



**International Convention on
the Elimination of All Forms
of Racial Discrimination**

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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**Combined twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth reports
submitted by Sweden under article 9 of the
Convention, due in 2023***

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



I. Introduction

1. Article 2 of the Instrument of Government, one of the fundamental laws that make up the Swedish Constitution, states that public power shall be exercised with respect for the equal worth of all and the liberty and dignity of the individual. The Government's goal for its human rights policy is to ensure full respect for Sweden's international human rights obligations. During the last reporting period progress has been made in Sweden's work to strengthen human rights, at the same time challenges remain.

2. Sweden hereby submits its twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth periodic report under Article 9 of the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. As recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the present report follows up on Sweden's earlier reports. The measures taken in the most recent reporting cycle are set out under each Article. The points raised in the Committee's concluding observations to Sweden's twenty-second and twenty-third report are addressed under the relevant Article.

Article 2.1

Population statistics, with special reference to paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Committee's recommendations

Statistics

3. Population statistics are compiled by, *inter alia*, Statistics Sweden (SCB). The statistics cover population by sex, citizenship and country of birth (see tables below).

**Table 1
Population by background, 31 December 2021**

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>whereof women</i>	<i>whereof men</i>
Total	10 452 326	100.0	49.7	50.3
Foreign-born	2 090 503	20.0	9.9	10.1
Born in Sweden	8 361 823	80.0	39.7	40.3
whereof born in Sweden with two foreign-born parents	662 069	6.3	3.1	3.3
whereof born in Sweden with one parent born in Sweden and one foreign-born parent	805 340	7.7	3.8	3.9
whereof born in Sweden with two parents born in Sweden	6 894 414	66.0	32.9	33.1

Source: Statistics Sweden.

**Table 2
Foreign-born by region of birth, 31 December 2021**

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>whereof women</i>	<i>whereof men</i>
Asia	820 127	39.2	19.1	20.2
EU except for the Nordic countries	359 318	17.2	8.5	8.7
Europe except for EU and the Nordic countries	309 649	14.8	7.3	7.5
Africa	244 803	11.7	5.5	6.2
Nordic countries except Sweden	221 614	10.6	6.1	4.5
South America	77 282	3.7	1.9	1.8

	Number	Percentage	whereof women	whereof men
North America	44 362	2.1	1.0	1.1
Oceania	6 634	0.3	0.1	0.2
Soviet Union	5 219	0.2	0.2	0.1
Unknown	1 495	0.1	0.0	0.0
Total Foreign-born	2 090 503	100.0	49.7	50.3

Source: Statistics Sweden.

Table 3
Most common countries of birth for foreign-born people, Number, 31 December 2021

	Women	Men	In total
Syria	86 822	109 255	196 077
Iraq	67 902	78 867	146 769
Finland	83 333	53 274	136 607
Poland	49 699	45 377	95 076
Iran	39 416	43 706	83 122
Somalia	35 381	34 706	70 087
Afghanistan	22 038	40 765	62 803
Yugoslavia	31 310	31 134	62 444
Bosnia and Herzegovina	30 386	29 808	60 194
Turkey	24 336	29 668	54 004
Germany	27 827	25 133	52 960
Eritrea	21 849	26 429	48 278
India	21 988	25 381	47 369
Thailand	35 377	9 732	45 109
Norway	22 146	18 479	40 625
Denmark	18 075	20 399	38 474
China	21 888	15 284	37 172
Romania	16 445	17 250	33 695
United Kingdom	11 110	20 883	31 993
Lebanon	13 194	16 119	29 313

Source: Statistics Sweden.

4. General information on the composition of the population and their circumstances forms an important, and often essential, basis for shaping and following up the Government's policies. Under recommendations 6 and 7, statistics that concern discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, religion or other belief are provided.

5. Sweden also takes a restrictive view when it comes to statistics and data collection in relation to, *inter alia*, the national minorities. It is important to show sensitivity to the circumstances and needs of different groups, and thus to gather knowledge about people's living conditions in a variety of ways. A number of in-depth studies have been carried out during the period; for more information see examples under paragraphs 8, 34, 47, 87, 101 and 104. This kind of studies contribute to better information on which to base efforts to improve equal enjoyment by all of all the rights enshrined in the Convention. For information on Swedish legislation in this area, see paragraph 6 of Sweden's nineteenth to twenty-first report, and paragraph 26 of its twenty-second and twenty-third reports.

6. One of many ways of demonstrating how the rights of different ethnic groups are safeguarded is statistics on opportunities to develop and use their language or languages. Mother-tongue tuition follows a national curriculum that is common to all languages that can be studied as mother tongues, and also national minority languages. Pupils in compulsory school and equivalent types of schools who have a custodian with a mother tongue other than Swedish must be offered mother-tongue tuition in this language under Sweden's Education Act. However, the language must be the pupil's daily language of communication in the home and the pupil must have a basic knowledge in the language. The organiser's obligation to arrange mother-tongue tuition is limited to those languages in which at least five pupils who should be offered mother-tongue tuition in the language want this tuition. Another condition is the availability of appropriate teachers.

7. Pupils in compulsory school and equivalent types of schools who belong to a national minority may participate in mother-tongue tuition in a national minority language even without having either a custodian whose mother tongue is the minority language, or prior knowledge of the language. These pupils are entitled to mother-tongue tuition in the language even if only one pupil in the provider's schools want this tuition.

8. The reason that not all pupils participate is due to a number of factors (see Tables 4 and 5 below and the difference between the number of eligible pupils and those actually participating). This is because the subject is optional, not set in the timetable and often taught after the end of the school day, and because pupils must have a basic knowledge in the subject. The optional status of the subject means that it is perceived as less important, not just by pupils but also by school directors, school principals, other teachers, and custodians. There are also important structural factors, primarily the shortage of mother-tongue teachers and, in particular, the shortage of qualified mother-tongue teachers. Special schools and compulsory schools for pupils with learning disabilities in particular find it difficult to recruit teachers with the skills required to meet the special needs of their pupils. Furthermore, access to mother-tongue teachers is uneven across the country, with smaller municipalities and sparsely populated municipalities in particular finding it difficult to recruit them.

9. Data on mother-tongue tuition form part of the National Agency for Education's national monitoring system for the school sector and are reported as the data applicable on 15 October annually.

Table 4
Pupils in compulsory school participating in mother-tongue tuition, school year 2021/22

<i>Most widely spoken mother tongues</i>	<i>Number of pupils entitled to mother-tongue tuition</i>	<i>Pupils participating in mother-tongue tuition</i>
Arabic	79 331	56 562
Somali	21 583	16 808
English	19 223	9 926
Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian	16 619	8 389
Kurdish	16 124	8 595
Persian	14 360	8 211
Spanish	14 133	6 901
Albanian	10 385	5 919
Polish	6 662	5 720
Tigrinya	8 916	6 390
Other languages (173)	104 292	50 769
In total	314 628	184 190

Source: Swedish National Agency for Education, Official Statistics of Sweden.

Table 5
Pupils in compulsory school participating in tuition in the national minority languages, school year 2021/22

<i>In total</i>	<i>Pupils entitled to tuition in national minority languages</i>	<i>Pupils participating in tuition in national minority languages</i>
Finnish	8 847	4 657
Yiddish	18	17
Meänkieli	351	177
Romani	2 389	651
Sami	745	499
In total	12 350	6 001

Note: The data on pupils participating in tuition in national minority languages is based on the number of eligible pupils that the schools are aware of.

Source: Swedish National Agency for Education, Official Statistics of Sweden.

Study on ethnic diversity and economic living conditions

10. Statistics Sweden (SCB) has been tasked with producing a report on economic living conditions. The report utilises register-based statistics covering the population in Sweden and compares the economic living conditions of persons born in Sweden whose parents were born in Sweden, with those of persons with a non-European background (persons born outside Europe, who have lived in Sweden for at least 10 years; and persons born in Sweden with at least one parent born outside Europe). The report shows that people's circumstances – such as education level, employment and the type of area in which they live – differ depending on their background. In many cases, people with a non-European background have what can be described as poorer socio-economic prospects than people with a Swedish background. People with a Swedish background have higher earned income and higher net income than people with a non-European background. The results from the statistical analysis show that there are income disparities that cannot be explained by age, education, employment or region of residence. Unexplained income disparities are particularly large between people with a Swedish background, and people born outside Europe who have lived for at least ten years in Sweden. An analysis of region of birth shows that unexplained income disparities are usually the largest for women and men born in Sub-Saharan Africa, and for women and men born in Sweden with at least one parent born in Sub-Saharan Africa. Statistics Sweden writes in its report that these disparities may be due to several different types of factors that are not included in the statistical analysis, such as occupation, language skills, or racism and discrimination. Statistics Sweden proposes in its analysis that racism and discrimination may also affect the factors included in the analysis, for example that some of the differences in employment may be due to racism and discrimination in the labour market. The report shows that people with a non-European background have occupations that are a poorer match with their education. It is also more common for people with a non-European background not to have a job.

Penal law and its application, with special reference to paragraphs 10 and 11 of the Committee's recommendations

Constitutional and penal law

11. As noted in the nineteenth to twenty-first report to the Committee, the Swedish Constitution includes a fundamental protection against ethnic discrimination. Since 2011, there is also a programme declaration in the Constitution on the protection of minorities which requires the promotion of opportunities for the Sami people and other minorities to maintain and develop their own cultures and community life.

12. For information on the relevant penal legislation, see paragraphs 20 and 21 in the nineteenth to twenty-first report.

Work of the legal system to combat hate crime

13. The work of the Swedish Police Authority rests on the principle of legality, which requires that the actions of the police are supported by the legal order. All work done by the Swedish Police Authority is thus through the application of relevant legislation. The Swedish Police Authority, like others performing public administration functions, shall pay regard in their work to the equality of all before the law and shall observe objectivity and impartiality. These are fundamental principles of the rule of law and derive from the Swedish Constitution. Relevant penal provisions do not take aim at public officials and politicians specifically. This means that the police investigate crimes committed by politicians, for example, in the same way as crimes committed by others. It is for the courts to administer justice and in doing so decide whether there are aggravating circumstances or that the context in which a statement was made, etc., should be taken into account. The concept of crimes threatening democracy is being developed as part of a current task of the Police Authority to combat hate crime and other crime that threatens democracy. The purpose of developing this concept is to enable more effective detection, investigation and prosecution of hate crime, and uniformity across all police regions in the country concerning hate crime and other crime that threatens democracy. Pursuant to a decision of the National Police Commissioner in 2015, the police regions have strengthened their capacity to combat hate crime and violations of fundamental rights and freedoms through, *inter alia*, the establishment of hate crime groups, more training initiatives, and enhanced interface activities with religious communities and representatives of various minority groups. The capacity of the police regions to combat hate crime and other violations of fundamental rights and freedoms will be evaluated in 2023. It is an ambition that this type of crime will be investigated by a specially trained resource.

14. Since 2008, the Swedish Police Authority flags hate crime in its investigations system. This means that a case is flagged as hate crime when there is reason to believe that the motive behind the offence is to offend an individual, group or ethnic group on the grounds of their race, skin colour, national or ethnic origin or religious belief, sexual orientation, transgender identity or expression, or other similar circumstance. This flagging system has been evaluated by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) and the Swedish Police Authority. As part of the Authority's government commission on hate crime and other crime that threatens democracy, it conducts an internal dialogue on what can be done to increase the number of correctly flagged cases. The Swedish Police Authority cooperates closely with the Swedish Prosecution Authority in order to increase prosecution rates in this type of cases.

15. Trainings with the aim of raising the level of competence in combating hate crime and crimes that threaten fundamental rights and freedoms are part of all the country's police training institutes. Training in hate crime are also part of the basic education for operators at the police contact centre (which is the "first line report taker" on the telephone) and in equal treatment training for service staff (e.g. receptionists, passport officers, etc.). A unit on hate crime has existed for some time in the training for officers in charge of investigations. There are also three specific hate crime courses targeting investigators, inspectors, municipal and community police officers.

16. In September 2021, a human rights workshop was held for the target group of managers in the Swedish Police Authority. The workshop included a theme focusing on how international criticism and recommendations concerning discrimination and racism can contribute to the development of the policing operations.

17. In June 2022, a web-based training day focusing on hate crime and antisemitism was held by the Living History Forum (FLH) in conjunction with the Swedish Committee Against Antisemitism and the Swedish Police Authority. The target group was all employees within the Swedish Police Authority.

18. For information on the training of judges, see paragraph 89 in the twenty-second to twenty-third report.

19. Hate crime is a priority area for the Swedish Prosecution Authority, which has continued to work actively to combat hate crime. The compulsory internal basic training for new prosecutors includes a number of lectures on hate crime. These lectures teach participants about the different types of hate crime and how they should handle them as prosecutors.

20. For several years, the Swedish Prosecution Authority has appointed a senior prosecutor as national subject specialist in hate crime. The national subject specialist works closely with the Swedish Prosecution Authority's Development Centre, and they meet regularly to discuss topical issues in the area of hate crime.

21. Each local public prosecution office has at least one prosecutor, but the larger offices generally have several prosecutors, who deal with all hate crime. The aim of this approach is to achieve the best possible outcome in each individual case that involves hate crime. The prosecutors who work with hate crime are part of a national network. The network holds regular online meetings, providing an opportunity to discuss topical issues related to hate crime. The network is headed by the national subject specialist in hate crime.

22. When the Swedish Police Authority reports an offence to a local public prosecution office, the offence can be flagged as hate crime (see paragraph 12). This means that the public prosecution office can see that the Swedish Police Authority has identified the offence as potentially hate crime right from when the case is received. The public prosecution office can therefore immediately allocate the case to the prosecutor in the office who specialises in hate crime.

23. The Swedish Prosecution Authority's Development Centre has produced a legal guidance on hate crime. The guide aims to provide support to prosecutors, including prosecutors who do not prosecute hate crime regularly, and includes a description of the applicable Acts and relevant rulings by Swedish courts as well as the European Court of Human Rights. The guide also contains information on what prosecutors need to consider in preliminary investigations concerning hate crime.

Hate crime statistics

24. In Swedish criminal law, hate crime is not specifically defined but is construed from the provisions on agitation against a population group and unlawful discrimination, and the enhancement of penalties rule. This means that, as aggravating circumstances when assessing the penalty value of the offence committed, in addition to what applies for each specific type of offence, particular consideration is given to whether a motive for the offence was to insult a person or a population group on grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation or transgender identity or expression, or another similar circumstance, resulting in a more severe penalty. The overwhelming majority of reported offences flagged as hate crime relate to the enhancement of penalties rule. Table 6 shows the statistics for agitation against a population group and Table 7 for unlawful discrimination. The low clearance rate is partly explained in paragraphs 35-36 in Sweden's nineteenth to twenty-first report.

Table 6
Statistics on agitation against a population group 2019–2021

	2019	2020	2021
Reported offences	1 422	1 476	1 109
Processed offences	2 277	1 899	1 264
Investigated offences	1 562	1 192	633
Person-based clearances	565	558	137
Number of prosecutions initiated	535	472	116
Person-based clearance rate (%)	25%	29%	11%
Conviction decisions [*]	143	116	70
Imprisonment [*]	7	4	3
Suspended sentence [*]	74	53	33
Fine [*]	39	23	20

Source: Official Crime Statistics (Brå).

Table 7
Statistics on unlawful discrimination 2019–2021

	2019	2020	2021
Reported offences	162	114	118
Processed offences	146	138	120
Investigated offences	83	80	55
Person-based clearances	-	-	-
Number of prosecutions initiated	-	-	-
Person-based clearance rate (%)	-	-	-
Conviction decisions*	-	-	-
Imprisonment*	-	-	-
Suspended sentence*	-	-	-
Fine*	-	-	-

Source: Official Crime Statistics (Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, Brå).

Note: It is not possible to compare the statistics on persons found guilty of offences (conviction decisions, prison sentences, suspended sentences and fines) with other statistics. This is partly because the data come from different data frameworks within the legal system, which have different ways of registering offences, and because there is no simple link between data relating to the same case. However, a development project is under way to ensure that cases can be monitored throughout the entire chain of the legal system.

25. Hate crime statistics are based on reported crimes that the police classified as hate crime and where the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) identified hate as the underlying motive, along with data on how these crimes were handled by the legal system. Hate crime statistics are published every two years, and in between more detailed statistical analyses is published in the area. In 2020, extensive changes were made in the methods used for compiling statistics on hate crime reported to the police. This means that the statistics for that year are not comparable with previous hate crime statistics. As of 2020, the statistics on offences reported to the police with hate crime motives consist of a survey of all police reports that the police have flagged as hate crime. The change has been made to increase the relevance of the statistics. For example, the new statistics can be used as a more relevant basis for following how reported offences with hate crime motives are processed in the justice system. The changes also make it possible to use the hate crime statistics as a tool for operational oversight, for example to evaluate the police service's initial handling of reported offences flagged as hate crime. The statistics will thus be more operationally relevant. In autumn 2023, the processing outcomes based on the new statistics will be published. Once these statistics are published, it will be possible to follow how many offences reported to the police with hate crime motives have been investigated, the person-based clearance rate for these offences, and the number of indictments, for example.

26. In 2020, 1 994 reports were identified with a total of 2 031 xenophobic and racist hate crime motives. This category of offence includes Afrophobic hate crime (which accounted for 28 per cent of reported hate crime), antiziganist hate crime (3 per cent), hate crime against the Sami (1 per cent) and other xenophobic and racist hate crime (68 per cent). 'Other xenophobic and racist hate crime' includes hate crime targeting a foreign nationality or ethnicity (95 per cent), Swedish nationality (2 per cent) and unknown (3 per cent). Of the total 3 398 reports, most (3 114) contained only one hate crime motive. More than 8 per cent of them, however, contained more than one motive: 261 reports contained two motives, 19 reports three motives, and 4 reports four motives. The most common combination of intersecting hate crime motives was Islamophobic with other xenophobic and racist motives. Other common intersecting hate crime motives were a homophobic motive with a transphobic motive; and an Afrophobic motive with another xenophobic and racist motive. The difference between the number of reported offences and the number of hate crime motives depends on number of reported offences with multiple hate crime motives flagged.

27. Of the reported offences with xenophobic and racist hate crime motives, molestation was the most common type of offence. Approximately one in three reported offences (32.5 per cent) concerned molestation. The second most common type of offence was defamation (15.7 per cent) followed by unlawful threat (15.4 per cent), agitation against a population group (13.9 per cent) and assault (11.7 per cent). Less common types of offences were criminal damage/graffiti (5.5 per cent), other offences (2.8 per cent), unlawful discrimination (1.9 per cent) and deprivation of liberty and integrity crimes (0.7 per cent).

28. Statistics for previous year's show that the person-based clearance rate (which means that the offence has led to prosecution, abstention from prosecution, or the summary imposition of a fine) in the period 2013–2018 remained relatively constant – between 3.4 per cent and 5.2 per cent. The low clearance rate can be explained by the nature of the reported offences. The prospects of person-based clearance for malicious damage and graffiti is generally more difficult than for assault or similar offences. There is no difference between offences with a hate crime motive and other offences in terms of the person-based clearance rate.

29. The statistics on hate crime describe how hate crime is brought to the attention of and dealt with in the legal system and the structure of the reported events, such as levels, types of offences and type of hate crime motive. Since most of these crimes are not reported to the police, the statistics do not fully indicate the prevalence of hate crime in society.

30. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention carries out the Swedish Crime Survey (NTU) annually, which aims to investigate victimisation, fear of crime, confidence in the criminal justice system, and crime victims' contacts with the criminal justice system. In various in-depth studies of the Swedish Crime Survey, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention has produced statistics on exposure to hate crime. The statistics on self-reported exposure according to the Swedish Crime Survey can supplement the picture of exposure to hate crime. According to the Swedish Crime Survey, 1.6 per cent of the population was exposed to xenophobic hate crimes between 2014 and 2016, which is 0.2 percentage points more than the previous period.

Measures to counter terrorism, with special reference to paragraphs 20 and 21 of the Committee's recommendations

31. A fundamental premise underlying all work to counter terrorism is that human rights and the principles of the rule of law are respected. This also applies to the protection of privacy. These principles permeate the Government's counter-terrorism work both nationally and internationally. Terrorism may only be countered by means that belong in an open, democratic society governed by the rule of law (Comm. 2014/15:146)

32. Under the Swedish Constitution, like others performing public administration functions, the Swedish Police Authority and the Swedish Security Service shall pay regard in their work to the equality of all before the law and shall observe objectivity and impartiality.

33. In Sweden, penal legislation on terrorism has mainly been enacted to implement various international obligations within the context of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Union, and the Financial Action Task Force. In drafting this legislation, most recently in connection with the introduction of the new Terrorist Offences Act (2003:148), there has been careful examination of the compatibility of these provisions with fundamental rights and freedoms. The new Terrorist Offences Act provision on what constitutes a terrorist offence changed one of the purposes of terrorism from being to seriously intimidate 'a population or a population group' to 'a population or a section of a population'. As a result, groups such as asylum seekers, LGBTQI persons or persons of a particular sex will be unequivocally included in the element 'a section of a population'.

34. In its full-year assessment of 2022, the *Nationellt Centrum För Terrorhotbedömning* (National Centre for Terrorist Threat Assessment) describes the threat of terrorist attacks on Sweden during 2022 as coming mainly from actors motivated by a violent right-wing extremist or violent Islamic ideology.

35. The threat from extremist environments has also broadened as a result of, inter alia, the digital development of society. Extremist environments use the digital arena to disseminate hate and threats, and digital platforms often provide a platform for radicalisation and recruitment. Extremism now has a clearer global arena, with virtual communities replacing traditional physical organisations.

36. Since September 2021, the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) has been tasked with mapping the incidence of different forms of racism in digital environments. This task includes measuring the incidence of racism and analysing how it manifests itself in various digital environments with ties to Sweden, including in the form of codewords and images. The task was reported in *En studie i fördom. Om rasistiska stereotyper i digitala miljöer* (2022) (A study in prejudice. On racist stereotypes in digital environments). The Defence Research Agency's investigations indicate that people of Middle Eastern and North African descent are particularly exposed to prejudice and negative assumptions, as are Muslims, and these groups are often exposed to racism on several different grounds. Since 2022, the Defence Research Agency has also had a permanent mission to conduct surveys and analyses of violent extremism and racism in digital environments.

37. The Agency's surveys have helped to increase awareness of the propaganda that is being disseminated and how the messages of violent ideologies can appeal to different recipients.

38. The Swedish Centre for Preventing Violent Extremism (CVE) within the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention was set up in 2018 and is responsible for developing Sweden's preventive efforts in this area at the national, regional and local levels. One of the most important tasks of the Centre for Preventing Violent Extremism is to support professionals at the local level in their preventive efforts, where concrete support is often requested. The Centre for Preventing Violent Extremism has therefore developed methodological support material for questions about violent extremism that can be used by professionals working in social services, for example, in their dialogues with children, young people and adults.

39. Concerning higher education, the University of Gothenburg has been tasked with developing and disseminating knowledge and methods for reducing the recruitment of individuals to violent ideologies and movements and to racist organisations.

The Discrimination Act and its application, with special reference to paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Committee's recommendations

40. The Equality Ombudsman is the supervisory authority monitoring compliance with the Discrimination Act (2008:567) and is required to work to ensure that discrimination associated with ethnicity, inter alia, does not occur in any areas of civic life. The Equality Ombudsman is also tasked with working actively for equal rights and opportunities regardless of ethnicity.

41. In 2021, the Ombudsman started a work to change the focus of its activities so that one of the starting points is now to investigate more complaints, with the aim of obtaining redress for more people who have been victims of discrimination. Among other things, the Ombudsman emphasises that they will be making more requests for compensation for discrimination and, where appropriate, bringing the case to court.

42. Complaints of discrimination to the Ombudsman increased during the years 2017–2021. Ethnicity is the second most common ground for complaints of discrimination.

Table 8

Number of complaints of discrimination to the Equality Ombudsman per ground of discrimination

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Disability	742	729	801	916	1 212
Ethnicity	686	709	724	1 146	1 033

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Age	256	294	301	497	624
Sex	339	376	397	676	585
Religion or other belief	211	143	183	237	222
Sexual orientation	66	79	62	62	96
Transgender identity or expression	59	67	53	49	78

Source: Equality Ombudsman.

43. The highest number of complaints of discrimination concern areas of society such as the workplace, education, goods and services, and health and medical care (see Table 9).

Table 9
Number of complaints of discrimination to the Equality Ombudsman per area of society

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Workplace	489	555	626	988	849
Education	458	540	527	586	624
Goods and services	334	297	359	427	490
Health and medical care	130	138	129	193	439
Social services etc.	132	148	144	191	208
Treatment within public service activities	75	99	132	118	121
Housing	61	70	57	67	96
Social insurance system, unemployment insurance and financial aid for studies	44	44	56	72	53
Labour market policy activities and employment services not under public contract	49	35	45	58	45
National military service and civilian service	4	9	5	5	19
Starting or running a business and professional recognition	2	4	8	10	12
Membership of certain organisations	11	5	13	13	11
Other areas of society	206	179	179	316	559

Source: Equality Ombudsman.

44. The category ‘Other areas of society’ consists mainly of complaints relating to an area of society not covered by the twelve defined in the Discrimination Act, and complaints for which no area of society was registered at all. The category also includes a small number of complaints in the areas of society defined in the Discrimination Act, but where the situation described is not covered by the protections in the Discrimination Act.

45. The remit of the Inquiry into certain matters in the Discrimination Act included considering whether the prohibition on discrimination should be strengthened in certain respects. The Inquiry has submitted its positions and proposals in the interim report *Effektivare tillsyn över diskrimineringslagen* (SOU 2020:79) (More effective supervision of the Discrimination Act) and final report *Ett utökat skydd mot diskriminering* (SOU 2021:94) (Greater protection against discrimination). The proposals have been referred for consultation.

46. The Equality Ombudsman has a central government grant of more than SEK 126 million. In addition, government funding of just over SEK 28 million per year is distributed to organisations for activities that prevent and counter discrimination. In 2020, this funding was distributed to 18 antidiscrimination bureaus (ADB)s located in various parts of Sweden. The ADBs play an important role at the local level in preventing and countering discrimination.

47. In its final report concerning the use of and effect of government grants distributed to the ADBs, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) took the view that the grant had helped the ADBs to provide advice and support to individuals, and paid for continuing professional development and training, and advocacy. For example, individuals who have been victims of discrimination have obtained redress, more people have learned that there is support available, more actors have started working to counter discrimination at the local level, and knowledge about discrimination has increased. It is assessed that these short-term effects could lead to long-term effects such as discrimination having been countered and prevented, and conditions for civil society as a key component of democracy having improved.

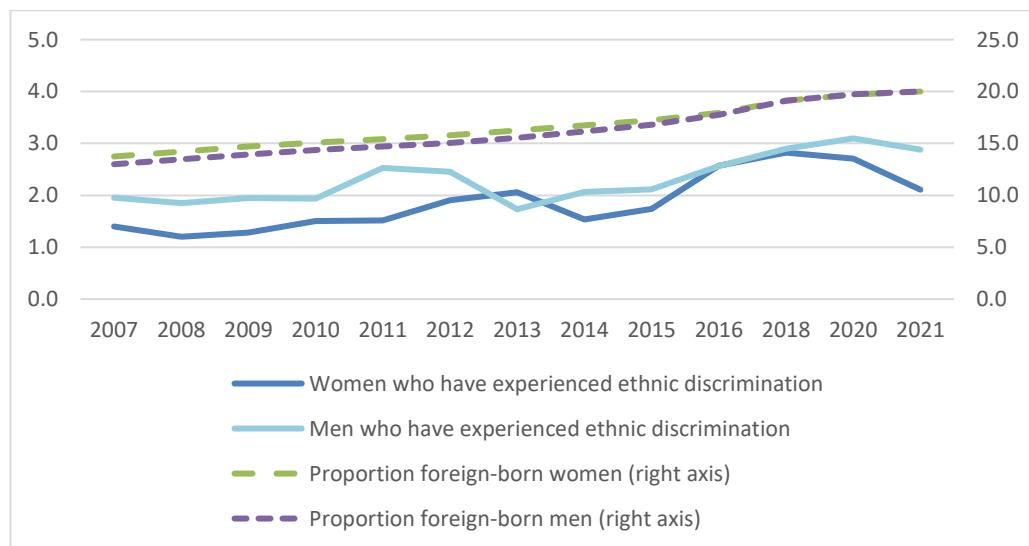
48. In 2020, a total of 1 562 cases were received by antidiscrimination bureaus, compared with 1 564 cases received in 2019. Most of these cases were related to disability and ethnicity.

Statistics on experienced discrimination

49. The Public Health Agency of Sweden's national public health survey is conducted every two years, except in 2021, when an additional survey was conducted due to the pandemic. The statistics show that the proportion of women and men in the population aged 16–84 who stated that during the last three months they experienced abusive treatment or treatment linked to ethnicity and/or skin colour, amounted to just over 2 per cent of women and nearly 3 per cent of men in 2021 (see Chart 1). The increase is particularly apparent after 2015, when Sweden received many asylum seekers. During the same period, the proportion of foreign-born persons in the population increased from just over 13 per cent in 2007 to 20 per cent in 2021.

Chart 1

Proportion of the population who have experienced discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity and/or skin colour and proportion of foreign-born persons in the population, 2007–2021

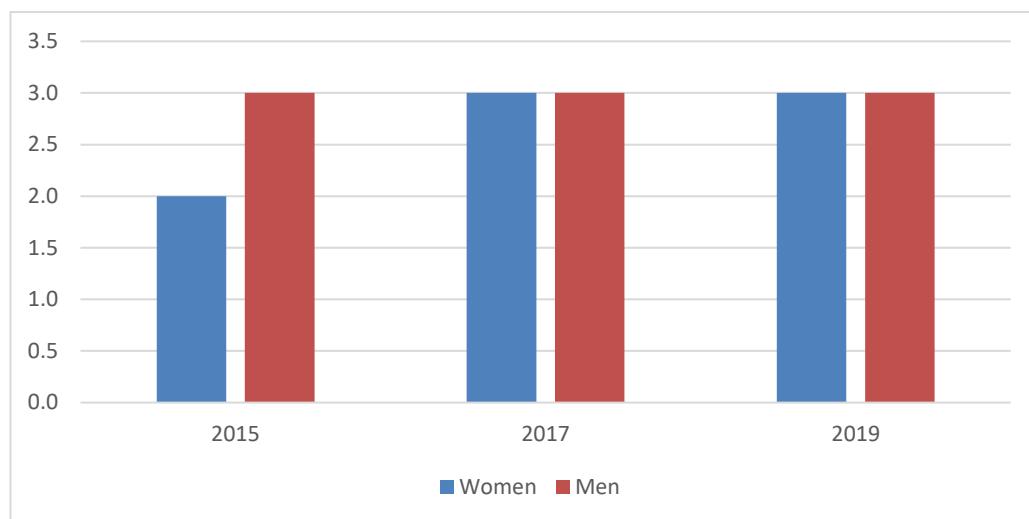


Sources: Public Health Agency of Sweden and Statistics Sweden.

50. Around 3 per cent of the country's employees aged 16–64 feel that they are discriminated in their workplace based on their ethnicity (see Chart2).

Chart 2

Employed persons aged 16–64 who experience discrimination in their workplace based on their ethnicity in 2015–2021



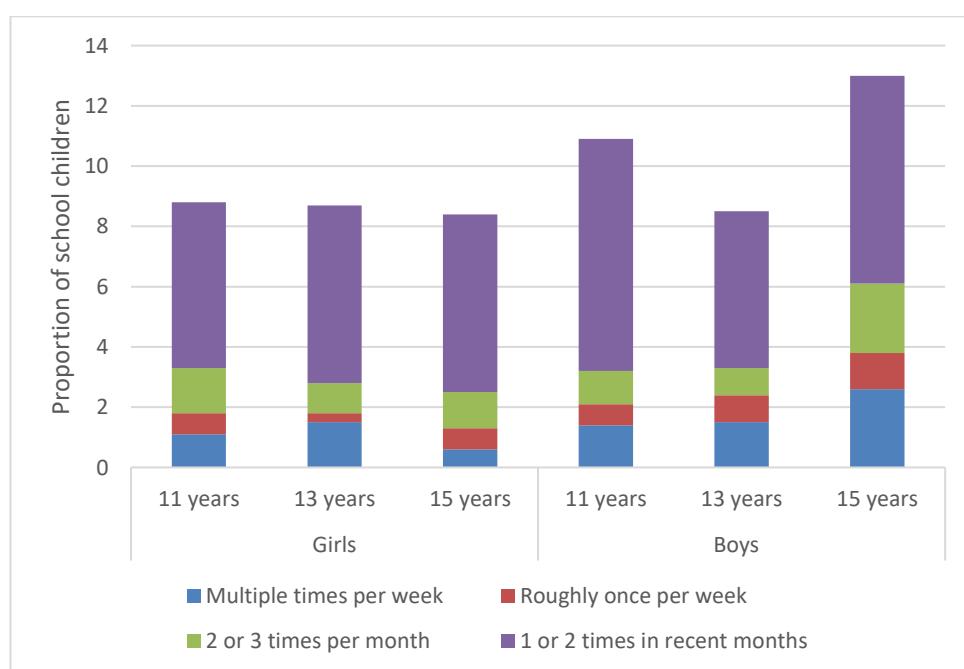
Source: Statistics Sweden.

Note: The lower proportion of women in 2015 is not statistically significant.

51. Between 8 and 9 per cent of girls aged 11, 13 and 15 report that in recent months they have been subject to verbal abuse based on their ethnic background at school. As shown in Chart 3, a majority of the girls report that this has happened 1–2 times, while a smaller group, around 3 per cent regardless of age, had experienced this at least 2–3 times per month. 11- and 15-year-old boys were subject to verbal abuse more frequently than the other groups. Among the 11-year-old boys, 11 per cent report that they have been subject to verbal abuse based on their ethnic background while the figure for 15-year-olds is 13 per cent. As many as 6 per cent of the 15-year-old boys report that they have repeatedly (2–3 times a month or more) been subject to verbal abuse based on their ethnic background.

Chart 3

Proportion of school children who have been subject to verbal abuse based on their ethnic background 2017/2018



Source: Public Health Agency of Sweden.

52. Measures to promote the rights of vulnerable groups and to prevent discrimination are described in more detail under Article 5.

Institutional protection for human rights, with special reference to paragraphs 8 and 29 of the Committee's recommendations

Establishment of a national human rights institute

53. As stated in paragraph 45 of the twenty-second and twenty-third report and in the 2019 follow-up report, an assessment was made as part of a strategy on the national implementation of human rights (Comm. 2016/17:29) that a national institute for human rights in accordance with the Paris Principles is needed to strengthen the legal and institutional protection of human rights. In June 2021, the Riksdag (Swedish parliament) decided on a new Act and legislative amendments establishing a National Human Rights Institution and regulating its mandate, management and organisation.

54. On 1 January 2022, the Swedish Institute for Human Rights was established. The Institute's mandate is to encourage respect for human rights and to monitor, investigate and report on how human rights are being respected and realised. The Institute can also submit proposals to the Swedish Government on the measures needed to safeguard human rights, and may also submit proposals to the Government on the expansion of Sweden's obligations under international law in the area of human rights. The Institute does not examine individual complaints about human rights violations. To comply with the Paris Principles and to strengthen the Institute's independence from the Government, its mandate and management and certain fundamental matters pertaining to its organisation and ways of working are governed by law *lagen (2021:642) om Institutet för mänskliga rättigheter* (Institute for Human Rights Act). In 2022, the Institute had a budget of SEK 50 million.

55. Sweden's first National Action Plan for Human Rights (Comm. 2001/02:83) was adopted in 2002 and was followed by the National Action Plan for Human Rights 2006 (Comm. 2005/06:95). The current strategy on the national implementation of human rights (Comm. 2016/17:29) describes the need for a coherent structure to promote and protect human rights. The structure consists of strong legal and institutional protections for human rights, coordinated and systematic work with human rights in the public sector, and strong support for work with human rights in civil society and the business community.

Article 2.2

Special measures, with special reference to paragraphs 14 and 15 of the Committee's recommendations

Positive discrimination and other enabling measures

56. Sweden's twenty-second and twenty-third report sets out Sweden's stance on the question of positive discrimination, see paragraphs 80–83.

57. As also described in Sweden's previous reports, a number of measures are being taken to encourage progress towards equal rights and opportunities for all regardless of ethnicity. See examples of enabling measures under Article 5.

58. Promoting equal rights and opportunities for all is an important part of Sweden's work against discrimination. According to the Discrimination Act (2008:567), all employers and education providers are obliged to actively prevent discrimination and promote resilience and in other ways work to promote equal rights and opportunities regardless of, *inter alia*, ethnicity. These active measures must be continuous. Employers with more than 25 employees and education providers must document these measures.

Article 3

Integration policy and the successful integration of newly arrived immigrants

59. The goal of integration policy is equal rights, obligations and opportunities for all regardless of ethnic or cultural background. This includes measures in areas such as the labour market, education and public health, health and medical care, and housing. A gender equality dimension is central in the implementation of integration policy.

60. Today, too many foreign-born people, especially women, remain far distant from the labour market. An Inquiry chair has a remit to develop proposals for measures aimed at improving the establishment of foreign-born women in the labour market. The Swedish Public Employment Service and several other government agencies have been tasked with developing a common plan to increase the number of foreign-born women entering the labour market. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has been tasked with conducting a study on the situation and needs of foreign-born women.

Housing segregation

61. Segregation needs to be monitored over time and across areas to ensure that efforts to counter segregation can be well targeted and effective. In 2020, Statistics Sweden and the *Delegationen mot segregation* (hereinafter, the Delegation against Segregation) were tasked with developing tools to monitor segregation and evaluate the work to counter segregation throughout the country. As part of this work, the Delegation against Segregation and Statistics Sweden have jointly produced a nationwide socio-economic index, which shows how different residential areas compare in terms of socio-economic status. Based on this index, these two government agencies have defined five different types of residential areas – from areas with major socio-economic challenges to areas with very good socio-economic circumstances. This open access location database makes it possible to measure and monitor progress in different policy areas of society such as level of employment, school outcomes, or receipt of income support, and for different residential areas within a municipality or a county. His data can be used to analyse what kinds of issues and areas still need the most work to reduce and counter segregation. is data can be used to analyse what kinds of issues and areas most urgently need work to reduce and counter segregation.

62. The five types of residential areas show some positive trends over the period 2012–2020. During the same period however, little or no changes in the degree of segregation were seen. The gap remains between those with the highest and lowest incomes. The Government takes the view that the measures and tools that have been developed are important for Sweden's work to achieve the goal for this policy area moving forward. It is important that progress can be monitored over time, for instance regarding unemployment, income support, and school outcomes.

63. The Inquiry on socially sustainable housing, *En socialt hållbar bostadsförsörjning*, had a remit to submit proposals for reducing housing segregation and improving the prospects of equitable conditions in which to grow up and live. In March 2022, the Inquiry submitted its proposals. The proposals have been referred for consultation.

Article 4

Penal provisions that combat the activities of racist groups, and racist and extremist organisations, with special reference to paragraphs 12 and 13 of the Committee's recommendations

64. As noted in the twenty-second and twenty-third report, Swedish legislation prohibits every form of racist expression (cf. paragraphs 95–99 in the twenty-second and twenty-third report, paragraphs 119–122 in the nineteenth to twenty-first report, paragraphs 81–89 in the seventeenth and eighteenth report, and paragraphs 66–74 in the fifteenth and sixteenth report). The provision on agitation against a population group is of particular importance. It criminalises the dissemination of a racist statement or other communication including threats among the general public as well as within a group. This provision was amended in 1989 to

coerce racist groups into passivity. Before 1989, the statement or other communication had to have been disseminated among the general public. The legislative amendments have removed this requirement, so that statements or communications within organisations, for example, would also be covered with regard to criminal liability. The purpose of this amendment was to make it impossible in practice for racist organisations to operate. The amendment was also cited as grounds against proposing an explicit prohibition on racist organisations; such a prohibition was deemed unnecessary given the penal provision in its new and expanded wording.

65. There are also a number of other penal provisions that combat the activities of racist groups – see paragraph 93 of the twenty-second and twenty-third report.

66. Overall, the penal provisions in Swedish law mean that in practice it is impossible for groups that advocate racial discrimination to operate without their members committing an offence.

67. The All-party Committee on the prohibition of racist organisations has proposed the introduction of a prohibition on racist organisations through new penal legislation (SOU 2021:27). Under the proposal, two new offences would be introduced: organised racism and support for organised racism. It also proposed a specific scale of penalties for gross cases of organised racism. The report has been referred for consultation.

68. Individuals have fundamental rights and freedoms, including the freedoms of expression, assembly and demonstration. This means, *inter alia*, the freedom to express one's opinions and attend gatherings. It also means a freedom to organise and participate in demonstrations in public places. Freedom of expression is a relative freedom that can be restricted under certain specific conditions. An individual can therefore be punished for offences committed through expression of opinion, such as agitation against a population group or unlawful threats.

69. If the intention is to demonstrate in a public place, normally this requires an application for a permit. A demonstration permit must always be applied for, but the absence of a permit is not in itself an acceptable reason for the police to break up a demonstration. When processing the application, the police can facilitate the demonstration by agreeing on rules of conduct, the place and the time of the demonstration. This reduces the risk of disorderly conduct or the demonstration colliding with other demonstrations or events.

70. The police are responsible for ensuring that everyone can express their opinions in accordance with the applicable legislation and for creating the conditions for this to occur in practice. The police are responsible for the order and safety of the arrangements and investigate any offences committed.

Article 5

Work on equal treatment within the legal system, with special reference to paragraphs 26 and 27 of the Committee's recommendations

71. According to Swedish law, police operations based on the person's appearance being perceived as foreign or based on the person's name and language may never constitute grounds for the State to take law enforcement measures against a person. Ethnic profiling or profiling based on some kind of conception of race is prohibited under Swedish law.

72. On request from the Swedish Police Authority, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention is conducting a study on how the police apply profiling and external equal treatment in the organisation. The focus of the study is what the Police Authority's profiling and equal treatment looks like at the strategic level and how it is implemented by police officers in patrol duty. Examples of questions investigated are how do intervening police use profiling, *i.e.* what building blocks are used when they suspect that a person has committed an offence? What is checked, where are these checks carried out, and under what circumstances? This includes getting a picture of the priorities set at the police region level when it comes to the areas focused on by uniformed police activities, and of the differences in the way in which police officers work with profiling in different types of areas, as well as

the potential difficulties and obstacles faced by uniformed police officers in their work; and to what extent any differences can be attributed to differences in leadership. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention will also analyse how reported cases of discriminatory ethnic/racial profiling have been handled by the Swedish Police Authority and other government agencies.

73. Concerning equal treatment, the Swedish National Courts Administration holds courses as described in paragraph 99 of Sweden's previous report. Paragraph 100 of the previous report describes the National Courts Administration's work with gender equality and diversity. The National Courts Administration has been developing its work on gender equality and diversity since 2016. The National Courts Administration has set up a coordination group with all departments represented, which works actively to include the gender dimension in all the different support processes for Sweden's courts. This means, for example, that the coordination group provides the courts with support material, checklists and key performance indicators in the area of gender equality. The gender equality and diversity dimension is now a natural part of all management and employee training, various surveys, and processes. The National Courts Administration works actively with the courts on their treatment of parties and witnesses in the legal system, with a focus on diversity and gender equality.

74. As described in Sweden's previous report, under the Code of Judicial Procedure, the court has an obligation to engage an interpreter if a suspect or injured party in a criminal case is incapable of understanding and speaking Swedish, and to translate a document in a criminal case, or the most important parts thereof, if a translation is materially relevant to the suspect or injured party being able to assert their rights. The court must also continue to engage an authorised interpreter or translator if possible. In its *Riktlinjer för tolkanvändning i domstol* (Guidelines for the use of interpreters in courts), the National Courts Administration recommends that the court should preferably engage an authorised interpreter who can show evidence of specialist skills as a legal interpreter. In certain designated courts, a party has the right to use the minority languages Sami, Finnish or Meänkieli under the Act on National Minorities and Minority Languages (2009:724).

75. The interpreter's fee is determined on the basis of four different levels of remuneration. The two highest fee levels require authorisation. The lowest level covers interpreters whose skills and education levels vary. In 2018, a new level of remuneration was introduced, giving a right to higher remuneration than the minimum level for qualified interpreters who are not able to become authorised because authorisation is not possible in all languages.

76. In 2016 and 2017, the National Courts Administration carried out a project to support the more efficient use of interpreters in courts. It operated within the framework of a government commission. Within the framework of this commission, the National Courts Administration has developed and installed a technical solution for simultaneous interpreting via video link in many of the country's courtrooms, which increase opportunities for courts to engage interpreters with a higher-level of competence. Since the end of the government commission, the National Courts Administration has continued to work on developing its support for the courts' use of interpreters. The National Courts Administration has completed a development initiative which involved reviewing the process for using interpreters in courts, the purpose of which was to create a uniform, efficient and legally certain use of interpreters. Another completed initiative was the production of support material for the courts' coordination of interpreter matters, the purpose of which was to help optimise quality and efficiency in managing interpreters, standardise the management of interpreter services, and improve the coordination of Sweden's pool of interpreter resources.

77. In order to structure and streamline interpreter matters, a coordination group has been appointed at the National Courts Administration. The group's responsibilities include the coordination of development initiatives in the use of interpreters and the dissemination of information. In addition, through regular meetings with interpreter organisations, the National Courts Administration ensures that interpreter matters are managed in close dialogue with the relevant stakeholder organisations.

Measures to promote human rights and combat Afrophobia and Islamophobia, with special reference to paragraphs 18, 19, 22, 23 and 30 of the Committee’s recommendations

Strategy and action plans to combat various forms of racism

78. Many initiatives have been implemented to prevent and combat racism, including within the framework of the National plan to combat racism, similar forms of hostility and hate crime, which was decided in 2016. This plan aims to prevent and combat racism and polarisation in the community. The plan addresses racism in general as well as various forms of racism, including Afrophobia and Islamophobia. A more detailed description of the National plan to combat racism, similar forms of hostility and hate crime can be found in paragraphs 31, 32, 34 and 38 of the twenty-second and twenty-third report.

79. Specific action programmes against Afrophobia, Islamophobia, antigypsyism, antisemitism and racism against Sami people were decided in June 2022. These are intended to help increase awareness of and combat these specific forms of racism. The programmes supplement the National plan to combat racism, similar forms of hostility and hate crime. Like the plan, the action programmes emanate from the strategic areas. These are More knowledge, education and research; Stepping up preventive work online; A more active legal system; and Greater support and more in-depth dialogue with civil society.

80. These specific action programmes contain concrete measures for the period 2022–2024. The programmes are based on dialogues with representatives of civil society, reports on the incidence of racism and hate crime in Sweden, and recommendations from regional and international human rights bodies.

81. Sweden has taken on the Presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) from 1 March 2022 to 28 February 2023. A priority during Sweden’s Presidency has been to follow up the pledges presented at the Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism held in autumn 2021. One of these pledges concerned the development of specific action programmes on various forms of racism. Combating antisemitism and antigypsyism is an important part of the Presidency’s priorities.

82. On 18 September 2020, the European Commission presented the Communication “A Union of equality: EU anti-racism action plan 2020–2025”. In its Communication, the Commission notes that racism damages society in many different ways and that racism comes in different forms. In a concrete way, the action plan aims to put forward measures to be taken to combat racism and discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity within the Union. The specific action programmes to combat various forms of racism are in line with the EU anti-racism action plan 2022–2025.

83. The Living History Forum (FLH) is responsible for monitoring and coordinating the National plan to combat racism, similar forms of hostility and hate crime. The Forum’s assessment is that work within the framework of the plan has contributed in various ways to increasing awareness of and combating various forms of racism. The Forum’s coordination efforts have helped make it possible for more government agencies to share knowledge about their tasks, experiences and work to combat racism and similar forms of hostility, and this has improved the conditions for working strategically, effectively and coherently in this area.

84. The Living History Forum assesses that the support and training initiatives it provides to school staff, government agencies and other public activities is helping to combat racism in school environments, for example. These initiatives are also helping to assure the quality of efforts to treat all individuals equally in these activities. An impact assessment of the training initiatives in this area shows that both teachers and public sector employees in activities other than schools feel that the initiatives have boosted their knowledge in relevant areas.

85. In 2022, the Swedish Agency for Public Management was commissioned to analyse and follow up the National plan to combat racism, similar forms of hostility and hate crime.

86. Furthermore, the national goal for disability policy, taking the Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a starting point, is to achieve equal living conditions

and full participation in society for persons with disabilities in a society based on diversity. This goal shall contribute towards greater gender equality and consideration of the children's rights perspective. The implementation of the national objective of disability policy is to include a focus on i.a. preventing and combating discrimination. Based on the national objective of disability policy, in 2021 a strategy for systematic follow-up of the disability policy was adopted for the period 2021–2031. This strategy means that the implementation of Sweden's disability policy is to be monitored by 28 government agencies. As a guide to the government agencies in this task, a report is to be submitted on i.a. how preventing and combating discrimination' has been taken into account in the agency's work on implementing disability policy.

General measures to combat various forms of racism

87. The action programmes contain measures which aim to raise awareness of and combat various forms of racism, as well as measures to combat racism in general. Examples of general measures include a joint task for the Swedish National Agency for Education and the Living History Forum to develop a tool for working systematically with initiatives to strengthen democracy as a means of combating various forms of racism. Some of the tasks described in the following paragraphs are included in the action programmes.

88. The Swedish Police Authority is to continue to develop and improve its efforts to combat hate crime. In addition, the Swedish Police Authority is to report the results of the work it is doing to strengthen its capacity to investigate and clear up these offences. The Swedish Defence Research Agency is to map the incidence of various forms of racism in digital environments, see paragraph 34.

89. Another measure is an assignment to the Ombudsman for Children in Sweden to develop knowledge about children's and young people's exposure to racism. The purpose of this task is to obtain a comprehensive picture of how racism directed at children and young people is expressed and in what contexts, how conditions in life for children and young people are affected by racism, and how the exposure of children and young people to racism can be combated and prevented. The Ombudsman for Children reported on this task in *Om barns och ungas utsatthet för rasism* (2021) (On children's and young people's exposure to racism). According to this report, racism is part of children's everyday lives and is expressed in many different ways. Children are subjected to racism in a range of environments by other children as well as adults. In addition, the report states that many children who have been victims of racism feel that they do not have the same rights as other children. There are also children who are not aware of their rights. Subsequently, in April 2022, the Ombudsman for Children was tasked with implementing awareness-raising measures on racism, based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in order to strengthen the capacity of children and young people to assert their rights.

90. For the rights of the child to have an impact in practice, since 2017 a knowledge boost for the rights of the child has been conducted to raise awareness and strengthen knowledge and skills concerning the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child within central government agencies, municipalities and regions. A total of 27 government agencies have been included in this initiative, as well as the Ombudsman for Children and the county administrative boards, which are tasked with supporting the work of the government agencies as well as the municipalities and regions to ensure that the Convention on the Rights of the Child is implemented.

91. The Equality Ombudsman has been tasked with implementing specific information initiatives and producing information material to support pupils and custodians in order to furnish and disseminate information on the protections against discrimination for children and school pupils, under the Discrimination Act (2008:567), and against abusive treatment under the Education Act (2010:800). The information material is to highlight in particular who children, pupils, custodians or adults who are *in loco parentis* for the pupil can approach if a child or a pupil has been a victim of discrimination or abusive treatment. In order to carry out this task, the Equality Ombudsman is to cooperate with the Child and School Student Representative (BEO) at the Swedish School Inspectorate.

92. On the basis of received complaints of discrimination, the Equality Ombudsman has been tasked with deepening knowledge about discrimination linked to multiple grounds of discrimination and highlighting questions that have to do with intersectionality, i.e., how different systems of power and grounds of discrimination intersect and sometimes amplify each other.

93. Since 2017, the Equality Ombudsman has provided data on the number of complaints of discrimination related to multiple grounds of discrimination.

94. Each year, the Equality Ombudsman receives about sixty complaints of discrimination in the Housing area of society. In the years 2017–2021, the Ombudsman therefore focused part of its work on combating discrimination in the rental housing market. The Equality Ombudsman's report *Diskriminering vid tillhandahållande av hyresbostäder* (Discrimination in the provision of rental housing) sets out current knowledge on various aspects of discrimination in the rental housing market. According to this report, the Ombudsman intends to work further on strengthening access to justice and opportunities for redress for victims of discrimination, and developing the case law.

95. In the years 2017–2021, the Equality Ombudsman also included a focus on the workplace in its work. In this area, the Ombudsman has implemented awareness-raising initiatives and dialogues with relevant stakeholders in order to be able to act and take a greater responsibility in Sweden's work to combat discrimination. Some of the actors involved in this work are the Swedish Work Environment Authority (AV), the Equality Ombudsman's union network and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR).

96. As part of a previous task in a survey conducted in 2020, the Swedish Defence Research Agency found that 8 per cent of the threats and hate directed at a number of occupational groups that are active in the democratic conversation could be linked to the victim's descent and ethnicity. In another government commission, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention surveyed the exposure of elected representatives to harassment, threats and violence in 2020 (Politicians Safety Survey 2021, Report 2021:13). The survey shows that in 15 per cent of the incidents, the perpetrator was linked to a far-right or racist group. Since 2017, the Fojo Media Institute at Linnaeus University, has been tasked with providing support to and implementing initiatives targeting journalists and editorial offices for preventing and managing exposure to threats and hate.

Specific measures to combat Islamophobia

97. As mentioned above, a special action programme to combat Islamophobia has been developed. Some of the initiatives in the action programme are listed below. These include the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention having been tasked with carrying out an in-depth study on Islamophobic hate crime. The main conclusion of the study is that Islamophobic hate crime takes many different forms and is not confined to any particular place, time or person. This means that some Muslims are particularly affected, and for some veiled women, Islamophobic elements of various degrees of seriousness can be experienced as part of their everyday lives.

98. In addition, the Swedish Crime Victim Authority has been tasked with producing information for people who are at risk of being or have been the victims of hate crimes with Islamophobic motives. This material is intended to inform these individuals about, *inter alia*, the rights of victims, how to make a police report, what happens after making the report, and about compensation to which victims of crime may be entitled. A report on the task is to be presented in 2023.

99. Municipal and community police officers and the democracy and hate crime network in the Swedish Police Authority conduct interface activities with religious communities to increase trust in the Authority and reduce the number of unreported cases of hate crime.

100. The Swedish Police Authority is participating in the EU's PROTECTOR project (Protecting places of Worship). The PROTECTOR project runs from 2021–2023 and aims to create innovative strategies for the future with the intention of enhancing the protective security countermeasures of religious communities and places of worship. The PROTECTOR project aims to develop innovative solutions to detect deviant behaviour in

public places using artificial intelligence (AI), and to develop a security manual and training for police officers, other emergency services staff and representatives of religious communities, in order to enhance the security of religious communities.

101. In October 2018, a new Ordinance on central government grants for security-enhancing measures to faith communities and non-profit organisations in civil society entered into force. Under the new Ordinance, central government grants may be provided when an organisation's activities are affected by fear of threats, violence or harassment related to skin colour, national or ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, transgender identity or expression or other similar circumstance. An inquiry chair has been appointed to map and describe the difficulties for faith communities and their affiliated activities in Sweden to take out insurance against attacks or damage for their places of worship and assembly. The inquiry chair is to also submit proposals for measures which may improve the prospects of taking out such insurance and, if necessary, make necessary legislative proposals. A report on the task is to be presented during 2023.

102. For more information on security-enhancing measures and certain legislation, see the 2019 follow-up report, pages 3–7.

103. Over the past year, The Equality Ombudsman's has been tasked with enhancing knowledge about the incidence of discrimination related to religion or other belief and how it interacts and relates to discrimination related to ethnicity. In order to enhance knowledge the Ombudsman has reviewed reports to the Ombudsman, court cases and existing Swedish research in the field. The Ombudsman has also conducted dialogue meetings with more than 50 organizations and faith communities. The task has also included developing a knowledge base on the challenges and obstacles that people face when they practise their religion or their religion is visible from their clothing for example. Discrimination against Jews and Muslims in particular is to be investigated as part of this task.

104. During the period 2022–2024, the Living History Forum will produce supporting material on Islamophobia for teachers and carry out further continuing professional development initiatives as part of strengthening efforts to raise awareness of various forms of racism.

Specific measures to combat Afrophobia and measures as part of the International Decade for People of African Descent

105. A specific action programme to combat Afrophobia has been decided, as mentioned above. Among other things, the Living History Forum has been tasked with increasing awareness of Sweden's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade and slavery. This task includes the development and dissemination of educational material primarily targeting pupils in compulsory school and upper secondary school and students in municipal adult education as well as participants in folk high-schools.

106. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention has had the task of conducting an in-depth study on Afrophobic hate crime. One of the findings of this study is that verbal attacks are the most common Afrophobic offences reported to the police, but that there is a higher incidence of violence in the category of Afrophobic hate crime than in other categories of hate crime. Those who are victims of Afrophobic hate crime are usually young people and the perpetrators are usually young, male and have previous experience of engaging in criminal activities.

107. In order to support adults when talking with children about racism, including Afrophobia, the Family Law and Parental Support Authority is tasked with reviewing, gathering and compiling information in supporting and information material on how adults can talk to children and young people about racism. This knowledge summary is to be disseminated so that it can be used in practice and can function as a support primarily to custodians, but also staff working in government agencies, municipalities and regions.

108. In addition, the Swedish Agency for Work Environment Expertise is to gather and compile knowledge about the connection between the victimisation of certain groups and work-related stress. A particular focus should be knowledge about the work environment and the impact of victimisation on the grounds of ethnicity, skin colour and religion or other belief

on the individual's health. This knowledge summary is to be disseminated so that it can provide support to employers, health and safety representatives, and other elected representatives in workplaces.

109. The county administrative boards have a task to further develop efforts to combat racism in the labour market. The purpose of these efforts is to highlight norms that are limiting opportunities for Afro-Swedes and to help remove obstacles for them and others at risk of suffering racism to enjoy equal rights in the labour market.

110. The Living History Forum has produced a knowledge review on experiences of racism in contact with Swedish government agencies and other public activities (2021). This review is part of ongoing work to support government agencies in ensuring that individuals are treated equally and with legal certainty, and to prevent people's access to social welfare from being affected by factors such as ethnicity.

111. Sweden received a visit from the UN's Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in the context of Law Enforcement on 31 October to 4 November 2022. The purpose of the visit was to make recommendations and focus on best practice related to combating racism against people of African descent. Meetings were held at the Government Offices of Sweden with officials from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Employment, but also with relevant government agencies. Within the Swedish Police Authority, a number of visits were made to police stations and arrests in Stockholm and Malmö, as well as to the Authority's hate crime unit. These visits were carried out without participation from the Government Offices. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service also received visits. The Mechanism also met with the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, the Equality Ombudsman, and the Parliamentary Ombudsman (JO), and in addition met with civil society and stakeholder organisations. The recommendations of the Mechanism's delegation will be communicated to the UN Human Rights Office and a report will be presented to the General Assembly in 2023. Sweden is awaiting the final recommendations of the delegation in the report before reviewing the need for possible measures. Sweden is the first country to be visited within the context of the Mechanism's mandate.

Equality of health and medical care

112. The National Board of Health and Welfare has been tasked with producing, developing and disseminating knowledge support materials to combat racism and to promote equal rights and opportunities for all in the health and medical care system, thereby contributing to equality of care. This material is to be disseminated to those working in the health and medical care system to provide them with support in how they receive patients and their relatives. It is to target specific groups, and be designed so that it can be implemented in the routine work of staff in the health and medical care system. In addition, the Board is to present an analysis of what additional measures could be taken in health and medical care to reduce the incidence of racism and to promote equal rights and opportunities for all, thereby contributing to equality of care.

113. Sweden has a decentralised health and medical care system in which regions and municipalities are responsible for providing the population with health and medical care on equal terms. Furthermore, health and medical care must be provided in ways that respect the equal value of all people and the individual's dignity. Those with the greatest need for health and medical care are to be given priority.

114. A number of agreements have been concluded with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions during the period 2020–2022 with the aim of creating more accessible, equitable and person-centred maternal health care and obstetrics. Under these agreements, the regions are required to develop a coherent chain of pregnancy care and knowledge-based aftercare that takes account of the different needs and circumstances of the women.

115. The Public Health Agency of Sweden is tasked with analysing trends in health and health determinants and their distribution based on ethnic or cultural background, but also gender, socio-economic group, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, disability and age.

Work to reduce and counter segregation

116. The overall objective of Sweden's work to counter segregation is reduced segregation, equitable and gender-equal conditions in which to grow up and live, and favourable life opportunities for everyone.

117. In 2018, a long-term strategy to reduce and counter segregation was adopted, one of its aims being to create equitable and gender-equal conditions in which to grow up and live, and favourable life opportunities for everyone (Ku2018/01462). The strategy concludes that isolated measures to reduce segregation are not enough, but that structural measures are needed in a number of areas, in particular housing, education, the labour market, democracy and civil society, improved security and reducing crime. The following paragraphs list a selection of the measures initiated during the period, with focus on monitoring and evaluation, and education.

118. Sweden's long-term strategy for reducing and countering segregation is a further development of a long-term programme of reform to tackle segregation presented in 2016 and described in paragraph 83 of the twenty-second and twenty-third periodic report.

119. Work with the strategy focuses primarily on socio-economic segregation, i.e. spatial separation between individuals belonging to different groups based on factors such as education, income and occupation. Socio-economic circumstances explain a lot of the ethnic segregation that exists in Sweden. In its 2022 annual report, the Delegation against Segregation outlined what characterises areas with socio-economic challenges. In these areas, the employment rate, disposable income and level of education are lower than in areas with good or very good socio-economic circumstances. Furthermore, democratic participation is lower. Children and young people in areas with socio-economic challenges generally grow up in worse circumstances, and their opportunities in life are not as favourable as those of other children and young people. The Delegation against Segregation notes that everyone is affected by a segregated society, as it risks creating a less cohesive society.

120. In December 2020, the National Board of Health and Welfare was tasked with managing, distributing and monitoring central government grants for social interventions in disadvantaged areas. This investment amounts to SEK 250 million per year for the years 2021–2023, and aims to complement and strengthen the municipality's activities in the area of crime prevention. The grants can be used for more field workers in the evenings and on weekends, improving access to social services, and various forms of structured collaboration between schools, social services and the police.

121. In 2022, the Swedish Agency for Public Management was commissioned to review the work being done to reduce and counter segregation, with a particular focus on the organisation of this work at the local and regional levels. The agency is also analysing what obstacles there are for this work at the local and regional levels, and will make recommendations for further efforts.

122. In April 2022, eight government agencies that are central to the work to reduce and counter segregation were commissioned by the government to analyse how they can use the new statistical tools now in place for monitoring socio-economic segregation (see paragraph 59), with the aim to strengthen knowledge-based measures to reduce and counter segregation. The following agencies were included in this commission: the Swedish Public Employment Service, the Public Health Agency of Sweden, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, the Swedish Police Authority, the National Board of Health and Welfare, National Government Service Centre (Statens servicecenter), the Swedish National Agency for Education and the Swedish Transport Administration.

123. The Swedish Research Council has been tasked with funding a national research programme on segregation. The research programme on segregation is intended to generate new knowledge about the causes of segregation and its incidence. The Council's funding for this programme will amount to SEK 30 million from 2023.

124. Social segregation in schools is largely a result of housing segregation, but the design of school choice also has an impact (SOU 2020:28). Social segregation in schools means that pupils with similar backgrounds go to the same schools, which can contribute to differences in learning outcomes between schools. Equivalence and quality in teaching in schools needs

to be strengthened and learning outcomes need to improve. The following are some agreed measures to reduce the impacts of social segregation in schools.

125. The equivalence grant for schools was introduced in 2018 and is a central government grant to strengthen equivalence and improve learning outcomes in schools. The grant goes to the providers of preschool classes, compulsory schools and leisure center (afterschool care) and is distributed by the Swedish National Agency for Education based on socio-economic factors. The grant is intended to boost the organiser's resources for strengthening equivalence and improving learning outcomes in these types of schools. The providers must be in a position to make long-term investments in areas such as teaching and pupil health. In the years 2018–2022, more than SEK 22 billion has been distributed through the equivalence grant, and this funding has been used to add better educated staff.

126. Schools with poor learning outcomes and preschools in areas facing socio-economic challenges receive support to plan, monitor and develop the education they provide through two tasks given to the Swedish National Agency for Education: the *Samverkan för bästa skola* (Working together for the best in education) initiative, and the reception of newly arrived immigrant pupils initiative. A total of SEK 524 million is allocated to these initiatives annually. In 2021, a special central government grant was also introduced to improve the work environment and working conditions of teachers in schools with socio-economic challenges. In 2022, this grant amounted to SEK 420 million, which has been allocated to 150 selected schools.

Turnout in elections

127. Since Sweden does not maintain any official statistics on ethnicity, it is not possible to present statistics on turnout in general elections based on this categorisation. However, Statistics Sweden regularly collects statistics on turnout among foreign-born persons and among persons with foreign-born parents. Statistics Sweden's analysis shows that people born abroad have a lower turnout rate than people born in Sweden. However, among foreign-born persons, the turnout rate is higher among those who have lived in Sweden for a long time than among those who have lived here for a shorter period of time. In the 2018 Riksdag elections, the turnout rate was 74 per cent of the electorate born abroad, compared with 90 per cent of the electorate born in Sweden. The lowest turnout rates were among people born in European countries outside the EU and the Nordic countries, and in Asia and Africa. In the 2018 Riksdag elections, the turnout rate among the electorate born in Sweden with two parents born abroad was 82 per cent, i.e. eight percentage points lower than the rate for the electorate born in Sweden. In conjunction with the 2022 elections, a string of initiatives were carried out such as school choice, funding to the political parties for special communications campaigns and funding to civil society organisations; and for activities aimed at increasing participation in elections among people born outside Sweden.

Specific measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic

128. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of emergency measures were decided and implemented to manage the consequences of the pandemic. Paragraphs 127 to 131 describe a selection of these measures.

129. In April 2020, the National Board of Health and Welfare was tasked with rapidly identifying the groups of individuals who were most at risk of particularly severe illness with COVID-19, and who therefore could have a special need for protection from this infection. Many studies, both in Sweden and abroad, have shown a higher risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 among the foreign-born in particular.

130. During 2020, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Board of Health and Welfare received SEK 100 million extra in funding to allocate to civil society organisations that work with children in vulnerable situations so that they could expand their support activities to meet the increased and changed needs of this group. The purpose of this support was to alleviate the potential increase in vulnerability among groups that could not go to work or school, or attend educate activities after school, or who needed to isolate at home. In 2021, a total of SEK 230 million was allocated for the same purpose.

131. In the agreement between central government and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions concerning COVID-19 vaccines for 2022, an important starting point was to increase vaccination coverage nationally, and more specifically, among unvaccinated individuals and groups. Vaccination coverage varies depending on the part of the world in which a person was born. According to the Public Health Agency's statistics, vaccination coverage is lowest among people of African descent.

132. As part of its task to carry out and report on work with the COVID-19 vaccine, the Agency is required to assist the regions in achieving higher vaccination coverage by providing them with data from analyses of the groups in the community that have lower vaccination coverage. In cooperation with the regions, the county administrative boards are tasked with assisting efforts to achieve a higher COVID-19 vaccination coverage, and in doing so they are to focus in particular on those groups where vaccination coverage is lower. In addition, the Public Health Agency, the Swedish Medical Products Agency, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) and the National Board of Health and Welfare have been tasked with conducting coordinated national information initiatives, primarily targeting the general public, on vaccination against COVID-19. These government agencies are to focus particularly on the need for information initiatives targeting groups where vaccination coverage is low in performing this task. The Public Health Agency also organised a national vaccination week to reach as many as possible of those who had not yet been vaccinated.

133. During 2022, the National Board of Health and Welfare has been tasked with distributing nearly SEK 2 billion to the regions for targeted initiatives to deal with the backlog of essential care. In implementing these initiatives, particular attention should be focused on those groups with the greatest need for both medical and socio-economic interventions.

Equal access and right to education and vocational education

134. Preschool can have positive effects on children's language development and their prospects in compulsory school. But the children who need preschool the most attend preschool the least. These children are often those with a mother tongue other than Swedish. In order for more children to start attending preschool, the Riksdag has decided on changes in the law which require the municipalities to inform the custodians of children without a place in a preschool about the purpose of preschool and the child's right to preschool. The municipalities are also obliged to offer children who have lived in Sweden for only a short period of time a place in preschool from the age of 3, even if their custodians have not applied for a place.

135. Since 2022, the Swedish National Agency for Education has been tasked with the national coordination of teaching in the minority languages. This task includes planning and responsibility for how remote tuition in national minority languages can be made available to all organisers that must offer tuition in these languages under the Education Act.

136. Today, adult education offers a range of minority languages classes, but their number varies depending on the minority language concerned. Interest in and the opportunity to learn one of the minority languages can come at all stages in an individual's life. Since the circumstances of native speakers vary, it is important that there are educational pathways open to individuals of different ages, at different levels, and with different goals. Adult education can offer a flexible pathway for those who want to learn a minority language as an adult. In 2022–2024, the Swedish National Council of Adult Education is receiving funding for initiatives aimed at strengthening Sweden's national minority languages.

137. The Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) has been tasked with carrying out a thematic evaluation of the work of Sweden's higher education institutions to broaden recruitment. The Authority reported on this task in March 2022. The purpose of the thematic evaluation was to make visible how higher education institutions are working to broaden recruitment, and to investigate how far Sweden has come in increasing diversity in higher education, and in counteracting socially skewed recruitment. The thematic evaluation was intended to both generate knowledge about work to broaden recruitment and have direct benefits by supporting development initiatives towards the highest possible quality in the sector. In the course of this evaluation, it has been noted that up to a few years ago people with a Swedish background were those most inclined to start studying at university. However,

a few years ago different categories of people with a foreign background (born in Sweden with foreign-born parents, and immigrated to Sweden before the age of seven) surpassed those with a Swedish background, and since then constitute a higher proportion of those who start studying at university. The category where the percentage of people who start studying at university remains low is those who immigrated after the age of 7. The percentage in this category has actually fallen and is now below 30 per cent. The Swedish Higher Education Authority is of the opinion that Sweden's higher education institutions should collaborate with secondary schools and other actors to foster opportunities for people with a foreign background to apply for higher education in greater numbers. Particular attention should be paid to groups with a national background that is under-represented in higher education or in a specific study programme.

138. Continued investments have been made in bridging programmes for people who have completed degrees abroad equivalent to a Swedish university degree. The aim of these programmes is for students to take a Swedish degree that is awarded after higher education studies corresponding to their education abroad, or to obtain a qualification or specific knowledge to enable them to practise in a profession in Sweden relevant to their education abroad. Bridging programmes are available in a number of areas such as nursing, teacher education, law and medicine. The Swedish Higher Education Authority is tasked with monitoring and reporting on the establishment of graduates in the labour market, including those with foreign qualifications who have completed bridging programmes. The task is to be reported to the Government Offices in March 2023.

139. The Swedish Council for Higher Education produces a Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test which, when passed, satisfies the general entry requirements to higher education studies. A pilot project will examine and evaluate the Test in 2022 and 2023. The aim of the pilot project is to provide scope for more pathways to higher education. The intention is that the Swedish Scholastic Aptitude Test should make it easier for people with foreign qualifications to demonstrate that they have the necessary skills for admission to higher education. Passing this Test satisfies the general entry requirements for higher education studies.

Stigmatisation and discrimination of Roma, with special reference to paragraphs 24 and 25 of the Committee's recommendations

140. The Strategy for Roma Inclusion rests on human rights, with a particular emphasis on the principle of non-discrimination. For 2022, an additional SEK 14 million was allocated to strengthen Roma inclusion, with proposed additional funding of a total of SEK 18.5 million annually for 2023 and 2024.

141. One of the starting points for work within the Strategy is to ensure Roma participation and Roma influence through various forms of consultation. The Government Offices continues to engage in ongoing dialogue with a Roma reference group and also holds consultations with representatives of the Roma. The Stockholm County Administrative Board is responsible for central government and organisation grants to national organisations that represent four of Sweden's national minorities: Jews, Roma, Sweden Finns, and Tornedalians. The purpose of the grant is to support and facilitate the activities of these organisations.

142. The Board is tasked with coordinating and monitoring the strategy. During 2021, the Board began work on developing a model for monitoring the Strategy for Roma Inclusion. The purpose of the model is to create better conditions for monitoring progress with the Strategy over time.

143. In 2019, the Act on National Minorities and Minority Languages (2009:724) was strengthened. This strengthening means for example that all municipalities and regions are obliged to adopt objectives and guidelines for their minorities policy initiatives.

144. In 2018–2019, the National Board of Health and Welfare was tasked with informing municipalities, county councils, health care providers and other relevant actors about the significance of the Minorities Act for social services, especially in the area of elderly care, and health and medical care. As part of this task, the National Board of Health and Welfare was to conduct a survey of the potential need for knowledge-enhancing initiatives in social services (in particular concerning elderly care) and the health and medical care system, and

if necessary to propose measures. In its report on the task, the National Board of Health and Welfare noted that a lack of language skills and cultural competence among staff in municipalities and regions is preventing the Minorities Act from having its intended effects within the National Board of Health and Welfare's areas of responsibility. During the period 2022–2024, the National Board of Health and Welfare is tasked with developing and disseminating knowledge support and implementing skills-enhancing measures concerning the rights of the national minorities, and the national minority languages. This support will target decision-makers and occupational groups within the health and medical care system, social services and elderly care.

145. Pursuant to the Government's decision Ku2022/00784, the Stockholm County Administrative Board is to distribute central government grants to municipalities to promote Roma inclusion in accordance with the Roma Inclusion Ordinance (2022:259). The purpose of this grant is to improve the conditions for the inclusion of Roma in the society. The grant is also intended to give municipalities better conditions for implementing measures to promote Roma inclusion, so that Roma can participate on an equal footing with others in society. Similar central government grants were previously paid to the pilot project municipalities (see paragraphs 65 to 66 of the twenty-second and twenty-third report). The grant has been significant in work on Roma inclusion at the local level.

146. During the period 2016–2019, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society was tasked with implementing initiatives intended to help improve the conditions for Roma engagement in civil society and for Roma organisations to participate in civic life, including measures to promote Roma inclusion. The Agency's assessment was that the funding that was distributed from the grant strengthened Roma organisations. An important factor was support in the application process and contact with the applicants.

Access to education, work, housing, health and medical care, and justice

147. Many Roma children and young people suffer due to the prejudices that exist about the Roma in the broader community. The Stockholm County Administrative Board's study *Stolt men ofta otrygg. En undersökning om unga romers upplevelser av trygghet och tillgång till sina rättigheter* (2021) (Proud but often insecure. Young Roma experiences of security and access to their rights) and the report by the Ombudsman for Children titled *Om barns och ungas utsatthet för rasism* (2021) (On children's and young people's exposure to racism) show that antigypsyism and other forms of racism form part of the everyday lives of Roma children and young people, especially at school and online.

148. The public know relatively little about Sweden's five national minorities. A study conducted by the Institute for Language and Folklore in 2020 found that the proportion of the population reporting that they know something about Sweden's minorities and minority languages has remained relatively unchanged since 2010. On the other hand, it appears that the more knowledge a person has about the minority languages, the more positive that person's attitude is to initiatives to preserve the minority languages. During the period 2016–2019, the Swedish National Agency for Education was tasked with implementing initiatives to increase knowledge about the national minorities in schools, with a focus on the Roma.

149. The Stockholm County Administrative Board is tasked with implementing initiatives to increase knowledge about Roma history, the current living conditions for Roma and their status as a national minority, and to distribute the educational material *Antiziganismen i Sverige* (Antigypsyism in Sweden) to schools. The Board also carries out knowledge-enhancing initiatives and offers support to municipalities and other government agencies.

150. The Living History Forum is tasked with mapping knowledge about antigypsyism in compulsory schools and upper secondary schools and proposing measures to combat antigypsyism.

151. The Swedish Public Employment Service has been tasked with further developing its work on Roma inclusion within its activities in the period 2020–2023. The Public Employment Service is required to disseminate information and raise awareness among Roma about the support that the Employment Service can offer, and to ensure that individual job seekers utilising the Employment Service receive the help they need. In addition, the Employment Service is to strengthen efforts to improve women's opportunities to participate

in its initiatives; to ensure that the knowledge about Roma as a national minority required for its activities exists within the Employment Service; and to develop a monitoring system that utilises baseline studies.

152. According to the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning's baseline study in 2018, there is a lack of knowledge among the actors in the housing market concerning matters related to the rights of the Roma. The Board assesses that this is partly due to the fact that many Roma choose not to report discriminatory behaviour because they do not think they will be believed, and do not want to risk having to leave their homes. In the years 2016–2019, the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning was tasked with increasing knowledge about the situation of the Roma and to prevent discrimination against the Roma in the housing market. As part of this task, the Board developed a web-based training course in collaboration with Roma course supervisors, which is offered to landlords and property owners.

153. As described in paragraph 113, the Public Health Agency is working on improving public health based on health determinants. In addition, the Agency also has a project that falls within the framework of the minorities policy. It is based on the objective of Sweden's National minorities policy and its sub-areas, with a particular focus on the sub-area 'discrimination and victimisation'. The Agency is to develop the forms in which the health situation of the national minorities can be monitored and contribute to equitable prospects for good health.

154. During the period 2021–2024, the Agency has a government commission to strengthen and develop knowledge of the health situation of the national minorities. The Agency is to describe the current state of health of the national minorities and submit proposals on how to monitor the health situation, living conditions, circumstances in life and lifestyle habits of minority groups regularly in the future.

155. The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society is tasked with distributing central government grants for health promotion activities that target Roma. The purpose of the grant is to promote the health of Roma. The grant is also intended to improve the conditions for civil society, and in particular, Roma organisations to work with health-promoting initiatives targeting Roma.

156. The Institute for Language and Folklore is tasked with being responsible for the language centre for Romani chib in 2022–2024. In April 2022, an action programme for the preservation and promotion of the national minority languages was also presented. The action programme includes initiatives amounting to SEK 40 million annually in 2022–2024.

157. The Swedish National Agency for Education and the National Board of Health and Welfare are tasked with producing and disseminating an appropriate training programme for mediators with Roma language skills and cultural competence for their work in preschools, preschool, schools, school-age educate, adult education and social services or the health and medical care system during the period 2022–2024. Mediators act as a link between individuals and the public sector and previous activities involving mediators have shown good results.

Evictions

158. In November 2017, the National Board of Health and Welfare published a guide for the work of municipal social services when encountering vulnerable EU/EEA citizens who do not have the right to reside in Sweden. The main starting point for this guide is the obligations that apply under EU law and Swedish legislation and what can be done under the law when social services encounters EU/EEA citizens. The guide has an emphasis on the perspective of the child and provides support to social services staff concerning what needs particular attention when encountering children who are EU/EEA citizens in a vulnerable situation, for example human trafficking, children who are victims of violence or children who are living in other unacceptable circumstances. The guide has been continuously updated.

159. Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Sweden's Social Services Act, if an application for assistance involves children, the principle of the best interests of the

child must be observed when making the assessment. The municipality's ultimate responsibility for support and assistance under the Social Services Act applies to all children, regardless of whether they have the right to stay in Sweden and how long they have been here. The social welfare committee must initiate an investigation without delay into what has become known to the committee, and which may be cause for some action. In assessing what living in acceptable or unacceptable circumstances means for a child, no distinction must be made between children whose parents have a right to reside in Sweden or not. This means, for example, that living in cars, caravans, in emergency shelters and similar temporary housing is to be regarded as unacceptable housing circumstances for children, regardless of their parents' legal status.

160. According to the Social Services Act, municipal social services are obliged to operate outreach services and other initiatives to prevent harm to children and young people. Many municipalities work actively to assist EU/EEA citizens who are in a vulnerable situation. Based on their local circumstances, some municipalities operate outreach services themselves or in cooperation with third sector organisations. Outreach services increase the chances of identifying particularly vulnerable and victimised individuals such as children, women exposed to violence and people with physical or intellectual disabilities.

161. Social services have an important role to play in providing support in connection with evictions from dwellings, in particular when children are involved. If the persons being evicted do not have a right to reside in Sweden, and therefore do not have a habitual place of residence in the country, as a general rule, social services' responsibility is limited to remedying an emergency situation. This may involve providing premises for temporary evacuation, and occasional assistance with repatriation, food and medicines. If there are children in the housing provided, as a rule social services should already have been informed of this by the municipality's outreach service or in connection with information received about a forthcoming eviction from the Swedish Enforcement Authority or Swedish Police Authority. Such information may in itself be enough to trigger the requirement to investigate the child's needs under the Social Services Act, and thus measures can be prepared in advance.

162. In the past, the Swedish Police Authority has been tasked with reviewing the issue of begging and unlawful residence. For this work, the Swedish Police Authority now has a practical guide which provides support at the national level for work of the police with unlawful/unauthorised residence. The goal is to reduce crime committed against or by vulnerable EU citizens, to increase safety and security, and to ensure that the work of uniformed police is based on the equality of all before the law.

163. It is up to each police region to deal with instances of unlawful residence in accordance with the guidance and with the powers and legal basis they have derived from, *inter alia*, the Public Order Act (1993:1617/3:19). This may be done through reprimands, injunctions or coercive measures. Offences under the Public Order Act for example must be escalated and investigated. The Swedish Police Authority is most often affected in these matters by being responsible for the practical implementation in its capacity as an executive authority. In connection with this, the Swedish Police Authority works continuously to integrate the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the principles that apply to the protection of the child's best interests in these contexts.

The Indigenous Sami people, with special reference to paragraphs 16 and 17 of the Committee's recommendations

164. The Act on Consultation in Matters of Special Importance to the Sami People (2022:66) entered into force on 1 March 2022. The purpose of consultation is to further the Sami people's influence in matters affecting them. The Act requires the Government and its administrative authorities to consult the Sami Parliament, and, if necessary, other relevant representatives of the Sami, before making decisions on matters that can significantly affect the Sami people. As of 2024, the Act will also cover regions and municipalities. The obligation to consult does not apply to courts, quasi-judicial boards or committees, or bodies in government agencies with quasi-judicial remits. Certain types of cases are excluded from the consultation obligation. A starting point for determining whether consultation is appropriate is that Sweden is and must continue to be a model for respect for human rights.

165. To combat racism against Sami increased level of knowledge in society about the Sami people, their living conditions, culture and rights as indigenous people is important. The Sami Parliament is commissioned to inform about the conditions of Sami people and to propose measures to promote Sami culture. Within the framework of this commission, the Sami Parliament will participate in community planning and ensure that Sami needs are taken into account. In order to support this task, the Sami Parliament's commission have been supplemented by participation in consultations according to the Act on Consultation in Matters of Special Importance to the Sami People (2022:66).

166. The right of the Sami people to participate in decision-making processes in matters of particular concern to them will be strengthened as a result of the consultation regime. A consultation regime means that Sami interests and rights will be better clarified and taken into account, while at the same time the Government and its administrative authorities, the municipalities and regions will have a broader basis for making decisions on matters concerning Sami questions. The introduction of a consultation regime for the Sami people was preceded by extensive contacts, dialogue and consultations, primarily with the Sami Parliament.

167. In November 2021, it was decided to set up a Truth Commission to map and review the policies that have been pursued in relation to the Sami and their consequences for the Sami people. The task of the Truth Commission includes mapping and reviewing the policies pursued in relation to the Sami and the actions of relevant actors in implementing those policies; disseminating knowledge about and increasing the public's understanding of the history of the Sami and the impact of historical injustices on present-day conditions for the Sami people; and working to ensure that this knowledge is transferred to future generations and proposing measures for redress and promoting reconciliation and a viable Sami society. The final report of the Commission is to be delivered by December 2025 at the latest.

168. In January 2017, the negotiated text of a Nordic Sami Convention was initialled. The Sami Parliament has collectively submitted a petition on four points that concern self-determination and the right to vote in the Sami Parliament. The Nordic countries and the Sami Parliaments are in close contact concerning the petition and are working on a proposal for a solution.

169. The Inquiry on a resilient provision of innovation-critical metals and minerals (SOU 2022:56) submitted its report in October 2022. Its remit included analysing and proposing changes to permit processes and regulations so that a better consideration can be taken to a project's local environmental impact and to its benefit to society. The Inquiry sought the views of representatives of the Sami people. The report is currently being prepared in the Government Offices.

170. In 2021, a parliamentary committee, the Committee on Reindeer Lands, was set up to propose new reindeer husbandry legislation. A large number of representatives of the Sami people are appointed to the Committee. The Committee's work will therefore have broad support among the Sami. An interim report is due in August 2023 and a final report in May 2025.

A sustainable predator policy

171. Like other EU Member States, Sweden must comply with the EU's Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC). In order to achieve a balance between reindeer husbandry's level of tolerance and the need for a favourable conservation status for predators, work is being done that jointly involves those most affected. In recent years, the Sami Parliament, the county administrative boards and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency have had a goal to work with the management tool using a defined level of tolerance for maintaining both sustainable reindeer husbandry and a favourable conservation status for large predators. These government agencies are also required to report on the tool's effectiveness. Work with the management tool continues and is continuously developed. The county administrative boards conduct annual consultations on predators with the Sami villages in the reindeer husbandry area, which have continued as far as possible during the pandemic. The consultations discuss preventive measures, as well as the areas in which the hunt for predators will have the greatest effect in terms of limiting the numbers of injured or

killed reindeer. In May 2022, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency was tasked with investigating whether, and if so under what conditions, the wolf population's reference value could be within the range of 170–270 individuals stated in "A sustainable predatory policy" (Govt Bill. 2012/13:191).

172. The Sami villages receive compensation for harm caused by predators. The compensation is given on the basis of predator prevalence and is based on a predator inventory. Compensation is also provided for harm prevention measures.

173. For more information on legislation and compensation levels for harm to reindeer caused by predators, see the follow-up report from 2019, page 2.

Hate crime targeting the Sami

174. In 2020, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention's statistics identified 20 hate crimes where the victims were Sami. This corresponded to 1 per cent of all identified xenophobic and racist hate crimes. Representatives of the Sami people have pointed out that Sami rarely report these crimes, which is believed to be due to those who do report them being met with suspicion and ignorance, that many feel that they are without legal protection, and that the percentage of reports that lead to legal proceedings is small.

175. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention has been tasked with conducting an in-depth study of hate crime targeting Sami in order to improve knowledge about racism targeting the Sami, and strengthen preventive efforts to counter it. In carrying out this task, the Council is to gather knowledge and experience from the relevant government agencies, including the Sami Parliament, and relevant civil society organisations.

176. The Swedish Police Authority interfaces with Sami at many levels but at the local level primarily within the context of the crime prevention mission of municipal and community police officers. In the Northern police region, police officers interface regularly with representatives of the Sami minority within the context of their crime prevention mission. There is a need to work to build trust between the police and the Sami minority at the local, regional and national levels.

Article 6

177. For information on the relevant legislation, see paragraph 9 and paragraphs 20 and 21 in the nineteenth to twenty-first report.

178. For the application of this legislation, see paragraphs 10–21 and 32–37.

Article 7

Education and teaching

179. The course syllabi for the different types of compulsory school (compulsory school, special school, Sami school, and compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities) have been revised and the new course syllabi came into effect from autumn 2022. The new course syllabi contain new wordings which strengthen their content in relation to Sweden's national minorities. A major review is also under way of all the subject syllabi for upper secondary school, upper secondary school for pupils with learning disabilities, and municipal adult education. There are also new wordings in the curricula for several types of schools that aim to strengthen the school's work to combat various forms of intolerance, violence and oppression. For some time, the Education Act and curricula have stated that education within the school system must be organised in accord with fundamental democratic values and human rights such as the inviolability of human life, the freedom and privacy of the individual, the equal value of all people; gender equality and solidarity between people. Everyone working in education should promote human rights and work actively to counter all forms of abusive treatment.

180. The Swedish National Agency for Education has also produced support and commentary material for the new course syllabi and changes in the curricula, which is

intended to assist teachers in understanding the changes that have been made. The Swedish National Agency for Education has also produced extensive material for organisers and schools. This material can be used to support staff in their work to counter abusive treatment and is also intended to provide staff with more detailed knowledge intended to promote more systematic preventive efforts for example.

181. During 2022, the Swedish National Agency for Education has been tasked with preparing a project to support the production and promote the improvement of and access to textbooks in the national minority languages and to cooperate in this project with relevant actors. The Government considers that this task needs to be expanded to include preschools. The Inquiry on strengthening school libraries and textbooks submitted its report in August 2021 *Läromedelsutredningen – Böckernas betydelse och elevernas tillgång till kunskap* (SOU 2021:70) (Textbook Inquiry – The importance of textbooks and pupil access to knowledge). The Inquiry dealt with the issue of stereotypes in textbooks such as gender or disability stereotypes. The Inquiry's report proposes the establishment of a textbook committee and that this committee should draw up quality criteria. The report has been circulated for comment and the proposals are being prepared within the Government Offices.

Culture and communication

182. The Living History Forum is tasked with being a national forum to promote initiatives pertaining to democracy, tolerance and human rights, with its starting point being the Holocaust. In particular, the Forum is to communicate about the Holocaust and Communism's crimes against humanity. The Forum is to endeavour to strengthen people's willingness to actively promote the equal value of all people. A vital part of the Forum's activities is exhibitions and programmes, education and training. The Forum produces reports regularly and works actively with experts in the research community. The Forum also produces various types of teaching materials. The main target groups for the Living History Forum are teachers and school pupils.

183. Since 2019, the Forum has been running the DEMBRA project jointly with the Swedish National Agency for Education. DEMBRA is a Swedish acronym for democratic preparedness against antisemitism, racism and antidemocratic attitudes. The project aims to foster a democratic school culture based on participation and critical thinking. This means working with a 'whole school approach' involving skills enhancement for teachers, school leaders and other staff at the school. DEMBRA is developed by the Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies (HL-Senteret). For 2022 and 2023, following on from Sweden's undertakings at the Malmö international forum for remembering the Holocaust, the Living History Forum and the Swedish National Agency for Education have been tasked with developing a tool for systematic efforts to strengthen democracy in the school system, in adult education and in other parts of the education system for adults.

184. Between 2013 and 2020, the Swedish Media Council was tasked with running the No Hate Speech Movement, a youth campaign. Between 2017 and 2020, the campaign aimed to raise awareness of racism and similar forms of hostility on the Internet among children and young people.

185. Based on existing research and other studies and having regard to current legislation, the Swedish Media Council has an ongoing task to identify methods that can counter racism, similar forms of hostility and hate crime on the Internet among children and young people.

Other recommendations

Consultation and joint forum for consultation with special reference to paragraph 31 of the Committee's recommendations

186. As part of the preparations for Sweden's twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth periodic report, a *sakråd* (joint forum for consultation) was held with representatives of civil society on the 6th of December. The purpose of the joint forum for consultation was to learn from experts and get input from civil society on the issues dealt with in the report, and to inform those present about the reporting process and Sweden's work to counter various forms of

racism. A separate joint forum for consultation with representatives of youth organisations was held on the 9th of December in order to learn from their specific expertise in the area. The memoranda from these joint fora for consultation will be available at regeringen.se.

Ratification of other instruments, with special reference to paragraph 28 of the Committee's recommendations

187. Sweden makes no other assessment than that described in paragraph 156 of the twenty-second and twenty-third report. The protection stipulated in the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families largely follows the rights of other conventions ratified by Sweden.

188. In March 2018, an inquiry chair was appointed to map the compliance of Swedish legislation and case-law with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The inquiry chair presented their final report in November 2020. With regard to Article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on non-discrimination, the assessment of the inquiry is, *inter alia*, that the Discrimination Act, together with Sweden's penal law, supplements the Social Services Act, Education Act, Health and Medical Services Act, and other Acts which pertain more directly to the rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Discrimination Act also regulates the consequences of violating the prohibition.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has been in force as Swedish law since 1 January 2020.

Amendment of Article 8 of the Convention, with special reference to paragraph 32 of the Committee's recommendations

189. On 29 April 1993, the Swedish Government decided to approve the amendment. On 17 May 1993, the approval was deposited with the UN Secretary-General in New York (SÖ 1995:23).

Dissemination of information, with special reference to paragraph 35 of the Committee's recommendations

190. More detailed information on Sweden's work with human rights can be found on regeringen.se. These websites contain the texts of conventions, information on individual complaint procedures, Sweden's reports to UN Monitoring Committees and the conclusions and recommendations of these Committees. Key documents are available in Swedish and English.