



Government Offices of Sweden

# The Government encourages Swedish higher education institutions and research funders to stop cooperating with state institutions in Russia and Belarus

On Wednesday 2 March, Minister for Education Anna Ekström held a press briefing with Vice-Chancellor of the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF) Hans Adolfsson and Director General of the Swedish Research Council Sven Stafström due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The Government continues to push for sanctions against Russia, support to Ukraine and strengthening Sweden.

The Government encourages higher education institutions and research funders to immediately stop all contact and cooperation with state institutions in Russia and Belarus and to not initiate any new contacts or commitments. This was conveyed by the Minister for Education Anna Ekström at a press briefing on Wednesday.

Sweden condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's unprovoked, illegal and unjustifiable aggression against Ukraine. Russia's actions are an attack on the European security order, and it is extremely important that European countries stand in solidarity with Ukraine and its people. Swedish higher education institutions and research funders play an important role when it comes to standing up for knowledge, academic freedom, democracy and human rights, and showing solidarity with Ukrainian students and researchers.

Much cooperation in education and research consists of individual contacts between researchers in Sweden, Russia and Belarus. Many Russian academics have openly criticised the country's actions, and it is important not to equate individual Russian and Belarusian researchers with state institutions. The Government expects that Swedish higher education institutions and public authorities ensure that any individual contacts and collaborations are truly suitable based on national and European policy positions. Higher education institutions and public authorities are especially encouraged to consider security policy aspects in relation to cooperation in various subject areas. Sweden should not be involved in education and research cooperation that supports the Russian central government.

The Government recommends that higher education institutions and other relevant public authorities maintain a very strict position regarding payments, managing applications, project implementation, concluding agreements, etc. that involve Russian and Belarusian recipients. The basic premise is that contact and cooperation with Russian and Belarusian state institutions must cease.

The Government's positions are based on decisions and guidance from the EU and other European actors. The Ministry of Education and Research is conducting a dialogue with relevant public authorities on how the Government best can support higher education institutions with issues concerning the ongoing conflict and other issues concerning security risks in connection with education and research cooperation.

Published 03 March 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

# The Programme of the Malmö Forum

The programme format will be interactive and action-oriented, with a focus on discussions between Heads of Delegations with active moderation. The head moderator of the Malmö Forum is Ms. Hala Gorani, anchor and correspondent for CNN International. HM King Carl XVI Gustaf and HM Queen Silvia will honour the Malmö Forum with their presence throughout the day the 13 October.

## **Tuesday 12 October**

**18.00–20.00 Welcome Reception (not open for media)**

A welcome reception for the Heads of Delegations will be hosted by the Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. Delegates are invited to a separate welcome reception. This will be hosted by the State Secretary to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Ms Karin Wallensteen, and State Secretary to the Minister for Education Anna Ekström, Ms Kristina Persdotter. The receptions will feature music in Yiddish by the Swedish/Danish duo Ida&Louise.

## **Wednesday 13 October**

**08.30–09.45 Doorstep**

[Web-TV on demand: Doorstep](#)

**10.00–11.15 Plenary Session I – Remember**

[Web-TV on demand: Plenary Session I – Remember](#)

Today, few survivors remain to bear witness to the horrors of the Holocaust. The opening Plenary Session will reflect on the consequences of the

diminishing number of survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust, the Roma genocide and the persecution that different groups were exposed to during the Holocaust. The international community has an obligation to ensure that the Holocaust is remembered and that future generations understand the causes of and the process leading up to the Holocaust, and to reflect on its consequences to prevent this from ever happening again.

The first Plenary Session will feature klezmer musician Giora Feidman and musical performances in Yiddish by Gabrielle Aaron-Johansson, and in Romani by Maria Salamanca Taikon Gonzalez. The speakers in this Plenary Session:

- Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven
- Mayor of Malmö City Katrin Stjernfeldt Jammeh
- President of the European Council Charles Michel
- President of Israel Isaac Herzog
- Professor Yehuda Bauer
- President of the World Jewish Congress Ronald Lauder
- President of the European Roma and Travellers Forum Miranda Vuolasranta
- President of France Emmanuel Macron
- United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

**11.15–11.35 Family photo**

**11.50–12.50 Breakout Sessions**

[\(Web-TV on demand: Breakout Sessions 1\)](#)

Three parallel Breakout Sessions will feature interactive discussions focusing on the different themes of the Forum with short interventions (approx. 3 min) by Heads of Delegations. Each Breakout Session will start with a brief “scene setter” by an expert. The format of these sessions is a moderated conversation where the moderator will play an active role. The organisers kindly ask all speakers to respect the limited time for interventions in order to allow for an interactive conversation. At the end of each session there will be possibilities for questions or comments from delegates.

### **1.1 Promoting remembrance, fighting distortion**

This session will focus on the significance of museums, memorials, and commemorative activities to promote Holocaust remembrance. Discussions will also cover how to combat denial and distortion – which includes safeguarding independent free research – to guarantee a correct presentation

of historical facts and honour the memory of all victims of the Holocaust and other mass atrocities. This is also a prerequisite for lessons to be learnt and efforts to prevent mass atrocities in the future.

### **1.2 Developing education and reaching new target groups**

This session will explore the development of Holocaust education and its various aims. These aims include preserving the memory and understanding of the historical course of events, and the role of education as a mean to prevent and combat antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism. The ways that Holocaust education and education to prevent antisemitism can reach a wider target group and approaches to capacity-building for teachers will also be covered.

### **1.3 Countering contemporary antisemitism and other forms of racism online and offline**

This session will explore the nature of contemporary antisemitism and the various contexts where it exists. Discussions will also cover good examples of combating antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism and intolerance. A special area of emphasis will be antisemitism on social media platforms, Holocaust denial, distortion, disinformation, conspiracy theories and incitement to hate crimes and hate speech online.

### **13.00–14.30 Lunch**

A lunch for the Heads of Delegations will be hosted by Prime Minister Löfven. Delegates are invited to a separate lunch. The lunch at the Malmö Forum will feature a musical performance by the Alma Quartet from the Malmö Symphony Orchestra. The lunch for the delegates will be hosted by the State Secretary to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Ms Karin Wallensteen, and State Secretary to the Minister for Education Anna Ekström, Ms Kristina Persdotter.

### **14.50–15.50 Breakout Sessions**

[\(Web-TV on demand: Breakout Sessions 2\)](#)

Three parallel Breakout Sessions will feature interactive discussions focusing on the different themes of the Forum with short interventions (approx. 3 min) by Heads of Delegations. Each Breakout Session will start with a brief “scene setter” by an expert. The format for these sessions is a moderated conversation where the moderator will play an active role. The organisers kindly ask all speakers to respect the limited time for interventions in order to allow for an interactive conversation. At the end of each session there will

be possibilities for questions or comments.

### **2.1 Implementing strategies and ensuring security**

This session will deal with the use of different tools, for example strategies and action plans to combat antisemitism, and the appointment of special coordinators/rapporteurs to combat antisemitism. The session will also explore examples of implementation of the IHRA non-legally binding Working Definitions on antisemitism and antigypsyism/Roma discrimination. Discussions will also cover the promotion of Jewish life and ensuring safety and security of persons belonging to minorities affected by antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism and intolerance.

### **2.2 Combating antisemitism and hate speech on social media**

This session will address the use of social media to spread disinformation, incite hatred and incitement to violence and how these developments can be prevented and countered by various actors at state, regional and local level (law enforcement, education systems, etc.), social media platform companies and civil society. The session will also explore how social media can be part of the solution to promote human rights and strengthen democracy. Discussions will also cover media and information literacy.

### **2.3 Preserving testimonies and developing education for the future**

How can we ensure that the testimonies and witnesses of survivors remain accessible and continue to be shared in the future? In order to reach new and changing target groups, diverse forms and methods within Holocaust Education will be explored. This includes coalition-building involving various sectors, such as civil society, experts and academics. Participants will also explore new practices and technologies of reaching out and making an impact.

## **16.15–17.15 Plenary Session II – ReAct**

### **[Web-TV on demand: Plenary Session II – ReAct](#)**

The Holocaust was driven by hatred against Jews. However, it affected not only Jews but the whole society. Antisemitism is a concern for society as a whole and may be symptomatic of eroding democracy. Contemporary antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism and intolerance exist in many forms and flourish in different contexts. Wherever we see it, we must both react – and – act. The concluding Plenary Session will focus on action, the steps forward to ensure implementation of the pledges presented at the Forum, and how we can join forces to strengthen the work for Holocaust

remembrance and combating antisemitism and other forms of racism.

This concluding Plenary Session will be opened by the Swedish art music composer, Jacob Mühlrad. Cello soloist Johannes Rostamo will perform "Maggid", composed by Mühlrad. The Session will end with a musical performance by Swedish singer Lisa Nilsson. The speakers will be:

- President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen
- Panel:
  - President of Finland Sauli Niinistö
  - Prime Minister of Albania Edi Rama
  - Minister of State for Europe at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany Michael Roth
- Secretary-General of the United Nations António Guterres
- President of European Jewish Congress Moshe Kantor
- COO of Facebook Sheryl Sandberg
- Panel:
  - Secretary General of the Secretariat of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Kathrin Meyer
  - High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Miguel Ángel Moratinos
  - Minister of Diaspora Affairs of Israel Nachman Shai
- Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Löfven.

**17.30–18.00 Press Conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven**

[Web-TV on demand: Press Conference with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven](#)

Prime Minister Löfven will host the Malmö Forum Press Conference. Heads of Delegations will have the opportunity to hold parallel press conferences after 18.00.

Published 04 October 2021



# Sweden's pledges at the Malmö Forum

Sweden will assume the Presidency of the IHRA from March 2022 to the end of February 2023. This was Sweden's first pledge in connection with the Malmö Forum. Pledges presented at the Malmö Forum will be followed up during the Swedish Presidency. The ambition of the Swedish Government is to implement the measures below and allocate a total amount of approximately EUR 9.3 million/year.

## **We pledge to preserve and pass on the memory of the Holocaust**

- A museum to preserve and pass on the memory of the Holocaust will be established in Sweden in 2022. The activities of the museum will be built up and formed over the years to come. One starting point is that stories of Holocaust survivors with a connection to Sweden will be at the core of the museum's activities. A Swedish-language version of the Dimensions in Testimony installation (developed by the Shoah Foundation) that allows visitors to interact with Holocaust survivors via pre-recorded answers to questions – using artificial intelligence technology – will be spread by the museum to schools and other museums all over the country.
- The Swedish Government will make a contribution of 5,5 million kronor to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation, so that this place is preserved and new generations can build a future from learning, reflecting and remembering the terrible past.

## **We pledge to promote education to prevent antisemitism and other forms of racism and to strengthen Holocaust research**

- Education for active citizenship to prevent antisemitism and other forms of racism will be promoted through a nationwide undertaking conducted by the Swedish National Agency for Education in cooperation with the



Living History Forum. It will focus on a wide range of target groups encompassing formal and non-formal education.

- Activities, based on the recommendations of the Swedish Research Council's survey of Swedish research on the Holocaust and antisemitism, including groups such as the Roma and antigypsyism, will be initiated during 2022, with funding allocated by the Swedish Research Council.

**We pledge to combat antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism – online and offline**

- An action programme with measures against antisemitism will be presented in 2022. Action programmes targeting antigypsyism, islamophobia, Afrophobia and racism against the Sami will also be presented. The IHRA working definitions of antisemitism and antigypsyism/Roma discrimination will be considered in these respective programmes. The programmes will e.g. include measures in the field of education, continued and enhanced efforts by the police to counter racism and hate crime, as well as an assignment to the Swedish Defence Research Agency to continuously monitor antisemitism and other forms of racism, hate speech and violent extremism in digital environments.
- Organised racism and support for organised racism will be criminalised. The Government will also consult the Parliament and appoint a parliamentary committee of inquiry to unbiasedly consider whether Holocaust denial should be more clearly criminalised.

**We pledge to promote Jewish life, strengthen Roma inclusion and enhance security for civil society**

- A government inquiry on a strategy to promote Jewish life in Sweden will be appointed. The National strategy for Roma inclusion will continue and permanent resources will be allocated from 2022. Language centres for Yiddish and Romani will be established.
- Funding for security-enhancing measures for civil society, including the Jewish community, will increase significantly from 2022.

Published 13 September 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

# A new national educational material about the Holocaust and antisemitism

As a part of the national initiative to increase knowledge about the Holocaust and antisemitism, connected to the Malmö Forum Remember ReAct, a national educational material has been produced.

The material is about the Holocaust, antisemitism, antigypsyism and democracy and has been produced by The Living History Forum, the Swedish public authority commissioned to work with issues related to tolerance, democracy and human rights. With this initiative the Swedish Government aims to reach students with different needs and in school forms that might not have been reached by the educational materials of The Living History Forum earlier.

“Intolerance, oppression and violence, such as antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of racism, must be prevented and met with knowledge and active efforts. The memory of the Holocaust needs to be kept alive. Holocaust education is a starting point for knowledge and reflection on the equal value of all human beings. I am happy that we, with this initiative, will reach new groups of students, for instance adult students,” says Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

[The Living History Forum](#)

Published 19 March 2021



# The Expert Group of the Malmö Forum holds its first meeting

On 10 March 2021 the Expert Group of the Malmö Forum held its first meeting. The group will serve in an advisory capacity to the Secretariat of the Malmö Forum regarding the content of the programme of the Forum. Anna Ekström, Minister for Education, opened the meeting and stressed the importance of the coming Forum and how this will work as a catalyst for increased action for Holocaust remembrance, education and for actions to combat antisemitism.

Members of the Expert Group are:

- Doctor Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, Poland
- Professor Lars M. Andersson, Sweden
- Professor Yehuda Bauer, Israel
- Professor Deborah Dwork, USA
- Program Manager Benjamin Fischer, Germany
- Independent Expert Mirjam Karoly, Austria
- Professor Deborah Lipstadt, USA
- Director Tali Nates, South Africa
- Doctor Andre Oboler, Australia
- Professor Dina Porat, Israel
- Doctor Juliane Wetzel, Germany
- Doctor Robert Williams, USA

The group discussions were lead by Ingrid Lomfors, Director of the Living History Forum.



# The Swedish Holocaust Museum will be established in Stockholm

The Statement of Government Policy presented by Stefan Löfven in the Riksdag in January 2019 announced that a new museum would be established to preserve and perpetuate the memory of the Holocaust. Today, 27 January, on Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Government has announced that the museum is to be established in July 2022 and that it will be located in Stockholm.

The Government will establish the Swedish Holocaust Museum as an independent museum within an existing museums agency. By doing so, the museum can be incorporated into an established organisation with management functions and museum expertise, thus providing stability for the new museum. Facilities for storage, conservation, archives and other functions can be jointly used and coordinated. If the museum is located in Stockholm, it will be easier for school pupils and the general public from around the country to visit.

Memories of the Holocaust can be found all over the country in all the local communities where thousands of Swedes volunteered to help refugees and survivors.

The Holocaust museum should collaborate with many key actors, such as county museums and local museums, both to facilitate involvement of the country's entire population in the activities and because the accounts, testimonies, objects and places concerning the Holocaust are found throughout the country.

The murder, persecution and terrible suffering of the Jewish people, Roma and millions of other victims of Nazism have left an indelible scar across Europe. Although the killing did not take place on Swedish soil, Sweden both

influenced and was influenced by what happened. The Holocaust is also part of Sweden's history. As a society, we have an obligation to promote education, remembrance and research on the genocide committed by the Nazis and their allies so that new generations will be able to learn from history. The Swedish Holocaust Museum will be one way of doing so.

Published 27 January 2021



# Minister for Education on the Swedish decision to not close down schools

At a press briefing on June 11, Minister for Education Anna Ekström explained the Swedish decision to not close down the entire school system.

“The main reason was that it would not be an efficient and effective measure to stop the spread of the virus,” Minister for Education Anna Ekström said.

From March 17 and throughout the spring all teaching at Swedish upper secondary schools and in adult education, higher vocational education and higher education has been conducted remotely or online. On May 29 the Government announced that upper secondary schools can return to regular instruction on the school premises as of June 15.

“The decision to return to regular teaching was taken on the basis of a recently published document from the Public Health Agency of Sweden where it was concluded that children and young people only account for a small proportion of the COVID-19 cases,” Anna Ekström said.

“Moreover, staff within the preschool and school system which has remained open were found not to have been diagnosed with COVID-19 to a greater extent than those in other professions,” the Minister for Education stated.



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

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.

Published 30 March 2020





Government Offices of Sweden

# Several Ministers participated in commemorating Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January

On Holocaust Remembrance Day January 27 several representatives from the Swedish Government participated in memorial services to honour the victims of the Holocaust and to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven attended a memorial ceremony at Auschwitz-Birkenau to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the liberation. The memorial service began in Auschwitz and ended with a candle lighting ceremony in Birkenau.

Minister for Education Anna Ekström spoke at a memorial service arranged by the Council of Roma representatives in Malmö and then at a memorial service arranged by the Jewish Community of Malmö in the Synagogue of Malmö.

Minister for Home Affairs Mikael Damberg spoke at a ceremony arranged by The Living History Forum at Raoul Wallenberg's Square and then at the memorial ceremony in the Great Synagogue of Stockholm. Minister for Environment and Deputy Prime and Climate Isabella Lövin, Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson and Minister for Financial Markets and Housing Per Bolund also participated at the ceremony in the Great Synagogue.

Minister for Culture and Democracy Amanda Lind visited the Jewish Community of Gothenburg and spoke at the memorial ceremony in the evening.

Minister for Gender Equality, with responsibility for anti-discrimination and anti-segregation Åsa Lindhagen spoke at the memorial ceremony at the

Palais des Nations in Geneva.

Further Minister for Energy and Digital Development Anders Ygeman and Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson participated in a memorial service at the The Royal Dramatic Theatre.

Published 30 January 2020



Government Offices of Sweden

# Hearing with researchers, research institutes and government agencies

On Friday 24 January the Minister for Education, Anna Ekström, and State Secretary Kristina Persdotter hosted a hearing for researchers, research institutes and representatives from government agencies. Participants were invited to give input on the upcoming Malmö Forum. The input will serve as a valuable contribution in the continued work with the Forum.

A similar hearing will shortly be arranged for civil society organisations.

Published 27 January 2020



# International community gathered to affirm commitment to combating Holocaust distortion, antisemitism and other forms of discrimination

On Sunday 19 January, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) held a ministerial meeting in Brussels. Minister for Education Anna Ekström represented Sweden. During the meeting, a Ministerial Declaration was adopted to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Stockholm Declaration.

At this unique summit International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), together with the Government of Luxembourg, welcomed ministers and high-ranking government representatives from 35 countries to Brussels, to declare their commitment to fighting Holocaust distortion, antisemitism, antigypsyism and other forms of discrimination.

The ministerial meeting, at the Residence Palace Press Centre in Brussels, saw IHRA Member Countries adopt the IHRA 2020 Ministerial Declaration formed of 14 measures that underpin the ultimate objective of IHRA: to ensure the world remembers the Holocaust and work to contribute to a world without genocide.

- The Swedish Government welcomes this Declaration, which reaffirms the strong international support for the Stockholm Declaration's important messages. I consider it to be particularly important that this is taking place this year – 20 years since the Stockholm Conference – because it is the same year that we are hosting the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism. The Government continues to

strongly condemn and combat antisemitism and other forms of racism,” said Ms Ekström.

The IHRA was established at the initiative of Sweden in 1998 by then Prime Minister Göran Persson.

Published 20 January 2020



Government Offices of Sweden

# Teachers and pupils must have the right conditions to strengthen their work

Improving attainment, strengthening equity and guaranteeing the provision of teachers, safety and peaceful study environments in Swedish schools. Listen to Minister for Education Anna Ekström talk about some of her priorities during this electoral period.

Published 09 May 2019



# ”Protect people, not jobs”

Opinion piece by Minister for Education Anna Ekström and Minister for Employment and Gender Equality Eva Nordmark.

Throughout the world, working life is transforming. Countries that aspire to compete the global market have to keep pace with rapid developments. As a consequence of accelerating digital transformation, automation and the transition to climate neutrality, existing jobs will change, some will disappear and many new ones will be created. In order for Sweden to continue to spearhead technological innovation and the transition to climate neutrality, working adults need to be equipped with more knowledge and given significantly greater opportunity for upskilling and reskilling for new jobs.

In close consultation with the social partners, the Swedish Government is now preparing the greatest freedom and security reform package for the labour market in modern times. In 2022 the Swedish Government will introduce an entirely new career transition scheme as part of a larger package aimed at enhancing employment security, career transition opportunities and employment protection in the labour market.

Everyone in Sweden who has worked for more than eight years will be given the opportunity to study for up to one year with student finance (grants and loans) providing at least 80 per cent of their previous income up to a maximum amount. This ceiling is set at a generous level so that 81 per cent of those who are expected to study will be able to receive the maximum amount of the grant. In addition to this government support, those with a higher income will often be entitled to benefits negotiated under collective agreements, making it attractive for them to study.

Sweden has a long-standing tradition of the social partners negotiating the rules of the labour market. This uniquely successful model has resulted in very few days lost in industrial action, strong adaptability and real wage growth. Our reform represents the next step in the Swedish model and is based on the proposals negotiated between trade unions and employers. The

fact that the social partners and the Government are able to provide this career transition and social security system for Swedish wage earners, is a testament to the strength of the Swedish model.

The career transition scheme will play an important role for ordinary employees. The industrial workers who want to be employed in the new battery factory or green steel production, will be able to learn the necessary skills to make it possible. The assistant nurses who want to enhance their knowledge and skills and specialise in, for example, dementia care, will be able to do so. The engineers who feel they need to learn more about artificial intelligence or machine learning will have a great opportunity pursuing that.

Those who will especially benefit from this reform are people in mid-life, with children, mortgages and fixed expenses who did not previously view reskilling and education as a viable alternative, despite the desire or need.

Thanks to the Swedish model based on strong partners who take responsibility via collective agreements, we will build the world's best career transition system.

Anna Ekström  
Minister for Education

Eva Nordmark  
Minister for Employment and Gender Equality

Published 01 February 2022





# Sweden and UK strengthen cooperation in life sciences

Today, Minister for Education Anna Ekström is meeting the UK's Minister for Science, Research and Innovation, George Freeman, and Minister for Technology, Innovation and Life Sciences, Lord Kamall. In connection with their meeting in London, they will sign a memorandum of understanding in the area of life sciences. The memorandum builds on a long tradition of Swedish-UK cooperation and is intended to promote joint progress on policy development, technical standards, industry engagement, research, development and implementation of new technologies and treatments.

Two years ago, the Government launched a national life sciences strategy. The goal of deeper cooperation with the UK is mentioned in the strategy.

“Research in the field of health and medicine is one of Sweden’s strengths. The UK is a world leader in that area, and has long been an important partner for Sweden. The memorandum we are signing today secures long-term cooperation, which I know many Swedish researchers and companies want to see,” says Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

The aim of the memorandum of understanding is to support the development of a common dynamic, effective and attractive life sciences ecosystem that encourages development and innovation for modern and equitable care in both countries and also globally.

“The UK and Sweden are leaders in innovation and research. Clinical research has been vital in our fight against Covid and is essential in saving thousands of lives. The UK’s innovation is testament to our ability to rapidly

create vaccines and identify life-saving treatments like dexamethasone. This MOU will enable us to collaboratively build on our joint strengths in innovation and we look forward to working with our colleagues in Sweden on progressing our joint work in this area,” says Minister for Innovation, Lord Kamall.

This cooperation will proceed from both countries’ current strengths and common priorities, which include early diagnosis, clinical trials, antimicrobial resistance and pandemic preparedness.

“The life sciences sector is one of the most important in both Sweden and the UK, and there’s a long tradition of cooperation. The Government has invested in life sciences for the long term in the last two electoral periods, and this has produced results. Deeper cooperation with the UK is of huge strategic importance if we are to further develop the Swedish life sciences sector,” says Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson.

“Both Sweden and the UK are home to world-leading life science sectors from Anglo-Swedish AstraZeneca to hundreds of small high growth companies so I am thrilled that our countries have been able to sign this MOU to work together on cutting edge research, business and policy that will benefit health outcomes both at home and across the globe,” says Science Minister George Freeman.

Published 27 May 2022



# Anna Ekström to visit the UK

Minister for Education Anna Ekström will visit the UK on 26–27 May alongside the King and Queen. Ms Ekström’s programme includes visits to AstraZeneca and the University of Cambridge, a speech at the Impact sustainability event in London, and signing a memorandum of understanding on life sciences between Sweden and the UK.

“The UK is a very important research and trade partner for Sweden, and we cooperate in many areas. Both Sweden and the UK have strong traditions of research and innovation and are world leaders in the life sciences. The COVID-19 pandemic clearly demonstrated the importance of a first-rate life sciences sector, and I hope that deepened cooperation can lead to further progress in the area,” says Ms Ekström.

## **Programme**

### **Thursday 26 May**

10.30 Visit to the AstraZeneca Discovery Centre

11.30 Discussion on AstraZeneca’s vaccine development in the early stages of the pandemic

12.45 Speech and lunch at King’s College, University of Cambridge

16.30 Bilateral meeting with George Freeman, Minister for Science, Research and Innovation

19.45 Dinner with shadow education secretary Bridget Phillipson

### **Friday 27 May**

09.05 Speech at the Impact sustainability event in London, organised by the Swedish Chamber of Commerce for the UK

## 11.30 Signing of a memorandum of understanding on life sciences between Sweden and the UK

Published 25 May 2022



# Swedish Research Council tasked with providing comprehensive information on support to Ukrainian researchers

Displaced Ukrainian researchers need support during Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine. Swedish higher education institutions and research funding bodies have already launched a number of support initiatives. The Government has now tasked the Swedish Research Council with providing comprehensive information about support available to researchers who leave Ukraine and come to Sweden.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has caused many people to flee. The Swedish Government's response focuses on sanctions against Russia, strengthening Sweden and supporting Ukraine. Swedish higher education institutions and research funding bodies have launched a range of initiatives to support Ukrainian researchers who want to conduct research at a Swedish higher education institution.

The Swedish Research Council has now been tasked with gathering information about support that is available to Ukrainian researchers. This information should then be made available on the Swedish Research Council website and elsewhere as soon as possible, and updated continuously. The Research Council will engage in close dialogue with relevant stakeholders, including universities and higher education institutions. This assignment will be contained in an amendment to the Swedish Research Council's appropriation directions for 2022.

“I am very pleased to see such strong engagement in the higher education sector and the many initiatives for Ukrainian researchers. It's important that

the funds allocated by a range of actors are used and that they enable Ukrainian researchers to continue their work. That's why clear, comprehensive and accessible information is important to both the Swedish research community and to the Ukrainian researchers who are now in Sweden," says Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

The report on this assignment will be presented to the Ministry of Education by 30 September 2022.

Published 30 March 2022



# Historic transition package for flexibility, adaptability and security in the labour market

On 27 January 2022 the Government decided on a historic transition package to improve flexibility, adaptability and security in the labour market in the long term. The proposals are based on an agreement between the Government and the Centre Party.

On 27 January 2022 the Government decided on two proposals on a labour law reform and a new career transition assistance scheme to be referred to the Council on Legislation for consideration.

The proposals are based on an agreement between the Government and the Centre Party, stemming from the January Agreement. The proposals are in line with the agreement in principle that the social partners in the private sector had referred to the Government. The social partners' intention was to take an integrated approach to tackling factors that together can create flexibility, adaptability and security in the labour market. They jointly requested that the Government propose how the agreement in principle should be implemented with regard to employment protection and the associated unemployment insurance issues, and how it should be implemented in line with the social partners' proposals on a new public organisation for basic transition and skills support and a new and parallel form of publicly financed student finance.

## **The Government's proposals include:**

Labour law will be reformed, giving employers greater flexibility and better opportunities to adapt skills to operational requirements. Security for employees will be increased through improved predictability in a variety of terms of employment, such as standard working hours and forms of employment. Wider possibilities will be introduced for employers to make

exceptions to the order of priority rules and lower costs when terminating employment, whereby exceptions to the order of priority rules will be extended by one person, and the limit on the size of the employer will be removed. The rules on termination of employment on objective grounds will be made clearer so as to increase predictability for employers and employees. Employers will no longer bear wage costs in the event of disputes concerning the validity of termination. Overall, the reform will make it easier for small and growing businesses to recruit staff and employ them on a permanent basis. The balance between different terms of employment will be improved. General fixed-term employment contracts will be replaced by a new form of fixed-term employment contracts that more rapidly transform into indefinite term employment contract – the time period will be halved. In the event of re-regulation of employees' working hours, employers must follow specific order of priority rules and employees will be entitled to an adjustment period of up to three months. Hiring of temporary staff and full-time work will be regulated.

A new student finance scheme for transition and retraining will be introduced to strengthen employees' position in the labour market. The scheme will make it significantly easier for people in mid-life and with work experience to undertake further education or training using student finance in the form of grants and loans which, for the vast majority, will be equivalent to at least 80 per cent of their wages. Professionals will be able to study for up to 44 weeks (equivalent to one year) while receiving the new student finance. At a time when society and the labour market are changing increasingly rapidly as a result of the digital transformation, the green transition, etc, it is important that people can develop their skills throughout their working lives through lifelong learning. The new student finance scheme is a reform for the freedom of Sweden's workers, who will now have new and improved opportunities to strengthen their position in the labour market. Self-employed people will also be eligible for the scheme. Individuals will be able to initiate their own continuing skills development and retraining to strengthen their position in the labour market. This will strengthen the skills supply for employers, boost Sweden's competitiveness and strengthen individuals' power over their own lives.

The proposed date of entry into force of these legislative amendments is 30 June 2022.

### **Additional proposals concerning basic retraining and skills support**

The memorandum Grundläggande omställnings- och kompetensstöd – för



flexibilitet, omställningsförmåga och trygghet på arbetsmarknaden (‘Basic retraining and skills support – for flexibility, adaptability and security in the labour market’, Ministry Publications Series 2021:16) that was circulated for consultation proposed the introduction of a new basic transition and skills support scheme. The scheme will aim to strengthen the position of individuals in the Swedish labour market. The basic transition and skills support will consist of public basic support for individuals who are not covered by collective agreements, and central government financing of the basic transition and skills support provided by registered transition organisations. The consultation concerning the memorandum has identified a need to supplement certain proposals to make the scheme fit for purpose. The Ministry of Employment has therefore decided that an addendum to the proposal will be circulated for consultation.

The proposed act on retraining and skills support does not have to be referred to the Council on Legislation.

### **Central government costs of the proposals**

When the reforms are fully operational (in 2026), the estimated total cost to central government will be around SEK 11 billion annually, taking into account wage trends. The annual cost of the new student finance scheme will vary, as it is partly linked to economic developments. Retraining support will be provided subject to the availability of funds.

### **Inquiry on collectively agreed unemployment benefits**

Acting on a proposal by the social partners, in August 2021 the Government appointed an inquiry tasked with reviewing the conditions for a new form of collectively agreed unemployment benefits. The inquiry is due to submit its final report by 15 December 2024.

Published 01 February 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

# Swedish Office of Science and Innovation in London to enhance Swedish-British collaboration

Sweden's seventh international Office of Science and Innovation was established at the Embassy of Sweden in London on 1 January 2022. The Office will develop and strengthen collaboration between the UK and Sweden on issues linked to the Government's life sciences strategy, its export and investment strategy, the Research and Innovation Bill, and the Government's strategic partnership programmes.

“The London Office is an important and strategic initiative for a country like Sweden where export and innovation issues are of vital importance. Establishing the Office is an effective way to meet the objectives of Sweden's life sciences strategy and is completely in line with efforts to help the Government's partnership programmes achieve an international impact,” says Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson.

To maintain Sweden's strong international position as an innovation and knowledge leader, it is important to develop collaborations with world-leading innovation and research countries. Sweden has already established Offices of Science and Innovation at its embassies in Brasilia, New Delhi, Beijing, Seoul, Tokyo and Washington DC.

“The new Office of Science and Innovation in the UK will help increase the international visibility of Swedish higher education institutions. This is important to maintain a high level of quality in research and strengthen Sweden as a research nation,” says Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

The UK is a priority country for Sweden and an important partner in areas

such as innovation and research, as well as a close ally on many trade policy issues.

“We are in the midst of a climate-driven green industrial transition, and the UK is a strategically important partner in these efforts. The establishment of the London Office allows us to strengthen our relations and pursue more ambitious climate efforts,” says Minister for Climate and the Environment Annika Strandhäll.

Published 05 January 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

# Change of government, 30 November 2021

Today in the Riksdag, Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson announced the ministers who will serve in the Government. The change of government takes place at a Council of State at the Royal Palace presided over by His Majesty the King. The Council of State begins at 13.00.

**Sweden's new Government consists of the Prime Minister and 22 ministers.**

## **Prime Minister's Office**

Magdalena Andersson, Prime Minister

Hans Dahlgren, Minister for EU Affairs

## **Ministry of Employment**

Eva Nordmark, Minister for Employment and Gender Equality

Johan Danielsson, Minister for Housing and Deputy Minister for Employment

## **Ministry of Finance**

Mikael Damberg, Minister for Finance

Max Elger, Minister for Financial Markets

Ida Karkiainen, Minister for Public Administration

## **Ministry of Defence**

Peter Hultqvist, Minister for Defence

**Ministry of Infrastructure**

Tomas Eneroth, Minister for Infrastructure

Khashayar Farmanbar, Minister for Energy and Digital Development

**Ministry of Justice**

Morgan Johansson, Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Anders Ygeman, Minister for Integration and Migration

**Ministry of Culture**

Jeanette Gustafsdotter, Minister for Culture

**Ministry of the Environment**

Annika Strandhäll, Minister for Climate and the Environment

**Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation**

Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson, Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation

Anna-Caren Säterberg, Minister for Rural Affairs

**Ministry of Health and Social Affairs**

Lena Hallengren, Minister for Health and Social Affairs

Ardalan Shekarabi, Minister for Social Security

**Ministry of Education and Research**

Anna Ekström, Minister for Education

Lina Axelsson Kihlblom, Minister for Schools

**Ministry for Foreign Affairs**

Ann Linde, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Anna Hallberg, Minister for Foreign Trade and Nordic Affairs

Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for International Development Cooperation

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Published 30 November 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

# Accreditation to the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism, Remember ReAct

On 13th of October Prime Minister Stefan Löfven is hosting the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism, Remember ReAct.

Heads of State or Government from around 50 countries, researchers, experts, representatives of civil society and social media companies have been invited to the Malmö Forum. The aim of the Malmö Forum is to jointly take concrete steps forward in the work on Holocaust remembrance and the fight against antisemitism. The programme will focus on four main themes:

- Holocaust remembrance
- Holocaust education
- Antisemitism on social media
- Combating antisemitism and other forms of racism in all spheres of life

## **To editorial offices**

A Media Advisory is published at [Media Advisory](#). It offers useful information about the Malmö Forum events, the services that will be available, practical information about Malmö and important programme times to consider in your planning.

Accreditation to cover the Malmö Forum is required. The deadline to apply for accreditation is on Friday 1 October 2021 and can be done at [Media Accreditation](#).

Published 13 September 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

# Sweden's new Government

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

Published 09 July 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

# Swedish Holocaust Museum to be established

Today, 27 January, on Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Government has announced that a Swedish Holocaust museum is to be established in July 2022 and will be located in Stockholm.

The Statement of Government Policy presented by Stefan Löfven in the Riksdag in January 2019 announced that a new museum would be established to preserve and perpetuate the memory of the Holocaust. The museum will be established in 2022 and it will be located in Stockholm to make it easier for school pupils and the general public from around the country to visit.

“I have promised survivors to do what I can as Prime Minister for Holocaust remembrance and combating antisemitism today. The Swedish Holocaust museum and the international forum in Malmö later this year are part of those efforts,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

“Collecting testimonies and accounts of historical events is part of remembering and honouring those who died and ensuring that the Holocaust is never forgotten. A museum that compiles the names and accounts of survivors will become part of the cultural heritage that we preserve together for the future,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Amanda Lind.

“This museum will fulfil so many important aims. It is a place for remembrance, but also a place where future generations can learn about what undemocratic forces and phenomena such as antisemitism, conspiracy theories and polarisation can lead to. We must all learn from history,” says Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

The Government will soon task the relevant museums agency with establishing the museum. Integrating it into an existing agency should ensure a streamlined process while maintaining a high standard.

The Holocaust museum should collaborate with many key actors, such as county museums and local museums, both to facilitate involvement of the country's entire population in the activities and because the accounts, testimonies, objects and places connected to the Holocaust are found throughout the country.

Published 27 January 2021



# The Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven postpones the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism

The world is facing a new, and severe, challenge. The spread of the new coronavirus and COVID-19 is challenging our countries. We are all working to fight the pandemic and its effects. Due to this, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has announced that the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism 2020 has been postponed.

In January 2020 Prime Minister Stefan Löfven extended an invitation to heads of state and government, researchers, experts and civil society representatives from around 50 countries to participate in the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism in October 2020. The purpose of the Forum is to jointly take concrete steps forward in the work on Holocaust remembrance and the fight against antisemitism.

Due to the unfortunate circumstances of the current pandemic Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has announced that the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism 2020 has been postponed. The invitation still stands and the Forum in Malmö will take place in the autumn of 2021. The exact date will be communicated in the near future.

– The commitment of the Swedish Government to strengthening the work on Holocaust remembrance, to combating antisemitism and other forms of



racism and to international cooperation in this field remains as strong as ever. In order for us to give full focus to these issues we see a need for postponing the Malmö Forum, says Stefan Löfven.

– In the wake of this global crisis we are seeing signs of increased antisemitism and other forms of racism, the spread of conspiracy theories and misinformation. This is very unfortunate and shows that the work against antisemitism and other forms of racism must continue, says Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

Planning of the Forum will continue, and the Swedish Government is looking forward to welcoming the invitees to Malmö next year. More information on the programme, as well as practical information will be shared with all invitees at a later date.

Published 06 May 2020



# National initiative to increase knowledge about the Holocaust and antisemitism

In connection with the Government's International Forum for Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism, the Government is allocating SEK 10 million to a national initiative to increase knowledge in schools and society.

“The Holocaust and the crimes against humanity committed during the Second World War must never be forgotten. This national initiative is a continuation of the Government's strategic and comprehensive work for democracy, tolerance and human rights, and to combat antisemitism, antiziganism and other forms of racism,” says Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

This year, it is 75 years since the end of the Second World War, and 20 years since the adoption of the Stockholm Declaration at the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust. In the Stockholm Declaration, Sweden has pledged to strengthen its efforts to promote remembrance, education and research about the Holocaust. In October, the Government will host an international forum on Holocaust remembrance and combating antisemitism in Malmö. In connection with this, the Government has allocated SEK 10 million in the Budget Bill for 2020 for a national initiative. It is now clear which four assignments will be included in the initiative:

- The Living History Forum will receive SEK 6 million to implement a national initiative to enhance educational initiatives about the Holocaust, antisemitism, antiziganism and other forms of racism, to particularly target audiences that are rarely reached by the Forum's activities. Various parts of the school and liberal adult education systems are to be the focus of the efforts. Civic orientation for newly arrived immigrants is

also covered by the assignment.

- The National Historical Museums will receive SEK 2.3 million to develop a Swedish-language version of the Dimensions in Testimony installation that allows visitors to converse with Holocaust survivors via pre-recorded answers to questions made possible by artificial intelligence technology. There are few Holocaust survivors left alive today to talk about their experiences. There is therefore a need to preserve the survivors' testimonies in various ways.
- The University of Gothenburg (the Segerstedt Institute) will receive SEK 1.2 million to prepare a research review and conduct a research seminar on education in the school system that can combat antisemitism and other forms of racism. The assignment is to take both national and international research into account. The research seminar is to be conducted in conjunction with the Malmö Forum in October.
- The Swedish Defence Research Agency will receive SEK 0.5 million to produce a report on antisemitism in social media and other digital environments. The report will be part of the agency's assignment to conduct surveys and analyses of violent extremist propaganda that is spread via the internet and social media.

“Remembering is not just never forgetting. It must also mean doing everything we can to prevent something similar from happening again. Although history has shown us the ultimate consequences of hatred of one another, discrimination and racism still exist in all parts of society. This is why initiatives like this are so important,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Amanda Lind.

Published 28 February 2020



Government Offices of Sweden

# Anna Ekström to attend IHRA meeting in Brussels

On Sunday 19 January, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) will hold a ministerial meeting in Brussels. During the meeting, a Ministerial Declaration will be adopted to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Stockholm Declaration. Minister for Education Anna Ekström will represent Sweden.

Ms Ekström will also speak about the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism, which the Government will host in October 2020.

The IHRA was established at the initiative of Sweden in 1998 by then Prime Minister Göran Persson and now has 34 member countries.

“The Government welcomes this Declaration, which reaffirms the strong international support for the Stockholm Declaration’s important messages. I consider it to be particularly important that this is taking place this year – 20 years since the Stockholm Conference – because it is the same year that we are hosting the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism. The Government continues to strongly condemn and combat antisemitism and other forms of racism,” says Ms Ekström.

Published 17 January 2020



# Children of all embassy staff receive right to attend preschool class

The Government proposes in a government bill that the children of members of foreign missions from countries outside the EU, EEA and Switzerland will have the right to education in preschool class free of charge in the same way that they have the right to education in other compulsory school forms.

In 2018, preschool class became a compulsory school form, thus extending compulsory schooling in Sweden by one year. The overall purpose of preschool class is to stimulate pupils' development and learning and prepare them for continued education. Pupils are to be provided with the opportunity to develop in line with the subsequent knowledge requirements.

“Instruction in preschool class ties in educationally with the compulsory school that follows it. So it is also reasonable that six-year-olds with a parent working at an embassy of a third country should have the same right as other children in Sweden to attend preschool class,” says Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

The proposal is expected to concern around 40 six-year-olds per year. It is proposed that the legislative amendments enter into force on 1 January 2020.



# Anna Ekström to visit Yad Vashem in Jerusalem

On Sunday 8 September, Minister for Education Anna Ekström will visit Yad Vashem, one of the world's most prominent knowledge centres for Holocaust remembrance. Ms Ekström will be in attendance when a declaration of intent between the University of Gothenburg, the Living History Forum and Yad Vashem is signed in Jerusalem. This is the first declaration of intent between Yad Vashem and Sweden.

Yad Vashem is an Israeli authority, monument, archive and research centre that was founded in 1953 to conduct teaching and remembrance activities about the victims and heroes of the Holocaust. An exchange has been under way since 2017 on courses for Swedish teachers and school staff through the Segerstedt Institute at the University of Gothenburg. The signing will take place while a course for Swedish teachers is given at Yad Vashem.

“I am very pleased about this opportunity to join Swedish teachers in developing teaching about the Holocaust in Swedish schools. By supporting teaching about the Holocaust, we can promote tolerance, combat antisemitism and other forms of racism, and work to protect our open and democratic society,” says Ms Ekström.

Teaching the Holocaust is one of two themes at the Prime Minister's high-level meeting on Holocaust remembrance and combating antisemitism that the Government will host in Malmö on 27–28 October 2020.



# OECD raises gaps in new report

The OECD presents its new report on the Swedish economy today. In the report, the OECD notes that Sweden has a stable economy and strong state finances, but also points to problems with increasing income gaps and the need to reduce gaps in schools to improve school performance.

## **Stable economy**

In its report, the OECD notes that Sweden has enjoyed positive growth and that unemployment has reduced. In the future, the OECD expects “continued robust growth”, however somewhat slower, as a result of labour shortages in many sectors.

The report establishes that fiscal policy in recent years has invested considerable resources in important areas, such as education, integration, health care, defence, and the environment and climate.

## **Essentially small gaps, but income from capital has had an impact**

The OECD stresses that inequalities in Sweden are generally low and prosperity is high, and that increasing employment has resulted in reduced relative poverty. The Government’s increased child allowance and housing allowance have benefited the most disadvantaged households. However, the OECD believes that increasing capital income in recent years has made the gaps increase.

“Between 1995 and 2016, average capital income grew by almost 500 per cent. In addition, capital incomes have become more unevenly distributed, where a very large percentage goes to a small group of people. Dealing with this is crucial to combating income gaps,” says Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson.

## **An ambitious environment policy**

The report also covers Sweden's environment policy. The OECD establishes that "Sweden is a frontrunner in the fight against climate change and in greening the economy" and that "the government has stepped up efforts" by increasing environmental investments and setting clear objectives for reducing carbon emissions.

## **Problems**

The report also raises a number of problems that are high on the Government's agenda. Income gaps, imbalances in the housing market and an increase in gaps in schools are problems that the Government is working on and has been pursuing measures to remedy since 2014.

"An equitable school system that gives all children the same opportunities to grow and develop, regardless of how much money their parents have, is an absolutely fundamental issue for the Government. According to the OECD, our market-oriented school system impedes such a system. I hope that the report's conclusions can lead to a constructive discussion on how we can create an equitable knowledge-based school system of equal quality," says Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

The OECD also makes a number of recommendations in these and a number of other areas.

Published 29 March 2019





Government Offices of Sweden

# Invitation to press conference and seminar on new OECD report

On 29 March, the Ministry of Finance will host a press conference and follow-up seminar to present the most recent OECD Economic Survey of Sweden. OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría, Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson, Minister for Education Anna Ekström and experts from the OECD and Sweden will take part in the seminar. Ms Andersson and Mr Gurría will hold a press conference before the seminar. The press conference and parts of the seminar will be held in English.

The OECD regularly reviews the economies of its member countries, focusing on structural issues and economic performance in the medium term. The aim is to discuss and give recommendations on key economic policy issues.

The in-depth chapter in this report deals with schools and how to improve learning outcomes and strengthen equity.

The OECD report will be published in connection with the press conference.

## **Time and venue for the press conference:**

**Date and time:** 29 March 2019 at 09.15 (entry from 08.45)

**Venue:** Bella (Björnen). Entry via Rödbodgatan 6

Press credentials and registration required. To register for the press conference, please contact Per Strängberg. The press conference will be webcast on [www.regeringen.se](http://www.regeringen.se).

## **Time and venue for the seminar:**

Media are welcome to take part in the seminar, but the number of places is limited. Advance registration is required by 28 March at 15.00 via:  
[fi.anmalan.oecd-seminarium@regeringskansliet.se](mailto:fi.anmalan.oecd-seminarium@regeringskansliet.se).

**Date and time:** 29 March 2019 from 10.15–12.15 (registration from 09.45)

**Venue:** Ministry for Foreign Affairs International Press Centre, Fredsgatan 6

Note! Unfortunately, it is not possible to bring film equipment into the room. Please bring identification.

Published 27 March 2019



Government Offices of Sweden

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

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Published 22 January 2019



# New state secretaries at the Government Offices

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 Ardalan 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.

Published 22 January 2019



Government Offices of Sweden

# Sweden to host conference with youth perspective on 17–18 April, celebrating 25 years of fruitful Barents cooperation

Stakeholders from the Barents region will meet in Luleå to invigorate the youth perspective in the development of our societies and the future of the Barents region. The conference '25 years of Barents cooperation – youth perspective for the future' will bring together some 150 participants from governments, counties and local administrations, young people and experts. The objective is to put the youth perspective at the heart of discussions and explore opportunities and challenges that lie ahead in the Barents region.

Swedish Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström will host the conference, which will be arranged by the Swedish Chairmanship of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council in cooperation with Norrbotten County.

"We believe it is vital to listen to young people and to encourage them to play an active part in the development of our societies and in the future of the Barents region," says Ms Ekström.

The conference marks 25 years of fruitful collaboration in the Barents region. This cooperation was launched in 1993 by the foreign ministers of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the EU. The aim of this cooperation is to promote peace, stability and regional development. It is based on people-to-people contacts and carried out in consensus and a spirit of cooperation at national, regional and local level.

The priorities of the Swedish Chairmanship 2017–2019 are sustainable development, respect for human rights and gender equality, and are being pursued through practical, project-oriented cooperation and by enhancing people-to-people contacts, with a special focus on the younger generation.

**Date:** 17–18 April

**Venue:** Kulturens hus, Luleå, Sweden

For additional information visit:

<http://www.barentscooperation.org/en>

# BARENTSYOUTH25

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Published 05 April 2018



Government Offices of Sweden

# Reforms for greater knowledge the focus as Anna Ekström visits Ottawa and Toronto

Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström will be in Canada from 4 to 7 February.

Her programme includes meetings with politicians and experts, study visits to schools, and presentations of Ontario's education system, school reforms and strategies.

The aim of the visit is to exchange knowledge and experience, particularly on issues concerning the governance chain in the education system, leadership and teachers' professional development, school health and welfare services, and pupils' knowledge development and attainment.

## **Programme points**

### **Monday 5 February, Ottawa**

Time: 08.30 Visit to the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

Time: 10.30 Visit to Woodroffe High School  
Time: 12.30 Meeting with experts on pathways between education and jobs

Time: 15.00 Meeting with Canada's Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Patricia A. Hajdu

### **Tuesday 6 February, Toronto**

Time: 08.30 Meeting with Ontario's Deputy Minister of Education, Bruce Rodrigues

Time: 09.00 Presentation of reforms and education strategies in Ontario, focusing on pupil performance, leadership, the role of teachers and teaching methods

Time: 10.35 Presentation of language introduction programmes in Ontario

Time: 11.30 Presentation of special needs education, focusing on gifted pupils

Time: 12.30 Meeting with Ontario's Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development, Mitzie Hunter

Time: 14.00 Visit to a welcome centre for newly arrived immigrants in Toronto

**Wednesday 7 February, Toronto**

Time: 10.15 Meeting with a teachers' organisation in Toronto

Time: 14.00 Visit to Grenoble Public School

Published 05 February 2018



Government Offices of Sweden

# Anna Ekström to visit Vilnius and Riga

Vocational education and training, ministerial meetings and panel discussions on women's leadership – these are some of the programme points when Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström visits Latvia and Lithuania on 15–17 January.

In Vilnius, Ms Ekström will meet Jurgita Petrauskienė, Minister of Education and Science, and make study visits to various vocational education and training courses, attend the launch of an essay competition and participate in a panel discussion on women's leadership.

In Riga, Ms Ekström will meet Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economics Arvils Ašeradens, and Minister of Education and Science Kārlis Šadurskis. There will also be visits to various vocational education and training courses, including to the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga.

The purpose of the visit is to exchange experiences, particularly on issues relating to vocational education and training, and strengthen relations with Latvia and Lithuania.

## **Programme points:**

### **15 January, Vilnius**

Time: 18.30–21.00 Panel discussion on women's leadership

Place: Swedish Embassy residence, Didžioji g. 16, Vilnius

### **16 January, Vilnius**

Time: 09.30–10.30 Visit to Vilnius Automechanics and Business School

Place: Bukiškis

Time: 11.00–12.15 Visit to Vytautas Magnus Gymnasium and launch of Embassy's essay competition on the Global Goals

Place: Vytautas Magnus Gymnasium, Augustijon g. 8, Vilnius

Time: 12.30–14.00 Meeting with Jurgita Petrauskienė, Minister of Education and Science

Place: Swedish Embassy residence, Didžioji g. 16, Vilnius

Time: 15.00–16.00 Visit to Living Freely! – a democracy and cultural project for young people

Place: Pagiriai Upper Secondary School, Pagiriai

Time: 18.00–20.00 Meeting on vocational education and training with representatives of the private and public sectors

Place: Swedish Embassy residence, Didžioji g. 16, Vilnius

#### **17 January, Riga**

Time: 09.00 Bilateral meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economics Arvils Ašeradens

Place: Ministry of Economics, Brīvības iela 55, Riga

Time: 10.00 Bilateral meeting with Minister of Education and Science Kārlis Šadurskis

Place: Ministry of Education and Science, Vaļņu iela 2, Riga

Time: 11.15–11.25 Press conference with Kārlis Šadurskis and Anna Ekström

Place: Ministry of Education and Science, Vaļņu iela 2, Riga

Time: 12.00 Visit to Riga Technical School of Tourism and Creative Industries

Place: Nīcgales iela 26, Riga

Time: 14.10 Visit to Riga State Technical School

Place: Dārziema iela 70, Riga

Time: 15.40 Visit to Stockholm School of Economics in Riga

Place: Strēlnieku iela 4a, Riga

Published 15 January 2018



# Eight Swedish cabinet ministers to the Social Summit in Gothenburg

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.





# Media invitation: Ministerial meeting in Södertälje on the role of education and training in labour market establishment

Media representatives are welcome to take part when EU ministers meet in Södertälje to discuss the role of education and training in challenges facing the labour market. Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström will host the meeting.

Education and training is vital in preparing young people for work, integrating newly arrived immigrants and creating opportunities for career changes. It is also vital for meeting the needs of the labour market.

On Monday 13 November, EU ministers and invited officials will meet to discuss the role of education and training in labour market establishment. The day will begin with a visit to Hagaberg Folk High School in Södertälje, a municipality with extensive experience of combining language instruction with vocational education and training.

Discussions during the day will focus on potential ways to create structures for lifelong learning and increased employment. The meeting will also focus on what motivates people to study and how to make use of previous knowledge and experience through validation and recognition.

The issues raised in the discussions will provide input to the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth to be held in Gothenburg on 17 November, hosted by European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

Media representatives are welcome to take part in the tour of the folk high school in the morning. Please contact Helena Paues to register.

### **Programme**

Time: 9.15–11.30

Presentation of the Swedish education system and roundtable discussions on challenges and success factors.

Venue: Hagaberg Folk High School, Erik Dahlbergs väg 60, Södertälje

Time: 14.00–16.30

Speech by Inge Bernaerts, Head of Cabinet for EU Commissioner Marianne Thyssen: The situation in the EU today.

Speech by Cecilia Berglund, Director of Centrum Vux, Haninge

Municipality: Employability and the local environment.

Subsequent roundtable discussions for ministers.

Venue: Rosenbad, Stockholm

Published 08 November 2017



## Anna Ekström to visit India

High-level international meetings, education projects for Indian school children, women's education and skills supply – these are part of the programme for Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström when she visits India on 1–3 November.

Prabodhan is a high-level forum that brings together European and Indian political leaders and representatives of business and academia to discuss current issues. At Prabodhan, Ms Ekström will take part in a panel discussion on skills development for the future in Europe and India. The discussion will focus on how policy can contribute to matching skills and labour market needs.

Ms Ekström's visit will also include a meeting with Pratham, which has just launched a project to educate 30 000 Indian school children in three Indian states with the support of nine Swedish companies. The project has begun in the state of Assam.

Ms Ekström will also visit the IKEA Foundation. Together with the United Nations Development Programme, the IKEA Foundation has started the Disha project that aims to educate one million women over a ten-year period.

Ms Ekström will also inaugurate the Nobel Memorial Wall, a yearly event during the Sweden India Nobel Memorial Week, organised by the Swedish Embassy. This year's Nobel Memorial Wall comprises portraits of India's eight Nobel laureates by art students from different fine arts universities in India. The Nobel Memorial Wall is at the Rajiv Chowk Metro Station in the centre of New Delhi.

Ms Ekström will also attend a digital transformation and innovation seminar, which is part of the Sweden India Nobel Memorial Week. The seminar is jointly organised by the Swedish Embassy, Business Sweden and SEB to

showcase good practices of Swedish industry that are of relevance to India.

Published 01 November 2017



Government Offices of Sweden

# Anna Ekström to accompany the national vocational team to WorldSkills Abu Dhabi 2017

On 14–19 October, the WorldSkills Competition will be held in the United Arab Emirates. Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström will accompany the Swedish vocational team to Abu Dhabi and take part in a ministerial meeting on vocational training being held at the same time.

The WorldSkills Competition is the world championships of vocational skills for young people under the age of 23 years. This year, 1 300 young professionals from 77 countries will compete in 51 different skills sectors over a period of four days. Sweden will be represented by the national vocational team, and the skills sectors include web design, floristry, nursing, aircraft maintenance and jewellery.

Ms Ekström will take part in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Summit, a ministerial meeting on issues concerning vocational training, that will be held in connection with the WorldSkills Competition. She will also meet Hussain Ibrahim Al Hammadi, Minister of Education in the United Arab Emirates, and hold bilateral talks on vocational education and training with Sanni Grahn-Laasonen, Minister of Education in Finland, and Ong Ye Kung, Minister for Education (Higher Education and Skills) in Singapore.

Ms Ekström will also take part in a panel discussion and lead a seminar on the future of vocational education and training.

Published 13 October 2017



Government Offices of Sweden

# Anna Ekström travels to Scotland for the OECD summit on the teaching profession

Tomorrow, Wednesday 29 March, Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström will travel to Edinburgh to take part in the OECD International Summit on the Teaching Profession (ISTP).

This seventh ISTP will focus on the role of the teaching profession in delivering improved outcomes for all. Ministers and union leaders from the participating countries will hold bilateral talks to identify the challenges and priorities in the year ahead. Björn Åstrand, Inquiry Chair of the national action for the teaching profession, will also attend.

An important issue for Sweden at this summit is how to increase equity in education.

"We see from the latest international student assessments that Swedish learning outcomes are improving, but we also see worrying signs of less equity in education. Representatives of Swedish teaching unions and I are hoping to learn more about what other countries are doing to improve learning outcomes and equity in their schools," says Ms Ekström.

Ms Ekström will also visit Education Scotland to discuss school inspections and the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) for talks on how to strengthen the teaching profession.

Published 28 March 2017



Government Offices of Sweden

# Anna Ekström to visit Tallinn

Today, Tuesday 14 February, Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström will travel to Tallinn, Estonia to take part in the conference 'PISA and its meaning for policy and practice around the Baltic Sea'.

Ms Ekström will take part in a panel discussion together with Estonian Minister of Education and Research Mailis Reps and Lithuanian Minister of Education and Science Jurgita Petrauskiene.

During the day, Ms Ekström will also visit pupils and teachers at Gustav Adolf Upper Secondary School and the Tallinn Industrial Education Centre.

Published 14 February 2017



## Anna Ekström to visit India

On 7–13 January, Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström will travel to India to take part in the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit and for bilateral discussions. During her trip, Ms Ekström will meet India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several of the country's ministers.

Ms Ekström will take part in the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit, which is India's equivalent to the summit in Davos between representatives of governments and the business sector. This year, the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit will focus on innovation, education, research, vocational training, start-ups, economic growth and social justice.

Selected programme points:

### **Monday 9 January**

Visits an Indian vocational training school for young men and women in the automotive, textile and other similar industries.

Meets the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Vijay Rupani.

Takes part in the opening of the Vibrant Gujarat Trade Show and the Swedish pavilion together with Prime Minister Modi. At the Trade Show, Ms Ekström also meets Minister for Science and Technology Harsh Vardhan and Minister of Finance Arun Jaitley.

Takes part in the opening of India's first smart city, Gujarat International Finance Tec-City, and an exhibition organised by Nobel Media.

### **Tuesday 10 January**

Delivers the opening address at a symposium on basic research and applied research and its importance for innovation, organised by Nobel Media.



Speaks and takes part in the opening of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit together with Prime Minister Modi.

Takes part in a round-table discussion with Prime Minister Modi and others.

**Wednesday 11 January**

Speaks about the importance of basic education and vocational training at the Sweden Country Seminar, and takes part in seminars on smart manufacturing and smart cities.

Meets Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Nirmala Sitharaman.

**Thursday 12 January**

Meets Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajiv Pratap Rudy and Minister of Defence Manohar Parrikar.

Speaks at dinner for Nobel Laureates at the Swedish residence.

Published 05 January 2017



Government Offices of Sweden

# Anna Ekström to Brussels and The Hague

Today, Monday 21 November, Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström will travel to Brussels to take part in the European Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council. On Tuesday, Ms Ekström will meet Dutch Minister of Education Jet Bussemaker in The Hague.

The agenda for Monday's Council meeting in Brussels includes a skills guarantee, discovering and drawing out the best in young people, and prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism. Tuesday will include a bilateral meeting with Ms Bussemaker in The Hague and a study visit to the Da Vinci College i Leiden.

Published 21 November 2016



Government Offices of Sweden

# Anna Ekström new Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training

Anna Ekström was on Tuesday appointed Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training. Her most recent post was as Director-General of the National Agency for Education.

Published 14 September 2016



Government Offices of Sweden

# Speech by Minister for Education Anna Ekström at the General Conference of UNESCO

Paris, November 14, 2019. Check against delivery.

Mr. President of the General Conference,

Mr. Chair of the Executive Board,

Madame Director-General,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is an honour for me to address the 40th General Conference of UNESCO.

Sweden fully aligns itself with the EU statement.

Let me start by reaffirming Sweden's strong support for UNESCO and its increasingly important mandate. We are proud that Sweden is the largest donor of voluntary funds to UNESCO.

I am proud to be part of the first feminist government in the world. This means that the Swedish Government puts equality between women and men, girls and boys, at the very top of our agenda. Without gender equality we cannot truly have human rights or sustainable development.

Therefore, I was particularly pleased to see that the evaluation conducted by MOPAN in early 2019 confirms that UNESCO has made important progress on gender equality.

UNESCO has a key role in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. However, a stronger focus on fewer working areas, reforms of the field network and strengthening of the corporate services are needed.

Greta Thunberg has become the voice of millions of children all over the

world, urging us to take action on climate change. And indeed, we only has 10 years left to reach the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda. The next Medium-Term Strategy must therefore get it right. I would like to highlight a few issues of special importance to my government regarding this strategy. We wish to see a continued strong human rights-based approach and a gender transformative perspective in all UNESCO sectors. The Strategy must also be focused on the realisation of the SDGs including on climate change.

Furthermore, we wish to see a sharper Medium-Term Strategy that truly prioritises and explains UNESCO's work to policy-makers and stakeholders.

Lastly, the Medium-Term Strategy should be accompanied by a reviewed resource mobilisation and partnership strategy covering the same period.

Mr. President,

UNESCOs' regular budget has remained the same for more than a decade, while Member States continue to ask more from the organisation. With several key reforms in place and given the positive MOPAN assessment, UNESCO should have its regular budget normalised to a level that compensates for cost increases. Sweden supports the regular budget level of 534 Million USD.

Over the last years Sweden has contributed with less earmarked and more long-term voluntary contributions to UNESCO. However, our support comes with high expectations, both on results and that UNESCO strengthens its communication of results. We encourage other donors to follow suit to enable UNESCO to fulfil its important mandate.

We welcome the new "Partners Forum" as a means to increase transparency and accountability regarding voluntary contributions. Sweden urges UNESCO to take note of the evaluation which recommended that a technical financial discussion be held in the next Forum as a Structured Financing Dialogue.

Based on the recommendation of the Executive Board Sweden has, together with more than 40 other countries, proposed an amendment to UNESCO's constitution regarding improved measures for assessed contributions. Assessed contributions are the bedrock for funding in the UN and they ensure legitimacy and universality of its decisions. The Swedish government counts on your support for a well-resourced multilateralism and I look forward to the final approval of this amendment during the General

Conference.

Mr. President,

We expect UNESCO's leadership to be a strong and proactive voice on fundamental human rights including on gender equality. Human rights are the foundation of UNESCO's constitution and should be promoted at every opportunity. We welcome UNESCO's leadership in comprehensive sexuality education, academic and artistic freedom globally and nationally.

UNESCO's mandate to promote freedom of expression has never been more relevant and UNESCO must continue to be at the forefront. Recently, we have seen a negative development across the world: journalists, artists and authors are increasingly threatened. Women journalists are often harassed both for what they write and for being women who express themselves.

We support the peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and the opportunities this brings. We continue to stress that the imprisoned Swedish-Eritrean journalist Dawit Isaak should be released.

UNESCO has always supported Member States in putting high quality education at the centre stage of national policies and priorities. Sweden believes quality education - a fundamental human right - is essential for sustainable development.

Mr. President,

Next year in October, Sweden will host a high-level international forum in Sweden on Holocaust remembrance and combating antisemitism. The Forum, which will be held in the city of Malmö, will focus on three themes; Holocaust remembrance, Holocaust education and the role of social media.

The founding ideas and principles of UNESCO are as urgent as ever. Sweden remains a strong friend of multilateralism and, especially, a strong and critical friend of the UN system and UNESCO.

Published 14 November 2019



Government Offices of Sweden

# Speech by Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström at Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit

Gujarat, India, 10 januari 2017 Check against delivery.

Honourable Prime Minister Modi, Heads of Government, Ministers, Honourable Chief Minister of Gujarat Rupani, Business representatives, Ladies and gentlemen.

India, and Vibrant Gujarat is the place to be if you want energy, entrepreneurship, and prospects for the future.

Make in India and Skill India initiative taken by Prime Minister Modi and the Indian Government hold a promise of transformation.

Sweden is proud to enjoy a growing partnership with the world's largest democracy.

In the spring of 2015 we had the honour to receive President of India on a state visit Sweden. Last year in Mumbai a Joint Statement was issued by Prime Minister Modi and my Prime Minister Löfven that sets out ambitious directions for our cooperation – issues ranging from energy to environment and health, from digitalisation to defence and security.

Innovation defines our partnership – ranging from research, first-class IT solutions or a state-of-the-art air force.

We are amazed by modern Indian innovation. Not least the use of the number zero (0) – one half of the binary code. Indian tech companies are investing in Sweden.

Sweden has a long tradition of internationally successful companies with innovative solutions focusing on low life-cycle costs, quality and sustainability.

180 Swedish companies are active in India and we look forward to an even deeper and wider cooperation within the India Sweden Business Leaders Round Table. Skills development is close to my heart. To keep being innovative and find new solutions to challenges we need education. Equal education is needed to fulfil everyone's full potential.

Equal education where boys and girl meet high expectation and are given equal opportunities leads to fairness, quality and growth.

The initiatives taken by Prime Minister Modi to further increase education for women are important.

To continue, we need to embrace innovation. And embracing innovation means investing in the skills of our people and being open to new solutions.

In a world where climate change is accelerating we need equal education, innovation and new sustainable solutions to our mutual problems.

By working together, we can contribute to a safe, sustainable and fair future.

Thank you.

Published 12 January 2017





Government Offices of Sweden

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

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.

Published 10 February 2021