Minister for Environment and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister, Isabella Lövin.

Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

The Government has appointed Stina Billinger and Emil Högberg as state secretaries to Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Ibrahim Baylan.

The Government has appointed Per Callenberg as State Secretary to Minister for Rural Affairs Jennie Nilsson.

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

The Government has appointed Maja Fjaestad as State Secretary to Minister for Health and Social Affairs Lena Hallengren.

Ministry of Education and Research

The Government has appointed Erik Nilsson as State Secretary to Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

The Government has appointed Malin Cederfeldt Östberg as State Secretary to Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government has appointed Annika Söder as State Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.

The Government has appointed Per Olsson Fridh as State Secretary to Minister for International Development Cooperation Peter Eriksson.

The Government has appointed Niklas Johansson as State Secretary to Minister for Foreign Trade, with responsibility for Nordic affairs, Ann Linde.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech

Speech by Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for Higher Education and Research, at the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development

Published 20 May 2021

May 19, 2021. Check against delivery.

I want to thank Unesco and the Government of Germany for hosting this conference.

International collaboration

Climate change, inequal access to education, gender inequality, poverty, mass loss of biodiversity and undemocratic movements. These are all inter-connected challenges.

Challenges that cannot be met by one nation alone.

Instead we must work together, as we have done during this conference, to truly achieve a sustainable development.

All young people have a right to be included in this, this is a matter of equity. Their knowledge and experiences are invaluable for the success of the 2030 Agenda.

Being a Swedish minister, I am proud of the movement Greta Thunberg has inspired, which gathers millions of young people all over the world.

Urging us to act now.

Swedish perspective

Sweden has set out to be the first fossil free welfare country in the world. This guides us in all areas.

When it comes to education for sustainable development, it is integrated at all policy levels of the Swedish education system.

From pre-school to adult and higher education, as well as in teacher education.

This is important to secure sustainability in life-long learning, including through vocational training to ensure the transition to sustainable economies and jobs.

But policy documents are not enough.

We need education for sustainable development also in practice. Therefore, I want to underline the importance of monitoring and implementation when it comes to bringing about a more sustainable world.

In Sweden, we have evaluated the implementation at our universities and then asked them to follow-up on the results.

And we are also carrying out an inspection of secondary schools, which indicates that systematic implementation needs to improve.

Another of Sweden's strengths regarding education for sustainable development is that many parts of our society are engaged. From civil society to universities.

I also want to highlight that UNESCO has an essential role in supporting national efforts. Sweden looks forward to the establishment of country initiatives and is currently mapping national ESD work.

The way forward

This conference, the kick-off on the framework for ESD 2030 must lead our way. And it's up to us to deliver. In practice.

Better than we do today. Everyone of us.

Based on science, but also on equity. We need to acknowledge that the most well-educated and prosperous societies still make the largest ecological footprints.

Education for sustainable development is key for making this possible, and so is implementation and joint action.

I also want to add that education for sustainable development must have a human rights based approach, as full human rights is a fundamental part of a sustainable society.

We only have a few more years to achieve the goals in the 2030 agenda. The time to act is now.

Thank you!



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech

Speech by Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for Higher Education and Research, at Space19+, the ESA Ministerial Council

Published 04 December 2019

Seville, Spain, November 27-28, 2019 Check against delivery.

Dear Director General, dear Colleagues,

Firstly, I would like to thank our Spanish hosts for having us here in this historical and beautiful town.

As the responsible minister for space matters in the Swedish government, I am also looking forward to contributing to the development of ESA and strengthening the relations with my fellow space ministers.

Sweden has been a member of ESA since the start over forty years ago. European cooperation within space is of utmost importance to Sweden. Sweden will thus continue to perform an important part of its space activities through ESA. Sweden also has unique resources, like the space base Esrange, through which we strive to contribute to Europe's space capabilities.

ESA has a very important role to play as provider of cooperation in space research and technology, in an era where space applications become more and more essential to create wealth and safety for the European society and its citizens.

ESA must make sure that all its member states, big or small, can benefit in a

fair way from the opportunities that the programs offer.

I would like to underline the importance of close cooperation and efficient definition of roles between ESA and the EU to achieve cost efficiency and make their Member States and Europe stronger and more competitive in space.

Sweden is upgrading its ambitions in space. Last year the government presented a national space strategy that was adopted by the parliament. I have brought copies of an English summary that I invite you to read. On the front page there is, by the way, a famous picture of the “Earth-rise” seen from the moon, taken by a Swedish camera from Hasselblad.

With the strategy as a basis, we have started several activities, including an upgrade of our space base Esrange. Since more than fifty years we have successfully launched more than five hundred sounding rockets from Esrange, and it is thus a strategic resource for all of Europe.

We have now invested in a test bed which is under construction. The test bed will contribute to Europe’s independent access to space by allowing advanced tests of for example motors and reusable equipment.

I also have the ambition to start a revision of the national space law as soon as possible, in order to modernize it and adapt to current and future needs.

We have a shared responsibility for the planet and future generations. ESA:s space operations should contribute to meeting the global sustainability goals of Agenda 2030. Satellite-technology is central to environmental and climate observation as the data provided by these systems gives us the opportunity to detect changes, for instance in temperatures, at an early stage.

Earth observation data should therefore be free and open to facilitate contributions to the work on Agenda 2030 and the global sustainability goals. Let me underline the significance of the new activities planned in ESA around the theme of Space and the Arctic, which we appreciate sincerely.

Thank you.



Speech

Speech by Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for Higher Education and Research at the Swedish Research Council

Published 29 November 2019

Stockholm, November 20, 2019 Check against delivery

I am very happy to be here today at this research policy conference. I am inspired to see all of you here. I want to thank the organizers for all their hard work.

It is of great importance that Sweden continue to be a prominent research nation. It creates jobs from north to south in our country - and it generates wealth and development.

Investments in research and new knowledge lay the foundations for our welfare society, and it enables important scientific breakthroughs and innovations.

It is important to have strong links between higher education, research and innovation. Sweden has its strength because we have invested in the entire chain, from higher education, through research to innovation.

Even though we are a small country in the north, we produce leading research in many fields. Examples are found in such areas as material research, climate research but also in several medical fields. Sweden is also one of the world's most innovative countries, with world-leading universities and colleges, many among the top 100 in the world.

But we must remember that our position cannot be taken for granted. It is something that governments slowly and patiently have built during a very

long time. Through political decisions.

By establishing educational institutions throughout the country and by investing in research. This has been good political choices, which have served our country well.

And the work needs to continue, the international competition is strong. Without continued investments in education and research, we put our competitiveness and our ability to innovate at stake.

The Research Bill

The government has under my lead now started the work with the next research policy bill, planned for the autumn 2020.

We have appointed a new advisory body in research policy. It's an expert group with extensive knowledge of Swedish research and its international competitiveness. They will also give important input to the bill.

Many actors have also sent in their views and recommendations to the government: research funding organizations, universities, government agencies, companies and in other stakeholder organizations.

We have now started to analyze this input, about 300 contributions. Necessary and important.

There is also a need for a good understanding of the concerns people face in their everyday lives, and we must show citizens that it is possible to meet a good part of our challenges with research and new knowledge. In this way, we can create belief in the future and for example handle the climate challenge without being caught in climate anxiety.

The overall focus for the research bill is clear.

Sweden is a leading knowledge nation and that position needs to be defended. Bottom up research must be safeguarded, at the same time as research policy must respond to our global and national societal challenges.

This will strengthen our society, create jobs and give hope of a sustainable future.

Research is a long-term activity that requires long-term conditions. This must be respected. The social challenges mentioned in the previous bill are still applicable, but it remains to be seen how we can deal with them in the best way. The UN Sustainability Goals will be an important basis for the bill.

The greatest challenge of our time is clearly the climate change. We experience this in our everyday lives and new research-based knowledge is needed.

Since the last bill, there has been an accelerated pace of digitization that goes deep throughout all sectors of society, including healthcare, with rapidly emerging fields such as AI. This links to the supply of competence and skills. We need to have strong links between research and education in these new areas.

But we also have important programs for teacher and nursing education where research links must be secured. It is crucial to our welfare.

We also have major health challenges where Sweden, as a country with strong research in life science, can contribute. We see this as a key area that not only generates new knowledge and better health for our citizens, but we also see big economical gains in the form of increased exports, new investments and more jobs.

Cooperation and innovation

A crucial part of research policy is to promote cooperation between universities and society. Such collaborations have built Sweden strong historically and led to important research and innovation breakthroughs.

The Government has initiated new cooperation programs with businesses and academia, and they can connect to the bill. Cooperation is at the heart of the Swedish model and we will strengthen it to increase the potential for innovation.

Conditions for researchers and Gender Equality

I would like to highlight the importance of good conditions for doctoral students and researchers, and increased gender equality. We must handle

these issues in the forthcoming bill. Much remains to be done in this area. But it is necessary to create the right conditions for research.

Fact Resistance

I would like to conclude with reminding us all that we today experience a situation where we have representatives at the top political level that ignores scientific facts.

So, in order to meet our challenges and continue to invest in research, I believe that it is important to make sure that research-based knowledge is spread throughout society.

This is something we must consider when working with the research bill.

To sum it up, we have many things to consider and a lot of work ahead of us. But with the next bill, I believe that we can strengthen Sweden as a knowledge nation. That's important for a stronger society.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Anna Ekström

Statement from Anna Ekström and Matilda Ernkrans regarding the defamation verdict against two Polish Holocaust researchers

Published 10 February 2021

A Polish court has ordered two Holocaust researchers to apologise for information in a research report published in 2018 on the fate of Jews in German-occupied Poland in 1939–1945.

Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of every democratic society. Freedom to conduct research is also fundamental in a democracy. This is particularly true of research about the Holocaust, about how and why the Holocaust could happen and about the role of individuals, society and the State in the Holocaust. At the Malmö International Forum for Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism in October this year – REMEMBER-REACT – the central role of freedom to conduct research in Holocaust remembrance efforts and combating antisemitism will be highlighted. We must learn from history so that this horrific part of our shared past is never forgotten, never distorted and never repeated.