



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.

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.

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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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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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