



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Employment

Several major challenges awaiting

Published 14 May 2019

Listen to Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson talk about her continuing role as Minister for Employment, what challenges she sees ahead and which issue she will be addressing first.



Article from Ministry of Employment

The future of work is not set in stone

Published 29 April 2019

On 4–5 April 2019, a Nordic conference on the future of work was held in Reykjavik, Iceland. The conference focused on megatrends affecting the labour market in the future.

The findings of the report by the ILO (International Labour Organisation) Global Commission on the Future of Work were presented at the conference. The Norwegian research foundation Fafo also presented drivers, institutions and politics from the Nordic research project on the future of work.

A panel discussion linked to both reports was held with the participation of the Nordic labour ministers, the ILO and representatives of international employers and trade organisations. The discussion focused on the capacity to act and moving from words to action.

- Instead of asking ourselves what the future of work will be like, we need to focus above all on how we are to face the future. I would like to highlight four important factors here. Opportunities for retraining and the role of the social partners in promoting this; decent working conditions throughout an entire working life; continuing efforts to create a more gender-equal labour market; and well-equipped welfare systems, says Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson.

Participants included Sweden's Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson, Norway's Minister for Labour and Social Affairs Anniken Hauglie, Iceland's Minister of Social Affairs and Children Ásmundur Einar Daðason, ILO Director-General Guy Ryder, Secretary-General of the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) Roberto Suárez Santos, and General

Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) Sharan Burrow.

The material and discussions from the conference will make up the Nordic contribution to the ILO centenary at the International Labour Conference in Geneva later this year.



Article from Ministry of Employment

future of work

Published 14 February 2019

On 22 January, the ILO's centenary was launched in Geneva. The centenary, which will run throughout 2019, focuses on the future of work and forms part of the ILO's long-term strategy for creating a decent and sustainable working life worldwide.

At the same time as the centenary was launched, the Global Commission on the Future of Work was in attendance to present its final report. The Commission's report presents the possibilities and challenges that are arising due to digitalisation, climate change and demographic changes. The Commission's work has been led by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa.

In the report, the Commission presents a human-centred agenda for the future, consisting of 10 recommendations divided into three main areas:

- Investing in people's capabilities, for example through initiatives for lifelong learning, social protection and increased gender equality.
- Investing in labour market institutions, the development of collective agreements and so on, and social dialogue.
- Investing in decent and sustainable work for a green global economy.

From possibilities to reality

Modern working life demands an ambitious work environment policy. Making use of possibilities and turning them into reality requires global engagement, from the world's governments all the way to the social partners.

— Modern working life means new opportunities to get rid of dangerous jobs, while traditional working environment problems remain. Global

competition, digitalisation and new working methods are leading to new ways of organising work. These must not lead to precarious forms of employment or lower wages,” says Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson.

The results of the Global Commission’s report will form the basis for continued discussions at the ILO’s International Labour Conference in Geneva, 10–21 June. Some 4 000 representatives of employer organisations, trade unions and governments will attend.



Article from Ministry of Employment

Nader Ahmadi new Director-General of the Swedish Agency for Work Environment Expertise

Published 27 June 2018

On 19 April 2018, the Government appointed Nader Ahmadi as Director-General and head of SAWEE. Most recently, he was pro vice-chancellor of the University of Gävle. Mr Ahmadi will be the first Director-General of the newly established agency when he takes up his post on 1 June 2018.

"The Government has clearly prioritised work environment efforts during the electoral period. Through the new Swedish Agency for Work Environment Expertise, we are now taking another important step to improve the working environment for everyone working in Sweden. I am pleased today to introduce the first Director-General of the new agency," says Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson.

Nader Ahmadi is a professor of sociology and has been the pro vice-chancellor and acting head of agency at the University of Gävle since 2016. He was formerly head of the University's Academy for Health and Working Life. Mr Ahmadi has broad experience in leadership and development work and has held positions at the Government Offices, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), UNICEF and the World Bank.

"The labour market has always been complex and dynamic, which means that the conditions for good work environment measures and sustainable working life are also constantly changing. The new agency will help prepare Sweden to better harness opportunities and respond to the working life challenges of today and tomorrow. Our vision is to be an engine for

improvement in working life and promote work environment measures that are always a step ahead," says Mr Ahmadi.

The Government has also adopted an ordinance containing instructions and appropriation directions for SAWEE, which will become a national knowledge centre for work environment issues. The agency has been tasked with compiling and spreading knowledge, as well as evaluation and analysis, to contribute to the practical application of knowledge about work environments.

The agency will also be tasked with developing knowledge on working life in the future. There is a need for both easily accessible overviews and in-depth knowledge about how a constantly changing working life can affect the work environment, as well as about the conditions for preventive work environment measures. A report on the assignment is to be presented alongside the annual report for 2019.

SAWEE will be located in Gävle and start operations on 1 June. According to the Government's budget bill, SEK 18.8 million will be allocated in 2018. The agency will gradually be built up and when operations are fully established in 2020, the budget is expected to total SEK 35 million per year.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Both incentives and motivation needed to ensure learning becomes reality in the workplace

Published 11 June 2018

Supplying skills to the labour market, and to society at large, has been a recurring issue since the Government's National Innovation Council started meeting in 2015. When the Council met on 28 May at Harpsund, the meeting opened with the issue of lifelong learning in the workplace.

Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson summarises the discussions from the meeting: "Sweden has a strong starting position. The Swedish model means that we encourage and facilitate labour market adjustment. Both central government and the social partners take considerable responsibility in this. However, digitalisation and globalisation place major demands on skills development and learning in the workplace."

What is important to consider in the work going forward?

"The discussion emphasised the importance of business managers giving skills issues greater weight and of strengthening cooperation between working life and education providers. Both incentives and motivation are needed to ensure learning becomes reality in the workplace," says Ms Johansson.

What will the workplaces of the future look like?

"New opportunities to acquire new skills must be available to more people, for example through using online courses or other flexible means of

customising and making education accessible for concrete needs. But to ensure that these new skills benefit both the individual and the workplace, a good, supportive learning environment is important," says Ms Johansson.

In the current public debate, there is considerable engagement and interest in the issue of learning, lifelong learning and skills supply. Increasingly greater demands are being made today on continuous learning throughout one's entire working life, but how is this need being addressed in the labour market and at individual workplaces? What characterises a learning workplace?

Minister for Higher Education and Research Helene Hellmark Knutsson, one of the government members of the National Innovation Council, explains more from the meeting.

Could you give a brief summary of what the meeting concluded on this particular point? A concrete example to think about in the work going forward?

"It was an exciting discussion, including many well-informed contributions and good, concrete proposals. Technological developments in digitalisation and automation are resulting in new demands on knowledge and skills in working life. The days when it sufficed to acquire an education at the start of one's career are gone," says Ms Hellmark Knutsson.

"It's clear that we need a holistic approach to education and learning, where every part is needed to ensure a good overall outcome. Continuous learning in the workplace needs to be developed and regarded more as the strategic issue it actually is.

What is most important to ensure the success of lifelong learning?

"From the perspective of higher education, I believe that collaboration between educational institutions and companies must improve. Close cooperation is required to develop the courses the business sector needs and help increase access to the courses currently offered. The development of courses for professionals, digital learning and skills validation opportunities are important parts of the overall picture. More people will need to change their career path or acquire new skills and knowledge throughout their working life. This is why opportunities to study at higher education institutions later in life must increase. We are now working in a coordinated way on a number of education-based reforms throughout the country and through all stages of life. One major reform is expanding higher education

throughout the country through resources equivalent to almost 25 000 new places by 2021.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice

The Government of Sweden's measures against sexual violence and harassment

Published 03 January 2018

One of the Swedish Government's gender equality policy sub-goals is that men's violence against women must stop. With reference to #metoo, the following lists some examples of implemented and forthcoming measures to counteract sexual violence, harassment and assault.

The Government's work involves preventive initiatives, stronger protection and support, more effective law enforcement, work environment investments and awareness-building measures.

Article: The Government of Sweden takes action against sexual violence and harassment

Work at an overarching level

- On 1 January 2017, the ten-year national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women, including honour-related violence and oppression, as well as prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes, came into effect. The strategy, which contains a package of measures, is intended to guide central government steering in this area and has a particular focus on developing efforts to prevent violence. In total, the Government is setting aside around SEK 1.3 billion for efforts to counteract men's violence against women in 2017–2020.

Fact sheet: National strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women

- A new gender equality agency begins working in January 2018. The agency will work with follow-up, analysis, coordination, knowledge and support for achieving the Government's gender equality policy goals. One of the sub-goals is that men's violence against women must stop, and that women and men, girls and boys must have the same right and access to physical integrity.

Summary of the Government Communication 'Power, goals and agency – a feminist policy'

Stronger protection and support

- At the end of 2017 the Government proposed to the Council on Legislation new sexual offence legislation that is based on consent. The Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority will receive resources to implement information and training initiatives in the area of sexual offences.

Press release: New sexual offence legislation based on consent

- The Act on special protection for workers against reprisals for whistleblowing concerning serious irregularities, the Whistleblowing Act, which entered into force on 1 January 2017, can be applicable in situations where an employer takes reprisals against an employee for reporting sexual harassment to a government agency or the media.

- In its bill on enhanced penal protection of personal integrity, the Government proposed that the protection against threats and violations be strengthened and modernised. Most of this enters into force on 1 January 2018.

- At the turn of 2016/17, the legislation for counteracting workplace discrimination was tightened.

- The issue of better protection against discrimination and violations in schools (based on SOU 2016:87) is being processed at the Government Offices.

More effective law enforcement and preventive efforts

- The Government is implementing a historic investment through additional funding to the Swedish Police Authority of just over SEK 9.8 billion over the period 2017–2020. Assignments in the appropriation directions to the Police and the Swedish Prosecution Authority allow the Government to follow how these authorities are working to develop their working methods for investigating rape and other sexual offences.
- The Government has an agreement with Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, SALAR, in 2017 to strengthen the focus of gender equality work on men, boys and questions of masculinity.

Work environment investments

- The Government has adopted a national work environment strategy in close consultation with the labour market and union partners, containing concrete measures in three priority areas, one of which is the psychosocial work environment. The strategy has been produced partly in light of gender segregation in the Swedish labour market. Research indicates that a gender unequal organisation goes hand in hand with psychosocial aspects such as conflict, harassment and high staff turnover.

A Work Environment Strategy for Modern Working Life 2016–2020

- The Government's strategy emphasises that initiatives are needed to strengthen the organisational and social work environment. The Swedish Work Environment Authority's regulations on organisational and social work environment were adopted in spring 2016 and entail a major step forward in work environment management. Victimisation is a focus area in the regulations.
- The Government has enhanced resources for its work environment policy by over SEK 100 million per year during this term of office. The funds have enabled the Work Environment Authority to strengthen its supervisory activities. Around a hundred new work environment inspectors have been hired.
- The Government has adopted some changes to the Swedish Work Environment Authority's instructions, which enter into force on 2 January 2018. The instructions now explicitly state that the Authority is to conduct its activities so as to promote diversity and gender equality and a work environment free from victimisation (Section 4 a).

Awareness-building measures

- The Children's Welfare Foundation Sweden is receiving SEK 500,000 from the Government to disseminate information and support materials on sexual harassment to all compulsory and upper secondary schools.
- In order to raise the basic competency of particularly relevant professional groups, the Government has decided to make teaching about men's violence against women and violence in close relationships, including honour-related violence and oppression, compulsory in a number of higher education programmes.
- The Swedish Schools Inspectorate is reviewing the sex and human relationships teaching of compulsory schools, compulsory education for pupils with intellectual disabilities, upper secondary schools and upper secondary education for pupils with learning disabilities. The completed assignment is to be presented by 16 February 2018 at the latest. The teacher's guide "Dags att prata om" [Time to talk about] has been launched for schools to improve their ability to talk to children about sexual abuse.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research,
Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs,
Ministry of Justice

The Government of Sweden takes action against sexual violence and harassment

Published 03 January 2018

The #metoo movement in Sweden strongly demonstrates that more needs to be done to combat sexual harassment and sexual violence in workplaces and society at large. The Swedish Government requires all employers to take responsibility for a secure work environment. In the area of work environment and discrimination there are already many tools and relevant legislation, but the power and size of the petitions show that there are deficiencies in compliance with the regulations. For this reason, Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson and Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Regnér have met with the labour market and union partners, and several ministers have in recent weeks convened meetings with heads of government agencies and business leaders in order to focus on the responsibility of employers to counteract sexual violence and harassment.

The testimonies regarding sexual violence and harassment in a great number of workplaces and schools that have emerged in the wake of the #metoo

movement confirm that more needs to be done. The Government has already adopted a number of initiatives, and the long-term measures against sexual violence and harassment already adopted by the Government include a proposal for improved legislation on sexual consent and sexual offence, the national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women, the establishment of the new gender equality agency, and a national work environment strategy.

"Thanks to the important petitions in industry after industry, with testimonies about violations and harassment, we have moved the focus from women's behaviour and appearance to talking about the responsibility of men. Feminist policy is needed, and the work against sexualised violence and harassment is a high priority for the Government. The new gender equality agency, which commences its activities in January, will play an important role in supporting government agencies and organisations to systematically achieve societal change," says Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

"Several of the testimonies made public have clarified the frequent link between working conditions and vulnerability to sexual harassment and abuse. Criminal acts committed at workplaces shall of course always be reported to be dealt with by the judicial system. But in addition to punishable acts, many women also bear witness to a completely unacceptable work environment. It is obvious that not enough has been done to rectify these problems," says Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson.

Meetings with government agencies and the social partners

With reference to the #metoo petitions, the Government has initiated meetings about sexual violence and harassment with heads of government agencies, labour market and union partners, business leaders and the initiators behind the petitions.

Concrete measures against violence and violations

The Government has both ongoing and planned measures to counteract sexual violence, harassment and violations. This involves preventive initiatives, stronger protection and support, more effective law enforcement, improved supervision and awareness-building measures.

Article: The Government of Sweden's measures against sexual violence and harassment



Article from Ministry of Employment

New work environment agency in Sweden

Published 27 September 2017

To strengthen national and international work environment efforts, the Government has today decided to establish a new government agency for work environment awareness. The agency is to be situated in Gävle and will start operations on 1 June 2018.

"From day one, the Government has clearly prioritised work environment efforts. A national strategy has been adopted and resources have been increased by SEK 125 million annually. Through the new agency for work environment awareness, work environment efforts will now be further strengthened," says Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson.

The Swedish Work Environment Authority currently has a limited mandate as a national function for knowledge on the work environment and working life. But since the previous government closed the National Institute for Working Life 10 years ago, there has been no special agency with national responsibility for compiling and spreading knowledge about working life. Nor is there an actor that evaluates the work environment policies that have been implemented. The social partners – both trade unions and employer organisations – have long pointed out the need for such an organisation and have recommended the creation of a new agency for that purpose.

The new agency for work environment awareness will be tasked with compiling and making available knowledge about the working environment and communicating this in a manner tailored to the target audience. The aim is to support practical work environment efforts at workplaces. The agency will also evaluate and analyse labour market policy and support the

Government in international work environment efforts. The agency will also work on issues relating to occupational health services.

Strengthening central government presence and spreading central government agencies throughout the country is an important priority for the Government. It is also a way for the Government to contribute to central government jobs for civil servants and academics outside the biggest cities. The agency for work environment awareness will therefore be situated in Gävle. In choosing a location, the Government has considered it advantageous for the new agency to be situated in close proximity to the University of Gävle, which conducts working life research. Gävle municipality has a large catchment area for skills provision. All in all, it is considered that the new agency is well-placed to attract the right skills.

The new agency is to be up and running by 1 June 2018. In the Budget Bill for 2018, SEK 18.8 million has been earmarked for the agency. The agency will be built up successively. When operations are fully established in 2020, the agency's budget is expected to total SEK 35 million annually.

Ewa Stålldal has been appointed Inquiry Chair for the establishment of the agency. She was most recently Director-General of the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare (Forte) in 2014–2016.

The Budget Bill for 2018 is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.



Article from Ministry of Employment

Ministry of Employment initiatives in the Budget Bill for 2018

Published 22 September 2017

Everyone who can work should work and contribute to our common welfare. This is why, in the autumn budget, the Government is investing in strengthening labour market measures and the integration of new arrivals. The Government is reforming the system of subsidised employment and introducing a new, uniform supportive measure – introductory jobs. The Government is also strengthening efforts for a sustainable working life by establishing a new agency for work environment awareness and allocating funds for the development of methods to combat unfair competition. Moreover, the Government is investing in measures to continue creating a sustainable reception system and ensuring the effective integration of newly arrived immigrants. The paths to employment will be strengthened through a new regulatory framework for Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish public employment service) on the integration of new arrivals and the introduction of an education and training obligation. The Budget Bill for 2018 is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

Integration of new arrivals

Same requirements for new arrivals as for other jobseekers

The integration of newly arrived immigrants in working life and Swedish society must be more effective. Therefore, a new regulation for the integration of new arrivals in working life and Swedish society will enter into force on 1 January 2018. The regulatory changes will harmonise the regulation of new arrivals' integration in working life and Swedish society to a greater extent with the regulations that apply to other jobseekers.

This harmonisation will mean that the right to an introduction plan will be removed and replaced with a referral to a labour market policy programme, that a proportional system of measures will be introduced for new arrivals corresponding to what currently applies to other jobseekers, and the processing of introduction benefit will be moved from Arbetsförmedlingen to Försäkringskassan (the Swedish social insurance agency).

Education and training obligation for new arrivals

As of 1 January 2018, the Government will introduce stricter requirements for all unemployed people who are considered to be in need of education and training to undertake training offered within labour market policy. The Government is also introducing an education and training obligation for newly arrived immigrants. The education and training obligation means that all newly arrived immigrants involved in Arbetsförmedlingen's introduction measures and who are considered in need of education and training to find work can be instructed to apply for and undertake education and training.

The education and training obligation makes clear the individual's responsibility to, within the framework of their introduction, obtain the skills necessary to be matched to a job or to take part in labour market policy measures or continue studying.

The Government considers that the municipalities should be allocated funding to better meet the education and training needs of newly arrived immigrants and therefore intends to raise the standard compensation for municipalities' reception of newly arrived immigrants in 2018. This additional funding amounts to SEK 301 million in 2018, SEK 467 million in 2019 and SEK 378 million from 2020 onwards.

Enhanced work training as a measure within the introduction programme

In connection with the introduction of the new regulations for integration on 1 January 2018, the Government intends to make enhanced work training available for participants in the introduction programme too. In the autumn budget, SEK 54 million has been allocated for 2018, SEK 39 million for 2019 and SEK 36 million as of 2020 for enhanced work training.

Increased resources for civic information within early measures

Information about how Swedish society works is crucial for those who have recently arrived in Sweden. It is important that asylum seekers receive information as quickly as possible about the basic principles of the Swedish system, gender equality and what applies with regard to the rights and obligations of the individual.

The Government therefore proposes that the funds for early measures be increased by SEK 39 million in 2018, SEK 39 million in 2019 and SEK 38 million from 2020.

Increase in promotion funds for fast tracks

The Government wants newly arrived immigrants in Sweden to quickly find a job that is relevant to the individual's education and experience. At the same time, there is a shortage of labour in many sectors. These sectors are now receiving help to find the skills they need thanks to cooperation between Arbetsförmedlingen, the social partners and industry on fast tracks.

To increase resources to the social partners' work on fast tracks, the Government proposes that the funds for special promotion and development measures be increased by SEK 20 million in 2018 and SEK 35 million in 2019.

Labour market

The Government's objective is that Sweden will have the lowest unemployment rate in the EU by 2020. The Swedish labour market is now developing strongly. The number of people in employment has increased by more than 200 000 since the Government entered office in 2014, and youth unemployment is at its lowest since 2003. The Government's reforms have contributed to strong growth, a rapid increase in employment and a decrease in unemployment, and this will continue in 2018. In 2018, unemployment is

expected to be below 6 per cent.

Introductory jobs – simpler and more effective employment support

Subsidised employment is an efficient way of getting people with weaker links to the labour market into work. For this support to function effectively, it must be adapted to the needs of jobseekers and employers. The Government therefore proposes that the current forms of employment support be merged and simplified. Five forms of support will become one – introductory jobs.

This reform will make processing more straightforward and remove unnecessary differences. There will also be less administration for employers. Introductory jobs provide more effective support for those with the greatest needs. This support can be combined flexibly with education and training. At the same time, the ceilings for support and introductory jobs will be harmonised in a benefit qualifying gross salary of SEK 20 000 per month, which is a considerable increase compared with the support being replaced. New start jobs and extra jobs will remain in place.

Gradual increase of the wage subsidies ceiling

Since the Government took office, work has been under way to raise the wage subsidies ceiling. The first increase was introduced at the beginning of the year. In the Budget Bill for 2018, it is proposed that the wage subsidies ceiling be raised further.

This autumn, the Government intends to raise the current ceiling from SEK 17 100 per month in benefit qualifying gross salary to SEK 18 300; in 2019 the ceiling will be raised to SEK 19 100 and will amount to SEK 20 000 in 2020. This is the same amount as the ceilings for introductory jobs, extra jobs and new start jobs. The proposal also includes a corresponding increase for jobs in sheltered employment with public sector employers.

SEK 500 million to municipalities and county councils

Extra jobs have given municipalities, county councils and private health and social care providers the opportunity to gain an extra resource to support their activities. Long-term unemployed people and newly arrived immigrants can also be employed in certain cultural, sports and social activities. To

further encourage municipalities and county councils to employ long-term unemployed people and newly arrived immigrants, the Government is allocating special municipality support of SEK 500 million in the autumn budget to support those who take a major responsibility in employing people who are furthest from the labour market.

More secure unemployment insurance fund

The Government is further improving protection for people who become unemployed. In the autumn budget, the Government is setting aside funds to reduce the number of initial qualifying days in unemployment insurance from seven to six days. The Government is allocating SEK 30 million in the Budget Bill for 2018, followed by SEK 60 million for 2019 and 2020 respectively.

Increased funding to Samhall

Samhall has an important role to play in employing people with disabilities and who cannot find work any other way or through other measures. The Government intends to increase funds to the company to improve the possibility of fulfilling the labour market policy remit and to create more transitions to employment outside the company, and to increase the number of jobs in sheltered employment.

Increased activity support for young people with disabilities to be phased out

There is currently a form of support allowing young people with disabilities to receive increased activity support if they have taken part in the programme for a certain period of time. This increase in compensation after more time spent in the programme deviates from other compensation systems and risks lengthening the period of unemployment. The Government's assessment is that this is not fit for purpose.

The Government proposes that the increased activity support for young people with disabilities be phased out by not granting this right to increased activity support to any new people once the change has been implemented.

Loans for driving lessons

To improve opportunities to enter the labour market, the Government

intends to introduce the possibility of taking out a loan for driving lessons for a category B driving licence.

The loan will finance driving lessons at approved driving schools and is intended in the first phase for certain unemployed people between 18 and 47 years of age. To help improve upper secondary school completion rates, the Government intends, in the second phase, to expand the opportunity in 2019 to include people aged 19–20 who have completed their upper secondary education.

Working life

New work environment agency to be located in Gävle

To strengthen national and international work environment efforts, the Government has decided to establish a new agency for work environment awareness. The remit for the new agency will be to collate and disseminate knowledge about the work environment. The agency will also evaluate and analyse labour market policy, focus on occupational health issues and support the Government in international work environment efforts. The new agency will be up and running on 1 June 2018 and will be located in Gävle.



Article from Ministry of Employment

European high-level meeting on young people's establishment in the labour market

Published 19 February 2016 Updated 19 February 2016

Youth unemployment is a high-priority issue for the Government. As a part of work on the European Employment Strategy, Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson initiated a high-level meeting in Stockholm to discuss young people's situation in the labour market. On 18-19 February five European ministers responsible for labour market issues met for a High Level Learning Exchange on 'Designing and implementing effective strategies to support the integration and retention in the labour market of youth at risk'.

– I am very satisfied with this meeting. Together with ministerial colleagues and officials from the European Commission we have discussed what efforts are working, and not working, for young people who have difficulty establishing themselves in the labour market. We have had good discussions where we shared important experiences, says Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson.

Even though economic growth is now increasing and new jobs are being created, it is still difficult for some young people to enter, and remain at, the labour market. To reduce youth unemployment, the Government is investing in closer cooperation between central and local government with the help of the Youth Employment Delegation; within the scope of this delegation, 286 municipalities have signed agreements with the Swedish Public Employment Service on how they will tackle youth unemployment at local level.

On 18-19 February Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson hosted a European high-level meeting in Stockholm. The purpose of the meeting was to share experiences and best practice from each country and build on earlier lessons concerning young people who have difficulty establishing themselves in the labour market. Ministers from Denmark, Estonia, Germany and Portugal as well as representatives of the EU took part in the meeting.



Article from Ministry of Employment

Fast track - a quicker introduction of newly arrived immigrants

Published 11 December 2015 Updated 10 June 2016

The Government wants newly arrived immigrants in Sweden to quickly find a workplace that is relevant to the individual's education and experience. At the same time, there is a shortage of labour in many industries; these are now being helped with the provision of skills through the creation of fast tracks by the Swedish Public Employment Service and the industries, to make it easier for newly arrived immigrants to establish themselves in the labour market.

– I am pleased that we are now entering a structured collaboration with the industries. It is the social partners who have the expertise to assess what is required in a profession. The fast track will help employers find the opportunity to obtain people with the right skills, while newly arrived immigrants get to work in their profession, says Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson.

Fast track for social scientists and social workers

The fast track for newly arrived social scientists – including economists and lawyers – means that the Swedish Public Employment Service's various measures can be used in parallel. For example, work experience can be combined with lessons in Swedish for the workplace and a supplementary education programme at a higher education institution. To make use in the Swedish labour market of the skills of university graduates educated abroad and to ensure that they find employment that is in line with their education

and experience, the social partners see the need to establish a fast track for those with an academic background in the social sciences.

The fast track for social workers targets newly arrived immigrants with a degree in the area of social work. The fast track is a combination of work experience, lessons in Swedish for the workplace and a supplementary education programme at a higher education institution that currently offers social worker education, with the aim of supplementing foreign education in social work or a closely related subject to skills corresponding to those necessary for a Swedish degree in social work

Fast track for teachers and preschool teachers

The proposal for a fast track for newly arrived teachers means that the Swedish Public Employment Service's various initiatives for newly arrived immigrants can be used and undertaken in parallel, for example by combining work experience with Swedish for the workplace and supplementary education. The fast track for teachers and preschool teachers means that individuals will be able to enter a school or preschool through work experience and employment. The fast track is being established in cooperation with the social partners – the Swedish Teachers' Union, the National Union of Teachers, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, and Almega, the Employers' Organisation for the Swedish Service Sector – as well as the Swedish Public Employment Service, other relevant government agencies and several higher education institutions.

Fast track for professions requiring registration in health and medical care

The social partners and the Swedish Public Employment Service have produced a fast track for the twenty-one regulated professions in health and medical care. The fast track is based on the major groups of newly arrived immigrants in the area – doctors, nurses, dentists and pharmacists – and the goal is for the path into the labour market and a licence for newly arrived immigrants in these professions to be predictable, legally secure and as short as possible.



Article from Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Justice

German Minister of State for Europe Michael Roth visited Sweden

Published 26 October 2015 Updated 26 October 2015

On Thursday, 22 October, Germany's Minister of State for Europe, Michael Roth, visited Sweden and had a meeting with the Minister for Employment, Ylva Johansson, and the Minister for Justice and Migration, Morgan Johansson. The aim was to exchange experiences on the occasion of the refugee situation in Europe.

One item on the agenda was the Swedish answer to the refugee crisis including labour market integration and cooperation with social partners. During his visit in Sweden, Michael Roth also met representatives of think tanks and NGOs engaged in issues regarding refugees and integration.



Article from Ministry of Employment

The Government presents the '100 club'

Published 26 October 2015 Updated 26 October 2015

One of our greatest challenges in society is how we can become better at harnessing the skills and experience of people who were born abroad. The current situation demands that the Government, public authorities and companies take new action to identify possibilities for more new arrivals to enter working life. The Government wants to work together with companies that are prepared to employ at least 100 new arrivals to create opportunities based on the conditions and needs of each company.

Everyone needs to lend a hand to get more new arrivals into jobs. The Government is now inviting companies to help out. To this end, the Government is now establishing the '100 club' – an initiative to enable the Arbetsförmedlingen (Swedish Public Employment Service) to offer support and package solutions to major companies that want to help contribute to the introduction of new arrivals while at the same time managing their labour supply. The purpose of the initiative is to customise packages of initiatives based on individual companies' needs so as to create new opportunities for companies to employ at least 100 new arrivals within three years.

Special access to the Arbetsförmedlingen for companies

Companies that want to employ at least 100 new arrivals will be offered special access to the Arbetsförmedlingen. From 12 October, the

Arbetsförmedlingen has set up a new telephone option on its national telephone line for employers. The company will be called back within three days and its needs and requirements will be discussed at a personal meeting, in order to then identify applicants and create a customised package for the company. Examples of measures include fast tracks, career aptitude assessment, employment training, validation of qualifications, entry recruitment incentives, new start jobs, work placement schemes and occupational training with an supervisor. The initiative will apply for three years and will focus on companies that can employ at least 100 new arrivals during this period.

On Monday 12 October, Sweco, Riksbyggen, Ragn-Sells, Axfood and Hemköp announced that they will participate in the initiative and will employ at least 100 new arrivals each.



Article from Ministry of Employment

Informal European ministerial meeting in Stockholm on fair conditions in the labour market

Published 11 September 2015 Updated 14 September 2015

The issue of fair conditions in the labour market is one of the Government's overall EU priorities for 2015. It is a question of fair working conditions in the EU internal market. Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson has invited a number of EU colleagues to an informal meeting in Stockholm on 10–11 September 2015 to discuss the issue.

The right of all EU citizens to move freely and work wherever they wish within the EU is a cornerstone of European cooperation. The single market holds an exceptional potential for social and economic prosperity. But a common European labour market must not lead to poorer conditions for the workers of Europe.

Swedish initiative to discuss fair working conditions

Ms Johansson has invited a number of fellow EU ministers to a meeting in Stockholm on 10–11 September. The purpose of the meeting is to exchange experiences and discuss ways forward to ensure fair working conditions for Europe's workers, while facilitating cross-border mobility.

Representatives from Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovakia, Belgium and France will take part in the meeting.

The European Commission to present proposal at the

end of the year

At the end of 2015, the European Commission plans to present a Labour Mobility Package intended to facilitate labour mobility and prevent misuse. The package is expected to contain proposals for better coordination of social security schemes, and a target-oriented review of the Posting of Workers Directive will provide opportunity to discuss how fair working conditions in the internal market can be achieved.



Article from Ministry of Employment

Employment and youth unemployment discussed in Milan

Published 10 October 2014 Updated 12 March 2015

Against the backdrop of continuing difficulties in the EU labour market, EU employment ministers met in Milan on 8 October to exchange experiences of labour market reforms.

Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson gave an account of the Government's reform ambitions and expressed the need to give young people opportunities for sustainable employment.

"We must create genuine paths into permanent employment. For me, it is vital that we do not create a new precariat," Ms Johansson emphasised.

The European Network of Public Employment Services' directors-general as well as representatives of the European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the ILO and the OECD took part in the employment ministers' working lunch. The social partners at EU level also attended. In the afternoon, the employment ministers joined the meeting of heads of state and government. At the lunch, Sweden was represented by Ms Johansson. Mikael Sjöberg, Director-General of the Swedish Public Employment Service, also attended.



Government Offices of Sweden

Opinion piece from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of the Environment

Establishment of new arrivals to Sweden to be reformed

Published 19 February 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Dagens Nyheter 19 februari 2015

Events in the rest of the world affect us all. Terrorist organisation IS hunting down fleeing families, children being abducted by Boko Haram, repressive states persecuting journalists. These events provoke abhorrence against the perpetrators, but they also arouse empathy with the victims.

Questions are raised around every breakfast table: What if it was our family under threat? What if it was our children hearing the shelling at night? Many people in Sweden bear personal memories of repression that are now being reawakened.

Today almost 50 million people in the world are displaced. This is the most serious refugee situation since the Second World War. Conflicts around the world are forcing people to leave behind everything they own to seek security in another country. They are fleeing in desperation from war, torture, repression, abuses and rape.

One or two of every thousand refugees in the world seek asylum in Sweden. We bear a small part of the global responsibility, but in the short term it is still a major challenge, even for a rich country such as Sweden. Our values and our respect for human dignity mean that we have a collective duty to help people in distress. This Government will always stand up for a humane asylum policy and unwaveringly defend the right of asylum.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, recently praised Germany and Sweden for setting a good example in taking responsibility for the reception of refugees and providing extensive support to the UNHCR. At present, just a few EU Member States take in the vast

majority of those seeking asylum in the EU. Sweden will seek international cooperation to enable more EU countries to increase their responsibility for displaced people. In addition, Sweden will take steps in the EU to create more legal channels for people to seek asylum in the EU and to increase the reception of quota refugees in other countries.

Immigration in Sweden is regulated and asylum legislation is based on international conventions and EU law. Those granted asylum begin a journey to build a new life in Sweden. People have a strong drive to create a home, get a job and a secure income, use their skills and find their place in society. The Government's policy for getting immigrants established builds on this drive.

Handled properly, the reception of immigrants offers a massive opportunity. For many years, public debate has been characterised by concern over the demographic challenge whereby young people of the future will have to provide for an increasing number of elderly people.

The increased number of immigrants arriving in Sweden helps create better prospects of tackling this challenge.

Many of those who come to Sweden are of working age and have an education – often a higher education – and professional experience. Just as it did with the waves of immigration from Latin America, the Middle East and the Balkans in the 1980s and 1990s, Sweden's reception of refugees will bring new colleagues, neighbours, friends and family members who will help to build Sweden's prosperity. In the global economy, having good knowledge of regions, cultures and languages brings a competitive advantage, not least for an export-dependent country such as Sweden.

But there are significant shortcomings in the current policy concerning the establishment of new arrivals in the labour market and in society. This has been the case for a long time, under both centre-right and Social Democratic governments.

It takes far too long for new arrivals to find work. When not all municipalities take a share of the responsibility for receiving refugees, those who have recently arrived are forced into long stays in accommodation centres instead of being allowed to begin the process of getting settled. The measures offered to new arrivals are not sufficiently well tailored to the circumstances and needs of the target group. Finding the right path, and getting academic certificates assessed and skills validated can take several

years. In some cases there is a lack of opportunities for supplementary education to allow those with vocational training and graduates to find jobs that match their skills. Many people with foreign backgrounds also encounter discrimination.

The Government's focus is on creating more jobs, closing gaps and increasing cohesion in Sweden. For this reason, as soon as this Government came into office we launched a serious project to reform the establishment of new arrivals. In recent weeks, the debate has featured cobbled-together symbolic proposals – which for the most part risk delaying the establishment of immigrants rather than accelerating it. Making life worse for new arrivals, weakening job security or reducing remuneration and wages will not help them become established or increase cohesion in Sweden.

The Government is currently drafting an establishment package of well-founded reforms in four areas. The individual reforms in these four areas will be presented as and when the details are completed in the Government Offices. The first will be presented today.

1. Quickly into work through language, training, validation and housing. Work is key to establishing adults in Swedish society. More people establishing themselves in the labour market requires better Swedish language training, a more efficient validation process and greater opportunities for supplementary education, combined with work placements and jobs. It also requires active anti-discrimination measures in working life. The Government considers that the social partners have an important role to play in ensuring more rapid establishment in the labour market.

The Government will also present measures to ensure that more housing is built, in both the short and long term. More housing is needed for young people and students as well as new arrivals in parts of the country where the labour market is strong.

2. Every child and young person must receive a good education in preschools and schools. Municipalities will be given increased support to be able to offer newly arrived children and young people a good education in preschools and schools, and the social support needed for young people to get a good start in life. Children and young people should learn Swedish quickly, alongside continuing to develop their mother tongue and subject knowledge.

3. All municipalities must take in refugees. The reception of refugees is a

national concern. All municipalities must play their part to ensure that new arrivals can establish themselves as quickly as possible. At the same time, the municipalities should be allowed better planning opportunities when new arrivals are allocated, and be given reasonable and stable economic conditions.

4. Civil society has a key role to play. Civil society already does a great deal throughout the country to help new arrivals establish themselves. Many people do what they can to give new arrivals a warm reception. This is our country at its best, and it is a way for us to stand united. For this reason, support will be given to efforts by civil society organisations to facilitate their contribution to dignified reception of refugees. This includes a wide range of activities, from contact families and sports for children to mentors from similar professional backgrounds and language cafés.

These are the starting points for the reforms that the Government will present. This also means choosing a way forward for Sweden. We will not present symbolic proposals that worsen the establishment of refugees. Instead, we will implement well-founded reforms as part of a broad establishment package, so that people who come to Sweden can use their skills and benefit from their professional experience. Together we will develop our country.



Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Employment

Sweden nominates Ylva Johansson as new European Commissioner

Published 09 August 2019

The Government has decided to nominate Ylva Johansson, Minister for Employment and one of Sweden's most experienced ministers, as the new Swedish European Commissioner.

“Ylva Johansson is highly competent and has extensive experience of government, EU work in the Council of the European Union and dealings with the European Commission. She has a strong sense of commitment and will contribute to an effective Commission,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven in a comment.

Mr Löfven will discuss the policy issues Ms Johansson will be responsible for in the European Commission with President-elect Ursula von der Leyen, who will take the decision in the near future.

The new Commission will take office on 1 November. Mr Löfven will announce when Ms Johansson will leave her post as Minister for Employment in the Swedish Government at a later date.

“I am very pleased and honoured by the confidence the Government has shown in me through this nomination as European Commissioner for Sweden. The new European Commission has a major task in moving the EU's work forward on climate issues and for more jobs, fundamental European values and security. The role of European Commissioner involves considering the interests of the entire EU, at the same time as I will contribute my experience from Swedish politics,” says Ms Johansson.

Ylva Johansson has a background as a mathematics and physics teacher, and has been Minister for Employment since 2014. In all, Ms Johansson has held ministerial posts for 11 years under three different prime ministers since 1994. She was born in 1964, is married and has three children.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release

The ministers' press contacts

Published 22 January 2019

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Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Government Offices

New state secretaries at the Government Offices

Published 22 January 2019

The Government today appointed 31 state secretaries at the Government Offices. Former state secretaries have been dismissed from their positions. Most of the state secretaries have previously held corresponding positions at the Government Offices.

Prime Minister's Office

The Government has appointed Nils Vikmång as the Prime Minister's State Secretary. The Government has also appointed Madeleine Harby Samuelsson and Karin Wallensteen as state secretaries to Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

The Government has appointed Paula Carvalho Olovsson as State Secretary to Minister for EU Affairs Hans Dahlgren.

The Government has appointed Mats Andersson and Maria Ferm as state secretaries in the coordinating committee at the Prime Minister's Office.

Ministry of Employment

The Government has appointed Annika Dahl as State Secretary to Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson.

The Government has appointed Karin Strandås as State Secretary to Minister

for Gender Equality, with responsibility for anti-discrimination and anti-segregation, Åsa Lindhagen.

Ministry of Finance

The Government has appointed Max Elger and Leif Jacobsson as state secretaries to Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson.

The Government has appointed Ulf Holm and Elin Olsson as state secretaries to Minister for Financial Markets and Housing, Deputy Minister for Finance, Per Bolund.

The Government has appointed Alejandro Firpo as State Secretary to Minister for Public Administration Ardan Shekarabi.

Ministry of Defence

The Government has appointed Jan-Olof Lind as State Secretary to Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist.

Ministry of Infrastructure

The Government has appointed Mattias Landgren as State Secretary to Minister for Infrastructure Tomas Eneroth.

The Government has appointed Sebastian De Toro as State Secretary to Minister for Energy and Digital Development Anders Ygeman.

Ministry of Justice

The Government has appointed Catharina Espmark and Lars Westbratt as state secretaries to Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson.

The Government has appointed Elisabeth Backteman as State Secretary to Minister for Home Affairs Mikael Damberg.

Ministry of Culture

The Government has appointed Helene Öberg as State Secretary to Minister for Culture and Democracy, with responsibility for sport, Amanda Lind.

Ministry of the Environment

The Government has appointed Eva Svedling and Gunvor Ericson as state secretaries to Minister for Environment and Climate, and Deputy Prime Minister, Isabella Lövin.

Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

The Government has appointed Stina Billinger and Emil Högberg as state secretaries to Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Ibrahim Baylan.

The Government has appointed Per Callenberg as State Secretary to Minister for Rural Affairs Jennie Nilsson.

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

The Government has appointed Maja Fjaestad as State Secretary to Minister for Health and Social Affairs Lena Hallengren.

Ministry of Education and Research

The Government has appointed Erik Nilsson as State Secretary to Minister for Education Anna Ekström.

The Government has appointed Malin Cederfeldt Östberg as State Secretary to Minister for Higher Education and Research Matilda Ernkrans.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

The Government has appointed Annika Söder as State Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.

The Government has appointed Per Olsson Fridh as State Secretary to Minister for International Development Cooperation Peter Eriksson.

The Government has appointed Niklas Johansson as State Secretary to Minister for Foreign Trade, with responsibility for Nordic affairs, Ann Linde.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

Spain to become 100th partner to join Global Deal

Published 20 November 2018

Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson will take part in the signing ceremony in Madrid when Spain joins the Global Deal. This makes Spain the 100th partner, and the 20th government, to join the global partnership.

On Thursday, 22 November, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez will host a ceremony to mark his government joining the 'Global Deal for Decent Work and Inclusive Growth'. Spain will then be the 100th actor to join the partnership, which gathers governments, private sector actors, trade unions and other organisations to jointly address the challenges in the global labour market.

In connection with joining the Global Deal, Spain has made a voluntary commitment to work for strengthened labour law in the country and an improved working environment. Spain has also expressed a goal to rebuild labour law, which was weakened during the financial crisis.

During her visit, Ms Johansson will also meet Spanish Minister of Labour, Migrations and Social Security Magdalena Valerio.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

Government Bill presented: Contractor liability in the construction industry

Published 03 April 2018

The Government has decided to present the Government Bill "Contractor liability for wage claims in the construction industry" to the Riksdag. The aim is to strengthen protection for employees and counter corner-cutting and criminal activities, while safeguarding the opportunities for the social partners to regulate contractor liability in collective agreements.

The construction industry in Sweden is experiencing a boom. At the same time, it is an industry struggling with major challenges regarding corner-cutting and criminal activities. To strengthen protection for employees and promote healthy competition, the Government proposes introducing a completely new act on contractor liability for wage claims in the construction industry.

– We can never accept that serious and responsible contractors in the construction industry risk being forced out by those who cheat on taxes, neglect safety or do not pay their workers the wages to which they are entitled, says Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson.

The legislative proposal means that a worker who does not receive their wages can demand their pay from the company that hired their employer. Failing that, the main contractor will be liable. If contractor liability becomes applicable, the contractor that paid the employee's salary can retroactively demand compensation from the employer. The proposal is expected to make it more difficult for rogue actors to operate since it should result in closer

controls of the subcontractors admitted to Swedish construction sites.

One important premise of the Swedish model is that it must be possible for the social partners to reach an agreement on a regulation that is adapted to the conditions that apply in the industry or activity to which the agreement applies. Under the legislative proposal, the partners will therefore be able to regulate the issue of contractor liability in collective agreements that are to be applied instead of the act in certain circumstances.

– As I see it, current solutions achieved through collective agreements in the construction sector provide protection that corresponds to that which is intended by the act. However, the issue of whether a certain collective agreement meets the requirements of the act is ultimately determined through application of the law, says Ms Johansson.

It is proposed that contractor liability apply to both domestic and posted workers. Furthermore, the legislative proposal means that employers' and employees' organisations are to be entitled to information about the actors in the chain of contractors. It is proposed that infringements of the obligation to provide information may lead to damages.

The Government has previously introduced staff registers at construction sites to combat undeclared work. From 1 July 2018, an obligation will be introduced for some employers to provide information at individual level in the employer's tax return. This obligation will be expanded to cover all employers from 1 January 2019. The Government has instructed eight government agencies to develop their methods to counter corner-cutting and criminal activities in working life, and has overturned Lex Laval so that it will always be possible for trade unions to require a Swedish collective agreement.

The Government proposes that the new provisions on contractor liability enter into force on 1 August 2018.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

Government and social partners agree on ‘entry agreements’

Published 05 March 2018

The Government and the social partners have agreed that ‘entry agreements’ should be introduced. The aim is to help newly arrived immigrants and long-term unemployed people to become established in the labour market, and to facilitate future skills provision for employers.

Despite a strong labour market, far too many people have a hard time finding work. Strengthening paths to work and improving matching in the labour market are high-priority for the Government. Everyone who can work should work and contribute to our common welfare. The Government, the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO), the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise and Unionen agree that entry agreements should be introduced.

– We can better cope with major social challenges if we take joint responsibility. The social partners have an important role to play in ending long-term unemployment and the successful introduction and integration of the large group of newly arrived immigrants. With these entry agreements, the social partners are stepping up and taking responsibility, says Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson.

The intention is to give people opportunities to acquire knowledge and experience that is sought-after in the labour market. The employee will be given the opportunity to take part in Swedish for Immigrants and other short training courses as agreed on by the employer and the employee. Funds will be available for adult vocational places on training courses that are relevant to both parties. An entry agreement should generally be able to lead to a permanent, full-time position with the employer.

Entry agreements are a completely new model to stimulate employment for newly arrived immigrants and long-term unemployed people. The employer's total payroll expenses will be limited and the person will receive an individual state benefit for no more than two years. The size of the individual benefit will provide an incentive for people to obtain regular employment.

– The Swedish model is built on strong and responsible partners in the labour market. The partners have a far-reaching responsibility to regulate salaries and conditions. The fact that the partners have taken the initiative together for entry agreements demonstrates the strength of the Swedish model, says Ms Johansson.

The Government will now draft a proposal on the design of the benefit to the individuals with entry agreements and notify it to the European Commission in the summer of 2018. Also draft proposals for necessary legislative amendments and refer them for consultation in the summer of 2018, in order to submit a government bill to the Riksdag in March 2019.

Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish Public Employment Service), together with the social partners, will soon be tasked with analysing the conditions for a model for procured matching for entry agreements, and examining its design. The aim is that external actors will provide the major part of the matching for entry agreements. The Government and the social partners will also jointly review measures so that Swedish for Immigrants and other regular training courses, and also validation, can supplement entry agreements. The ambition of the Government and the social partners is to introduce entry agreements during the second half of 2019.

If entry agreements are introduced in 2019, an employer's total payroll expenses for a position of this kind will be SEK 8 400 per month. The individual state benefit will be at most SEK 9 870 per month. The social partners and the Government intend to work together to ensure that when fully implemented, the initiative will cover at least 10 000 individuals.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Eight Swedish cabinet ministers to the Social Summit in Gothenburg

Published 15 November 2017

The Prime Minister, together with the EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker has invited to a social summit focusing on the promotion of Fair Jobs and growth, in Gothenburg on Friday 17 November. Heads of State and heads of Governments together with other EU-member ministers will be in place.

Apart from the Prime minister the Swedish Government participates are:

- **Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson**
- **Minister for Health and Social Affairs Annika Strandhäll**
- **Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin**
- **Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde**
- **Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Mikael Damberg**
- **Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér**
- **Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Anna Ekström**

All government ministers will be available for media during the summit, contact respective press secretaries. In addition to the Swedish government, representatives from the EU Commission and EU countries, more than 30 different organizations and actors will attend the Summit on Fair Conditions and Growth in Göteborg, November 17, 2017.

The summit will bring together EU leaders, the social partners and other key stakeholders to discuss how to promote fair jobs and growth.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

Important legislative proposal that expands upon the Swedish labour market model in situations involving the posting of workers

Published 17 February 2017 Updated 17 February 2017

The Government has adopted the government bill 'New posting regulations'. These legislative amendments help create a more effective and efficient system for the protection of the rights of posted workers under the EU Posting of Workers Directive and the Enforcement Directive. The legislative proposal also contains provisions aimed at increasing transparency and predictability when posting workers so that it will be easier for companies that post workers to find out what conditions apply in the Swedish labour market.

"This is an important legislative proposal that expands upon the Swedish labour market model. I welcome the fact that workers come to Sweden from other EU countries to work here. But free movement within the EU does not mean a green light for exploiting people. Competition between companies must be based on skills, not reduced wages or poor working conditions," says Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson.

The fact that there are Swedish collective agreements is essential for posted workers to be guaranteed a minimum wage in Sweden and for our labour market model to work even in situations involving posted workers.

The basic premise of the Swedish labour market is that the social partners

negotiate on and reach collective agreements on employment conditions. The proposal in the bill on expanded opportunities to reach collective agreements that regulate the conditions for posted workers is intended for situations where it is not possible to reach this kind of voluntary agreement.

The proposed legislative amendments mean that trade unions will always be able to demand a Swedish collective agreement with regard to posting employers, ultimately by means of industrial action. This will strengthen protection for posted workers and opportunities for trade unions to ensure that these workers actually receive the wage and other employment conditions to which they are guaranteed by employers under the Posting of Workers Directive.

It is also proposed that posted workers who are not members of the trade union that concluded the agreement should have the right to demand certain collective agreement conditions in a Swedish court. Retaliatory protection for posted workers is also proposed.

The bill also includes provisions on increased transparency and predictability when posting workers, intended to improve the ability of foreign employers to find out in advance what conditions apply in the Swedish labour market.

It is proposed that the legislative amendments enter into force on 1 June 2017.

The Government's continued efforts at EU level

The Government is working in parallel at EU level to bring about an amendment to the Posting of Workers Directive so that it will be possible to demand the same wage for foreign workers working temporarily in Sweden as for domestic workers, with respect for the free movement of services.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

Ylva Johansson to visit Chile

Published 18 November 2016 Updated 18 November 2016

On 21–25 November, Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson will visit Chile, accompanied by representatives of Swedish trade unions and employers. The visit is a follow-up to President Michelle Bachelet's State Visit to Sweden earlier this year, and the main aim is to exchange experiences on labour market issues and the Swedish model.

During her time in Chile, Ms Johansson will visit several operations, including the Chuquicamata copper mine and the ALMA observatory in San Pedro. She will also meet representatives of the non-profit organisation Fundación Sol, which conducts research into working life in Chile, and the Confederation of Production and Commerce (CPC), an umbrella organisation for Chilean business.

On 24 November, Ms Johansson and the Swedish social partner representatives will speak about the Swedish labour market model at a seminar on labour market issues organised in cooperation with Chile. Ms Johansson will also meet President Bachelet and other representatives of the Chilean Government.

For enquiries regarding interviews and more detailed information about the visit, please contact Press Secretary Natalie Sial.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

Ministry of Employment initiatives in the Budget Bill for 2017

Published 23 September 2016 Updated 23 September 2016

In the autumn budget, the Government is investing in an active labour market policy for increased employment, strengthened skills supply in elderly care in particular, and improved unemployment insurance for part-time unemployed people. The Government is also intensifying efforts to better enable new arrivals to quickly become established in working and community life. More investments will be made in early measures for asylum seekers and increased resources for the introduction system. The Government also intends to introduce a new compensation system for the reception of unaccompanied minors and young people. The Budget Bill for 2017 is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

Responsible and sustainable reception

The number of people who sought asylum in the EU and Sweden in 2015 exceeded all forecasts. According to the OECD, the number of asylum seekers per capita in Sweden in 2015 was the highest ever recorded in an OECD country. The unique situation Sweden is currently experiencing presents a number of challenges, but also great opportunities. The reception of newly arrived people is a shared responsibility for the whole of Sweden. Building our society requires Sweden to stand together. Effective reception at municipal level is also crucial for the establishment of new arrivals.

Increased funds to municipalities

To strengthen welfare in municipalities and county councils the Government is allocating SEK 10 billion from 2017 onwards. This reinforcement will initially be of particular support to the municipalities and county councils with the greatest investment needs as a result of the large number of asylum seekers and new arrivals. To facilitate the settlement and establishment of new arrivals with special needs, the Government also proposes increasing the level of compensation to municipalities in 2017–2020 for related costs. Since municipalities' reception is expected to be at its highest in 2017, it is proposed that the level of compensation be increased most for 2017 and gradually adjusted as reception decreases. This proposal entails increasing the appropriation by SEK 80 million in 2017, SEK 50 million in 2018 and SEK 30 million in 2019 and 2020.

New compensation system for the reception of unaccompanied minors

Quality and security must be ensured in the reception of unaccompanied minors and young people. The current compensation system for municipalities is complicated, creates a great administrative burden and is cost-ineffective. The Government therefore intends to introduce a new compensation system on 1 July 2017 to simplify the regulatory framework, improve municipalities' planning conditions, reduce the administrative burden and increase cost-effectiveness. Under the new system, compensation is largely based on flat rates. In addition, the Government proposes that SEK 40 million be allocated per year in 2017 and 2018 to facilitate the transition for municipalities.

Support to municipalities to make it easier to let private dwellings

County administrative boards are tasked with ensuring increased preparedness and reception capacity in the municipalities, and enhanced collaboration. In the spring amending budget for 2016, the Government allocated a further SEK 10 million to create conditions for good housing provision in the municipalities through measures to arrange housing or in some other way make the letting of private homes easier. In the autumn budget, the Government proposes that this investment should be continued and increased to SEK 20 million per year in 2017 and 2018.

Migration Agency takes over instructions on settlement

The Act on the reception of certain newly arrived immigrants for settlement came into force on 1 March 2016. The aim is a more even distribution of new arrivals among municipalities, and that municipalities well placed to enable the establishment of new arrivals take in more new arrivals than they have to date. In 2016 the Public Employment Service and the Migration Agency share responsibility for instructions under the new law. As of 1 January 2017, the Migration Agency will be responsible for decisions concerning all instructions. For this reason, it is proposed that SEK 50 million in 2017 and SEK 30 million as of 2018 be moved from the Public Employment Service's administrative appropriation to the Migration Agency's administrative appropriation. The county administrative boards also play an important role in implementing the new Act on the reception of certain newly arrived immigrants for settlement. For example, they are responsible for conducting dialogues with the municipalities and deciding on municipal figures. The Government therefore proposes a permanent increase of SEK 10 million per year in the county administrative boards' funding beginning in 2017.

Active labour market policy and improved integration

The Government's objective is that Sweden will have the lowest unemployment rate in the EU by 2020. The Swedish model requires that everyone who is able to work should work. This is why an active labour market policy is an important part of the Government's jobs agenda. Swedish labour market performance is strong, employment is rising and unemployment is falling. Meanwhile, in several Swedish industries, labour shortages are considerable. It is important that labour market policy makes it easier for employers to find suitable people, helping jobs to be filled more quickly. There is also a great need to make it easier for new arrivals to more quickly become established in the labour market. Labour market policy is important to achieve this. The proportion of new arrivals leaving the introduction system to take up work or study must increase.

Increased quality and strengthened skills supply in elderly care

After dialogues with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and the Swedish Municipal Workers' Union, the Government proposes a training initiative for health and elderly care workers on fixed-

term contracts. This training initiative will provide important skills development and, along with 'extra jobs' and trainee jobs, improve skills supply in health and elderly care and improve the prospects of workers on fixed-term contracts gaining a permanent foothold in the labour market. This initiative also aims to increase quality in, above all, elderly care. The training initiative is directed towards people currently employed in health and elderly care on fixed-term contracts who become assistant nurses by undertaking training. The Government intends for this initiative to enter into force as soon as possible.

'Extra jobs' strengthened

To enable more long-term unemployed people to return to work, the Government also intends to make changes to 'extra jobs' to increase the level of support and enable subsidies equal to 100 per cent of a full-time job instead of the current 75 per cent. The Government also proposes an increase in mentor support for the first three months. The aim of these changes is to improve opportunities for people who have been unemployed for a long time to find a job. The Government also intends to broaden the 'extra jobs' target group to include newly arrived people. To a certain extent, the current 'extra jobs' and trainee jobs regulations have been restrictive. The Government will therefore review these regulations with a view to widening the opportunities for these jobs in more areas in accordance with the EU state aid rules.

Increased resources for a quality introduction system

The number of participants in the introduction system is expected to rise sharply over the next few years, posing a major challenge for the Public Employment Service. The proportion leaving to take up work or study was higher in 2015 than in the previous year, but is still at far too low a level. It is important to enable the Employment Service to intensify introduction activities so that more people can move on to work or education. To ensure the quality of the measures and improve the possibility of providing greater support based on individual needs, the Government proposes increasing the Public Employment Service's administrative appropriation by SEK 520 million in 2017, SEK 570 million in 2018, SEK 700 million in 2019 and SEK 600 million in 2020. Also, an extra SEK 130 million will be provided in the autumn amending budget.

Skills assessment during the asylum application period

continues

The Government proposes that the Public Employment Service receive SEK 90 million in 2017 and SEK 55 million per year as of 2018 to be able to offer assessment of asylum seekers' educational background and work experience during the asylum application period. The proposal is essential to enable people to become established more quickly and means that the investment in the Employment Service's skills assessment decided in connection with the spring amending budget for 2016 will continue.

Strengthening of early measures for asylum seekers

Early measures during the asylum application period aim to improve and speed up establishment in society and working life. It is important to take advantage of the individual's asylum application period and use it in a meaningful way, for example, to shorten the establishment period for those who are granted a residence permit. The Government proposes reinforcing the funding for early measures to help asylum seekers learn Swedish and acquire knowledge about Swedish society, and other measures to promote establishment. Funds will be allocated for early measures via civil society amounting to SEK 135 million in 2017, SEK 110 million in 2018, SEK 100 million in 2019 and SEK 30 million in 2020. These funds will be allocated to the county administrative boards. Funds will also be allocated for language initiatives through liberal adult education amounting to SEK 135 million in 2017, SEK 120 million in 2018, SEK 106 million in 2019 and SEK 41 million in 2020 (expenditure area 17, Culture, media, religious communities and leisure activities).

County administrative boards responsible for coordinating early measures

A coordinator is needed to ensure that the resources allocated to various types of measures for asylum seekers are used as intended, lead to activities with considerable geographical spread and reach as large a proportion of the target group as possible. The Government has therefore previously announced that as of 2017 the county administrative boards will be tasked with coordinating and organising early measures for asylum seekers. In light of this new responsibility, the county administrative boards' administrative appropriation will be increased by SEK 72 million per year as of 2017. It also means that the Swedish Migration Agency will no longer be responsible for measures to improve asylum seekers' knowledge of Swedish and other

measures to prepare for this establishment. For this reason, the Migration Agency's administrative appropriation will be reduced by an equivalent amount.

Delegation's mandate extended to promote collaboration for new arrivals

The delegation on putting young people to work is tasked with promoting constructive and flexible collaboration between the Swedish Public Employment Service and municipalities to reduce youth unemployment. It has been working on local agreements between the Public Employment Service and municipalities as tools for collaboration. The experience gained from this should now be used to strengthen the impact of local labour market measures for new arrivals. The delegation will therefore receive an expanded mandate to promote collaboration between stakeholders who are important for labour market entry for new arrivals, and in particular young new arrivals. Moreover, it is proposed that SEK 30 million per year be allocated in 2017 and 2018 for promotion activities similar to the resources currently available for collaborative youth projects.

Increased promotion funds for fast tracks

In 2015 and 2016, the Public Employment Service has coordinated the fast tracks that the social partners and government agencies have jointly initiated. Fast tracks are directed at new arrivals who have educational qualifications or professional experience in a shortage occupation for which the social partners have agreed on a fast track. In August, thirteen fast tracks for some twenty occupations were in place. For 2016, the Public Employment Service had been allocated funds for special promotion and development measures aimed at speeding up new arrivals' establishment in the labour market. The Government proposes an additional SEK 25 million per year in 2017–2018 for this purpose.

Simpler regulations for the introduction system

The Government believes it is crucial to create better conditions for the Public Employment Service to work more efficiently on the introduction system. The Government intends to present proposals for simplifying and streamlining the introduction system. The purpose is to make regulations concerning the introduction more like the labour market policy regulatory framework in general. This is expected to have a positive impact on the

number of people who leave the introduction system to take up work or study. To enable the Public Employment Service to adapt its activities to an amended regulatory framework, it is proposed that the agency receive an additional SEK 10 million in 2017.

More effective new start jobs with conditions in line with collective agreements

New start jobs have become the most common form of subsidised employment in terms of participant numbers. However, there is a certain risk that the transition to work is subsidised more than is justified from a labour market policy perspective. To make new start jobs more targeted and efficient, the Government intends to reduce the subsidy for people who have been unemployed for less than two years and to shorten the maximum support periods. The Government also intends to increase the new start job subsidy for people who have been unemployed for more than three years and for new arrivals to strengthen their chances of entering and becoming established in the labour market.

In 2017, the Government will set requirements for employment conditions that follow from, or are equal to, collective agreements for new start jobs too. The purpose of this amendment is to ensure equally good terms of employment for all those employed with wage subsidies. The proposed amendments are expected to reduce the 'deadweight' and resources can be redirected towards measures for people who are furthest from the labour market.

Modern temporary jobs in the public sector

Unemployment is high among people with a short education and relatively few qualifications. Although education and training is to be the main measure, jobs that have lower qualification requirements and offer good working conditions and collectively agreed wages can be a way in to the labour market for some people. Government agencies are to offer jobs with lower qualification requirements to enable more people with a weak attachment to the labour market to gain work experience and receive a salary. Modern temporary jobs in the public sector will therefore be introduced gradually from 2017 and will employ at least 5 000 people by 2020.

Better unemployment insurance

People who become unemployed must not be made to suffer immediate financial stress. The individual is to be given good opportunities to actively seek and find a new job, preferably equivalent to their skills and qualifications. The security provided by a functioning unemployment insurance system is crucial if people are to dare to change jobs. The Government therefore intends to amend the rules for part-time employment during a period of unemployment benefit so that people can be part-time unemployed and receive benefit for a maximum of 60 weeks. The current provision states that a jobseeker can have only 75 benefit days alongside part-time work. In principle, the restriction on part-time work means that a person working very few hours a week uses up their part-time days much more quickly than someone working part-time but for more hours a week. The Government considers that it is not reasonable for a person trying to re-enter the labour market to feel obliged to turn down a job – to the extent that is happening today – to be sure of making ends meet. This change will occur through a legislative amendment in 2017.

The Government will also shortly be presenting proposals that clarify elected representatives' right to compensation, how the coordination of pensions and unemployment benefit is to be designed to be as balanced and proportionate as possible, administrative simplifications for unemployment insurance funds and amendments to the age limit for entitlement to membership of an unemployment insurance fund. An inquiry is also under way at the Government Offices to look into how more people can be covered by unemployment insurance.

Higher ceiling for wage subsidies

Wage subsidies are an important tool for putting to good use the skills and capacity of people with disabilities. The previous government did not submit any proposals for a revision. The Government is now raising the ceiling for wage subsidies for the first time since 2007. This is to strengthen the conditions for increased employment and improved labour market participation for people with disabilities that entail reduced work capacity.

Employers can currently receive a subsidy for part of the salary if they employ people with disabilities that entail reduced work capacity. This subsidy can at most be calculated on the basis of a gross salary of up to SEK 16 700 per month. The Government's proposals in the autumn budget entail raising the ceiling for the salary on which compensation is calculated from SEK 16 700 to SEK 17 100 from 2017. This will provide employers with

increased compensation if they employ people with reduced work capacity, meaning an improvement in conditions for employers to take on staff. This investment is expected to amount to SEK 160 million in 2017, SEK 280 million in 2018, SEK 380 million in 2019 and SEK 390 million in 2020.

Review of subsidised wages

The Government has previously stated that it would review subsidised wages for people with disabilities that entail reduced work capacity. The starting point for this work is that we should make better use and support the development of individuals' work capacity and skills. The Government intends to make further amendments to subsidised wages in 2017 to clarify the direction and relationships between the various forms of wage subsidies and to make the subsidies more fit-for-purpose.

A more detailed description of the direction of this work was previously presented in the Ministry Communication on clarification of subsidised wages for people with disabilities that entail reduced work capacity (Ds 2016:14). The Government previously set aside funds to be used from 2017 because of amendments to subsidised wages, including funds for information measures and reinforcement of the Public Employment Service's work on subsidised wages.

Increased resources for development employment at Samhall

To further improve the conditions for unemployed people with disabilities that entail reduced work capacity to find a job, and to test and develop their work capacity within the framework of a paid employment, the Government will provide additional resources for more development employment positions at Samhall AB. The proposal is expected to result in an additional 100 positions in 2017 and 500 positions per year in the period 2018–2020. This investment is estimated to amount to SEK 24 million in 2017 and SEK 118 million per year in 2018–2020.

Increased incentives for young people aged 20–24 to complete upper secondary education

Young people who have not completed upper secondary education and are in a labour market programme before the age of 20 receive SEK 48 per day in development allowance. On 1 July in the year in which a young person

turns 20, the allowance increases to SEK 141 per day; in other words, the young person receives development allowance at the same level as young people who have completed upper secondary education. To increase incentives for young people who have not completed upper secondary education to return to their studies, young people without upper secondary education should be able to retain the lower level of development allowance even after 1 July in the year in which they turn 20, which means a decrease in the allowance compared to the current level.

Sustainable working life

The Government's policy is to contribute to a work environment that prevents ill health, accidents and unsound competition. To achieve these goals, the Government previously presented a new work environment strategy for modern working life and a zero vision for fatal accidents, and proposed a significant increase in resources in labour market policy – SEK 100 million per year during the electoral period.

Additional funds to the Swedish Work Environment Authority for more inspectors

During 2006–2014, the number of work environment inspectors fell considerably. The Government's additional resources to the Swedish Work Environment Authority have meant that the trend has now reversed as the agency has been able to recruit some fifty new inspectors. To further increase attendance in workplaces, the Government proposes that the Swedish Work Environment Authority now be allocated an additional SEK 25 million per year as of 2017, which is the equivalent of approximately 25 inspectors. The Swedish Work Environment Authority now being able to strengthen its supervisory activities will be an important tool in creating decent work in the Swedish labour market.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

Ylva Johansson invited to speak at University of Oxford

Published 02 September 2016 Updated 02 September 2016

On Wednesday 7 September, Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson will be in the UK to take part in a conference on challenges and opportunities in the area of migration. The conference is being organised by the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society at the University of Oxford.

The theme is Refugee and Migrant Integration, and Ms Johansson has been invited specially to present a talk on the theme of 'National policies: challenges and opportunities'. The aim of the conference is to discuss experiences and ideas concerning the introduction of newly arrived immigrants in the presence of invited experts and with the support of relevant research.

Media representatives are invited to contact Press Secretary Natalie Sial regarding interview requests or for more information about the visit.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

Cancelled: Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson to visit Paris on 13 June

Published 09 June 2016 Updated 13 June 2016

On 13 June, Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson will visit Paris. During the visit, Ms Johansson will meet her colleague, Minister of Labour, Employment, Vocational Training and Social Dialogue Myriam El Khomri, for discussions on such topics as fair conditions in the labour market.

During her visit in Paris, Ms Johansson will also meet Bruno Le Roux, President of the Socialist Group in the National Assembly. Ms Johansson will also represent the Government at the football match between Sweden and Ireland on 13 June in the UEFA European Championship, which will take place in Paris.

For enquiries regarding interviews and more detailed information about the visit, please contact Press Secretary Natalie Sial.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice

Government reshuffle, 25 May 2016

Published 25 May 2016 Updated 01 June 2016

Newly appointed ministers

Minister for the Environment (Ministry of the Environment and Energy):
Karolina Skog (Green Party)

Minister for Housing and Digital Development (Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation): Peter Eriksson (Green Party)

Minister for EU Affairs and Trade (Ministry for Foreign Affairs): Ann Linde (Social Democratic Party)

Changes by ministry

Prime Minister's Office

- Minister for Policy Coordination and Energy Ibrahim Baylan will be responsible for policy coordination and energy issues.
- Minister for Strategic Development and Nordic Cooperation Kristina Persson leaves the Government.
- The Government will establish a Committee for Strategic Development under the Prime Minister's Office.

Ministry of Employment

- Ylva Johansson's title is changed to Minister for Employment and

Integration.

Ministry of Finance

- Minister for Public Administration Ardalan Shekarabi will be responsible for eGovernment.

Ministry of Justice

- Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson will be responsible for arms export control issues.

Ministry of the Environment and Energy

- Minister for the Environment Karolina Skog takes office as head of Ministry, with responsibility for environmental issues and urban environment agreements.

- Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson leaves the Government.

Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

- Minister for Housing and Digital Development Peter Eriksson takes office, with responsibility for housing and digital development issues.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

- Minister for International Development Cooperation and Climate Isabella Lövin will be responsible for international development cooperation and climate issues and is Deputy Prime Minister, but will not substitute for the Prime Minister.

- Minister for EU Affairs and Trade Ann Linde takes office, with responsibility for EU affairs and trade issues.

- Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström will be responsible for Nordic affairs.

Press contacts for the Prime Minister and newly

appointed ministers

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Minister for Housing and Digital Development Peter Eriksson

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Press release from Ministry of Employment

Swedish Minister for Employment to take part in informal European ministerial meeting in Vienna on fair conditions in the labour market

Published 18 May 2016 Updated 18 May 2016

On 19–20 May, Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson will take part in an informal ministerial meeting in Vienna on fair and decent conditions in the labour market. The meeting is a follow-up of the ministerial meeting Ms Johansson hosted in Stockholm in September 2015 on fair and decent working conditions in the EU internal market.

The follow-up meeting in Vienna will be hosted by Austria's Minister of Social Affairs Alois Stöger. The purpose of the meeting is to exchange experiences and discuss ways forward to ensure fair and decent working conditions for Europe's workers, while facilitating cross-border mobility. A total of ten Member States will be represented at the meeting, including the country currently holding the EU presidency, the Netherlands, and the next country to hold the presidency, Slovakia. The responsible European Commissioner, Marianne Thyssen, will also take part.

"To create jobs and growth, the EU needs greater labour force mobility. But freedom of movement must go hand in hand with social security, a high level of employee protection and good working conditions for all employees," says Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson.

The meeting will focus on an amendment to the Posting of Workers Directive, measures for better and fairer rules for the posting of workers, and

discussions on various work environment issues. Ms Johansson and the Netherlands' Minister of Social Affairs and Employment Lodewijk Asscher will chair the meeting's working sessions.

Media representatives are invited to contact Press Secretary Natalie Sial for more information.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

OECD: Sweden on the right track to better introduction of new arrivals

Published 13 May 2016 Updated 13 May 2016

Today, the OECD presented its report *Working Together: Skills and Labour Market Integration of Immigrants and their Children in Sweden* on integration in the Swedish labour market and in Swedish society. The report shows that Sweden has a highly developed and sustainable policy for reception and introduction, but that the large number of asylum seekers who arrived in 2015 has created new challenges.

In its report, the OECD highlights the importance of investing in education initiatives to enable new arrivals with low education levels in particular, but also those with a higher education, to enter the labour market. The OECD also emphasises the importance of introducing integration measures during the asylum process and improving collaboration between the Swedish Public Employment Service and municipalities. The need for supplementary higher education programmes and validation measures is also highlighted in the report, as is more support to accommodate young new arrivals into school and more proactive anti-discrimination efforts.

"It is an interesting and important report, and many of the OECD's recommendations are in line with initiatives taken by the Government to facilitate integration of new arrivals in the labour market and society at large. Fast tracks into the labour market for new arrivals, better validation, more education initiatives and Swedish language training from day one for asylum seekers – these are some of the measures which the Government has already

taken," says Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson.

"Despite the many initiatives taken, several major challenges remain, not least because Sweden has received a large number of asylum seekers in a short period of time. Just like the OECD points out in the report, the housing shortage and long waiting times for settlement pose a major challenge. It is valuable to receive an independent review of this important policy area, and it will be interesting to compare how Sweden performs in relation to other countries," says Ms Johansson.

Sweden is the first country to be reviewed in the context of the project on labour market integration initiated by the OECD. The fact that in 2015 Sweden had the highest per capita inflow of asylum seekers ever to be registered in an OECD country creates particular challenges, according to the OECD. In its report, the OECD studied the whole chain of support and measures offered to facilitate integration of new arrivals in Swedish society and the labour market.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

OECD and Ylva Johansson to present labour market integration report

Published 12 May 2016 Updated 12 May 2016

At a press conference on Friday 13 May at Rosenbad, the OECD will present its report on integration in the Swedish labour market, *Working Together: Skills and Labour Market Integration of Immigrants and their Children in Sweden*. Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson will comment on the OECD report's assessment and recommendations. Stefano Scarpetta, Director for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs at the OECD, will also take part in the press conference.

Time and place

Date and time: Friday 13 May at 12.30

Venue: Press Centre, Rosenbad (admittance via Kopparporten from 12.00)

The press conference will be webcast on www.government.se.

Please bring your press credentials.

We look forward to seeing you there.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

Initiatives in the spring budget for more efficient introduction and reduced unemployment

Published 13 April 2016 Updated 13 April 2016

In the spring amending budget for 2016, the Government is strengthening efforts to enable newly arrived immigrants to quickly and efficiently establish themselves in Sweden. The Government is investing in early measures for asylum seekers and increased funds for county administrative boards to create preparedness and reception capacity in municipalities. The Government is also announcing that trainee jobs will be expanded to also cover newly arrived immigrants and people who are long-term unemployed. The spring amending budget for 2016 is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

The number of asylum seekers in 2015 significantly exceeded the assumptions on which the Budget Bill for 2016 was based. It is therefore the Government's assessment that further funds need to be provided and a range of measures need to be taken to handle the current situation, including measures to facilitate the introduction of newly arrived immigrants.

Early measures for asylum seekers

The large number of asylum seekers who came to Sweden in 2015 has led to many asylum seekers having to wait ever longer for a decision on a residence permit. It is important that the time the person spends in the asylum process

is put to use meaningfully and efficiently for the purpose of making future introduction easier. This also applies to persons with a residence permit still living in accommodation centres while waiting to be received by a municipality.

Coordination of early measures – a task for county administrative boards

The Government intends to task county administrative boards, from 2017, with coordinating and organising early measures for asylum seekers and others. The coordinating role of county administrative boards will be made easier by their existing structures for regional and national cooperation. In light of the county administrative boards' new assignment, the Swedish Migration Agency's assignment concerning activities for asylum seekers will change. From 2017, the Swedish Migration Agency will no longer be responsible for organised activities for asylum seekers that aim to strengthen their knowledge of the Swedish language and other measures to promote introduction. The changed division of responsibilities will increase the chances for asylum seekers and others to access regional and locally adapted early measures.

In its Spring Fiscal Policy Bill, the Government is announcing that, from 2017, SEK 72 million will be moved from the Swedish Migration Agency to the county administrative boards' administrative appropriation. The Government also proposes that the county administrative boards' administrative appropriation be increased by SEK 10 million in 2016 in order to begin developing the organisation and structure of the new assignment.

Funds to county administrative boards for language learning programmes

The Government proposes an increase of the county administrative boards' administrative appropriation by SEK 10 million in 2016 to provide a digital language learning package with the aim of strengthening asylum seekers' knowledge of the Swedish language.

Early skills assessment for asylum seekers

To improve the introduction of newly arrived immigrants in the labour market, the Government wants skills assessment, i.e. assessment of newly arrived immigrants' educational background and work experience, to be

offered by the Swedish Public Employment Service during their asylum-seeking period. The Government therefore proposes that a total of SEK 90 million be given to the Swedish Public Employment Service in 2016 to develop and provide skills assessment for asylum seekers. From 2017, this task should be permanently incorporated in the Swedish Public Employment Service's activities. Skills assessment can ensure that recruitment needs primarily in welfare areas are better satisfied.

Increased funds for refugee guides

It should be possible for several different actors, not least civil society organisations, to carry out early measures for asylum seekers. In its spring amending budget, the Government proposes an additional SEK 25 million in 2016 for measures for refugee guides and family contacts, and an expansion of the target group to also include asylum seekers. The proposal enables municipalities and civil society to jointly offer meaningful activities for asylum seekers, such as providing civic information.

Special measures in liberal adult education

There is great need for activities that can give asylum seekers and newly arrived immigrants still living at accommodation centres meaningful occupation during the asylum-seeking period and that can speed up future introduction for those who are granted a residence permit. The Government therefore proposes an additional SEK 97 million be set aside for special measures in liberal adult education in 2016 (SEK 25 million to folk high schools and SEK 72 million to study associations) for activities that aim to strengthen knowledge of the Swedish language and of society, and promote participation in society for asylum seekers and people who have been granted a residence permit but are still living at an accommodation centre. Financing increased funding for study associations will be done by reducing appropriations to the Swedish Migration Agency by SEK 72 million.

Sustainable reception and more efficient introduction

Increased funds for county administrative boards' work on the reception of unaccompanied minors and newly arrived immigrants

County administrative boards are tasked with ensuring preparedness and

capacity in municipalities to receive unaccompanied minors and newly arrived immigrants. The large number of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum means there is a great need for measures particularly focused on this target group. In the spring amending budget, the Government therefore proposes that county administrative boards have SEK 30 million at their disposal for these measures in 2016.

To support municipalities wanting to develop activities to make it easier to rent out housing to newly arrived immigrants, the Government assesses that there is a need to increase funds by SEK 10 million for county administrative boards' work to create preparedness and reception capacity in municipalities.

Increased funds for compensation to municipalities for special costs for the reception of newly arrived immigrants

Municipalities' needs for special costs compensation for the reception of newly arrived immigrants increase as the number of people received increases. Compensation is granted subject to the availability of funds, and SEK 60 million have been set aside for this purpose in 2016. So as to enable municipalities to receive compensation for special costs for newly arrived immigrants, the Government proposes that the appropriation for such compensation be increased by SEK 80 million.

The Swedish Migration Agency to take over settlement responsibility from the Swedish Public Employment Service

It is proposed that as of 1 January 2017, the Swedish Migration Agency take over the Swedish Public Employment Service's responsibility to assign newly arrived immigrants to municipalities pursuant to the Act on the reception of certain newly arrived immigrants for settlement. In its Spring Fiscal Policy Bill, the Government is announcing that, from 2017, SEK 30 million will be moved from the Swedish Public Employment Service to the Swedish Migration Agency's administrative appropriation. The Government proposes that the Agency's appropriation be increased by SEK 20 million in 2016 so that the Agency can take preparatory measures.

Standard reimbursement for unaccompanied minors

The large increase in the number of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in 2015 has led to a considerable challenge for municipalities. The Government considers that the current system of compensation to

municipalities for the reception of unaccompanied minors and young people is not efficient. The Government will therefore report back with proposals intended to simplify the regulatory framework, improve municipalities' planning conditions, reduce the administrative burden and increase cost effectiveness. Compensation for the reception of unaccompanied minors and young people should consist more extensively of standard reimbursement than is now the case. The Government intends to give municipalities better opportunities to find cost-effective housing forms that fit the individual needs of unaccompanied minors, thus leading to increased flexibility in terms of municipalities' reception.

Trainee jobs will cover newly arrived immigrants

Better possibilities for combining employment and education can help newly arrived immigrants to more quickly find work. The Government therefore intends to expand trainee jobs to also cover newly arrived immigrants.

The introduction system will be made more effective

There is a need to improve the introduction system to get more people into jobs. Just under one third of people who have completed introduction activities have a job or take part in regular education. An inquiry is under way in the Government Offices to simplify and streamline the introduction system through reduced administration and increased flexibility.

The Government's work to speed up the introduction of newly arrived immigrants on the labour market is ongoing and the Government will report back in the Budget Bill for 2017 with proposals for further measures.

Unemployment must fall

The Government's objective is that Sweden will have the lowest unemployment rate in the EU by 2020. This is an ambitious objective and poses great challenges for policy. The Swedish labour market is performing strongly and unemployment rates fell significantly in 2015. However, the level of unemployment remains too high and the positive trend still does not benefit everyone. The increased number of asylum seekers coming to Sweden means that many people who have been in the country for a short time are entering the labour force. Over the next few years it is expected that the fallback in unemployment will start to slow. This amplifies the need for a broad job agenda with active measures in a range of policy areas.

The Government's job agenda consists of three main parts: activities for increased competencies and an active labour market policy, investments in housing and infrastructure, and an active business policy for more and growing companies throughout the country. Investments in common welfare and a quicker introduction of newly arrived immigrants are also important aspects of the Government's job policy. The Government intends to report back with proposals for further steps by Sweden to achieve the objective of the lowest unemployment rate in the EU by 2020.

Jobs and education for unemployed young people

Combating youth unemployment is one of the Government's most important promises. In 2015, youth unemployment decreased significantly and is now at more or less the same level as before the financial crisis. Despite the favourable development in the labour market, it remains difficult for young people who lack the relevant education to find a job. To enable more young people to gain a steady foothold in the labour market, the Government is investing in trainee jobs that combine jobs with relevant vocational education and training, and education contracts that will encourage young people to complete upper secondary education.

The Government gives priority to measures for young people who are very detached from the labour market. A combination of jobs and studies is an effective approach to inducing more young people without upper secondary education to complete their studies. For this reason, the Government considers that it should also be possible to employ young people who have not completed upper secondary education in trainee jobs.

Trainee jobs will cover people who are long-term unemployed

Long-term unemployment must decrease further, and the Government will discontinue phase 3. Since 1 February, new individuals are no longer assigned to employment placements. People who have been registered in the job and development guarantee scheme for more than 450 days will instead be given access to any labour market policy measures that can improve their prospects of finding a job. It is expected that the possibility of combining a job with relevant education will make it easier for people who are long-term unemployed to return to the labour market. The Government therefore intends to expand trainee jobs to also cover people who are long-term unemployed.

The Government has recently taken a decision to task the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth, in cooperation with the Swedish Public Employment Service, with implementing a three-year initiative in which a total of SEK 60 million will be provided to measures to promote jobs for people who are long-term unemployed, through social enterprises for integration in working life. The Government considers that there is a need for additional measures to further reduce long-term unemployment and will report back with more proposals for measures.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

Minister for Employment to host European high-level meeting on young people's establishment in the labour market

Published 17 February 2016 Updated 17 February 2016

Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson has invited a number of European Union ministerial colleagues to a high-level meeting in Stockholm on 18-19 February to discuss young people's situation in the labour market.

"Youth unemployment is a high-priority issue for the Government. As a part of work on the European Employment Strategy, I have initiated a high-level meeting in Stockholm to discuss young people's situation in the labour market," says Minister Johansson.

Even though economic growth is now increasing and new jobs are being created, it is still difficult for some young people to enter, and remain at, the labour market. To reduce youth unemployment, the Government is investing in closer cooperation between central and local government with the help of the Youth Employment Delegation; within the scope of this delegation, 286 municipalities have signed agreements with the Swedish Public Employment Service on how they will tackle youth unemployment at local level.

The purpose of the high-level meeting is to share experiences and best practice from each country and build on earlier lessons concerning young people who have difficulty establishing themselves in the labour market. Ministers from Denmark, Estonia, Germany and Portugal as well as representatives of the EU will take part in the meeting.

Media representatives are invited to contact Press Secretary Natali Sial for

more information.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson to visit Australia

Published 05 January 2016 Updated 05 January 2016

On 10–14 January, Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson will visit Canberra and Sydney. The purpose of the visit is to study the structure and functioning of the Australian labour market, with a focus on employment services.

On 10–11 January, Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson will visit Canberra, where she will take part in a roundtable discussion with representatives from the Department of Employment, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Social Services and the Department of Education and Training to obtain a picture of how the Australian labour market functions. Ms Johansson will also visit a private disability employment service provider and the Braddon Centrelink Office; Centrelink is the agency delivering government payments and services.

On 12–14 January, Ms Johansson will visit Sydney. There her schedule will include a lunch meeting with Swedish company representatives in Australia, including Joe Farrugia (Atlas Copco Australia), David Hood (IKEA), Craig Salkeld (Tetra Pak Oceania), Dean Rosenfield (Saab Australia), Hans Andersson (H&M) and Jarrod Leak (Alfa Laval Australia).

During her visit to Sydney, Ms Johansson will also meet with Anthony Steel, CEO of the private employment services operator Mission Providence, and with political representatives of the Government and the opposition. She will also visit the National Employment Services Association, a trade organisation for employment services operators, and various employment services operators.

For enquiries regarding interviews and more detailed information about the visit, please contact Press Secretary Natalie Sial.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson to visit the United Kingdom

Published 26 November 2015 Updated 26 November 2015

On 27–30 November, Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson will visit London and Liverpool in the United Kingdom. The purpose of the visit is to study British labour market policy.

On 27–29 November, Ms Johansson will visit Liverpool, where she will pay a study visit to Crosby Jobcentre. She will also visit two social enterprises for integration in working life – South Sefton Development Trust and Ladders of Life – and meet representatives of Liverpool City Council for talks on labour market policy.

On Monday 30 November, Ms Johansson will visit St Marylebone Jobcentre in London. She will also meet the UK Minister of State for Employment, Priti Patel, to discuss jobs policy and receive a presentation on British labour market policy reform. Ms Johansson will then meet representatives of the opposition.

Media representatives interested in receiving further information about the visit are welcome to contact Press Secretary Natalie Sial.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

Ylva Johansson to Vienna for ministerial meeting on integration

Published 06 November 2015 Updated 06 November 2015

On Monday 9 November, Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson will take part in a ministerial meeting on integration in Vienna. Austrian Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs Sebastian Kurz has invited all European ministers responsible for integration issues to the Vienna Future Talks – Visions for Integration: Social Cohesion.

In light of the current difficult refugee situation, Austria will host a ministerial meeting on how integration can contribute to social cohesion in EU Member States. The meeting is the first of its kind and is intended to form a platform for the participating ministers to discuss and exchange experiences on integration issues. Among the meeting's programme points is a discussion on the challenges and opportunities the Member States currently face in the area of integration.

Media representatives are invited to contact Press Secretary Natali Sial regarding interview requests or for more information about the meeting.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson visits Austria

Published 26 October 2015 Updated 26 October 2015

On 27 October, Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson will visit Austria. The purpose of the visit is to gain knowledge and experience about Austrian labour market policy.

In Vienna, Ms Ylva Johansson will meet representatives of the Austrian employment services and the responsible ministry to learn more about how the country's labour market policy measures are designed and how its employment services work with the jobseekers. Ms Johansson, together with Austria's Minister of Social Affairs and Consumer Protection Rudolf Hundstorfer, will also visit ZOBAeck, a training centre for young apprentices. Austria has one of the lowest rates of youth unemployment in Europe and also has a well-developed system for offering various forms of training measures during unemployment.

Media representatives interested in receiving further information about the visit are welcome to contact Press Secretary Natali Sial.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs,
Ministry of Justice

International press conference on agreed migration and integration measures today at 13.00

Published 23 October 2015 Updated 23 October 2015

Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson and Minister for
Employment Ylva Johansson will present the agreed migration and
integration measures at a press conference in Bella Venezia, Rosenbad,
today at 13.00.

Please bring your press credentials.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

Cooperation in education between Sweden, Finland and Norway renewed

Published 19 October 2015 Updated 19 October 2015

A new agreement was signed today between Sweden, Finland and Norway concerning the Arctic Vocational Foundation. The Foundation, which has its headquarters in Övertorneå, was established in 1991 and arranges vocational courses for participants from the three countries.

“Utbildning Nord has a long tradition of offering vocational courses to participants from Finland, Norway and Sweden. We value this unique cooperation, which creates conditions for increased mobility across borders,” says Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson.

The current agreement between Sweden, Finland and Norway will expire on 31 December 2015. The new agreement will apply during the period 2016–2019 and was signed today at the Ministry of Finance in Stockholm by Ms Ylva Johansson, Finland’s Ambassador Jarmo Viinanen and Norway’s Ambassador Kai Eide.

Evaluations of the Foundation’s activities show that the educational programmes maintain good quality and competitiveness. At the same time, some areas for development emerge, for instance, concerning the Foundation’s work with industry councils. Therefore, the new agreement gives clearer instructions to the Foundation to develop strategic cooperation with different key actors, including industry councils. In addition, the agreement emphasises the importance of basing the range of educational programmes on collected labour market analyses and forecasts from the

countries. The new agreement also emphasises work on validation measures in the form of occupational skills assessments. Validation is essential for enabling newly arrived immigrants with occupational skills from abroad to quickly establish themselves in the labour market.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

Labour market policy initiatives in the Budget Bill for 2016

Published 23 September 2015 Updated 23 September 2015

In the Budget Bill for 2016, the Government is investing in better job matching and skills development through measures to promote an active labour market policy for people who are long-term unemployed or have impairments that entail reduced working capacity. The Government is also investing in a significant raise in the compensation paid to municipalities for their reception of refugees, and more effective measures to introduce newly arrived immigrants to the labour market. Under the Government's proposal, the investments in the labour market area presented by the Government in the spring amending budget for 2015 will continue. The Budget Bill is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.

Investments to overcome long-term unemployment

The objective of the Government's employment policy is to reduce unemployment so that it is the lowest in the EU by 2020. To succeed in this, it is particularly important to tackle the high long-term unemployment. The Government is now beginning to eliminate Phase 3 by stopping new referrals to the present employment placements. Instead, people will be offered active measures based on their needs, such as subsidised positions, education and training, and work experience. Those now in employment placements will gradually be offered other measures, such as extra jobs in the welfare

system.

The Government proposes additional funds to make it possible to provide labour market policy measures to those who have been unemployed the longest, i.e. those who have spent more than 450 days in the job and development guarantee scheme. This will open the way to meaningful and effective measures that will bring participants closer to the labour market. The Government will commit SEK 60 million to this end in 2016, SEK 102 million in 2017, SEK 111 million in 2018 and SEK 121 million in 2019.

In the Budget Bill, the Government proposes that participants in the job and development guarantee scheme in 2016–2019 should be allowed to retain activity support for at most 24 months while attending vocationally oriented courses at folk high school. The vocational programmes must be in occupations where there is a shortage of labour. The proposal will make it possible to raise the level of education among participants, since education is often vital to compete for jobs in the labour market.

The Government also intends to allow the initiative for folk high school courses aimed at encouraging further studies to continue for participants in the job and development guarantee scheme who have reached the age of 25 and lack a complete compulsory or upper secondary education.

The Government intends to introduce an option of six months of part-time study in the school system and folk high school alongside participation in the job and development guarantee scheme. The purpose is to make it possible to complete previously unfinished education or to supplement previous education with relevant short courses that can increase participants' chances of getting a job. The Government also proposes that studies in Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) should be possible for twelve months instead of the present six months as part of the job and development guarantee.

Investments for people with impairments that entail reduced working capacity

Many unemployed people have some form of impairment that entail reduced working capacity. Their skills and abilities must be used. The Government therefore proposes that additional resources be allocated to allow more people with impairments that entail reduced working capacity to obtain jobs at Samhall AB. Under the proposal, the resources for this purpose will increase by SEK 300 million in 2016 and by an estimated SEK 400 million in

subsequent years. As a result of this investment, up to 2 000 more people with impairments that entail reduced working capacity will be able to obtain a job at Samhall AB each year.

The Government also proposes an investment in wage subsidies and special introductory and follow-up support, which is estimated to create scope for jobs for up to 1 000 people with impairments that entail reduced working capacity. Increased resources of approximately SEK 400 million per year are proposed.

Work is in progress at the Government Offices to review the wage subsidies for people with impairments, with a view to improving job opportunities. The regulatory framework needs to be clarified and measures reinforced, putting a clear focus on opportunities for all individuals to develop their capacity to work. The Government is continuing its work on changes in the current system of wage subsidies. The resources for this purpose are estimated at SEK 174 million in 2017, SEK 243 million in 2018 and SEK 282 million in 2019.

In addition, participation in longer courses (up to five months) aimed at encouraging further studies at folk high schools will be incorporated in the job and development guarantee scheme as an option for people with impairments that entail reduced working capacity.

Investments for quicker introduction of new arrivals

The Government's objective is for more newly arrived immigrants to start work or education and training during their time in the introduction system, i.e. normally within two years. To achieve this objective, better use must be made of new arrivals' knowledge and skills.

Fast track and stronger labour market-oriented measures

Many new arrivals have education and training, and experience, in occupations in which there is a shortage of trained and experienced labour in the Swedish labour market. These individuals' knowledge and skills have to be put to use more quickly and efficiently. The Government has therefore held talks with the social partners, the Swedish Public Employment Service and other relevant government agencies on measures for creating more rapid ways, or 'fast tracks', into the labour market, within the framework of the introduction system, for new arrivals with education and training or

experience for which there is demand in Sweden.

The Government proposes an allocation of SEK 376 million in 2016 to enable measures for fast track participants and to reinforce labour market-oriented measures aimed at facilitating and speeding up the introduction of new arrivals to working life. The estimated investment in subsequent years is SEK 532 million in 2017, SEK 422 million in 2018 and SEK 339 million in 2019. To pave the way for fast track provision, the social partners will also be given the opportunity to apply for funds for promotion and development measures.

Swedish Public Employment Service will be given better conditions for the introduction system

The Swedish Public Employment Service has a key role in achieving the Government's objective of a quicker introduction of new arrivals to the labour market. The increasing number of participants in the introduction system presents a challenge to the Employment Service's activities. The Government proposes an additional allocation of SEK 193 million to the Employment Service's administrative appropriation for the introduction system in 2016, with a view to reinforcing efforts to facilitate and speed up the introduction of new arrivals. An increase of SEK 93 million per year is estimated in 2017–2019. The Government also intends to look over the system of rules for the introduction system. The purpose of this is to reduce unnecessary administration and create conditions for increased flexibility and efficiency in the system.

Early measures for people with residence permits in accommodation centres

More new arrivals are staying on in Migration Agency accommodation centres for extended periods after receiving residence permits because there is insufficient municipal reception capacity to cope with the need. The Government considers it important that new arrivals are able to use the waiting time in a meaningful way, so as to speed up labour market entry. The Government therefore proposes an additional allocation of SEK 32 million in 2016 for early measures for new arrivals with residence permits staying in Migration Agency accommodation centres. One example might be early skills identification measures. The estimated investment in subsequent years will be SEK 32 million in 2017, SEK 20 million in 2018 and SEK 10 million in 2019. In addition, the Government proposes that further funds be

allocated to the municipalities for education in Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) for people with residence permits staying in accommodation centres.

More efficient validation process for jobs and education

Validation of skills and assessment of foreign qualifications, together with various types of supplementary courses if necessary, can be very important for introduction to the labour market and to enable new arrivals' skills to be put to better use. The Government therefore proposes that funds be allocated to reinforce validation activities within the introduction system. The Swedish Public Employment Service will be given the possibility of offering brief supplementary courses within the introduction system to allow new arrivals with foreign qualifications equivalent to Swedish higher education to be matched more quickly with jobs in the Swedish labour market. An investment of SEK 7 million is proposed in 2016, and an estimated SEK 10 million per year in 2017–2019.

The Government also intends to establish a validation delegation with instructions to monitor, support and coordinate intensified development work in the area of validation. The delegation will operate until 2019.

Investments for better reception throughout Sweden

As a result of the refugee situation in the world, more people are seeking protection in Sweden. While this is a challenge in the short term, the fact that people with strength and skills are moving to our country and contributing to Sweden's development is above all an opportunity. To make the most of this opportunity, changes are needed to improve the introduction process in Sweden. The objective is decent and orderly reception and good conditions for introduction in all municipalities.

Higher compensation to municipalities for reception of new arrivals

To increase the ability of municipalities to receive new arrivals, the Government proposes to raise the level of compensation provided to municipalities. The Government proposes that the standard compensation paid by central government should be raised from SEK 83 100 to SEK 125 000 per new arrival up to the age of 65 received in a municipality, from 1 January 2016. For new arrivals over the age of 65, the proposed raise in compensation is from SEK 52 000 to SEK 78 000. The raise is estimated to

cost SEK 1.1 billion in 2016 and SEK 2.6 billion in 2017. In connection with the raise, the performance-based compensation provided to the municipalities will be eliminated.

More resources to county administrative boards for work on reception of new arrivals

The county administrative boards have an important role to play in the reception of new arrivals and their settlement, in that they enter into agreements with the municipalities on the reception of newly arrived refugees and other people in need of protection, and their family members. There is a great need to increase the number of available places in the municipalities, which means that the county administrative boards need to step up their negotiating activities. The Government therefore proposes a permanent increase of SEK 20 million per year in the county administrative boards' funding for administration, beginning in 2016. At the same time, the Government proposes that the funding available to the county administrative boards for use in measures in municipalities aimed at creating preparedness and sufficient reception capacity ('Section 37 funding') be increased by SEK 20 million in 2016. This investment is estimated to cost SEK 20 million per year in 2017–2019 as well.

Sustainable reception nationwide

For effective and solidarity-based refugee reception, all municipalities must join in and take responsibility, based on their own situation and possibilities regarding the labour market, population and other reception services provided. The Government therefore intends to propose a new act to the effect that all municipalities can be required to receive new arrivals for settlement in the municipality. The proposal has been referred for consultation, with responses due by 28 September. The memorandum referred for consultation proposes that the new act on reception come into force on 1 July 2016.

Compensation for vacancy rents

Currently, municipalities can receive compensation for rental costs that arise while waiting for a newly arrived person to move into an apartment. The Government intends to remove the current ceiling on the amount of rent and the restriction that compensation is only paid in so far as funds are available. The purpose of this is to increase the number of housing units for people in

the new arrivals category by having the municipality make more housing available to new arrivals assigned to the municipality. The intention is that the change will enter into force when the new act on reception is introduced.

Change in compensation system and new form of placement for unaccompanied minors and young adults

To facilitate municipalities' reception of unaccompanied minors and young adults, the Government wants to simplify the regulations, reduce the administrative burden and improve planning conditions and predictability for municipalities. The Government intends to change the central government compensation system by introducing differentiated standard rates for different forms of placement in the reception of unaccompanied minors and young adults from 1 July 2016 and 1 January 2017 respectively. The standard rates should make it possible to guarantee the quality, security and safety of the accommodation and the health and social care provided to unaccompanied minors and young adults, as required by current legislation.

The Government also intends to submit a bill to the Riksdag in autumn 2015 on the introduction of a new form of placement, to be known as 'supported accommodation'. Supported accommodation will supplement the existing forms of placement, homes for care or residence and foster homes. The new form of placement will make it easier for municipalities to find an appropriate placement for the individual concerned, and will increase the flexibility of reception by municipalities. The placement of unaccompanied minors and young adults must still be based on an individual assessment of what is best for the child or young adult. The Government expects this legislative amendment to be able to enter into force in 2016.

Increased funds for civil society for refugee guides

Civil society has a key role to play in the introduction process. Many people throughout the country feel involved and want to help improve the introduction of new arrivals. People at local level and in civil society have many good ideas and a strong desire to get involved and make a positive contribution to the introduction of newly arrived immigrants.

The Government proposes that an additional SEK 30 million be allocated to create more long-term economic conditions enabling civil society to contribute to the introduction of new arrivals. In 2017–2019, an estimated equivalent of SEK 40 million per year will be allocated to refugee guide and

family contact activities. These activities give new arrivals a chance to speak Swedish and learn more about Swedish society. On top of this, they can be a way of creating new contacts that contribute to broader networks both for new arrivals and for those who have lived in Sweden a considerable time or who were born in this country.

Investments to get young people into jobs

Reducing youth unemployment is one of the challenges for labour market policy to which the Government attaches highest priority. The Government has taken the first steps in an ambitious programme of reforms and has announced the gradual introduction of a 90-day guarantee for young people. Several different investments are being made to make the 90-day guarantee possible: education contracts have been introduced, the possibility for young people aged 20–24 who are returning to studies to obtain the higher grant level in the system of financial support for studies has been expanded and the possibility of taking courses at folk high school that encourage further studies has been extended.

Trainee jobs will increase opportunities for young people to establish themselves in the labour market, while making it easier for employers to recruit people with the right skills. Given the impending shortage of labour in the welfare sector, the Government considers it important that those who have begun a trainee job are able to complete their education and training under this scheme. To ensure that this happens, the Government intends to introduce a possibility of extending trainee jobs in the welfare sector to a maximum of two years. Work is in progress at the Government Offices to examine how this possibility should be formulated.

The Government has also appointed a delegation on putting young people to work, which has the task of promoting constructive and flexible collaboration between the Swedish Public Employment Service and municipalities to reduce youth unemployment. The delegation can also approve central government grants to municipalities that have entered into local cooperation agreements.

Investments for modern working life

The fundamental starting point in the Government's approach is that no one should have to risk death or injury in their work. Continued efforts to prevent work-related ill health, particularly psychosocial ill health, are

important for achieving a sustainable working life. Under the Government's proposals, the further development of the Swedish Work Environment Authority's efforts on special preventive measures in women's work environments, which was launched in 2015, will continue at the same level in 2016.

Investments in the work environment area were made in the spring amending budget for 2015. These will continue, according to the following proposals:

- The Swedish Work Environment Authority's appropriations will increase by a further SEK 35 million from 2016 onwards.
- The annual central government grant to regional safety representative activities will increase by a further SEK 1 million from 2016.
- Special funds will be allocated to financing research on working life, with a particular focus on the work environment in sectors dominated by women and women's work-related ill health. An investment of SEK 10 million is proposed in 2016, and an estimated SEK 20 million per year in 2017 and 2018.
- SEK 10 million will be allocated in 2016 to promote skills provision in occupational health services. This investment is estimated at SEK 10 million per year from 2017. The Government will present more detailed proposals on the form to be given to this support.

The Government aims to present a new work environment strategy at the beginning of 2016. The strategy will be formulated in close consultation with the social partners and on the basis of relevant research. It will proceed from the challenges and opportunities of modern working life. One component will be a vision zero for fatal accidents at work. The Government has already identified issues for closer analysis, such as how work on knowledge and evaluation of the work environment is to be collected and disseminated. The Government intends to conduct a survey of the work environment and working conditions in the household services sector, in response to reports of shortcomings in the work environment in this sector. The Government also intends to instruct the Swedish Work Environment Authority to inspect the work environment in elderly care in terms of stress and opportunities for influence and participation within the framework of systematic work environment measures.

Requirements complying with or equivalent to collective agreements to apply to new start jobs in 2017

The status of collective agreements must be safeguarded. The Government intends to make it a requirement in 2017 that for new start jobs to qualify for support, wages and other terms of employment must comply with, or be equivalent to, collective agreements. The purpose is to ensure equally good terms of employment for all those employed with wage subsidies.

Introducing this requirement in 2017 will give employers who currently do not meet this requirement time to take the necessary measures to fulfil the conditions that the regulatory change entails before it enters into force.

Unemployment insurance ceiling raised

On 7 September, the ceiling for income-related benefit in the unemployment insurance system was raised so that a person earning up to SEK 25 000 a month will receive 80 per cent of their wage for the first 100 days of benefits. This means the maximum daily allowance will be SEK 910 on days 1 to 100, and SEK 760 on subsequent days. The minimum level of compensation was also raised, from SEK 320 to SEK 365 per day. Raising the maximum daily allowance is essential if it is to function as insurance against loss of income, giving the individual security in the event of unemployment.

Certain issues relating to unemployment insurance have been studied by the parliamentary inquiry on social security. The inquiry presented its final report, *More security and better insurance* (Swedish Government Official Reports 2015:21), to the Government in March 2015. The report has been referred for comment and the Government intends to respond to the proposals at a later date. Work will also begin on a review of the unemployment insurance system with a view to making it easier for more people to qualify for and join the system.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

Minister for Employment to host informal European ministerial meeting on fair conditions in the labour market

Published 07 September 2015 Updated 07 September 2015

Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson has invited a number of European Union colleagues to an informal meeting in Stockholm on 10–11 September on fair conditions in the labour market.

“The issue of fair conditions in the labour market is highly prioritised for the Swedish Government. It is a question of fair working conditions in the EU internal market,” says Ms Johansson.

The purpose of the meeting is to exchange experiences and discuss ways forward to ensure fair working conditions for Europe’s workers, while facilitating cross-border mobility.

“Freedom of movement is important for economic growth, but it is absolutely essential to ensure this does not lead to deteriorated conditions for workers. The EU needs stronger social cohesion and constructive cooperation for fair conditions,” says Ms Johansson.

Representatives from Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovakia, Belgium and France will take part in the meeting.

Media representatives are invited to contact Press Secretary Natali Sial for more information.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

Trainee jobs, reforms in introduction of new arrivals and higher ceiling for unemployment benefits become a reality

Published 30 June 2015 Updated 30 June 2015

On 16 June, the Riksdag passed the Government's Spring Amending Budget, which means that previously announced labour market policy proposals in the budget – including trainee jobs and education contracts for young people, reforms to facilitate the introduction of newly arrived immigrants, and a rise in the ceiling for unemployment benefits – will now be put into practice. Today the Government took the next step in implementing these reforms, in part by deciding on several ordinances.

Among other things, the Government decided on amendments to the appropriation directions for the 2015 fiscal year for the Swedish Public Employment Service and the Swedish Work Environment Authority. The appropriations to these authorities are being increased to make it possible to implement the reforms that the Government proposed in the Spring Amending Budget for 2015 and to improve the Swedish Work Environment Authority's supervisory activities.

Also today, the Government decided to issue acts and several amendments to ordinances in the labour market policy area that follow from the proposals presented by the Government in the Spring Amending Budget for 2015. A selection of these are presented below.

Trainee jobs and education contracts for young people

Trainee jobs are being introduced in the welfare sector and in shortage occupation areas as a form of subsidised employment for unemployed young people. This employment will be combined with occupational training in the area of employment. The trainee jobs will be introduced on 3 August 2015.

Education contracts are being introduced for unemployed young people aged 20–24 who lack upper secondary school qualifications or equivalent knowledge. Education contracts will be introduced on 3 August 2015.

Introduction of new arrivals

The Government is making additional funds available in 2015 and changing the compensation to municipalities for participants in Swedish for immigrants (SFI) courses living in Swedish Migration Agency accommodation centres pending placement in a municipality. It is important that newly arrived immigrants have an opportunity to participate in SFI while waiting to start their introduction measures. The provisions on changes in compensation to municipalities enter into force on 1 August 2015 but will apply to everyone participating from 1 January 2015 onwards.

The Government has decided to augment the ‘Section 37a’ funds by another SEK 30 million. This funding is intended for activities in the civil society and local government sectors aimed at creating better conditions for new arrivals to establish themselves in society.

The Government has also instructed the Swedish Public Employment Service to carry out a pilot project in 2015 to develop methods to identify the occupational skills of new arrivals early on, while they are waiting in accommodation centres for assignment to municipalities. The Swedish Public Employment Service is to develop tools for quickly identifying new arrivals’ educational and/or occupational experience, for example in occupations in which skills supply needs have been identified. This task also includes producing a systematic information package on paths to work and studies for newly arrived immigrants.

Higher ceiling for unemployment benefits

The highest daily allowance in the unemployment insurance system will be raised from SEK 680 to SEK 910 during the first 100 days of benefits, which means that a person who has a monthly income of up to SEK 25 000 will receive 80 per cent of their previous income. After 100 days of benefits, the highest daily allowance will be SEK 760. The minimum level of compensation from unemployment insurance will also be increased, from

SEK 320 to SEK 365 per day. These increases will take effect on 7 September 2015.

Extra jobs and adult education in phase 3

Extra jobs will be introduced in some parts of the welfare sector as a form of subsidised employment. The target group consists of participants in phase 3 (the employment phase of the job and development guarantee). Special employment support in the form of extra jobs will come into effect on 2 November 2015.

A possibility will be introduced for participants in phase 3 to take short study courses (with a maximum duration of one year) while retaining activity support, within the municipal adult education, higher education, university, vocational higher education and folk high school systems. The adult education initiative in phase 3 will take effect on 3 August 2015.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson visits Canada

Published 05 June 2015 Updated 05 June 2015

On 9–12 June, Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson will visit Canada. The purpose of the visit is to exchange knowledge and experience on efforts concerning the establishment of new arrivals.

Ms Johansson will make a number of study visits in Ottawa, Toronto and Winnipeg for closer examination of and to gain knowledge from Canadian establishment policy, which is often cited as being successful in international comparisons.

Below are some of the Minister's programme points during the visit. For inquiries regarding interviews and more detailed information, please contact Press Secretary Natali Sial.

Tuesday 9 June - Ottawa

- Ministry for Citizenship and Immigration Canada (with representatives also from Employment and Social Development Canada).
- Meeting with Chris Alexander, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.
- Jinny Sims, Official Opposition Critic (New Democratic Party) on Employment and Social Development.
- Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organisation (OCISO).

Wednesday 10 June - Toronto

- Ryerson Maytree Diversity Exchange, Ryerson University.
- Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade of Ontario with participation from Ministry of University, Colleges and Training.

Thursday 11 June - Toronto

- COSTI Immigrants Services.
- Regent Park – Presentation of the concept Community Benefit Agreements.
- Welcome Centre – Markham South. The welcome centre offers one-stop services for immigrants, with a number of organisations working together.
- Markham Convergence Centre (a kind of incubator for immigrants).

Friday 12 June - Winnipeg

- Lunch at the Winnipeg Scandinavian Centre.
- USA-Sweden, Investors Group Field. Supporting the Swedish national team in the World Cup in Winnipeg.



Press release from Ministry of Employment

Labour market policy initiatives in the spring budget

Published 20 April 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

In the spring amending budget for 2015, the Government proposes initiatives for a modern and sustainable working life, trainee jobs and education contracts for young people, and a historic initiative for unemployment insurance. The Government also proposes initiatives to make it easier for newly arrived immigrants (new arrivals) to establish themselves in the labour market.

Jobs for young people

Trainee jobs for young people

The Government's trainee jobs initiative targets unemployed young people aged 20–24 and is an important part of a gradual introduction of the 90-day guarantee. The purpose is to reduce youth unemployment and facilitate the generation shift in welfare services. Trainee jobs will be possible both in the welfare sector and in sectors with shortage occupations throughout the labour market.

Trainee jobs will combine 50 per cent employment with 50 per cent vocational education and training. They will be available in the welfare sector, but also elsewhere in the labour market in sectors with shortage occupations. A wage subsidy will be offered at a rate of approximately 85 per cent for trainee jobs in the welfare sector and approximately 50 per cent for trainee jobs elsewhere in the labour market in shortage occupations that require upper secondary education. For trainee jobs in the welfare sector, a

supervisor grant will also be provided at a maximum rate of SEK 2 200 per month. Under the proposal, trainee jobs will be available from 1 August 2015 in most sectors, including health care and the school system. The estimated cost of this proposal is SEK 60 million in 2015, SEK 680 million in 2016, SEK 1 170 million in 2017, SEK 1 190 million in 2018 and SEK 1 200 million in 2019.

Education contracts for young unemployed people

The purpose of the education contract is to encourage unemployed young people aged 20–24 to begin or return to studies aimed at completing upper secondary education. The education contract is an important element of a gradual implementation of the 90-day guarantee for unemployed young people.

Within the framework of an education contract, it will be possible to study full-time or to combine part-time studies with work or a work experience placement, according to the individual's situation. Education contracts depend on cooperation arrangements being developed between central and local government. In the spring amending budget, the Government proposes an education contract initiative totalling SEK 380 million in 2015. In the coming years, the initiative is estimated to amount to SEK 790 million in 2016, SEK 780 million in 2017 and 2018, and SEK 800 million in 2019. Under the proposal, the earliest date on which education contracts will enter into effect is 1 August 2015.

Promoting local cooperation against youth unemployment

It is important that young people obtain work or are accepted into a programme that leads to work or education. Municipalities and county councils are important actors in the fight against youth unemployment. In December 2014, the Government appointed a delegation with a mandate to promote a greater impact at local level for labour market policy measures against youth unemployment. The delegation will receive funds to provide grants for measures that promote local cooperation between municipalities and Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish public employment service). The proposed resources amount to SEK 75 million in 2015, SEK 90 million in 2016 and SEK 25 million in 2017.

Early disbursement of resources for EU employment initiative and the national Social Funds programme

With high youth unemployment and many people outside the labour market, it is essential to make full use of the funding available through the European Social Fund. Social Fund actions are an important complement to ordinary labour market policy measures.

To speed up implementation of the EU employment initiative for young people and other parts of the new Social Fund programme, the disbursement of European Social Fund resources will be brought forward. The proposed increase will amount to SEK 50 million in 2015. In addition, these resources will be increased by SEK 222 million in 2016, SEK 360 million in 2017 and SEK 46 million in 2018. The increased funding will come to a total of SEK 678 million in the period 2015–2018 and will entail a corresponding reduction later during the 2014–2020 programme period. This does not affect the total resources available under the Social Fund over time, which is controlled by the EU.

Modern working life

Investments in the work environment for a modern and sustainable working life

During the past two electoral periods, work environment policies have been cut back. The number of work-related injuries and illnesses has increased, as has sickness absence. At the same time, working life faces major changes, as global competition continues to increase along with demands for more people to carry on working longer. The Government proposes to put the necessary augmented resources into the area of work environment policy to tackle these developments.

The Swedish Work Environment Authority's appropriation will be increased by SEK 20 million from July 2015 onwards. For 2016, the appropriation will be augmented by an estimated additional SEK 35 million and from 2017 onwards by a further SEK 5 million. This initiative will make it possible to improve the Authority's supervisory activities in the work environment area and to employ more inspectors. The central government grant for regional safety representatives will be increased by SEK 9 million from July 2015 onwards, and by an estimated additional SEK 1 million from 2016 onwards.

A special initiative for working life research will be implemented in 2015–2018, with a focus on women's work environment problems and work-related ill health. An enhancement of the skills supply for occupational

health services will also begin, starting in July 2015.

An active labour market policy

Higher ceiling for unemployment benefits

The benefits provided by unemployment insurance have eroded over a prolonged period. Few of those covered now have benefits amounting to 80 per cent of their earned income during the first 100 days. The Government considers that raising the highest daily allowance in the income-related unemployment insurance system is vital to enable unemployment insurance to serve as insurance against loss of income and as a safety net for the individual in the event of unemployment.

In the spring amending budget the Government therefore proposes an increase in the highest daily allowance to SEK 910, which means that a person with a monthly income of up to SEK 25 000 will receive 80 per cent of their income for the first 100 days of benefits, after which the allowance will be scaled down to SEK 760 per day. The highest daily allowance is currently SEK 680 per day. The Government also proposes an increase in the minimum level of compensation from unemployment insurance from SEK 320 to SEK 365 per day. The higher level of compensation from unemployment insurance also includes the activity support provided to individuals who qualify for compensation from the unemployment insurance system. Under the proposal, these changes will take effect on 7 September 2015. It is estimated that this proposal will cost SEK 880 million in 2015. For 2016–2019, the estimated cost of the reform is approximately SEK 2.8 billion per year.

Extra jobs

The Government intends to discontinue phase 3. The Government therefore proposes the introduction of 'extra jobs' in certain parts of welfare services. Participants in phase 3 may be offered a position in certain areas of welfare services. These positions will be for 75 per cent of full-time hours with wages in accordance with collective agreements. During the rest of their time, the individuals concerned are expected to look for work or study. The employer will receive financial support corresponding to the entire wage cost. This support will be available for up to 12 months, with the possibility of extension for a further 12 months.

The support will be made available to services where it can be implemented within the framework of EU state aid rules, pending notification to the EU so as to be able to extend it to other services too, such as elderly care. The extra jobs proposal will take effect in August 2015 at the earliest, at an estimated cost of SEK 10 million in 2015, SEK 560 million in 2016, SEK 1 660 million in 2017, SEK 2 430 million in 2018 and SEK 2 630 million in 2019.

Adult education initiative in phase 3

The Government proposes the introduction of a possibility for participants in phase 3 to take short study courses (maximum duration one year) while retaining activity support within the framework of adult education, higher education, university and vocational higher education. This will be conditional on the formal eligibility requirements being met and admission taking place in competition with other qualified applicants.

At present, few participants in phase 3 choose to study, despite great educational needs. This may involve supplementing upper secondary education or taking a vocationally oriented course to improve the chances of getting a job. It is suggested that the proposal take effect in August 2015 at the earliest.

Increased resources for Arbetsförmedlingen

The Government has launched a reform of Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish public employment service) to promote modernisation and development. Arbetsförmedlingen is tasked with arranging jobs both for people who are close to the labour market and people who are far from it, so as to create confidence among employers and jobseekers alike. The Government proposes an increase of SEK 210 million in Arbetsförmedlingen's administrative appropriation for 2015. In subsequent years, the estimated increase would amount to SEK 260 million in 2016, SEK 240 million in 2017 and SEK 140 million from 2018 onwards. The additional resources are intended to enable effective implementation of the Government's priority reforms, such as trainee jobs, education contracts and extra jobs, starting in 2015. During 2015, additional funds will also be made available to create better opportunities for development work and matching in the introduction system.

Introduction package

Civil society initiative to facilitate introduction of new arrivals

The Government is committing an additional SEK 30 million to activities in the civil society and local government sectors aimed at creating better conditions for new arrivals to establish themselves in society. This is an enhancement of the 'Section 37a funds', i.e. funds made available under Section 37a of the Ordinance on state compensation for measures for certain aliens (2010:1122). The initiative encompasses activities that aim to make it easier to become established in society, create networks, support language learning or provide social support to unaccompanied minors. Examples include social activities, study circles, activities to support language learning, mentorship and activities of sports associations.

The purpose is to enable new arrivals to make contact with people who are established in Sweden who can share knowledge and experience that is valuable during the initial period in Sweden. The Government has also issued an invitation to a dialogue in early May on how civil society can play a larger and more important role in the introduction of new arrivals. The civil society initiative focuses on voluntary, not-for-profit organisations. The proposal is included in the Government's spring amending budget and applies for 2015.

Increased compensation to municipalities for SFI for people living in accommodation centres

The appropriation for compensation to municipalities should be increased by SEK 50 million in 2015 so as to enhance the compensation to municipalities for participants in Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) who have been granted a residence permit and are living in accommodation provided by the Migration Board pending relocation to a municipality. It is important that new arrivals have the opportunity to participate in SFI while waiting to start an introduction plan. The Government also considers that the rules for compensation need to be changed so that municipalities receive compensation for the time each individual participates in SFI and for all participants, which is not the case under the current rules.

Funds for increased refugee reception capacity

The county administrative boards provide compensation to municipalities for measures aimed at creating preparedness and reception capacity for new arrivals and for developing cooperation aimed at making it easier to become established in society. Priority is to be given to measures that make it easier

to take up residence and substantially increase preparedness and reception capacity. This compensation is provided under Section 37 of the Ordinance on state compensation for measures for certain aliens (2010:1122).

The Government proposes to allocate a further SEK 20 million under Section 37, a doubling of existing funds during 2015. The proposal will give county administrative boards better opportunities to encourage preparedness and capacity in the municipalities. Municipalities will have more scope to receive new arrivals. New arrivals can be placed in municipalities and begin their introduction activities more quickly.

Fast track for introduction of new arrivals

In March 2015, the Government launched a first round of tripartite talks on a 'fast track' to the labour market for new arrivals. The Government wants to work with the social partners and Arbetsförmedlingen to identify forms and measures for making the best use of valuable skills possessed by new arrivals with education or experience in shortage occupations so that they can be matched more quickly with the needs of relevant industries and enterprises.

Better matching and validation can be important components of a fast track, along with supervision and vocationally-oriented instruction in Swedish. These measures already exist but it is a matter of finding ways to improve matching between the needs of employers and the skills of new arrivals. The idea is to find package solutions that are appropriate for the skills supply needs in relevant industries.

After a first round of talks, the parties have been called upon to consider what they can do to help bring about more employment, subsidised employment or work experience placements for the target group and what help they may need from the Government to achieve the objective. The parties will be instructed to report to the Government at a second round of talks in the autumn. Hopefully, a first fast track can be operational during 2016.

Pilot scheme in accommodation centres

The Government intends to instruct Arbetsförmedlingen to conduct a pilot scheme to test measures to identify new arrivals' vocational skills during their time in accommodation provided by the Migration Board. It is important that the time spent in an accommodation centre pending

placement in a municipality is put to meaningful use. Early action has a bearing on new arrivals' entry into the labour market.

Review of compensation to municipalities

All of Sweden's municipalities must take joint responsibility for receiving refugees. Having said that, they must be given reasonable and stable conditions that make it possible to plan municipal activities. The Government therefore intends to appoint an inquiry to review compensation to municipalities. Terms of reference are currently being prepared at the Government Offices for adoption before the summer.

More in the spring budget in the labour market policy area

More places in programmes

In the spring amending budget the Government also proposes additional resources to enable more places in labour market policy programmes. The aim is to enhance the ability of Arbetsförmedlingen to offer places in programmes early on during unemployment.

Tougher requirements for new start jobs

The Government is also announcing tougher requirements for new start jobs in the Budget Bill for 2016. The status of collective agreements must be defended and individuals working in a position under the new start job scheme must be entitled to the protection given by terms of employment in collective agreements.

Validation in the introduction system

The Government is allocating SEK 50 million for validation measures within the introduction system. The validation process needs to be made more effective so that new arrivals can become established in the labour market more quickly.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

Minister for Employment to meet Commissioner Thyssen

Published 15 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Tomorrow, Friday 16 January, Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson will visit commissioners and social partners in Brussels. Ms Johansson has taken the initiative to meet Marianne Thyssen, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, to advance the agenda on an orderly labour market and decent working conditions.

During her visit to Brussels, Ms Johansson will also meet Cecilia Malmström, European Commissioner for Trade, and Valdis Dombrovskis, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for the euro and dialogue between the social partners.

During a luncheon, Ms Johansson will also meet the social partners' representatives to the EU, Bernadette Ségol, General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation and Thérèse de Liedekerke, Deputy Director General of BUSINESSEUROPE.

The visit in Brussels is part of the Government's efforts to strengthen work on creating an orderly labour market and jobs with decent conditions in the EU.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office

Stefan Löfven to meet Nobel Peace Prize winner Kailash Satyarthi

Published 09 December 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

On Friday 12 December, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will meet Nobel Peace Prize winner Kailash Satyarthi for lunch at Rosenbad. Ministers Margot Wallström, Ylva Johansson and Åsa Regnér will also be present.

Kailash Satyarthi was awarded the prize jointly with Malala Yousafzai for his struggle against the suppression of children and young people, against child labour and for the right of all children to education.

Date and time: Friday 12 December at 12.00.

Venue: Bella Venezia, Rosenbad.

Photo opportunity. Assembly for photographers at Bella Venezia at 11.30. Prior notification of attendance is obligatory.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Employment

Labour market policy to focus on young people and work environment

Published 28 October 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

In the Budget Bill for 2015, the Government is taking several initiatives to tackle youth unemployment, including a 90-day guarantee for young people, trainee jobs and education contracts. The Government is also proposing initiatives to meet the challenges of modern working life, a higher ceiling for unemployment benefits, improved public employment services, earlier disbursement of resources for the EU employment initiative and 'extra jobs'. The Government also intends to lower the allowance paid to workplaces accepting apprentices in phase 3 of the job and development guarantee programme.

The high level of youth unemployment is one of the challenges for labour market policy to which the Government attaches highest priority. It is crucial to a society that young people are able to establish themselves in the labour market so that they can contribute and grow into independent individuals and members of society. The Government will now begin to implement an ambitious programme of reforms aimed at combating youth unemployment.

"No young person should have to start their adult life in unemployment, this is one of most important issues for the Government – to fight youth unemployment. It feels really positive to now be able to take these steps for a sustainable labour market policy for more jobs," says Minister for

Employment Ylva Johansson.

The introduction of a 90-day guarantee for unemployed young people means that the Government wants to set a limit to how long a young person can be unemployed before being offered a job, a measure leading to a job, or a position in education or training. This limit will gradually be cut back to 90 days.

Under the proposal, the 90-day guarantee will cover all unemployed young people who register with Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish public employment service) and will be introduced gradually, beginning in 2015. The Government has given Arbetsförmedlingen instructions to prepare a step-by-step introduction of a 90-day guarantee. Achieving success in the fight against youth unemployment will require the combined efforts of all actors in society. In particular, the knowledge, commitment and contributions of the municipalities will play a vital role in the success of the reform efforts that are now beginning.

Education contracts for young unemployed people

Education is key to future jobs and competitiveness, and also to people's freedom to shape their own lives. The primary cause of long-term unemployment among young people is inadequate education. The education contract will give young unemployed people who have not completed upper secondary education the opportunity to study in municipal adult education and folk high school. The education contract is an important part of the 90-day guarantee. The aim is to support young people in obtaining jobs and work experience positions, while emphasising their own responsibility to make themselves employable by completing upper secondary education.

One objective is to make it possible to combine studies with part-time work experience or employment, if necessary. As part of introducing the education contract, unemployed young people aged 20–24 should continue to be eligible for the higher level of grant in the student aid system, provided they meet certain conditions. This possibility should be adapted in future according to the design of the 90-day guarantee. The Government also intends to extend the availability of folk high school courses aimed at encouraging more advanced studies.

Trainee jobs in the welfare sector

The Government's initiative for trainee jobs in certain parts of the welfare sector targets unemployed young people and is an important part of the 90-day guarantee. Trainee jobs will be fully subsidised positions consisting of work and training. As a rule, trainee jobs will be 75 per cent work and 25 per cent training and will be based on vocational introduction agreements. This subsidy will be available for a maximum of one year.

Trainee jobs are important both to fight youth unemployment and to increase staffing ratios in the welfare sector so as to raise the quality of services. The budget also contains a proposal to allocate funding for more education and training places in adult education. This should make it possible for young people who are offered trainee jobs to combine work with relevant vocational education and training.

Phase 3 will be replaced by 'extra jobs'

The Government wants to increase staffing ratios in the welfare sector and enable people to do something useful. There is a great opportunity to create social value and raise standards in the welfare sector. Instead of people who have been unemployed for an extended period being locked into meaningless measures that do not lead to jobs, they should be given real jobs with real wages. The Government will therefore have talks with the local government sector and relevant parties in the labour market about 'extra jobs' for the long-term unemployed.

Under the Government's proposal, extra jobs will be introduced in certain parts of the welfare sector and other publicly financed activities. The employer will receive financial support corresponding to the entire wage cost. Wages will be payable in accordance with collective agreements. As a rule, the position will be for 75 per cent of full-time hours. The rest of the time, the individual is expected to look for work or study. The extra jobs proposal will enter into force as soon as possible.

The Government wants to see a gradual phase-out of phase 3 of the job and development guarantee programme. The allowance paid to an employer providing employment in phase 3 will be lowered from SEK 4 950 per month to SEK 2 200 per month. Existing agreements will be allowed to run their course. During the time it takes to abolish phase 3, employment with a provider offering meaningful working duties may constitute a first step before a subsidised position, such as an extra job.

Higher ceiling in unemployment insurance system

The benefits provided by unemployment insurance have eroded over a prolonged period. Few of those covered now have benefits amounting to 80 per cent of their earned income during the first 100 days. The Government considers that raising the highest daily allowance in the income-related unemployment insurance system is vital to enable unemployment insurance to work as insurance against loss of income and as a safety net for the individual in the event of unemployment. The proposal will take effect on 1 May 2015.

Under the proposal, the highest daily allowance in the income-related unemployment insurance system will be raised so that anyone with a monthly income of up to SEK 25 000 will receive 80 per cent of their income for the first 100 days. This means the maximum daily allowance will be SEK 910 on days 1 to 100, after which the allowance will be gradually reduced to SEK 760 per day. The current daily allowance is SEK 680 per day for the whole period, which means that only those whose monthly income is no more than SEK 18 700 receive benefits worth 80 per cent of their income.

The current reduction of the regulated benefit level from 80 to 70 per cent after the 200th day of benefits and to 65 per cent after the 300th day of benefits will continue to apply. The Government also proposes an increase in the maximum benefit payable under basic unemployment insurance from the current level of SEK 320 per day to SEK 350 per day. In a second stage, the Government intends to raise the base amount to SEK 365 per day from 1 January 2016. This means the base amount will have been increased by a total of SEK 45.

Improved employment services

The Government is now launching a reform of Arbetsförmedlingen (the Swedish public employment service), to promote modernisation and development. Arbetsförmedlingen must arrange jobs both for people who are close to the labour market and people who are far from it – this is the way to create confidence among employers and jobseekers alike. Increases of SEK 905 million in 2015, SEK 940 million in 2016, SEK 965 million in 2017 and SEK 736 million in 2018 are proposed in Arbetsförmedlingen's administrative appropriations.

The extra resources will be used partly to enable implementation of the reforms prioritised by the Government and partly to begin a process of change aimed at making the employment service a professional matching specialist. Arbetsförmedlingen will also need to work more extensively with municipalities. In addition, it will receive funding to maintain the quality of measures to help newly arrived immigrants become established in the labour market. The additional funding will be made available from 1 January 2015.

Investments in the work environment to meet the challenges of modern working life

During the past two electoral periods, work environment policies have been cut back. The number of work-related injuries and illnesses has increased. The growth in sickness absence, particularly among women, gives cause for concern. At the same time, the world of work faces major changes, as global competition continues to increase along with demands for more people to carry on working longer. Augmented resources are now needed in the area of work environment policy to tackle these developments.

The Swedish Work Environment Authority's appropriations will be increased by SEK 60 million from 2015 onwards. This initiative will improve supervision in the work environment area. Among other things, it will make it possible to employ more inspectors. In addition to this, the Government proposes a temporary boost in the Authority's appropriations for 2015 and 2016, of SEK 15 million and SEK 10 million respectively, to further develop special preventive measures for women's work environments. The central government grant for regional safety representatives will be increased by SEK 10 million from 2015 onwards, and by a further SEK 3 million in 2015 for a special training initiative.

A special initiative for working life research will be implemented in 2015–2018, with a focus on women's work environment problems and work-related ill health.

Modern working life also demands innovative thinking in the work environment area. Work will therefore begin at the Government Offices to produce a new strategy for work environment policies, in close consultation with the social partners.

SEK 2 million will be allocated in 2015 and SEK 10 million per year in subsequent years to promote skills supply in occupational health services.

The increased appropriations for the Swedish Work Environment Authority and the increased central government support for regional safety representatives will take effect in 2015. The Government will return to the question of how the proposed funding for research in 2015–2018 will be distributed and how the support for skills supply in occupational health services will be designed.

Early disbursement of resources for EU employment initiative and the national Social Funds programme

With high youth unemployment and many people outside the labour market, it is tremendously important to use the funding available through the European Social Fund to the full. Social Fund actions are an important complement to ordinary labour market policy initiatives.

To speed up the implementation of the EU employment initiative for young people and other parts of the new Social Fund programme, European Social Fund resources have been brought forward. The increased funding will come to more than SEK 600 million in the period until 2017 and will entail a corresponding reduction later during the 2014–2020 programme period. This will not affect the total resources available under the Social Fund over time, which is controlled by the EU.

The Social Fund appropriation proposed by the previous Government in its last Budget Bill would have meant a slow start to the employment initiative for young people and the Social Fund programme.



Statement from Ministry of Employment

Statement by Swedish Minister for Employment and Integration Ylva Johansson, on the adoption of Council Conclusions on LGBTI rights, EPSCO 16 June 2016

Published 17 June 2016 Updated 17 June 2016

People's love for each other is a force that cannot be restricted. But the brutal attack in Orlando, Florida, has shocked us all and reminded us in the most horrific way that the hatred against LGBTI people has no limits. We cannot ignore the fact that this hatred exists in each of our respective countries. The attack in Orlando shows the need to continue to stand up for the values on which the Union is founded and we must never quit challenging those who propagate intolerance and oppression. Together, we must combat hate, violence and terror and fight for human rights for all.

We welcome the fact that the Council has for the first time adopted Conclusions concerning equal rights for LGBTI persons within the EU. However, we would have preferred a more ambitious and stronger message concerning the enjoyment of human rights by LGBTI-persons.

Therefore, on the basis of these Conclusions, it is even more important than before to continue to work within and outside the EU for equal rights and opportunities for everyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, and to ensure that cultural, traditional or religious values cannot be invoked to justify any form of discrimination, including discrimination against LGBTI persons.

Together with Denmark, Belgium and Austria we have issued a statement on the Conclusions, and we hope to continue this struggle together with other

member states.