



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
24 April 2026

Original: English  
English, French and Spanish only

---

## Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

### **Information received from Sweden on follow-up to the concluding observations on its seventh periodic report\***

[Date received: 31 March 2026]

---

\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



1. On March 1, 2024, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted Concluding Observations on the seventh periodic report of the Kingdom of Sweden on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/SWE/CO/7). This document contains follow-up information in response to the Committee's recommendations as requested in paragraph 45 of the Concluding observations, specifically recommendations 15a (Indigenous Peoples), 25b (right to just and favorable conditions of work) and 27c (right to social security).

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 15 (a) of the concluding observations (E/C.12/SWE/CO/7)**

2. In paragraph 15 (a) of the Concluding Observations the Committee requested information on the Government's work to ensure the effective implementation of the Act on Consultation, including by providing adequate training for government and municipal officials on its provisions and the importance of meaningful dialogue and consultation with the Sami.

3. The Sami were first recognized by the Swedish Parliament as an indigenous People in 1977 and with the introduction of the National Minority Act in 2000 the Sami were also recognized as a national minority. In 2007 Sweden adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Since 2011, the Sami people is also recognized in the constitution which prescribes an obligation for the Government to promote the possibilities of the Sami to maintain and develop their culture and communities.

4. Sweden is strongly committed to upholding international law and human rights including Indigenous rights. Dialogue with the Sami Parliament and Sami organizations is a crucial part of the Government's efforts to shape and strengthen the Government's policy on issues related to the Sami.

5. Already in 2009, the Swedish government presented a proposal for a model for consultation with the Sami people on issues of particular importance to them. When the memorandum was circulated, certain critical views were expressed by, among others, the Sami Parliament. At this point the Government did not proceed with the proposal. In 2016 the Government Offices assessed that the issue of a consultation procedure needed to be re-examined, which was the starting point for a process that led to that the Act (2022:66) on Consultation on matters concerning the Sami People ('the Act on Consultation') entered into force in March 2022.

6. Initially, the Act on Consultation only applied to the Government and government agencies. Since March 2024, the Act has also applied to municipalities and regions. According to the Act, the Government, government agencies, regions and municipalities as a general rule are obliged to consult the Sami Parliament and sometimes also a reindeer herding community or a Sami organization concerned by a decision when deciding on issues that are of certain concern to the Sami people. According to the Act on Consultation, Sami representatives also have the right of initiative. This means they have the right to request consultation on a matter even if neither the government or a government authority, region or municipality have taken such an initiative in the first place.

7. The Act on Consultation is an important step in ensuring the Sami people's right to transparency and participation in decision-making processes that especially affect them. Sami interests and rights are better highlighted and properly considered because of the consultations. The Act on Consultation with the Sami People can however still be considered a relatively new piece of legislation. The government's assessment is that knowledge of the Act and its application is continuously increasing among the relevant authorities. This can be illustrated by the increasing number of consultation requests that the Sami Parliament receives. In 2022, the Sami Parliament received 110 requests, which can be compared to 324 requests in 2025.

8. Sweden regards the procedure under the Consultation Act as a specific form of consultation in line with the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). In the explanation of vote when adopting UNDRIP in 2007, Sweden, among other things, clarified

that the right to self-determination in Article 3 should not be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States and that Article 19 and Article 32 (2) shall be interpreted as a guarantee that Indigenous Peoples must be consulted, not as giving them a right of veto.

9. An important part of the Swedish legislative process is the practice of circulating government reports and other documents for comment by relevant bodies. Government agencies such as the Sami Parliament, to which matters are referred for comments whenever they are a stakeholder, are obliged to give an opinion. These opinions are considered and processed within the Government Offices. Effective consultation and participation of various kinds, in accordance with Sweden's international obligations, have a long tradition in Sweden and are a fundamental feature of (the?) Swedish democracy. Consultations are therefore held on a regular basis and in a variety of ways. This means that in addition to consultations under the Act on Consultation, within the framework of Swedish legislation, there are several other opportunities for Sami representatives to have their say in decision-making processes.

10. According to the Environmental Code, the Mineral Act, the Forestry Act and the Planning and Building Act, the reindeer herding community concerned must be asked for its opinion before any decision is taken. Furthermore, for plans or programmes, and activities or measures likely to have a significant impact on the environment, there are environmental assessment requirements, in line with the European Union requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment Directives (2001/42/EC and 2011/92/EU). Such assessments include consultations with affected citizens and stakeholders, such as reindeer herding communities. In addition, reindeer herding communities regularly have legal standing in matters leading to decisions that concern them. The reindeer herding communities are in such cases entitled to access all material relating to the matters and must be given the opportunity to comment before a decision is taken.

11. As of 2025, the Sami Parliament has received an added permanent budget allocation of SEK 5 million to be able to effectively participate in consultations. The Government assesses that this reinforcement will give the Sami Parliament good conditions for participating in consultations with the government, state agencies, municipalities and regions on issues that concern the Sami people.

12. It may be important to mention that in the Government bill that preceded the Act on Consultation it was considered appropriate to evaluate the act a few years after it had fully entered into force. The purpose of the evaluation, according to the government bill, could be to analyze its application, whether it fulfils its purpose, as well as the social and economic consequences of the act.

### **On the availability of information about Sami conditions and the consultation procedure**

13. The Sami Parliament is both the representative body of the Sami people and a national Government authority on Sami issues which has a mandate to engage in community planning and monitor consideration of Sami needs. In 2025, (state) funding for the Sami Parliament amounted to approximately SEK 260 million.

14. One of the tasks of the Sami Parliament is, according to the Sami Parliament Act, to provide information about Sami conditions. The Sami Parliament disseminates information about Sami people, Sami conditions and Sami society, among other things, by participating in various public events and through a special website [Samer.se](http://Samer.se) where current reports are continuously published. The Sami Parliament also offers training and lectures on reindeer herding and Sami land use, disseminates information via social media and produces printed publications.

15. The Sami Parliament has produced and provides detailed guidance documents on the Consultation Act, where one version of the document is intended for civil servants at state agencies and another version of the document is intended for civil servants at municipalities and regions. The Sami Parliament's website also provides a wide range of additional information about the Consultation Act.

16. In June 2025 the Swedish agency for Youth and Civil Society was commissioned by the Government to prevent and combat racism against the Sami (A2025/00141, A2025/00674). The assignment includes implementing educational initiatives directed at municipalities and regions, focusing on topics such as the Sami people and their culture, history, and rights as an Indigenous People, as well as how racism against Sami can manifest and affect their living conditions. The work should build on the agency's previous efforts in this area and on current knowledge about Sami exposure to racism and hate crimes. The assignment is to be reported in March 2028.

17. The government agency The Living History Forum has produced support material on racism against Sami for teachers and other school staff. It is also tasked to continue providing professional development and awareness-raising initiatives concerning various historical and contemporary forms of racism, including racism against Sami, for school staff and other relevant public sector occupational groups. The Living History Forum has also been commissioned by the government to carry out knowledge-raising initiatives about historical events that affect the Sami and the four other national minorities, Jews, Roma, Sweden Finns, and Tornedalians in Sweden. The assignment includes producing and disseminating material, among other things, aimed at actors in the school system and in the system for non-formal adult education. (Ku2022/01209).

18. At the request of the Sami Parliament and following a feasibility study carried out by the Sami Parliament, the Truth Commission for the Sami people was appointed as a committee of inquiry by the Government in November 2021 (Dir. 2021:103). 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 October 2026 at the latest.

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 25 (b) of the concluding observations**

19. Fighting work-related crime is a priority area for the Swedish government. The joint government agency initiative to combat and prevent work-related crime continues in seven regional centres. Nine agencies, including the Swedish Police Authority, the Tax Agency, the Work Environment Authority and the Migration Agency, collaborate to detect undeclared work, dangerous work environments, violations of regulations and human trafficking.

20. To stem exploitation of third country nationals, the government has raised the salary required for the issuing of a work permit to a level required for a good living standard. The government has proposed to further increase this salary requirement and to make it possible to exclude professions where there is serious abuse of work permit regulations from being granted work permits.

21. Alongside these proposed changes, the Swedish government has proposed that two new offences will be introduced – exploitation of foreign labour and trading in work permits. The special charge imposed on employers who employ an alien who is not entitled to stay or work in Sweden will be doubled. A clarifying provision will be introduced whereby work permits may be refused if the employer has been issued certain sanctions or is suspected of/had been convicted of certain offences.

22. Effective 1 April 2025, the possibility of changing track from a rejected asylum application to a work permit without leaving Sweden has been removed. Applicants in this track change process had been identified as especially vulnerable to exploitation.

23. In addition, Sweden has contributed to multi-agency initiatives, including the CAPE project, a regional programme (2019–2024) led by the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Swedish Gender Equality Agency that aims to improve the identification, prevention and

disruption of human trafficking for forced labour and labour exploitation by strengthening institutional knowledge, practitioner capacity, and cross-border cooperation.

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 27 (c) of the concluding observations**

24. The Swedish Government can initially conclude that several benefits and allowances within the social insurance system are linked to the so-called price base amount (prisbasbeloppet) which is adjusted each year as of January 1<sup>st</sup> and based on changes in the general price level in the country. This includes for instance the guarantee pension and income support for the elderly, which are means-tested benefits provided to those that have had a low income, or no income at all, during their life, sickness compensation in the form of guaranteed compensation, and additional cost allowance for adults and children who have additional costs due to a disability.

25. Similarly, for many income-replacing benefits, such as the parental benefit, pregnancy benefit, sickness benefit and temporary parental benefit, the ceilings for the benefits (i.e., the maximum benefit obtainable) are adjusted annually according to changes in the price base amount. The earnings-related old-age pension, income pension, and supplementary pensions, instead follows the average income development in the country.

26. Social assistance, a form of last resort assistance provided at local level by the municipalities, is based on a national standard (riksnorm) which is adjusted annually according to Government decisions on the basis of calculations from the Swedish Consumer Agency (Konsumentverket) and the consumer price index. Accordingly, many central government transfers in Sweden are uprated on the basis of various indexes, such as price- or income growth in the country.

27. Further, the Swedish Government takes note of the recommendation to adjust the daily allowance for asylum-seekers so that it is indexed to the cost of living. Asylum seekers in Sweden are guaranteed accommodation and the provision of basic necessities through the Migration Agency's facilities. These arrangements, together with the possibility to apply for special grants for essential needs such as winter clothing, constitute necessary support that is not dependent on changes in the cost of living.

28. The Swedish Government also take note of the recommendation to adjust the basic unemployment benefit, so it is indexed to the cost of living. The minimum and maximum daily allowance for the basic unemployment benefit is regulated by ordinance. On October 1<sup>st</sup> 2025, a new Unemployment Insurance Act entered into force, consolidating unemployment benefits into a unified income-loss insurance scheme.