



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice

Summary: National strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women

Published 14 November 2016 Updated 14 November 2016

Stopping men's violence against women is a priority issue for Sweden's feminist government. The Government is therefore now presenting a national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women.

The strategy contains measures that strengthen protection for and support to women subjected to violence, measures to combat violence in same-sex relationships as well as measures that counteract destructive masculinity and notions of honour. The strategy also emphasises the participation and responsibility of men in stopping the violence.

With a long-term strategy and a targeted action plan, the Government is laying the foundation for increasingly goal-oriented and coordinated action on men's violence against women. Developing violence prevention measures is particularly important. These measures must reach all groups in society and be developed in a variety of arenas. The national strategy is included in the Government's gender equality policy communication to the Riksdag (2016/17:10). The strategy spans a ten-year period and will come into force on 1 January 2017.

The strategy's four objectives

- Increased and effective preventive work to combat violence.
- Improved detection of violence and stronger protection for and support

to women and children subjected to violence.

- More effective crime-fighting.
- Improved knowledge and methodological development.

Special emphasis on preventive measures and men's participation

To date, measures have tended to deal with the consequences of violence rather than the causes. The Government's ambition is to shift the perspective and focus on preventing violence. This requires effective measures to prevent both the use and reoccurrence of violence. It also requires broader and more constructive involvement of men and boys than previously, and breaking with the norms that justify violence, the purchase of sexual services and other restrictions on the freedom of action and life choices of women and girls.

There are major challenges with regard to men's violence against women, honour-related violence and oppression, and action to combat prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes. Society must become better at detecting violence, and knowledge about the extent of the violence and effective practices needs to improve. Action to prevent violence must be well coordinated between relevant actors at all levels. Therefore, the control, coordination and follow-up of the measures to stop men's violence against women will be strengthened.

Long-term action plan for goal-oriented, coordinated and effective action

As a part of the strategy's implementation, the Government is allocating SEK 600 million to an action plan containing new measures for 2017–2020, in addition to SEK 300 million in development funds to municipalities and county councils. The role of the county administrative boards as regional coordinators will be clarified. The gender equality agency to be established by the Government will eventually be given overall responsibility for the work to end men's violence against women. Within the framework of the action plan, the Government intends to:

For increased and effective preventive work to combat violence

- support the development and spread of universal violence preventive efforts with the objective of reaching all young people,

- conduct a review of sex and relationship education in schools,
- counteract demand for the purchase of sexual services,
- strengthen professional treatment of men who have been violent and investigate the ability of municipalities to work with perpetrators of violence early on, and
- further strengthen prevention of reoffending by convicted perpetrators of violence, both within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and with other stakeholders.

For improved detection of violence and stronger protection of and support to women and children subjected to violence

- provide training to professionals, in social services and health and medical care for example, and on routines for asking about exposure to violence,
- strengthen protection of and support to children who have witnessed or been exposed to violence,
- strengthen expertise in the field of honour-related violence and oppression,
- continue the development of knowledge support on prostitution targeted at health and medical care and social services.

For more effective crime-fighting

- develop police methods and practices for preventing repeated violence,
- evaluate the 2014 legislative amendments on forced marriages and child marriages,
- prevent online threats and abuse.

For improved knowledge and methodological development

- survey the extent of honour-related violence and oppression,
- develop national statistics on measures in social services and health and medical care, and provide guidance to municipalities on calculating the cost of violence,
- strengthen knowledge about effective violence prevention,
- amend the degree descriptions in the Higher Education Ordinance so that men's violence against women and domestic violence are included in education and training for professional groups who may encounter victims of violence,
- allocate funds for skills development for relevant professional groups.

Extensive initiative since Government took office in 2014

Since taking office, the Government has decided on a long list of measures to counter men's violence against women and domestic violence (these measures are presented on the Government website). For instance, the Government has provided increased support to local women's shelters for 2015–2019 totalling SEK 425 million. In addition, the Government has decided on, or in other ways taken, more than 20 measures directly related to proposals from the National Coordinator on Domestic Violence.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

#FirstGeneration in New York

Published 14 June 2016 Updated 14 June 2016

As part of the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs's public diplomacy campaign #FirstGeneration, on 9 June the Swedish Consulate-General in New York held a seminar and panel discussion on the theme of engaging young people in the work on the UN Global Goals.

The event took place at the Swedish-owned design firm Trollbäck + Company in SoHo, and the panellists included Sweden's Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin and Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin, and representatives of various UN bodies and non-profit organisations.

Following a welcoming address by Consul-General Leif Pagrotsky, the event got under way with a presentation by Jakob Trollbäck of his company's work to produce the graphic profile for the UN Global Goals.

Communicating the Global Goals, Jakob Trollbäck founder at Trollbäck+Company

This was followed by two panel discussions: 'From Words to Actions - Implementing the 2030 Agenda' and 'Empowering and Engaging Young People in Global Sustainable Development'. In addition to the Swedish ministers, the panellists included Magdy Martín Solimán, Assistant Secretary-General of the UN and Director of the UNDP Bureau for Policy and Programme Support; Marie Paule Roudil, Director of the UNESCO Liaison Office in New York; Zara Rapoport, Head of the Plan International UN Liaison Office in New York; Ahmed Alhendawi, UN Envoy on Youth; Coco Killingsworth, Deputy Director of Global Kids; Katie Isaak Ginsberg, founder and Executive Director of the Children's Environmental Literacy

Foundation; and Domenic Smith, President of AIESEC United States.

Panel 1: From words to Action – Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Panel 2: Empowering and Engaging Young people in Global Development

The discussions were moderated by Lance Gould from the Huffington Post.

The audience included representatives of teachers' organisations, after-school programmes, universities and various organisations with links to the UN.



Article from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry for Foreign Affairs international campaign in support of the Global Goals

Published 09 June 2016 Updated 09 June 2016

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has launched #FirstGeneration, an international campaign in collaboration with international and local actors. The campaign is intended to strengthen international efforts on the 2030 Agenda and help ensure that new and younger target groups take on the challenges linked to the UN's Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

Almost half of the world's population is under the age of 25. The key to a sustainable future will be determined by our ability to transform knowledge into engagement among young pupils and students. The campaign is intended to generate engagement in, strengthen communication on and broaden popular support for the 2030 Agenda and the Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

#FirstGeneration is part of public diplomacy efforts by the MFA and Swedish embassies around the world. By working together with other actors, Sweden can have a positive influence on the work of other countries. Sweden's ambition is to remain an international role model and be a driving force in the global efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve the UN's Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

Campaigning via networks

The #FirstGeneration campaign is being run in both digital and analogue form via a series of activities and collaboration between the Swedish MFA, Sweden's embassies and consulates abroad and local and international actors. Activities around the world will highlight the Global Goals, and young people will be the focus. Teachers, educators and activists who can influence and inspire young people in the area of sustainable development are the true heroes.

"We believe in the power of networks, and that together with other actors we can engage and draw attention to young people and teachers, educators and activists around the world. Our joint networks offer us the opportunity to reach out to and influence much larger numbers of people. Many actors are hugely engaged in helping to achieve the Global Goals," says Miriam Mannbro, project leader for the #FirstGeneration campaign.

In addition to activities and initiatives being implemented by some 30 Swedish embassies in collaboration with local actors, two major events will be held in 2016. In June, Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin and Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin will take part in a seminar in New York. The focus of the seminar will be young people's engagement and the important role of teachers and educators in inspiring young people. Other participants will include representatives of UNESCO, the UNDP and AIESEC, the world's largest student organisation. #FirstGeneration will culminate in Stockholm on 5 October, which is World Teachers' Day and falls just after the first anniversary of the adoption of the UN's Global Goals for Sustainable Development. Some 20 teachers and activists from around the world will be invited to Stockholm, where they will be celebrated for their contributions to engagement among young people.



Article from Ministry of Education and Research

Exchange of experience on the education of newly arrived pupils

Published 08 April 2016 Updated 08 April 2016

The Ministry of Education and Research and the European Commission organised a two-day seminar on education for newly arrived pupils in compulsory school. Almost 30 people from ten different European countries attended, addressing experiences from all over Europe during the seminar.

"Creating a school system that is able to include newly arrived children and provide them an education that creates opportunities for the future is, first and foremost, about achieving quality education for each and every child. A school that is robust and flexible enough to offer every child a fair chance is the best possible precondition for newly arrived children to develop their knowledge and skills," said Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin in his welcoming address.

The National Agency for Education and the National Centre for Swedish as a Second Language talked about the Swedish experience and ongoing initiatives. Professor Nihad Bunar described his research on newly arrived pupils' learning. Participants also made a study visit to Hjulstaskolan to see examples close-up of how education for newly arrived pupils can be organised. They were given the opportunity to talk with students, teachers and head teachers at the school.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Education and Research

Ministers received filmmaker Leslee Udwin

Published 10 September 2015 Updated 11 September 2015

Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin and Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Aida Hadzialic today received filmmaker and producer Leslee Udwin for a visit to the Ministry of Education and Research. Ms Udwin is one of this year's winners of the Anna Lindh Memorial Prize, which will be presented in the Riksdag on 11 September.

She is the creator of the documentary film *India's Daughter*, which has attracted a great deal of attention internationally. The Anna Lindh Memorial Prize is awarded each year to a person or organisation that has worked in the spirit of Anna Lindh to promote human rights in a global context.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Education and Research

OECD presents Swedish school review

Published 05 May 2015 Updated 05 May 2015

Today, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) presented the Government with its report 'Improving schools in Sweden: An OECD Perspective'. The review was conducted in light of Swedish pupils' falling performance in the OECD's PISA survey.

The recommendations of the OECD report focus on three priorities: conditions that promote quality and equity across Swedish schools, a long-term human resource strategy to build capacity for improved teaching and learning, and strengthened policy steering and accountability with a focus on improvement.



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

First Generation to Eradicate Poverty

Published 09 June 2016 Updated 09 June 2016

Opinion piece by the Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin and the Minister for Education, Gustav Fridolin in The Huffington Post, 9 June 2016.

The last decades hundreds of millions of people have left extreme poverty. Today more than 90 percent of all children are enrolled in school, even in developing countries. Thanks to digitalization we are more closely interconnected with each other than ever before. Knowledge and ideas flow throughout the world and transcend all previous boundaries.

At the same time, the world is younger than ever. Almost half of the world's population is younger than 25. Together, we now have a unique opportunity to continue creating a better, more sustainable future. And we have recently taken some important steps. Last year, 2015, the world came together to agree on three milestones: the climate agreement in Paris, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for financing development and not least the UN Agenda 2030.

With the Agenda 2030, for the first time in history the world has one, integrated agenda for both development and environmental sustainability. We can't have one without the other. Poverty eradication without respect for the ecosystems and the planets limited resources is a dead end. This creates new visions, new possibilities — and challenges.

But we all know that plans and visions are not enough. The urgency of

putting words into action is underlined when we consider the climate change, the refugee crisis, the growing number of conflicts and wars, the threat of global terrorism, fundamentalism and hate speech, or the fact that more than one billion people are still lacking electricity. It is obvious that the world so far has failed to deal with the greatest challenges of our time.

The world needs countries that are willing to lead the way toward the fulfillment of the Agenda 2030. We are proud to declare that Sweden is committed to be such a country. Four areas are especially important in fulfilling the agenda:

- Including youth. This spring, Sweden launched the global campaign "#Firstgeneration." First Generation implies the generations and civil society actors who, thanks to digitalization, have access to networks and new knowledge and thus have a unique opportunity to use the 2030 Agenda and the global goals to build new solutions for a sustainable future — a future that can end poverty! Around the world we will organize activities and collaborations including everything from innovation competitions, university activities to social-media initiatives. A key target group is the teachers around the world. The crucial role of teachers in society, as well as their position as role models and sources of inspiration, gives them unique opportunities to pursue sustainability issues and influence our future.
- Climate. Sweden is committed to become one of the first fossil-free welfare nations in the world. Sweden used to be a country very dependent on fossil fuels. Since the oil crises in the '70s, we have been working systematically to reduce energy consumption and to increase the share of renewables. During the same period our economy has developed very fast. We opt for sustainable-energy sources for the sake of the climate, but also because it is economically sound. We believe it is much smarter to be the first one to enter the new economy, rather than being the last one depending on old solutions. Sweden is also the largest per capita contributor to the Green Climate Fund.
- Feminism. Sweden is the first country in the world to pursue a feminist foreign policy. Ensuring that women and girls can enjoy their fundamental human rights is both an obligation within the framework of our international commitments and a prerequisite for sustainable development. Investing in gender equality and promoting opportunities for non-traditional education and career choices for both boys and girls is of utmost importance. Investing in girls' education in particular is one of the most effective measures to promote gender equality and to contribute to economic and social development.

- Coherence. Coherence is a fundamental part of the Agenda. Sweden has a long tradition of working with policy coherence for global sustainable development, through what we call Policy for Global Development. Every Ministry has to produce its own action plans on how to achieve greater policy coherence for development. The Government recently appointed a multi-stakeholder National Committee to promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda throughout Swedish society. The responsibility includes conducting an assessment of the extent to which Sweden fulfills the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, submitting a proposal for an overarching action plan for Sweden's implementation and working to include all relevant actors. Civil society organizations, municipalities, academia, private sector and trade unions are essential in this endeavour, since we know that every part of the society needs to work together if we are to succeed.

We now have 15 years ahead of us to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030. We are convinced that it is possible to achieve the goals and to create a better future for us all. But we need to get to work at once, and we need to do it together. We are convinced UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is right: We are the first generation that could end poverty and the last one to limit climate change. Let us jointly rise to that challenge.



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of the Environment

Establishment of new arrivals to Sweden to be reformed

Published 19 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Dagens Nyheter 19 februari 2015

Events in the rest of the world affect us all. Terrorist organisation IS hunting down fleeing families, children being abducted by Boko Haram, repressive states persecuting journalists. These events provoke abhorrence against the perpetrators, but they also arouse empathy with the victims.

Questions are raised around every breakfast table: What if it was our family under threat? What if it was our children hearing the shelling at night? Many people in Sweden bear personal memories of repression that are now being reawakened.

Today almost 50 million people in the world are displaced. This is the most serious refugee situation since the Second World War. Conflicts around the world are forcing people to leave behind everything they own to seek security in another country. They are fleeing in desperation from war, torture, repression, abuses and rape.

One or two of every thousand refugees in the world seek asylum in Sweden. We bear a small part of the global responsibility, but in the short term it is still a major challenge, even for a rich country such as Sweden. Our values and our respect for human dignity mean that we have a collective duty to help people in distress. This Government will always stand up for a humane asylum policy and unwaveringly defend the right of asylum.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, recently praised Germany and Sweden for setting a good example in taking responsibility for the reception of refugees and providing extensive support to the UNHCR. At present, just a few EU Member States take in the vast

majority of those seeking asylum in the EU. Sweden will seek international cooperation to enable more EU countries to increase their responsibility for displaced people. In addition, Sweden will take steps in the EU to create more legal channels for people to seek asylum in the EU and to increase the reception of quota refugees in other countries.

Immigration in Sweden is regulated and asylum legislation is based on international conventions and EU law. Those granted asylum begin a journey to build a new life in Sweden. People have a strong drive to create a home, get a job and a secure income, use their skills and find their place in society. The Government's policy for getting immigrants established builds on this drive.

Handled properly, the reception of immigrants offers a massive opportunity. For many years, public debate has been characterised by concern over the demographic challenge whereby young people of the future will have to provide for an increasing number of elderly people.

The increased number of immigrants arriving in Sweden helps create better prospects of tackling this challenge.

Many of those who come to Sweden are of working age and have an education – often a higher education – and professional experience. Just as it did with the waves of immigration from Latin America, the Middle East and the Balkans in the 1980s and 1990s, Sweden's reception of refugees will bring new colleagues, neighbours, friends and family members who will help to build Sweden's prosperity. In the global economy, having good knowledge of regions, cultures and languages brings a competitive advantage, not least for an export-dependent country such as Sweden.

But there are significant shortcomings in the current policy concerning the establishment of new arrivals in the labour market and in society. This has been the case for a long time, under both centre-right and Social Democratic governments.

It takes far too long for new arrivals to find work. When not all municipalities take a share of the responsibility for receiving refugees, those who have recently arrived are forced into long stays in accommodation centres instead of being allowed to begin the process of getting settled. The measures offered to new arrivals are not sufficiently well tailored to the circumstances and needs of the target group. Finding the right path, and getting academic certificates assessed and skills validated can take several

years. In some cases there is a lack of opportunities for supplementary education to allow those with vocational training and graduates to find jobs that match their skills. Many people with foreign backgrounds also encounter discrimination.

The Government's focus is on creating more jobs, closing gaps and increasing cohesion in Sweden. For this reason, as soon as this Government came into office we launched a serious project to reform the establishment of new arrivals. In recent weeks, the debate has featured cobbled-together symbolic proposals – which for the most part risk delaying the establishment of immigrants rather than accelerating it. Making life worse for new arrivals, weakening job security or reducing remuneration and wages will not help them become established or increase cohesion in Sweden.

The Government is currently drafting an establishment package of well-founded reforms in four areas. The individual reforms in these four areas will be presented as and when the details are completed in the Government Offices. The first will be presented today.

1. Quickly into work through language, training, validation and housing. Work is key to establishing adults in Swedish society. More people establishing themselves in the labour market requires better Swedish language training, a more efficient validation process and greater opportunities for supplementary education, combined with work placements and jobs. It also requires active anti-discrimination measures in working life. The Government considers that the social partners have an important role to play in ensuring more rapid establishment in the labour market.

The Government will also present measures to ensure that more housing is built, in both the short and long term. More housing is needed for young people and students as well as new arrivals in parts of the country where the labour market is strong.

2. Every child and young person must receive a good education in preschools and schools. Municipalities will be given increased support to be able to offer newly arrived children and young people a good education in preschools and schools, and the social support needed for young people to get a good start in life. Children and young people should learn Swedish quickly, alongside continuing to develop their mother tongue and subject knowledge.

3. All municipalities must take in refugees. The reception of refugees is a

national concern. All municipalities must play their part to ensure that new arrivals can establish themselves as quickly as possible. At the same time, the municipalities should be allowed better planning opportunities when new arrivals are allocated, and be given reasonable and stable economic conditions.

4. Civil society has a key role to play. Civil society already does a great deal throughout the country to help new arrivals establish themselves. Many people do what they can to give new arrivals a warm reception. This is our country at its best, and it is a way for us to stand united. For this reason, support will be given to efforts by civil society organisations to facilitate their contribution to dignified reception of refugees. This includes a wide range of activities, from contact families and sports for children to mentors from similar professional backgrounds and language cafés.

These are the starting points for the reforms that the Government will present. This also means choosing a way forward for Sweden. We will not present symbolic proposals that worsen the establishment of refugees. Instead, we will implement well-founded reforms as part of a broad establishment package, so that people who come to Sweden can use their skills and benefit from their professional experience. Together we will develop our country.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Gustav Fridolin key person in launch of new global sexuality education programme

Published 11 January 2018

Sexuality education and reproductive health on the agenda when Minister for Education participates in launch of UNESCO's new handbook for sexuality education during visit to South Africa and Zambia on 12–16 January.

Sweden has been active in the work to produce the handbook, which is part of Sweden's efforts for qualitative and gender-equal sexuality education globally. The handbook will contribute to strengthened and improved sexuality education, and is based on scientific studies and the efforts of the working group which included prominent roles for RFSU and Sida.

During the visit, emphasis will also be placed on the regional launch of the Swedish-funded UNESCO initiative 'Our Rights, Our Lives, Our Future', which aims to provide more young people in southern Africa with access to qualitative sexuality education. Mr Fridolin will be keynote speaker at this event.

During the visit he will meet representatives of the South African Ministry of Basic Education, government agencies from Ghana, Swaziland, Côte d'Ivoire and Namibia, as well as youth organisations and civil society. In Zambia, Mr Fridolin will meet government representatives as well as members of civil society.

"All young people, regardless of gender, are entitled to good and unprejudiced knowledge about sexuality and reproductive health. Education

in this area leads to increased awareness and gender equality, and therefore means an investment in development and democracy. This is an example of feminist foreign policy in practice," says Mr Fridolin.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Eight Swedish cabinet ministers to the Social Summit in Gothenburg

Published 15 November 2017

The Prime Minister, together with the EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker has invited to a social summit focusing on the promotion of Fair Jobs and growth, in Gothenburg on Friday 17 November. Heads of State and heads of Governments together with other EU-member ministers will be in place.

Apart from the Prime minister the Swedish Government participates are:

- **Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson**
- **Minister for Health and Social Affairs Annika Strandhäll**
- **Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin**
- **Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde**
- **Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg**
- **Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér**
- **Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström**

All government ministers will be available for media during the summit, contact respective press secretaries. In addition to the Swedish government, representatives from the EU Commission and EU countries, more than 30 different organizations and actors will attend the Summit on Fair Conditions and Growth in Göteborg, November 17, 2017.

The summit will bring together EU leaders, the social partners and other key stakeholders to discuss how to promote fair jobs and growth.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Gustav Fridolin to take part in Nordic annual review with UNESCO in Paris

Published 11 May 2017

Today, Thursday 11 May, Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin is in Paris to take part in an annual dialogue on and follow-up of the financial support that Sweden, via the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), has given to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

This support goes to UNESCO's work to strengthen freedom of the press and freedom of expression, sex education and the freedom of expression of artistic practitioners. The support also goes to measures to build up research capacity in developing countries to address the growing impact of climate change, for example.

This year, the review has been coordinated with the other Nordic countries.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Gustav Fridolin to visit London

Published 29 March 2017

Today, Wednesday 29 March, Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin will travel to London to take part in meetings on inequality in education.

Mr Fridolin will meet with Nick Clegg, Chair of the Commission on Inequality in Education, and Caroline Dinenage, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Women, Equalities and Early Years. Mr Fridolin's programme also includes meetings with young Swedish students in London.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Gustav Fridolin to address and attend Education International Migration Conference in Stockholm

Published 21 November 2016 Updated 21 November 2016

Today, Monday 21 November, Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin will deliver the opening address at the Education International Conference in Stockholm on the theme schooling for newly arrived pupils. During the week, Mr Fridolin will take part in a number of conference activities.

The global federation of teacher unions Education International will gather delegates from around the world in Stockholm for a conference on the theme education for newly arrived children who come from Syria and other conflict areas in the Middle East. The conference is being held in Stockholm since the federation considers Sweden to be a world leader when it comes to newly arrived pupils.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice

Swedish Government presents feminist policy for a gender-equal future

Published 18 November 2016 Updated 18 November 2016

The Swedish Government has presented a gender quality policy communication entitled *Power, goals and authority – a feminist policy for a gender-equal future*, including a ten-year National strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women. As one of the measures in the strategy, the Government intends to amend the degree descriptions in the Higher Education Ordinance for educational programmes where it is most necessary and where students will encounter perpetrators and victims of violence in their future careers.

"People who encounter perpetrators of violence and their victims in their work must have knowledge of how violence can be uncovered and prevented, and of the most effective measures. This should therefore be included in the teaching of particularly relevant higher education programmes. This measure is part of the first long-term national strategy to combat men's violence against women, which prioritises preventive efforts. This communication shows the Government moving up a gear in its efforts to make a difference in people's lives," says Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

"So-called honour-related crimes are unacceptable. More offences must be

uncovered and more must be done to prosecute the perpetrators. It must be clear that society takes a very serious view of these offences. We are therefore appointing an inquiry to investigate the possibilities of introducing honour-related motives as special grounds for tougher penalties," says Minister for Justice Morgan Johansson.

"Many people, often young women, are now confined by a pressure to achieve that is creating growing mental ill health. Many people, often young men, lack motivation to study and faith in the future. The gender structures and norms that constrain both girls and boys must be broken; we must strengthen young people's self-esteem and self-confidence if we are to improve school performance. This is the basis of the Government's major investments in school health and welfare services, special needs education support, and study and vocational guidance," says Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin.

Highlights of the gender equality communication

The communication Power, targets and agencies – a feminist policy for a gender-equal future encompasses political objectives, an organisational structure for implementation and a follow-up system. It also includes a national strategy with a programme of measures to prevent and combat men's violence against women. The programme of measures will apply from 2017 to 2020. Parts of the strategy are based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

Gender equality agency and national assignments

The Government intends to establish a new agency in 2018 to help ensure strategic, cohesive and sustainable governance and effective implementation of gender equality policy. The Left Party supports the proposal and has been keen to establish a gender equality agency.

The three national assignments concerning honour-related violence and oppression, prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes, and the assignment on support to authorities (including higher education institutions) for gender mainstreaming of their activities, will be made permanent.

Two new interim targets for gender equality policy

The Government is introducing two new interim targets – gender-equal

education and gender-equal health – to give these areas greater space in gender equality policy.

Focus on men's participation and responsibility

Men's participation is a prerequisite if a gender-equal society is to be realised. The Government intends to implement measures to strengthen the gender equality work focus on men and boys with respect to violence prevention, health and use of parental benefits.

Strategic, cohesive and long-term agency governance

During this electoral period, the Government intends to analyse which agencies' instructions require strengthened requirements and governance with respect to gender mainstreaming.

National strategy to combat men's violence against women

The communication includes a ten-year national strategy on men's violence against women, including honour-related violence and oppression, as well as prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes. To strengthen the prospects of achieving the interim gender equality policy target of ending men's violence against women, the Government will focus particularly on preventive measures.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Gustav Fridolin in New York

Published 07 June 2016 Updated 07 June 2016

Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin is in New York this week for meetings with representatives of the UN, the New York City Department of Education, and others.

Tomorrow, Mr Fridolin will meet Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Jan Eliasson and the Deputy Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, Phil Weinberg.

On Thursday Mr Fridolin will visit a branch of the organisation StreetSquash, which supports thousands of young people from socially vulnerable areas by combining squash with academic tutoring, leadership development, etc.

Mr Fridolin will also take part in a seminar on the Global Goals for Sustainable Development.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Isabella Lövin discusses peace at UN Security Council

Published 07 June 2016 Updated 07 June 2016

Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate and Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin is visiting the United Nations headquarters in New York from 7 to 10 June. There she will take part in a debate in the UN Security Council on protection of civilians and peacekeeping operations, and a seminar on the UN Global Goals and education, together with Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin.

"At a time when large parts of the world are experiencing war and conflict, as well as the largest refugee flows since the Second World War, I will talk about the importance of respecting the fundamental humanitarian principles. This also applies to the UN's own peacekeeping troops, who must be well prepared for the operations they are to undertake and trained in ethics, gender equality and human rights. The world must be able to trust the UN to do its job," says Ms Lövin.

Her speech to the Security Council will be delivered in connection with an open debate on 10 June. Alongside Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin, Ms Lövin will also take part in a seminar on the UN's new Global Goals and Sweden's First Generation campaign, which is about highlighting the particularly important role of young people and teachers in achieving the goals, on 9 June.

On 8 June – World Oceans Day – Ms Lövin will take part in a ceremony to welcome the Polynesian voyaging canoe Hōkūle'a alongside UN Secretary

General Ban Ki-moon. Alongside a number of small island nations, Sweden has taken the lead on a follow-up mechanism to ensure the global implementation of Global Goal 14 on sustainable seas. Sweden and Fiji will jointly host a conference on sustainable seas in Fiji in June 2017.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Gustav Fridolin and Anthony Lake to visit Blackeberg School today

Published 20 May 2016 Updated 20 May 2016

Today, Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin and Executive Director of UNICEF Anthony Lake will visit Blackeberg School to find out how the school is working with newly arrived pupils. Véronique Lönnerblad, Secretary-General of UNICEF Sweden, will also take part in the visit.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Gustav Fridolin to take part in education conference in Paris

Published 02 May 2016 Updated 02 May 2016

Tomorrow, Tuesday 3 May, Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin will take part in an education conference in Paris.

Gustav Fridolin was invited by the French Minister for Education, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, to a seminar to discuss France's education reforms. Portugal's Minister of Education, Tiago Brandão Rodrigues, will also attend.



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Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Gustav Fridolin to take part in 25th Council of Europe ministers of education conference in Brussels

Published 11 April 2016 Updated 11 April 2016

Today, Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin will travel to Brussels to take part in the 25th Session of the Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education. The theme of the conference is how to secure democracy through education.

"Schools have a key role to play in preventing radicalisation, but they can also become the victims of it. This is what we saw with what happened in Trollhättan last autumn. Sweden is doing a great deal to combat radicalisation and build safe school environments. There is a lot of interest in what we're doing and at the same time we have a lot to learn. The Council of Europe is a good forum for this kind of exchange of experience. Building our society begins in preschool and school. Here we have to manage to stand up to and prevent radicalisation and extremism," says Mr Fridolin.

The conference is taking place on 11–12 April.



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Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Gustav Fridolin to take part in OECD summit in Berlin on importance of teachers to learning outcomes

Published 02 March 2016 Updated 02 March 2016

On 3–4 March, Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin will attend the OECD's International Summit on the Teaching Profession (ISTP) in Berlin. The focus of the conference will be the importance of the teaching profession to learning outcomes.

This will be the 6th ISTP, with political, academic and professional representatives all in attendance. Ministers, experts and teachers' union leaders from the different countries will discuss and debate the development of the teaching profession.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Gustav Fridolin to lead Swedish Delegation at UNESCO General Conference in Paris

Published 03 November 2015 Updated 03 November 2015

Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin is leaving for Paris today to take part in the 38th Session of the UNESCO General Conference. Mr Fridolin will lead the Swedish Delegation on 3–6 November and deliver Sweden's national address.

During the week, Mr Fridolin will also take part in a high-level meeting on the new Education 2030 agenda. In addition, Mr Fridolin will take part in a seminar on vocational education and training and liberal adult education that Sweden is arranging, as well as a seminar on LGBTQ issues. Mr Fridolin will have several bilateral meetings during the General Conference.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

OECD presents Swedish school review

Published 17 May 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Today, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) presented the Government with its report ‘Improving schools in Sweden: An OECD Perspective’. The review was conducted in light of Swedish pupils’ falling performance in the OECD’s PISA survey. Work began in March 2014, the OECD presented its preliminary conclusions in Stockholm in December the same year, and the final report was presented today.

In April 2015, the Government appointed a schools commission, headed by Anna Ekström.

“We welcome the OECD’s report and will now pass it to the schools commission. Partly based on the OECD’s recommendations, the schools commission will submit proposals aimed at improving learning outcomes, teaching and equity in Swedish schools. The commission will present its proposals by January 2017,” says Aida Hadzialic, Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training.

The recommendations of the OECD report focus on three priorities: conditions that promote quality and equity across Swedish schools, a long-term human resource strategy to build capacity for improved teaching and learning, and strengthened policy steering and accountability with a focus on improvement.

“The Government is already investing in many of the measures that the

OECD recommends. For instance, the Government has announced a primary school pledge with targeted efforts for the early school years and a long-term strategy to make the teaching profession more attractive by investing in higher teachers' salaries, an educational research institute and measures to reduce teachers' administrative burden," says Gustav Fridolin, Minister for Education.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

Press invitation: OECD presents school review

Published 30 April 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

On 4 May, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) will present the Government and the schools commission with its report ‘Improving schools in Sweden: an OECD perspective’.

The OECD will present its results and recommendations at the press conference. The review was conducted in light of Swedish pupils’ deteriorating performance in the OECD’s PISA survey. Work began in March 2014, the OECD presented its preliminary conclusions in Stockholm in December the same year, and now the final report will be presented.

In April 2015, the Government appointed a schools commission, which among other things based on the OECD’s recommendations, is to submit proposals aimed at improving learning outcomes, teaching standards and equity in Swedish schools.

Andreas Schleicher, Director of the OECD Directorate of Education and Skills, Graham Donaldson, professor at the College of Social Sciences at Glasgow University, and Marco Kools, analyst at the OECD, will participate.

Schools commission chair Anna Ekström, Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin, and Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Aida Hadzialic will also take part in the press conference.

The report will be available on the OECD website on Monday 4 May at 09.45.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Time: 4 May at 09.45

Location: Bella Venezia, Rosenbad.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Ministry of Education and Research

Speech by Gustav Fridolin at Peer Learning Activity

Published 08 April 2016 Updated 08 April 2016

Stockholm, April 6, 2016. Check against delivery.

It is my great honor to welcome you to Sweden and this Peer Learning Activity that is a follow-up on the discussions on the challenges to the educational systems held during the EYCS Council in November 2015. It is great to have you here in Stockholm.

The crisis in Syria is now on its sixth year. No person in Syria is unaffected by the war. As many as 470 000 might have been killed. 13,5 million are in urgent need of aid. There is a lack of all the basics: food, water, medicines and housing. The humanitarian situation is alarming. Families are constantly seeking refuge from war and oppression. Behind every figure there is a person, someone like you and me that are affected. And in refugee camps people are struggling to survive in desperate conditions, where women and children are vulnerable to harassment, exploitation and abuse.

The war in Syria has had significant effects both regionally and globally. Some of the children that seek asylum in Sweden are Afghans that have grown up in Iran. There are reports that even some of these children are refugees affected by the war in Syria, suggesting that they are fearing and fleeing enrollment to become soldiers in the Syrian war.

Out of them the European Union as a whole received around one million in 2015. It is mine and the Swedish governments strong belief that if the EU would have managed to already in 2015 give a collective response to the refugee crisis and put into practice the fundamental EU principle of solidarity we would have managed the situation perfectly well. If all the member states within the EU would have given shelter to the same amount of refugees as Sweden had done already before the dramatic fall of 2015, we

would have been able to provide a safe haven for all those over 4 million that have fled Syria.

But as you know the responsibility is not evenly shared. During the autumn Sweden, with 2 % of the EU population alone received 23 % of the Asylum Seekers to the EU. At the total 162 877 asylum seekers arrived in Sweden in 2015, including 70 384 children of school age. The number of unaccompanied minors was 35 369.

To give you some highlights of how we today work to meet our new children, that has come to Swedish schools from war and refuge, I need to give you a background of the Swedish School System as such. We face some major challenges broader than the one's directly connected to the large numbers of new students. To summarize: The attractiveness of the teaching profession has been low, we lag behind in early intervention, there are deficiencies in the steering of the education sector and we see increasing school segregation. None of these challenges are, as you understand, the result of Sweden taking our responsibility for the refugee crisis. These challenges are systemic.

The Swedish Government has invited the OECD to make a special report, analyzing the education system and we are now developing a comprehensive agenda for reform together with a specially assigned School Commission, gathering key expertise and stakeholders from the Swedish Education Sector.

To build a school that are able to include newly arrived children and provide for them an education that create opportunities for the future, is first and foremost about achieving quality education for each and every child. A school that is robust and flexible enough to give a fair chance for every child is the best possible precondition for newly arrived children to develop their knowledge and skills. Attractiveness of the teaching profession, early intervention and investments in greater equity are key priorities for our government. That includes such measures as increased teacher salaries, a high quality teacher training and increased cooperation between The National Agency for Education and education providers on measures to raise results in schools with a poor academic record and difficult preconditions. The Government is furthermore allocating additional resources to those municipalities taking a larger responsibility for newly arrived pupils. We also allocate funds to employ more teachers in the early years in school as well as to attract experienced teachers to schools with greater challenges.

The Government is also investing in improved health services for pupils and

school libraries. These are examples of components that are of importance for every child but have even greater significance to those newly arrived to Sweden or to those who are struggling in school. For children with trauma from living in a war zone, the quality of the health service for pupils can be life changing. For children with few Swedish books at home, the school library is even more important in opening up new horizons.

One of the strengths of the Swedish Education System, as identified by OECD, is a capable and committed profession. The present situation shows that clearly: The profession has despite operating in a too weak system found room for all those children that came to Sweden in the autumn of 2015. It was done through the hard work of teachers, principals and municipalities.

However, the greater task lies ahead. These kids, that has been given a place shall now be given the opportunity to the knowledge needed to build a new life. The magnitude of new students challenges of course the ability of our educational system to meet the needs of newly arrived children and give them the best possible preconditions to learn. It is critical to realize, at the same time, that the successful integration of newly arrived children will be an absolute must for our societies economic competitiveness as well as for social cohesion. And above all, every child, regardless of background, has the right to quality education. There is no alternative.

Looking at the figures of students reaching the qualifications requirement for upper secondary school and the increasing school segregation in Sweden there is a lot that will have to be done.

Statistics from the Swedish National Agency show that children who have immigrated to Sweden after the age of 7 qualify for a national program at the upper secondary level to a far less extent than other pupils.

However, a foreign born child that has arrived in Sweden before the age of 7, at the start of compulsory school, has on average almost the same chances as a Swedish born child to achieve equal results. Challenges to providing a fair chance for every one remain. But the positive note is that increased number of years in the Swedish school has a significant positive effect. Furthermore, we are observing a positive development of results for children born abroad that have lived in Sweden for more than four years. The development is especially encouraging for girls. In essence, more time in school increases the chances to succeed.

Poor mapping of migrant children's previous knowledge and skills, the

separation of newly arrived learners from the mainstream education, for too long, and a lack of individualized support are therefore clearly important explanatory factors for today's poor performance.

In light of that, Sweden has decided to introduce a mandatory assessment of newly arrived children's knowledge. The assessment aims at mapping the child's previous schooling and level of knowledge and skills in literacy and mathematics. Based on this assessment, the school principal will decide on the grade the child is to be placed in, the allocated teaching time for subjects, and the educational support the school will provide. Through this measure we want to ensure that each pupil gets individualized and proper support.

In addition, pupils in primary and secondary education with a mother tongue other than Swedish are entitled to mother tongue tuition. They are also entitled to tuition in their mother tongue in other subjects. A tool the Government recently expanded and improved. This increases the chance for a smooth transition to the Swedish school and lessens the risk of newly arrived children lagging behind in school compared to the knowledge base they already have with them arriving to Sweden. There is strong research evidence that fluency in the mother tongue also increases the ability to learn and master the Swedish language. Linguistic capital is, so to say, valuable regardless of the currency used to acquire it. And while exchanging linguistic currency is important and at times can be challenging, linguistic capital is always essential to succeed in school.

The allocation of newly arrived children between municipalities has been very unequal. Some municipalities have received a large proportion as compared to their inhabitants while others barely none. Last known figures, 4 percent of our schools took responsibility for a third of all newly arrived pupils. Sweden demands the EU to share the responsibility in solidarity. The same holds true for Swedish municipalities.

We are therefore through already passed or prepared new laws ensuring that all municipalities and also the most popular schools will share the responsibility of receiving newly arrived children. Our experiences from earlier integration processes, especially from the early 1990's, are that the school is a crucial meeting place, where young people with different backgrounds and life experiences interact. Today, Swedish Schools are more segregated. Therefore, we have to work hard to accomplish a school that is less segregated and where all parts of society meets in classrooms and school yards.

We do recognize the challenges but to fail is not an option. And we have succeeded in the past. The refugees migrating from The Balkans as children in the 1990's are when it comes to higher education today actually more established in society than Swedish born. And when it comes to several other factors they are in practice equally established to those born I Sweden.

It can be done. And it will be done again.

Before I finish, let me thank the European Commission for great cooperation in organizing and providing support to make this a successful event.

It is a joint European responsibility to make sure that each and every child are provided opportunities for quality education. To succeed, it is very important that we share and learn from each other. I wish you great days of sharing and learning.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Ministry of Education and Research

Speech at 38th session of UNESCO General Conference

Published 05 November 2015 Updated 05 November 2015

Paris, France, 5 November 2015 Check against delivery.

Mr President of the General Conference, Mr Chair of the Executive Board, Madame Director-General, Distinguished Delegates,

It's an honour for me to address the 38th General Conference of UNESCO. Sweden fully aligns itself with the EU statement.

We live in a time of huge transformation. The defining challenge is countering climate change. We need a course of action to create a low-carbon and climate-resilient world economy. The escalating conflicts stemming from draught and climate change shows clearly that the world must reach a fair, ambitious and legally binding agreement in Paris in December. It's not a choice, but a necessity for the survival of our civilisations as we know them. UNESCO's work with regards to the Ocean and freshwater is crucial. Sweden supports the Small Island Developing States or more appropriately Large Ocean States in addressing the specific challenges they are faced with.

The new Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development is a milestone. It is universal and we all have a responsibility for its realisation. UNESCO has an important role in translating the goals into concrete action. We look forward to engaging with all of you in the work ahead of us.

A sustainable future is impossible without ensuring gender equality. It is time to once and for all get rid of the oppressing structures that hinder women from the right to decide over themselves and to participate in political and economic life. Anything else is an immoral waste of human talents. Equal

rights and the right to education is a priority for the Swedish Government's feminist foreign policy.

Inclusive and equitable quality education for all girls and boys features prominently in the Agenda 2030. Education for all is a key driver for change and Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education are key components. Comprehensive sexuality education, as shown by UNESCO's programme, is essential in the work towards both gender equality and sustainable development.

In order to achieve fair and equal societies, UNESCO also has a vital role in promoting access to information and press freedom. Sweden will continue to engage on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. The upcoming conference with news organisations in February will provide a unique platform for dialogue on journalists' safety. We also welcome UNESCO's recent report on World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development and we invite more countries to contribute to this. UNESCO must continue to promote human rights, including freedom of expression, on-line as well as off-line.

It is unacceptable that journalists are killed and threatened when they do their job. We must speak up on behalf of those who have had their own voices silenced, like the Swedish-Eritrean journalist Dawit Isaak. Our aim is that he should be released.

Mr President,

While we need joint efforts in building a more sustainable future, we also need collective action for the challenges of today. The current refugee situation is a global crisis. Sweden is proud that many refugees over the years have made Sweden a second home country. They have contributed to build Sweden richer. Sweden will continue to take its responsibility. In this situation more countries need to give help to those in need. It is a human right to seek and if in need enjoy asylum. Sweden has a clear stand: no state can flee its legal or international obligations. Global crisis demands global responsibility.

To solve the crisis, the horrors in Syria must be stopped. Addressing the root causes of the conflict in Syria is key. That is why all actors – regional as well as international - must intensify their efforts in support of the UN-led political track and a political solution. The fabric of entire civilizations is torn apart. When artists and journalists cannot work, books are burnt and cultural

heritage is destroyed it is a sign of repressive, dark times. It is also the moment when UNESCO's mandate is more important than ever.

Sweden strongly supports the implementation of the cultural conventions and the actions undertaken by UNESCO and the global community to counteract the demolition and the illicit trafficking in cultural objects. A Nordic initiative for enhanced international collaboration will start in Oslo in December this year.

Distinguished Delegates,

Sweden has always been a strong supporter of the UN, both politically and financially. And, over the years, Sweden has stood by those in the world who fight against repression and inequality and for independence and dignity. We now seek your confidence for a non-permanent seat in the Security Council for the period 2017-2018. We will work towards a more representative, transparent and effective Council that can respond swiftly to the security challenges of our time.

Mr President,

We would also like to acknowledge all the hard work carried out by the UNESCO staff and the Director-General, Madam Bokova. Sweden fully supports the Director General's work for reform of UNESCO and we are actively engaged for better governance of the Organisation. Through further reform UNESCO will be even more relevant and more focused on its mandate, which will deliver more results. In order to do this, the budget level must match the goals we have set up for the Organisation.

As I said at the outset, we live in a time of huge transformation and the founding ideas and principles of UNESCO are as vibrantly urgent as ever. Sweden stands ready to continue our important joint work ahead to create a sustainable, equal and peaceful development for all women and men.

Thank you.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry of Education and Research

Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin comments on the PISA results

Published 06 December 2016 Updated 06 December 2016

The PISA 2015 results are a show of strength for Sweden's teachers and pupils. Hard work makes a difference; we know this in the classroom and it has now been demonstrated in improved eligibility from year nine and better performance in two independent assessments of knowledge. At the same time, however, social gaps are widening. The conditions under which you grow up now influence your performance more in Sweden than in many other OECD countries. We can never accept this. It is your performance in school that should determine your future, not the home you grow up in. The PISA results are gratifying, but they place demands on policy. We will continue to prioritise more time for teachers, breaking segregation, and providing timely support to pupils. We will leave no one behind.