



General Assembly

Distr.: General
14 November 2014

Original: English

Human Rights Council
Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review
Twenty-first session
19–30 January 2015

National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21*


Sweden

* The present document has been reproduced as received. Its content does not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations.

GE.14-21973



* 1 4 2 1 9 7 3 *

Please recycle 



Introduction

1. Sweden's long-term objective is to secure full respect for human rights in Sweden. Work to protect and promote human rights permeates not only our national policy areas but also every part of our foreign policy.

2. Sweden sees the UN's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) as a key mechanism for protecting and promoting human rights, both nationally and internationally. At national level, the UPR process has become a vital component of systematic work for human rights. Since the first UPR of Sweden in May 2010, its recommendations have been systematically followed up. In September 2012, the Government presented a Mid-term Implementation Assessment reporting on implementation of the recommendations from Sweden's first UPR report.

I. Methodology and consultation process

3. This report was compiled by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in close cooperation with the departments and ministries concerned. In its preparations, the Government strove for a transparent, open process; issued regular bulletins about the work; and held open consultations with civil society organisations, which were given the opportunity to express their views on the layout and content of the report.

II. Protection for human rights in Sweden

4. The Government prioritizes efforts to secure full respect for Sweden's international commitment to human rights. Swedish legislation must conform to the international human rights conventions that Sweden has ratified. In several areas, the Government strives for stronger protection for human rights than the levels guaranteed by the conventions.

5. The normative and institutional framework for the protection and promotion of human rights in Sweden was described in detail in Sweden's first UPR report.

A. International human rights conventions

6. Sweden has a dualistic approach to international conventions: on ratification, they do not automatically become part of Swedish national law. To become directly applicable by courts and administrative authorities, international law commitments must be integrated into Swedish law, which takes place through transformation or incorporation. Transformation is the method most often applied in Sweden. Before Sweden ratifies a convention on human rights, a thorough review of Swedish law is performed to investigate whether any amendments to the legislation are required to bring it into line with the provisions of the convention. When new statutes are drafted, these too must be worded in such a way as to avoid any conflict with the conventions.¹ Moreover, there are various individual rights and principles that are directly expressed in a number of provisions in the Swedish Constitutional Laws or other statutes.² The Government will begin work to incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into Swedish law.

7. Sweden regularly reviews its reservations to all international conventions.

8. On 1 July 2014 a new act, the Act on Criminal Responsibility for Genocide, Crimes against Humanity and War Crimes, entered into force. One purpose of the Act is to assure

that the crimes in question may be adjudicated in Sweden to the same extent, at least, as before the International Criminal Court.

B. National action plan and cooperation with civil society

1. National action plan

9. Sweden has ratified seven of the UN's nine core conventions on human rights. Moreover, the Swedish Parliament (the Riksdag) has set an objective of democratic policy that human rights should be respected in Sweden. As part of the work towards this objective, the Government has adopted two national plans of action for human rights.³ Work is under way in the Government Offices to draw up the Government's third action plan or strategy for human rights. This work focuses on promoting continued systematic work on human rights in Sweden.

2. Cooperation with civil society

10. Sweden regularly consults representatives of organisations in civil society on human rights and other issues. Consultation with civil society has been a natural part of work on the UPR process. Besides special consultations on the Swedish UPR report, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs holds meetings on human rights issues with civil society organisations four times a year. Moreover, consultations are implemented with organisations that work specifically for equal rights for certain groups, such as children; persons with disabilities; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons; and the national minorities.

3. Establishment of an independent national institution for human rights

11. The issue of a national human rights institution was dealt with by the Delegation for Human Rights in Sweden in its final report, which was referred for consideration to relevant bodies.

III. Development since the previous review: results and challenges

A. Discrimination

12. Despite formal protection against discrimination being strengthened, challenges remain. One challenge is to review the question of which further measures need to be taken to improve the scope for those who are subjected to discrimination to protect their own rights. Several committees of inquiry appointed for this purpose are now investigating the matter, and the Government will then decide on the need for additional measures in this area.

13. Under the Discrimination Act of 2009 and through the establishment of the Office of the Equality Ombudsman (Diskrimineringsombudsmannen, DO), Sweden has paved the way for combatting discrimination in society more effectively.⁴

14. Through communication, education, cooperation and knowledge dissemination, Sweden has improved prospects for work for equal rights and opportunities and against discrimination among a range of stakeholders in society. Cooperation with key stakeholders who can tackle discrimination and racism has resulted in material and tools that have been spread further to others. To promote local work and continuity in anti-discrimination

efforts, support was raised to SEK 12 million a year, to be distributed to anti-discrimination activities, from 2013.

15. Protection against discrimination associated with age (ageism) was extended on 1 January 2013 to apply broadly to all the sectors of society covered by the Discrimination Act.⁵

16. The dialogue on democratic principles and the equal value of all people must be ongoing. Sweden must secure the rights of national minorities. Compulsory and upper secondary schools must combat racism through the work they do on core values. A national knowledge and resource centre for research on racism will be set up. The Government will share the successful models that exist for reducing the recruitment of people to racist organisations.

1. Multiple discrimination

17. The new Discrimination Act passed in 2008, which superseded seven anti-discrimination laws, devoted particular attention to multiple discrimination. One result of merging the rules and regulations has been to facilitate the creation of uniform protection irrespective of the basis of discrimination and sector of society. Another has been to make redress easier for victims, especially if more than one type of discriminatory action is involved. More bases of discrimination are now referred to in complaints than before, and government agencies' knowledge of multiple discrimination has developed. The DO has highlighted the issue of multiple discrimination in several of the court cases it has pursued.

2. Information

18. The Government is working actively to spread, to organisations in both the private and the public sector and to individuals, knowledge about existing prohibitions of discrimination and efforts to promote equal rights and opportunities. The DO offers advice and support on the development of methods to employers, higher education institutions and schools. The Government earmarked specific funds for the DO's educational and training measures. The DO's work has included distributing information material, advertising in journals and developing the website and translating information on the website into several different languages. Voluntary organisations have received special funds to disseminate information about the Discrimination Act.

19. To ensure that students become aware of their rights the Swedish National Agency for Education has been assigned to support schools in their work to combat discrimination and offensive treatment. The National Agency for Education has produced support material on the rules in the Discrimination Act and the Education Act, and disseminated knowledge about offensive treatment and discrimination. Substantial information campaigns have addressed education principals and schools, and also directly and indirectly to pupils and parents.⁶

3. Education and training

20. The Government is implementing a three-year (2012–2014) initiative comprising measures to boost children and adolescents' knowledge of xenophobia and similar forms of intolerance. Within this framework, various measures have been commenced through support to a number of non-profit organisations, and several of these have focused on youth education. During 2014–2017, the Government is allocating a total of SEK 9 million to implement further initiatives to enhance knowledge in schools. The Government has also taken several concrete measures to raise awareness of xenophobia and similar forms of intolerance in schools, pre-schools and after-school centres, and to strengthen democratic values among children and adolescents. The new (2010) Education Act emphasises that

human rights should be a foundation of all activities covered by the Act and that the education system should convey and consolidate support for human rights and the basic democratic values on which Swedish society rests.

4. Disability

21. The basis for work to pursue disability policy has been defined in a national action plan for disability policy. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is one of the starting points for the Government's disability policy for the period 2011–2016. Sweden fulfils the Convention's absolute requirement that persons with disabilities should, without exception, enjoy the same rights and freedoms, guaranteed by law, as other citizens. Based on a report from the Government, a dialogue with the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) took place in 2014. The Committee's recommendations are now being considered in the Government Offices. The starting point of the disability policy is that the work should be effective, systematic and purposeful. The emphasis has been laid on wide-ranging cooperation among different stakeholders and clear roles in implementation.⁷

22. The Government has also taken measures to improve prospects of more effective, knowledge-based work to increase participation and accessibility for persons with disabilities. Work is under way to develop a voluntary follow-up system and devise indicators enabling development to be followed at local level in, for example, the labour market, education, social policy, culture and the arts, and sports. These indicators are derived from the Convention. The Swedish state is funding disability organisations with government grants of some SEK 180 million a year. A method has been developed to conduct a recurrent questionnaire survey of people with disabilities concerning their perceptions of society in various respects.

23. In 2014, the Swedish Government has proposed an amendment to the Discrimination Act regarding inadequate accessibility as a form of discrimination. The purpose of this legislative amendment is to strengthen protection for people with disabilities so that failure to take reasonable measures to increase accessibility may be deemed to constitute discrimination. The Riksdag has adopted the amendment, which will come into force on 1 January 2015.⁸ People with disabilities must have the opportunity to take part in everyday life on equal terms with respect to participation and accessibility. A national regulatory framework and an overall structure of responsibility for technical aids will be produced. The new law on inaccessibility as a ground of discrimination will be reviewed and broadened.

24. The Government has taken the initiative for measures to boost knowledge of, and change attitudes towards, people with mental illnesses and mental disabilities. A key part of this work has been to engage people with their own experience of mental illnesses and mental disabilities as 'ambassadors'. To facilitate full participation in the work life, special projects are being implemented with the purpose of changing employers' attitudes in order to foster increased employment for people with mental disabilities. People suffering mental illness and people with disabilities must have improved opportunities for care, housing, rehabilitation and employment.

5. LGBT persons' rights

25. Through an amendment to the Swedish Instrument of Government that came into force on 1 January 2011, protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation was introduced into the Swedish Constitution. Under the new constitutional provision, laws and other regulations may not entail disadvantages to any individuals due to their sexual orientation. In 2013 the Government adopted the first comprehensive strategy for equal rights and opportunities irrespective of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender

expression, the purpose being to strengthen work for LGBT persons' situation in Sweden. This strategy paves the way for long-term, performance-oriented work.

26. At international level, Sweden is continuing to play an active part in promoting legal protection against discrimination. Sweden has, for example, arranged a number of events in cooperation with civil society in various UN contexts for the purpose of emphasising practical problems and possible ways forward. Enjoyment of human rights and basic freedoms for LGBT persons is one of Sweden's foreign-policy priorities, pursued in areas including programmes for development cooperation and political dialogues.⁹

6. Discrimination due to religion

27. The Government engages in regular dialogue with Sweden's religious associations to enhance knowledge of current challenges. Particular emphasis has been put on how religious freedom can be practised in the work life and the educational system. The Government is carrying out a survey of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and consolidating existing knowledge of the incidence of anti-Semitic and Islamophobic notions in Sweden, and also of the vulnerability of Jewish and Muslim groups. The Government also devoted SEK 4 million in 2012, and a further SEK 2m in August 2014, to increase safety and reduce vulnerability for the Jewish minority who have suffered anti-Semitic hate crimes and harassment (see the section on minorities, below). The Government is working to survey xenophobic acts against religious communities, such as Muslim communities, including not only acts directed against members of these communities but also attacks on the their premises. In June 2014, the Government implemented round-table discussions on Islamophobia in Europe for the purpose of sharing experiences of challenges and best practices in terms of measures to combat Islamophobia.

7. Ethnic origin and minorities

28. In recent years, several central government agencies have been given various assignments relating to discrimination and xenophobia. The county administrative boards are intended to integrate human rights into their activities by elucidating and analysing these rights and taking them (especially protection against discrimination) into consideration in their own work. The Government has taken numerous initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of efforts to combat discrimination and xenophobia. In January 2014 a special investigator was appointed with the remit of recommending ways to organise anti-discrimination work and make it more effective.¹⁰ In March 2014 the Government presented a White Paper describing attacks and offensive treatment suffered by Roma in the 20th century, the aim being to give recognition to the victims and their relatives and create understanding for the Roma minority's situation today. In March 2014 a 'commission against anti-gypsyism' was set up with the purpose of achieving concerted efforts to combat anti-gypsyism and bridging the confidence gap between the Roma and the rest of society. The Government has also taken measures to prevent Afrophobia in Sweden.

B. Rights of National minorities' and indigenous people

1. The Sámi – an indigenous people

29. In the past few years, the Government of Sweden has taken a series of measures to strengthen the Sámi's status as an indigenous people. Through an amendment of the Instrument of Government that entered into force on 1 January 2011, the Sámi's position as a people was confirmed. The Swedish state's commitment to promote the Sámi people's opportunities to preserve and develop their own cultural and community life was also strengthened. In the Government's view, in terms of international law the Sámi are a people with a right to self-determination. A central aspect of Sámi self-determination is the Sámi

Parliament.¹¹ In 2010 the Sámi Parliament's remit of joining in community planning and monitoring consideration of Sámi needs, including reindeer-herding interests in land and water use, was extended. The Government's ambition is to strengthen Sámi self-determination further by giving the Sámi Parliament both additional responsibilities to make decisions on internal Sámi issues as well as giving the Sámi Parliament additional tasks in terms of participation in decision-making on issues of considerable importance to the Sámi.

30. In 2009, the Swedish Government presented a proposal for formalised consultation proceedings between itself and the Sámi Parliament. This proposal, presented with revised legislation on reindeer herding, was intended to be part of a more extensive Sámi Policy Bill that would also cover land rights. Following criticism from the Sámi Parliament and other Sámi representatives, however, the Government chose to postpone the Bill and await concrete proposals. In order to achieve progress concerning future Sámi policy, the Government intends to start a deeper dialogue with representatives of the Sámi Parliament and certain Sámi interest organisations. A special investigator has examined the question of whether Sweden can ratify ILO Convention No. 169¹² and, if so, what measures are necessary to enable Sweden to comply with its provisions. The investigator's assessment was that Sweden fulfils the Convention's requirements in the great majority of respects but that the question remains of whether the strongly protected right of land use conferred by the law on reindeer herding is sufficient for compliance with the demands of the Convention. The investigator, in turn, proposed the appointment of more committees of inquiry, such as a boundary commission, and this has been implemented.

31. Since spring 2011, negotiations have been under way between Sweden, Finland and Norway regarding a Nordic Sámi Convention, for the purpose of strengthening the Sámi people's rights to preserve and develop their language, culture, livelihoods and community life with the least possible hindrance of national borders. Representatives of the three Sámi Parliaments are included in the national delegations.

2. National minorities

32. Sweden has ratified the Council of Europe's conventions on national minorities, and is working actively throughout the monitoring cycle of these conventions to inform the national minorities in Sweden¹³ of their opportunities both to exert influence on the government reports and how to submit their own reports/views to the monitoring body. Twice a year, the Government holds consultations with national minority representatives on issues of importance to them.

3. Education and languages

33. On 1 July 2015 the Swedish Education Act will be amended with respect to education in minority languages, in the subject of Mother Tongue Studies. The changes involve abolition of the requirement that the language concerned should be the mother tongue of the pupil's legal custodian. For the compulsory forms of schooling the requirement that the pupil should have basic knowledge of the language is also being abolished.

34. The 2009 Swedish Act on National Minorities and National Minority Languages gives the five national minorities basic protection. In the administrative areas for Finnish, Sámi and Meänkieli (Tornedal Finnish), the Act provides reinforced protection. The Act stipulates that seven municipalities and one county council should be included in the administrative area for a minority language. Since 2010, after applying to the Government, municipalities and county councils can be added to the administrative area and receive government grants for the additional costs entailed by their increased obligations.¹⁴

35. It is evident from the 2014 annual reports of Stockholm County Administrative Board and the Sámi Parliament that work in the area of minority policy is achieving results, and that a relatively high proportion of the municipalities included in the administrative areas have implemented measures and are seeing the effects of work to implement the Act on National Minorities and National Minority Languages. One result of this is that the empowerment of Sweden's national minorities has been strengthened and progress has been made in the endeavour to preserve their languages and cultures.

36. A new curriculum for compulsory school came into force on 1 July 2011. This curriculum lays greater emphasis than before on the national minorities. In spring 2014, a web-based set of teaching material for Years 7–9 of compulsory school, about Roma culture, language, religion and history, was presented. On several occasions, the Government has allocated funds to support development and production of teaching material in national minority languages.¹⁵

4. Measures against discrimination

37. A summary of reports of discrimination submitted by Sámi in the period from 2000 to 2012 showed that only some 40 reports had been received since 2000. These reports do not permit general conclusions but can provide important information about Sámi perceptions of discrimination. The number of legal cases relating to discrimination against Sámi is very small. These results constitute the basis for the pre-study carried out by the Equality Ombudsman (DO) in 2013 within the framework of the project concerning discrimination against the Sámi as an indigenous people.

5. Access to healthcare

38. Equal access to healthcare for everyone in Sweden has long been high on the Government's agenda. The Government's strategy is about uncovering, eliminating and monitoring trends of unjustified differences in results and responses in the healthcare services. The Sámi and other national minorities are thought to have special requirements, needs and wishes. The Government has surveyed the health situation of the national minorities and consultations have been held between government agencies and representatives of the national minorities, to investigate needs and scope for collection of data about their health situation, and also which methods are suitable for each minority group. Healthcare-related information has been translated into Sámi and the other national minority languages.

6. Measures for Roma inclusion

39. On 16 February 2012, the Government adopted a coordinated, long-term strategy for Roma inclusion in 2012–2032, as a means of strengthening minority policy. The overall aim of the strategy is that a Roma person reaching the age of 20 in 2032 should have equivalent opportunities in life to those of a non-Roma person. The primary target group is the Roma who are in a situation of social and economic exclusion and subjected to discrimination. Women and children have special priority. The strategy comprises aims and measures in six areas of activity: education, employment, housing, health, social care and security, culture and languages, and the organisation of civil society, with human rights as the starting point and with a particular emphasis on the principle of non-discrimination, on gender equality and on the rights of the child. The background cited in the strategy includes criticism that Sweden has received from international review bodies, for example.

40. Within the framework of the strategy, pilot projects are under way in five municipalities in 2012–2015, with several government agencies involved. The methods and ways of working developed by these municipalities are then to be spread to Sweden's other municipalities. A central endeavour is to bridge the confidence gap that exists between

Roma and the public sector. Training is in progress for bridge-builders with Roma language and cultural skills, to serve as a link between private and public activities. These bridge-builders are active in pre-schools and schools in the pilot municipalities. The Swedish Public Employment Service, too, has appointed bridge-builders in these municipalities. The implementation of the strategy for Roma inclusion is characterised by Roma participation and influence. In pilot municipalities and government agencies, various forms of consultation and dialogue are being developed. The Government Offices have also appointed a Roma reference group, which influences how the Government is developing governance and initiatives in the strategy.

41. Equal rights and opportunities for Jews, Roma, Sámi, Swedish Finns and Tornedalers are a priority area for the DO. The DO is joining in several parts of the work for Roma inclusion, and has been conducting systematic work for some time to promote equal rights and opportunities for the Roma. In 2013, the DO initiated efforts to enhance Roma access to equal rights and opportunities in the social services, the housing market and other sectors. These efforts consist in development of methods to identify, through rights-based dialogue and training with Roma and also dialogue with the social services and stakeholders in the housing market, obstacles and shortcomings in existing regulations and structures in the social services.¹⁶

C. Gender equality, including men's violence against women

1. Aims of gender equality policy

42. The overarching aim of the gender-equality policy adopted by the Riksdag in 2006 is that women and men should have the same power to shape society and their own lives. Four interim objectives guide the Government's measures: an even distribution of power and influence; economic equality between women and men; an equal distribution of unpaid household work and social care; and an end to men's violence against women.

43. In its initiative to boost work for gender equality, the Government has distributed grants to projects concerned with such matters as discrimination, women's organisation and equality. Grants have been awarded to various organisations in civil society for the purpose of disseminating information about and knowledge of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

2. Measures to promote gender equality

44. One area in which there has been marked favourable development since the 1990s is the distribution of power and influence in politically elected assemblies, as a result of several Riksdag parties' active work to boost women's representation. Most political parties today have nomination lists in which every other candidate is a woman. In the central government sector, systematic efforts have been made to the result that in 2013 the proportion of women members of government agencies' boards reached 48% (against 52% men), while 41% of the chairs were women (59% men).

45. An area in which development has been more modest is the distribution of power and influence in the private sector, in boards and in leading positions in companies. The Government will conduct a review of the gender distribution in the governing boards of listed companies after the annual general meetings in 2016. If the proportion of women on the governing boards of listed companies is not at least 40 per cent by 2016, a legislative proposal on quotas will be presented. During 2013–2014 a special initiative is under way to bring more women into senior positions through the 'Golden Rules of Leadership', with their connection between entrepreneurship and leadership.¹⁷ In 2007, the Government launched a programme to promote women's business start-ups. This programme, which has

cost some SEK 100 million a year, was extended repeatedly until 2014. During the programme period, the number of businesses run by women rose by 13.2% between 2006 and 2010 alone.

46. The Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender in all sectors of society, in principle, and includes a ban on pay discrimination. The Act also covers employers' obligations to take active measures against unwarranted pay disparities due to gender, and requires employers to engage in active work to promote equal rights and opportunities in the work life, irrespective of such factors as gender. The DO is monitoring employees' work to promote equal rights and opportunities at the workplace. The Government has assigned the DO to step up its supervision and promotion measures regarding employers' work of surveying pay rates. This assignment is to run during the period 2013–2014 and a report will be issued not later than 1 March 2015.

47. Between 1994 and 2013, the total pay gap between women and men decreased by 3 percentage points. Although responsibility for pay determination rests on the social partners, the Government has taken measures to reduce salary differences in the central government sector. One initiative, for example, has been a programme for women's career development in this sector. The Government is reviewing the forms that requirements for active measures to combat unwarranted pay differences should take in order to prevent discrimination and promote equal opportunities and rights at work. In 2011, the Government decided to appoint a delegation for gender equality at work that, in May 2015, is to propose measures to promote gender equality in the work life and reduce the pay gap between women and men. The Government is also conducting a follow-up study and analysing progress in achieving gender equality in the light of social trends over the past ten years, and a report is to be issued in August 2015. The gender pay gap must be reduced. To this end, wage surveys will be carried out every year.

48. The aim of equal distribution of unpaid household work and social care means that women and men should assume the same responsibility for household chores and have opportunities to give and receive social care on the same terms. Policy measures that can influence the prospects of more gender-equal distribution of unpaid household work and social care are being implemented mainly in family, labour-market and tax policy. Gender-equality bonuses, tax reductions for household work and Earned Income Tax Credits are all aimed at helping to bring about more gender-equal conditions for women and men in terms of both paid and unpaid work. To encourage the equal take-up of parental insurance, a third month will be reserved for each parent. Parental insurance will also be reviewed to make life easier for those families that identify themselves as non-nuclear families.¹⁸

3. Violence against women

Continued government work to end men's violence against women (including appropriation)

49. Besides protecting and assisting women subjected to violence, society must confront the underlying values and attitudes that contribute to the perpetration of violence. Altogether, the Government allocated approximately SEK 1 billion¹⁹ in 2007–2010 and approximately the same amount in 2011–2014 for measures to combat men's violence against women. Evaluations of the Government's work carried out to date have, for example, shown that the Government's measures have contributed to the extensive development and methodological work now under way in municipalities and agencies. Inter-agency cooperation has been strengthened and this has enabled particularly vulnerable groups to be identified. The Government's measures have helped to improve skills in the public sector, both in agencies and in individual employees.

50. A national coordinator has had the assignment of combatting violence in intimate relationships in the period 2012–2014. This coordinator's final report, which was submitted to the Government on 27 June 2014, contained some 50 recommendations. The recommendations are currently being reviewed in the Government Offices.

51. The Government has appointed a committee of inquiry with the assignment of developing a national strategy to achieve the aim of ending men's violence against women, with long- and short-term objectives and propose how they are to be monitored. A final report is to be submitted on 29 May 2015. The Government has also allocated SEK 42 million for various projects and research on men's violence against women, including sexual violence and other forms of sexual assault.

Social services' responsibility

52. New regulations and general recommendations have been developed in 2014 regarding the municipal social welfare committees' work with women who have suffered violence and children who have witnessed violence, and a manual and other training material have also been produced. In 2014, for the third time, open comparisons were made of the municipalities' efforts, showing that nearly all the municipalities can provide advice and support, and offer sheltered accommodation to women subjected to violence, but that systematic quality assurance needs to be developed and much more attention must be paid to the situation of children than at present. The Government is also working to develop methods in the social services' work and other activities involving women and children who are victims of violence, and also perpetrators of violence.

Support for women subjected to violence

53. In September 2013, a comprehensive analysis of the sheltered accommodation provided for threatened persons and guidance material for the target groups concerned was carried out. A model was presented to show ways of developing the quality of these measures, and of monitoring and evaluating them continuously at national level. The Government provides annual government grants for non-profit organisations engaged in voluntary work, partly in order to tackle violence against women. The Government has made a permanent reinforcement of SEK 23 million to voluntary organisations working on combating violence against women with effect from 2014. Since 2007, the Government has also spent SEK 109 million annually to help improve the quality of the municipalities and non-profit associations' work of supporting and assisting women subjected to violence and children who have witnessed violence, and also perpetrators of violence.

54. In 2009–2010 and 2012–2014 the Swedish Police implemented information campaigns to disseminate knowledge about violence in intimate relationships, and to encourage people subjected to violence to report it to the police. Within the scope of these information measures, special attention has also been paid to honour-related crimes; the police have, for example, implemented measures to strengthen schools' competence on these issues. During the period 2011–2014, measures have been implemented to tackle honour-related problems in schools.²⁰ The Government has also developed a national skills team to combat forced marriage, child marriage and honour-related violence. In addition, the Government is engaged in ongoing work to implement a prevalence study of the incidence of female genital mutilation (FGM) and to produce guidance material for working to prevent FGM. This material is being drawn up in consultation with relevant government agencies and non-governmental organisations.

55. In the police service, continuous development work is under way regarding handling of crime in intimate relationships. In 2013 a special inspection group was appointed with the function of reviewing lethal violence in intimate relationships, to investigate whether there are additional measures that the police can take to prevent such violence.

56. During 2012–2013, the Government also supported organisations engaged in developing work for crime victims, addressing LGBT persons who are subjected to violence in intimate relationships.

New legislation and development of methods and knowledge in the judicial system

57. In October 2011, amendments to the Non-Contact Order Act came into force, aimed at improving the situation for people who in various ways are at risk of being subjected, or have been subjected, to violence, threats or harassment, often repeatedly (stalking), inter alia electronic surveillance to ensure compliance with certain non-contact orders. Simultaneously, a new offence — unlawful persecution — was inserted in the Swedish Penal Code to strengthen the protection against harassment and persecution afforded by criminal law.

58. On 1 July 2014 a number of legislative amendments intended to strengthen protection against forced and child marriage came into force. Among these amendments was the introduction of a new offence, coercion to marry: this criminalises the act of inducing someone to enter into marriage or a marriage-like relationship against the person's will.²¹ Simultaneously with these legislative amendments, the Riksdag decided to approve the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention). In July 2014 Sweden deposited its instrument of ratification of the Convention.

59. On 1 July 2013, the minimum penalty was raised for the so-called 'violation of integrity'-offences and their area of application were broadened to strengthen protection under criminal law against repeated violations of persons in close relationships. Legislative amendments were also implemented for the purpose of further strengthening protection for sexual integrity and sexual self-determination by broadening the crime of rape.²² In January 2012, new legislation came into force concerning investigations relating to women and men who have died as a result of crimes by people close, or formerly close, to them, the purpose being to provide documentation for proposed measures to prevent such crimes.

60. In the Swedish prosecution service, projects have been implemented concerning method development of work relating to violent and sexual crimes in intimate relationships and against children. During 2014, guidelines will be drawn up for assessment of risk and proportionality; the handbook on non-contact (restraining) orders is to be updated ahead of the forthcoming legislative amendment; and uniform routines for handling non-contact cases will be developed.

61. Special measures involving training and method development concerning men's violence against women, honour-related problems, prostitution and human trafficking are being implemented by a range of government agencies in the judicial system.

Statistics

62. Every year, Sweden carries out an extensive survey concerning victims of crime. On the initiative of the Government, crime in intimate relationships has been investigated within the scope of this survey, and the results of this investigation were published in May 2014. At the same time, work is continuing to introduce an electronic information flow in the criminal justice process. This will entail obvious development potential with respect to official crime statistics.

D. Hate crimes

1. Measures, including legislation, to tackle hate crimes

63. Sweden has extensive legislation that can be used to punish various expressions of racism, xenophobia and religious intolerance. There are two penal provisions directly aimed at threats, contempt or discrimination on the basis of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religious belief or sexual orientation.²³ However, in other categories of crime too, hate motives such as these must be taken into consideration as aggravating circumstances.

64. Sweden takes crimes motivated by racial, religious or homophobic hatred seriously. Sweden closely monitors national trends of this type of crime, and also the judiciary's work to combat hate crime, in order to assess the need for further preventive and law-enforcing measures. In March 2014, the Government assigned the Swedish National Police Board to develop the police's work against hate crimes.²⁴

65. The Swedish Prosecution Authority prioritises hate crimes. Guidelines for combatting hate crimes and the basic training for prosecutors lay emphasis on investigating any hate motives and, in court, citing these circumstances as aggravating, i.e. requiring more severe penalties. A digital knowledge bank for prosecutors working in the area of hate crimes has been compiled. Since autumn 2013, a conference on hate crimes at which the prosecutors concerned discuss the subject has been held annually.

66. In June 2013, the Government assigned the Swedish Media Council to implement the Council of Europe's No Hate Speech Movement campaign in Sweden. This assignment includes coordinating activities within the framework of the campaign in order to enhance knowledge of xenophobia, sexism and similar forms of intolerance on the Internet. This is to be done with a particular focus on children and adolescents. Sweden is also taking part in the EU Good Relations project, under way from November 2012 to October 2014, with the purpose to combat xenophobia and other forms of intolerance by promoting good relationships. Efforts to combat hate crime will be prioritised.

2. Education and training

67. The compulsory basic training for prosecutors contains a section about hate crimes. Police officers are trained in issues relating to tolerance and in fundamental rights, human rights and cultural awareness. Measures have also been taken to increase ethnic diversity generally in the police force. In 2010, the Swedish Police adopted its first action plan for diversity and equal treatment, and several police forces have implemented initiatives to enhance knowledge and skills concerning these issues. The aforesaid action plan was superseded by an equal treatment plan for 2013–2016.

3. Statistics

68. Swedish statistics on hate crimes are published annually, based mainly on reported offences, and including reported hate crimes classified by the perpetrator's motives. These statistics undergo continuous development on the Government's behalf. For the past few years, the hate-crime statistics have also included results from Sweden's national crime victim survey, enabling the statistics to be based on the victim's gender and age. A recurrent questionnaire survey of youth crime also now contains questions about hate crimes.²⁵

E. Asylum seekers' and undocumented migrants' right to healthcare and various measures against discrimination etc.

1. General

69. The principle of non-refoulement has long been part of Swedish law.²⁶ The main rule is that foreign nationals may not be refused entry or expelled if they risk persecution in the receiving country or lack protection against being sent on to a country where they risk persecution. There is an absolute prohibition on enforcing a refusal of entry or expulsion order if there are reasonable grounds for assuming that the foreign national concerned would be in danger of suffering capital or corporal punishment, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment. A decision to refuse entry to or expel a foreign national may be appealed to a court of law.

70. In 2009–2011, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in cooperation with the Swedish Migration Board, implemented a study for the purpose of analysing the Board's application of the provisions of Swedish law concerning international protection, and of making recommendations to raise quality. UNHCR found that the Board has a legally secure procedure for processing asylum applications, and cited several projects and measures that had involved quality improvements. UNHCR also found that there was room for improvement in some parts of the Board's work, and made a number of recommendations.

71. The Government has taken a number of decisions to further enhance the quality and legal security of the asylum process. One result has been development of methods for systematic quality monitoring of asylum casework. A special set of rules has been adopted for asylum cases in which sexual orientation and gender identity are invoked, and the rules mean that specialists in the area must take part in the casework.

72. Since 2010, security cases under the Aliens Act have been examined, in all essentials in the same way as other cases under the same Act. Scope for using diplomatic guarantees in the sphere of migration is now therefore extremely limited. In general, the rule is that diplomatic assurances may be considered only in rare exceptional cases under a procedure that provides security and guarantees for human rights.

2. Detention of asylum seekers

73. Asylum seekers and foreign nationals staying in Sweden without permits may be detained only in certain circumstances that are specified in the Aliens Act. Detainees have access to a public counsel and adequate information, and can also contact their home country's diplomatic mission for consular assistance, for example. Detention is used only if other, less interventionist measures, such as supervision, are insufficient in the individual case. A foreign national covered by a decision, which has come into force, to refuse entry or deport him or her, and who is detained ahead of the enforcement of this decision, may not be held in detention for more than two months unless there are exceptional reasons for this. On 1 May 2012, the Aliens Act was amended so that a maximum limit of 12 months for detention pending enforcement has been introduced.²⁷

3. Asylum seekers' and undocumented migrants' right to healthcare

74. Asylum seekers aged 18 and over are offered urgent health- and dental care, maternity healthcare, abortion care and contraception advice. 'Urgent care' means care measures that need to be taken to prevent serious illnesses developing. Asylum-seeking children are offered the same healthcare and dental care as children residing in Sweden. Under a new law that entered into force on 1 July 2013, people who stay in Sweden without a permit must be offered the same subsidised health- and medical care as adult asylum

seekers, and such children must be offered the same care as resident and asylum-seeking children.

4. Improvement of social services

75. Initiatives in the labour market and education sectors are prioritised in order to combat exclusion. This is intended to be attained mainly through general policy; but for newly arrived immigrants, especially those in need of protection and their relatives, focused initiatives may be necessary during their initial period in Sweden. The Government is continuing to focus on work and reinforced measures more adapted to the target group's needs. For example, a practical base year for new arrivals aged 30 and over, with a maximum of nine years' education, has been introduced and supervisor remuneration for providers of work training for the newcomers has been raised. To boost the municipalities' scope for receiving new immigrants, the Government has implemented a series of changes and now offers, for example, performance-based remuneration for municipalities that receive many new arrivals. Moreover, a range of measures have been introduced for newly arrived pupils who have migrated to Sweden after the regular age for starting school. Teaching time for the newcomers has been increased, as has support for teachers at schools in areas of widespread exclusion. In addition, initiatives in adult education have been implemented to promote integration of new arrivals. On 1 July 2013 legislative amendments were made in order to improve opportunities for people receiving financial assistance to support themselves through employment. The Government is reviewing possible scope for developing support for, and requirements applying to, unemployed people who receive financial assistance. To improve scope for children in financially vulnerable families to take part in organised leisure activities, the Government has introduced a scheme for refunding costs of leisure activities from July 2014.

5. Education

76. In 2011, the Government appointed a committee of inquiry to propose ways of increasing freedom of choice and individualisation in Swedish-language courses for immigrants. The committee's assignment was expanded in 2013 to include also the question of how instruction in the Swedish language can be adapted better to individuals' aims with their studies, and whether Swedish for immigrants should be discontinued as a form of schooling in its own right and made part of municipal adult education as a whole. The committee presented its report in October 2013. In spring 2014, work was under way to see how far the committee's work can be put into practice, and its recommendations are being reviewed in the Government Offices.

F. Rights of the child

1. Child rights policy

77. The objective of Swedish policy on children's rights is that children and adolescents should be respected and given scope for personal development, safety and security, and also for participation and influence. To improve coordination and dialogue on issues relating to children's rights at all levels, in June 2010 the Government presented a strategy for strengthening child rights. The strategy is one tool in the work of realising the rights of the child under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Several different measures have been taken to disseminate the strategy at national, regional and local level.

78. In the period 2010–2013 the Government gave priority to ensuring that Swedish legislation and its application correspond to the requirements of the CRC; developing a monitoring system for children's and adolescents' living conditions; and strengthening the child rights perspective in social care services for children and adolescents and in schools.

The Government has also taken the initiative in boosting the dissemination of knowledge and monitoring of work to promote children's rights, especially at local and regional level. Moreover, the Government has taken measures to support municipalities in their production of action plans to remedy economic deprivation among children, and in the drawing-up of indicators that relate to economically deprived children, in order to monitor development and work at municipal level better. In February 2014, the Government presented an action plan for protection of children against human trafficking, exploitation and sexual assaults, with measures to improve knowledge, support, protection and monitoring.

79. The Swedish Ombudsman for Children is a key stakeholder in child rights policy. This agency's functions include working for implementation of, and monitoring compliance with, the CRC. Moreover, the Ombudsman is intended to work within its sphere of activities to spread information, shape opinion and propose legislative amendments and other measures to fulfil the rights and interests of children and young people; to represent their interests in public debate; and to compile knowledge about children's living conditions. In the years 2012–2014, the Ombudsman has implemented measures to disseminate and communicate the strategy to strengthen the rights of the child, with municipalities, county councils and central government agencies as key target groups.

2. The Convention on the Rights of the Child in legislation

80. Before Sweden's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1990, a review of Swedish legislation in relation to the norms of the CRC was carried out. Swedish legislation was found to be compatible with the CRC.²⁸ In March 2013, the Government appointed a special investigator to carry out an overview of children's rights in Swedish law. This investigator has the assignment of carrying out a survey, in particularly important areas, of how well the application of statutes and other regulations conforms to the rights of the child according to the CRC and the Optional Protocols to which Sweden has acceded. The Government will begin work to incorporate the CRC into Swedish law.

3. Migration and unaccompanied refugee children

81. Sweden is the country in Europe with the most asylum-seeking unaccompanied children. In 2013, roughly 3,900 unaccompanied children applied for asylum in Sweden. The proportion of applications approved in cases that underwent assessment in the same period was 82%.

82. Cases involving children are assessed individually. The child rights perspective is intended to permeate every part of the asylum and migration process. The Government has taken several measures to strengthen the child rights perspective. Child impact assessments must be carried out ahead of all decisions by the Swedish Migration Board relating to children. Information material, designed to boost knowledge of the asylum process among chief guardians and legal representatives who represent unaccompanied children in the asylum process, has been drawn up. Measures are taken to ensure long-term skills provision and analysis of the Migration Board's skills requirements with respect to children, and of how the Migration Board ensures that children's own reasons for asylum are investigated, assessed and reported when the decisions are made.

83. In June 2013, a guide to social services' work with unaccompanied children and adolescents was presented. In December 2013, a survey of development areas relating to unaccompanied children's needs was also issued. To improve reception of unaccompanied children in the municipalities, legislative amendments came into force on 1 January 2014. Asylum-seeking unaccompanied children may be assigned to municipalities irrespective of whether the latter have reception agreements with the Migration Board in place.

84. The provision in the Aliens Act concerning residence permits on grounds of exceptionally distressing circumstances was amended on 1 July 2014 so that children may instead be granted residence permits if the circumstances are particularly distressing. At the same time, there was an amendment to a provision relating to enforcement of decisions on refusal of entry or deportation that have come into force. If new circumstances are found that entail medical obstacles or any other particular reason why the decision should not be enforced, the Migration Board may grant residence permits.

85. In February 2014, the committee of inquiry on compulsory residential care for children and adolescents issued an interim report recommending the introduction of a new form of care home for unaccompanied children, the 'support home'. This interim report has currently been referred for consideration to the relevant bodies.

4. Care

86. The Government is working to strengthen the child rights perspective and legal security for children and adolescents up to the age of 20 who are placed in compulsory residential care. It is also working to promote quality development in child and adolescent social care, focusing particularly on compulsory residential care. An overview of various forms of placement in residential care and fostering pursuant to various laws is also under way in order to create more options than are available at present. In cases relating to children, Swedish law prescribes that whatever is generally required with reference to the child's health and development, and what is best for the child, must be taken into account.²⁹

5. Homeless children

87. Sweden carries out surveys on the scale of homelessness nationwide, the latest being in 2011. The purpose is to create documentation for policy work and for action plans and strategies at local and national level in order, through improved knowledge of homelessness.

88. Eviction may be a key reason why children become homeless. The Government has developed and clarified the statistics on evictions, which has helped to bring about a large increase in knowledge of evictions affecting children.³⁰ A national homelessness coordinator has been appointed, with the function of giving the municipalities support in their work of developing long-term, sustainable structures and workable routines to combat homelessness and exclusion from the housing market. The Government has also assigned the county administrative boards to assist the municipalities in their work of alleviating homelessness.

89. Municipal social welfare committees should work, through outreach activities and other proactive efforts to prevent suffering among children and adolescents, to ensure that children and adolescents grow up in secure, favourable conditions. In cooperation with community bodies and other stakeholders concerned, a social welfare committee should focus on the need of children and adolescents not to stay in environments that are harmful to them, and work to ensure this. This applies to all young people staying in the municipality concerned. To supplement the national survey of homelessness in 2011, in 2012 the Government assigned the National Board of Health and Welfare to investigate the scope of homelessness among EU/EEA citizens in Sweden, as part of the work of elucidating their living conditions and needs.

6. Education

90. All children aged from seven to 16 who live in Sweden are subject to the obligation to attend school and are unconditionally entitled to education. Children who seek asylum in Sweden are entitled to education on the same terms as other children. Since 1 July 2013,

children staying in the country without a permit, too, have broadly the same right to attend school as children who live in Sweden.³¹

91. Since 2011, the Government has carried out a special initiative to combat discrimination and other offensive treatment in schools, pre-schools and after-school centres. The Government has allocated SEK 10 million to provide regular and in-service training for the staff, in order to strengthen these institutions' fundamental values and efforts to combat discrimination and offensive treatment, and to disseminate best practice relating to preventive work.

7. Child sex tourism and human trafficking

92. Sex crimes abroad can be investigated and the perpetrators brought to justice in Sweden under Swedish jurisdiction rules. Sweden is actively engaged in the issue of child sex tourism. The National Criminal Investigations Department has implemented an initiative to combat sexual assaults on children committed by Swedes abroad.³² The outcome is highly gratifying and a specialist group of investigators has been made permanent for these investigations. Sweden plays an active part in all relevant international forums that actively combat child sex tourism. Sweden participates in the EU's operationally oriented cooperation, within the framework of the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI), in Europol and in the EU's informal network of national rapporteurs on the subject of human trafficking. The Swedish Prosecution Authority conducted a project relating to child sex tourism in 2011 and 2013, concluding that it is essential that staff with specialist skills deal with these cases; there must be close cooperation with the police: applications for legal assistance must be made at an early stage; and international cooperation must increase.³³

93. On 20 February 2014 the Government adopted a new action plan for 2014–2015 for protection of children against human trafficking, exploitation and sexual assault.

94. In September 2014, the Government decided to appoint an inquiry to evaluate the application of the penal provision on trafficking in human beings and to examine how law enforcement authorities investigate and handle human trafficking matters. Moreover, the inquiry is to review the scale of penalties for the penal provision purchase of a sexual act from a child, to ensure that it fully corresponds to the seriousness of the crime. A report on this assignment is to be issued not later than 9 March 2016.

8. Trade in weapons

95. Swedish military equipment may be exported only to states or to recipients authorised by states. Under the Swedish regulations on export of military equipment, respect for human rights is a central condition and licences should not be issued for export of military equipment to states in which large-scale, gross violations of human rights take place. In the assessment of an export case, for example, exploitation of child soldiers in the country in question weighs heavily and would most likely make an export licence impossible to obtain.

96. The Swedish Government has appointed a parliamentary committee to investigate future Swedish export controls on military equipment and its limits, in order to tighten up control of exports to non-democratic states.

9. Children with disabilities

97. The Government is investigating the scope for increased coordination in matters relating to children with disabilities. Since a legislative amendment of 1 January 2011, the rule has been that when a measure taken pursuant to the Act concerning support and service for persons with certain functional impairments relates to a child, the child must receive

relevant information and be given the opportunity to be heard. The Government has taken the initiative for developing national knowledge support for parents and relatives of people, especially children and adolescents, with a combination of extensive disabilities and considerable medical needs. The Government has also taken the initiative for collecting experience of, and disseminating information about, methods and strategies to enable children and adolescents with disabilities to influence decisions. The Swedish Ombudsman for Children has developed methods of listening to children with various types of disabilities.³⁴

10. Non-discrimination

98. Since 2009, age has been a basis for discrimination recognised in the Discrimination Act. Since 'age' means both high and low age, both children and adolescents are included. On 1 January 2013, protection against age discrimination was strengthened by a legislative amendment whereby protection against discrimination on the basis of age was extended to include more sectors of society.³⁵ The Equality Ombudsman (DO) is to exercise supervision of compliance with the Act. The DO also investigates reports of discrimination in the education sector, and can pursue discrimination cases in the courts.

99. Work to implement a renewed initiative against discrimination and other offensive treatment in schools, pre-schools and after-school centres has continued. To obtain further knowledge of how efforts to combat bullying can be strengthened on the basis of children's own viewpoints, the Government has collected children's and adolescents' opinions and experience of offensive treatment and harassment. The Government is continuing to combat offensive treatment and work for all pupils to receive education in a school environment characterised by safety and peace.

G. Other issues

1. Torture

100. The Parliamentary Ombudsman (JO) exercises supervision of public-sector activities, including the Swedish Police. JO also ensures that courts and administrative agencies observe the rules of the Instrument of Government concerning objectivity and impartiality, and that all citizens' basic freedoms and rights are respected in public-sector activities. Individuals who consider that they have been incorrectly treated by police or prosecutors can report this to JO.

101. The Swedish Riksdag decided in December 2010 to contribute additional funds to JO to enable it to fulfil its role as Sweden's National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) body. Since July 2011, JO has had a special unit with the function of inspecting places of detention, to ensure that detainees are not subjected to cruel, inhuman or other degrading treatment or punishment.³⁶ The NPM unit at JO must regularly inspect places in Sweden where people are held in detention, report on these visits and join in international cooperation in the area. In addition, the Swedish Police and the Office of the Prosecutor-General have jointly produced a set of material addressing detainees, with information about the rights they have, the continued legal process and whom to contact for more information, or in order to express views on treatment by the police service. The material supplements the information that is provided orally by police officers to people deprived of their freedom. Detainees who regard themselves as incorrectly treated can report this to the police on the spot, to a prosecutor or ultimately to the court. A police officer is obliged to receive the report. A complaint against a police officer is investigated by the unit for internal investigations and the preliminary investigation is headed by prosecutors. To ensure independence in internal investigations a new department directly under the National Police Commissioner has been set up at the National Police Board to supersede the Swedish

Police Authority's previous local units for internal investigations. Six investigation units are deployed around the country, in premises separate from other police activities.

102. From 1 January 2015, the Swedish Police will be organised in a coherent Police Authority, which will entail changes to the organisation of internal investigations. To clarify the independence and impartiality of the latter's activities, the head will be appointed through a decision by the Government; the activities will have their own budget appropriation item, to be decided by the Government; and the Police Authority's advisory council and regional police council will be charged with specially monitoring the activities.

103. The Prosecution Authority has the National Police Crimes Unit, a unit demarcated from the rest of its operational activities, directly under the Office of the Prosecutor-General and in charge of handling complaints against the police and others. A special department under the Prosecutor-General also handles complaints against prosecutors. In spring 2014, the Prosecution Authority issued a report on detention times and restrictions containing proposals on how limits can be imposed on long detention times and on restrictions.

104. An inquiry is currently considering the need for a specific provision on torture in Swedish penal law. The report is due on 1 September 2015.

2. International aid

105. The framework for Swedish international development aid defines the focus of Swedish aid in the form of six 'sub-objectives' and key principles for their implementation. Aid for human rights is included both in sub-objective 1³⁷ and in sub-objectives 2 and 4³⁸. The framework also requires a rights perspective to be applied throughout Swedish aid. Moreover, Sweden amply exceeds the UN target for donors³⁹, since the Swedish aid allocation is 1% of GNI. Sweden channels roughly half of its total aid through multilateral organisations such as the UN, EU, World Bank, regional development banks and global funding programmes.⁴⁰

106. The framework will be revised during 2015 in an open and inclusive process.

3. Enforced disappearance

107. Sweden signed the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED) in 2007. In Sweden's view, Swedish legislation corresponds to the CED requirements in all essentials.

4. Act on Signals Surveillance in Defence Intelligence Work, 2008

108. The Swedish Act on Signals Surveillance in Defence Intelligence Work contains mechanisms of legal security and control to ensure that the requirement of integrity protection is met. In addition, the Government reports to the Riksdag once a year, issuing a written communication on the signals surveillance conducted under the Act. The Government most recently issued this communication on 3 December 2013. Sweden combines strong protection for citizens' rights with simultaneous efforts to combat terrorism online. With reference to the constitutional protection for freedom of expression, it is not possible for Sweden to prohibit Swedish service suppliers from hosting certain organisations. On the other hand, criminal acts committed by people belonging to these organisations can be prosecuted under Swedish law.

109. The Government will work in Sweden and the EU to strengthen legal certainty and personal privacy, including with regard to data storage. The Data Inspection Board and the Parliamentary Commission on Privacy will conduct a review of existing legislation, taking

account of the increasing numbers of private sector actors gathering information on consumers.

5. Cooperation with the UN's special procedures

110. Sweden continues to cooperate with all UN special procedures in the area of human rights by, for example, receiving and answering urgent appeals relating to human rights. Sweden's starting point is that all questionnaires touching on specialist areas where Sweden has relevant information or assessments to share should be answered.

IV. Conclusion

111. Sweden is deemed by international assessors to have very strong protection for human rights. The Government is aware of this, but also aware that substantial challenges remain and that protecting human rights is a constant task. The Swedish Government will learn from the UPR process, the dialogue with other states and the recommendations made to Sweden in deciding, while considering national priorities, on the focus of forthcoming work to strengthen protection for human rights in Sweden.

Notes

- ¹ However, in 1995 the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms was incorporated into Swedish law in its entirety and, accordingly, the full text now counts as Swedish law.
- ² Such as those relating to the fundamental freedoms, prohibition of discrimination, the right to education and the principles of the best interests of the child and the child's right to be heard.
- ³ The Government's second National Action Plan for Human Rights, for the period 2006–2009, was based on the first and on the evaluation of the same, and sought to further strengthen and concretise the work of protecting and promoting human rights at national level.
- ⁴ The Act provides protection against discrimination associated with gender, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation, age and transgender identity or expression. The objective of Sweden's measures to combat discrimination is to create a society free from discrimination.
- ⁵ Accordingly, protection against age discrimination now also applies, for example, to access to goods and services, housing, healthcare, social services and social insurance.
- ⁶ The Government's website for human rights (www.manskligarattigheter.se/en) promotes the spread of knowledge and information about human rights. It describes the Government's work for human rights in various areas, such as its efforts to combat discrimination and protect the rights of national minorities.
- ⁷ Twenty-two government agencies identified as strategically important have been assigned to implement a number of interim objectives in their own areas of activity.
- ⁸ A study of access to election and voting premises for advance voting during elections for the European Parliament and the national general election in September 2014 has been carried out. This included an analysis of the effects of legislative amendments that came into force in January 2014, tightening up the requirements on accessibility of election and voting premises.
- ⁹ Within the framework of cooperation in the Council of Europe Sweden has, for example, vigorously pursued efforts to develop a recommendation on LGBT persons' protection against discrimination, and made financial contributions to a project aimed at supporting its implementation. In May 2014 Sweden co-hosted with Malta the IDAHO (International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia) Forum, a top-level conference aimed at countering homophobia and transphobia at national, European and international level. Sweden and Malta jointly launched a Declaration of Intent that was signed by 17 countries.
- ¹⁰ The purpose of this investigation is to yield proposals to ensure favourable prospects for people suffering discrimination to protect their own rights.
- ¹¹ A publicly elected parliament as well as a government agency.
- ¹² On the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples.
- ¹³ Jews, indigenous Sámi, Swedish Finns, Roma and Tornedalers.
- ¹⁴ Voluntary joining has meant that, with effect from 2014, the administrative areas comprise 68 municipalities, 12 county councils and one region.
- ¹⁵ Most recently, in November 2013, SEK 4 million was allocated to an assignment for this purpose. To secure the supply of teachers of the national minority languages, in its 2013 Budget Bill the Government earmarked SEK 6.4 million for certain higher education institutions that were given special commitments to establish and develop teacher-training courses in subject teaching of the languages concerned. The Government has also allocated SEK 6.1 million to boost the supply of Sámi, Meänkieli and Romany Chib teachers between 2013 and 2015. The budgeted appropriation for minority policy in 2009 amounted to SEK 10 million a year, and with effect from 2010 it was raised to SEK 80m annually. In 2011–2012 the appropriation exceeded SEK 85m a year, and with effect from 2013 it totalled more than SEK 108m a year, including just over SEK 11m for special measures for the Roma minority.
- ¹⁶ Another aim is to reveal what the Roma perceive as discrimination in their encounter with the social services and the housing market.
- ¹⁷ This initiative includes leadership development and mentorship for women.
- ¹⁸ The measures implemented within the scope of the gender-equality initiative have been sought to develop knowledge about unpaid household work and social care.
- ¹⁹ Roughly EUR 100 million.

- ²⁰ School staff, and staff in pupil health services are offered in-service training on how schools can work on issues of honour-related violence and oppression, including marriage against a person's will, within the framework of their own activities.
- ²¹ This provision includes not only actual coercion but exploitation of a person's vulnerable situation, which may, for example, consist in parents or relatives exerting pressure on a child to marry.
- ²² More cases of sexual exploitation will now be judged to be rape since the term 'helpless state' has been superseded by the term 'particularly vulnerable situation'.
- ²³ These are the provisions on agitation against a national or ethnic group, which targets "hate speech," and unlawful discrimination. There is also a provision on leading youth astray that can be used to punish dissemination of racist propaganda.
- ²⁴ This assignment includes boosting knowledge in the police force and working to enhance confidence in the police among particularly vulnerable groups.
- ²⁵ In the statistics, Islamophobic hate crimes are reported separately.
- ²⁶ It is expressed in the Swedish Aliens Act, both in its provisions on residence permits for refugees and other persons in need of protection and in the provisions on legal impediments to enforcement of refusal of entry or expulsion orders.
- ²⁷ These amendments were implemented in line with the Directive (2008/115/EC) of the European Parliament and of the Council on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals (the Return Directive).
- ²⁸ In a further review of relevant Swedish legislation in 2011, it was confirmed that Swedish law to a large extent corresponds to the CRC.
- ²⁹ The legislation must have as its starting point what is deemed to be best for the child within the scope of the case management. The Government has strengthened support and protection for children and adolescents who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, by making what is best for the child the paramount factor in decisions and other measures relating to care or treatment measures.
- ³⁰ Figures from 2013 show a 24% fall in the number of evictions affecting children since 2011.
- ³¹ On the other hand, these children are not obliged to go to school.
- ³² By making it easier for the public to submit reports online and investigating crimes on the spot in cooperation with local police.
- ³³ Under the Aliens Act, a foreign national staying in Sweden may be granted a temporary residence permit if he or she takes part in a preliminary investigation or a main hearing in a criminal case. A special temporary 30-day residence permit to allow time for consideration may also be approved. These provisions are based on EU law, but go further in that they cover all victims of crime, not only victims of human trafficking. In addition to these rules, victims of human trafficking can apply for residence permits on the grounds of, for example, their need for protection or particularly distressing circumstances.
- ³⁴ Method development has related particularly to the need for support that may be required so that children with disabilities involving communication difficulties are able to obtain a hearing.
- ³⁵ The Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination against, for example, school pupils and children in pre-schools and at after-school centres, and contains provisions on education providers' obligations to investigate and take measures against harassment. The Act also states that schools must engage in purposeful work to promote children's equal rights and prevent harassment. This includes the requirement for each school to draw up an 'equal treatment plan' every year, reporting on its preventive work.
- ³⁶ The work is based on the 2003 Optional Protocol to the UN Convention Against Torture.
- ³⁷ Democracy, gender equality, respect for human rights and freedom from oppression.
- ³⁸ Education and health respectively.
- ³⁹ 0.7% of Gross National Income [GNI].
- ⁴⁰ This support amounted to just over SEK 18 billion in 2012.
-