



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.

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# 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.

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# 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.

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# 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.

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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.

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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