



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Åsa Regnér appointed as Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women

Published 07 March 2018

UN Secretary-General António Guterres today appointed Åsa Regnér as Deputy Executive Director of UN Women with responsibility for intergovernmental relations and strategic partnerships, as well as Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Ms Regnér will leave the Government when the Prime Minister has accepted her resignation, which is expected shortly. Ms Regnér will then take up her post at UN Women's headquarters in New York.

"I would like to thank the UN Secretary-General for my appointment today. I am aware that there was tough competition from many qualified candidates and that it was a process with many steps. I will work hard for the prioritisation of women's and girl's rights in global contexts, and for increased democratisation and economic development around the world.

"I would also like to thank Prime Minister Stefan Löfven for entrusting me to be part of his feminist government, and for his support and that of Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström in this candidature. I see today's appointment as evidence that the UN values Swedish UN engagement and our feminist foreign policy."



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.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Media invitation: Ministerial conference on how gender equality can contribute to fair jobs and growth

Published 03 November 2017 Updated 03 November 2017

On Wednesday 8 November, the media is welcome to attend the opening hour and subsequent press conference during #EqualityWorks17 at Gothia Towers in Gothenburg, hosted by Sweden's Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Regnér. Representatives from the upcoming EU presidencies will attend and will discuss gender equality in relation to the labour market, the situation of women brought to light by the #MeToo campaign, and overall progress in the area of gender equality in the EU based on the Gender Equality Index of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), released in October.

Tid: 8 november 2017 at 12:45 to 13:30

Plats: Room: Horizon. Gothia Towers, Mässans gata 24, Gothenburg

The gender equality perspectives discussed at #EqualityWorks17 will provide valuable input to the upcoming Social Summit on Fair Jobs and Growth, hosted by President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfvén in Gothenburg 17

November.

Press conference

Wednesday 8 November, 12.45–13.30

Gothia Towers, Mässans gata 24, Gothenburg

Room: Horizon

Åsa Regnér, Sweden's Minister for Gender Equality, Marlène Schiappa, France's Gender Equality Minister, and Jevgeni Ossinovski, Estonia's Minister for Health and Labour will present their conclusions from the initial sessions of the conference.

The press conference will be held in English.

#EqualityWorks17

A gender perspective is essential for achieving well-functioning and fair labour markets, sustainable social security systems, and inclusive growth. The aim of #EqualityWorks17 is to discuss and arrive at conclusions on topics which will then be mainstreamed into discussions during the Social Summit on Fair Jobs and Growth later in November.

#EqualityWorks17 will bring together a number of EU gender equality ministers, representatives of the EU institutions, the social partners, civil society and researchers active in the field.



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Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Sweden best in the EU on gender equality

Published 11 October 2017 Updated 11 October 2017

Sweden tops the EU Gender Equality Index in 2017, ahead of Denmark, Finland and the Netherlands. This news was presented today in Brussels at a conference organised by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).

The EIGE Gender Equality Index measures progress in the area of gender equality over a ten-year period, between 2005 and 2015. The Index measures progress across six domains: work, health, time, money, knowledge and power.

"Sweden's top ranking in the EU Gender Equality Index shows that systematic gender equality efforts pay off, even if the results do not mean that we can remain content. The Government has set an objective that women and men should have the same power to shape society and their lives – and we are not there yet. On the other hand, the Index confirms that we are on the right track, and I look forward to continuing this work," says Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Regnér, in Brussels.

The Gender Equality Index shows that, on the whole, progress towards gender equality is slow. A country can receive a score of at most 100 on the Index, and the EU average is 66.2. Sweden received a score of 82.6, thereby topping the list. Greece, Hungary and the Slovak Republic are at the bottom of the list.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Next step to incorporate Convention on the Rights of the Child into Swedish law

Published 07 July 2017

The Government in Sweden decided to submit a proposal to the Council on Legislation to incorporate the Convention on the Rights of the Child into Swedish law. The Government considers that the Convention's strong position must be made clearer and that a child rights-based approach must have a major impact in the application of the law.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child has applied in Sweden since 1990, and the overall conformity of Swedish legislation with the Convention is good. However, there are reports – most recently from the Inquiry on the rights of the child – indicating that the rights of the child have had inadequate impact in the application of the law.

"Another important step is now being taken to highlight the importance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child for Swedish law and clarify its strong status. With the Convention on the Rights of the Child as Swedish law, officials and decision-makers will have to take account of the Convention in a different way than is the case today. It will be more clearly required that legal practitioners must base any decisions concerning children on the rights contained in the Convention," says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

Incorporation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child will gather those human rights that concern children in one act, which will contribute to a holistic view and make it clear that the Convention's articles are to be

interpreted in relation to one another.

In decision-making processes concerning children, it will be made clearer that the principle of the best interests of the child must be the approach taken, and that the best interests of the child must be assessed on the basis of the individual child and their situation. With the Convention on the Rights of the Child as an act of law, it can be expected that children will be more involved in decisions that affect them.

It is proposed that the act enter into force on 1 January 2020 to give authorities responsible for the administration of justice ample time to make preparations ahead of the new act.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Conference to highlight gender equality ahead of Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth

Published 20 June 2017

The University of Gothenburg, the seat of the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, has been tasked with organising a conference ahead of the Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth to be co-hosted in Gothenburg by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker on 17 November 2017.

"It is hard to discuss well-functioning and fair labour markets, and efficient and sustainable social security systems, without highlighting gender equality. This is why the gender perspective will be addressed at the Summit. The gender perspective is also key in the discussion of the EU's future in a broad sense, and for this reason, we are organising this ministerial conference with the University of Gothenburg," says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

The target group for the conference includes gender equality ministers from a selection of EU Member States, representatives of the social partners, the European Commission, the European Institute for Gender Equality and civil society representatives. The University of Gothenburg has been allocated SEK 1.4 million for the conference, which aims to conduct a dialogue on current gender equality issues and highlight aspects of gender equality in fair jobs and growth.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice

Stronger protection against child marriage, forced marriage and 'honour' crimes

Published 17 March 2017

The Government has given Justice of the Supreme Court Mari Heidenborg the task of reviewing how protection against child marriage, forced marriage and 'honour' crimes can be strengthened.

Despite the legislative amendments introduced in 2014, most evidence indicates that the incidence of child marriage and forced marriage has increased in Sweden. This is why it is crucial that we evaluate legislation in these areas.

The inquiry remit includes analysing and taking a position on how the possibilities of recognising child marriages contracted abroad should be further restricted. Application of the penalty provisions on forced marriage and luring someone to travel abroad with the purpose of forcing them to enter into marriage will be evaluated and the Inquiry Chair will take a position on whether the provisions should be amended. The Inquiry Chair will also look at how relevant government agencies are working and cooperating on crime in these areas. Moreover, the Inquiry has been tasked with reviewing whether special grounds for tougher penalties should be introduced for 'honour' crimes.

"Forced marriage and child marriage must be combated. Children who have entered into marriage abroad must feel that society is on their side. People who commit 'honour' crimes must be sentenced and these crimes must be judged severely," says Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson.

"This is about the right to an education, choosing who you want to have a loving relationship with and how you want to shape your life. In combination with the remit we recently gave to the National Board of Health and Welfare, this Inquiry will produce stronger guidance for the municipalities. Our starting point is clear: children must not be married, and they must not be treated or considered as such either," says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

The part of the remit concerning the recognition of child marriages contracted abroad is to be presented in an interim report by 6 December 2017. The final report is to be submitted by 1 September 2018.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Minister for Gender Equality highlights the Swedish Sexual Purchases Act at the UN Commission on the Status of Women

Published 13 March 2017

On 13–15 March, Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Regnér will head Sweden's delegation at the annual session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York. This year's overarching theme is women's economic empowerment in a changing labour market. Actress Sissela Kyle will also take part in New York through the Swedish delegation.

The CSW brings UN Member States together and is the world's foremost intergovernmental body working globally to strengthen the situation of women and gender equality.

"Many of us are concerned about what is going on in the world at present, which is why it feels more important than ever to take part in the CSW. Right now, as the rights particularly of young girls, women and LGBT people are being called into question, it is an extremely positive force that thousands of women are gathering to discuss this specific issue in New York. Through its presence at the CSW, Sweden can strengthen courageous women activists around the world," says Ms Regnér.

The aim of Swedish engagement is to be a strong and constructive voice for

the rights of women and girls. In New York, in connection with the theme of the meeting, Sweden will address issues on gender pay and pension gaps, gender segregation in the labour market and social reforms – such as parental insurance and child and elderly care – as preconditions of women's participation in the labour market.

Combat sex purchases and trafficking

On Tuesday, Sweden, France and CAP International are organising a side event on the purchase of sexual services and trafficking, where Sweden will address its experiences of the Swedish Sexual Purchases Act. Known in part for her role as women's rights activist Dagmar Friman in the drama series 'Miss Friman's War', which portrays the development of gender equality policy in Sweden, actress and gender equality debater Sissela Kyle will also take part in the seminar.

On Tuesday 14 March, Ms Regnér will deliver Sweden's address in an open debate in the UN Security Council. The theme of the debate is modern slavery/human trafficking.

In New York, Ms Regnér will also take part in a panel of Nordic ministers to discuss gender equality in the Nordic labour market. In addition, she will meet representatives of a range of NGOs active in the area of gender equality, with a particular focus on honour-related violence and oppression.

A record 1 082 NGOs, with a total of 8 623 representatives, have registered ahead of this year's CSW session.

To Washington to discuss security issues

After the CSW, Ms Regnér will take part in the opening of this year's public diplomacy programme in Washington DC on the theme 'safe and sound'.

Safe and sound is being organised by the Swedish Embassy and serves as a platform for deepening bilateral relations with the United States in the area of security. Common interests and challenges related to national contingency planning are highlighted within the scope of the theme.

Ms Regnér will be available for interviews both on site and by telephone. Please contact Press Secretary Joanna Abrahamsson



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Nils Öberg to examine preventive measures for men who subject close relatives to violence

Published 07 March 2017

The Government has appointed Nils Öberg to chair an inquiry into measures to prevent men who subject close relatives to violence from reoffending. The remit of the inquiry is to analyse the effects of the measures and propose how work with perpetrators of violence can be developed and strengthened.

The inquiry is part of the implementation of the national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women adopted by the Government in November last year.

"The risk of a person who has been subjected to violence in a close relationship being subjected to violence again is very large. We must focus on the perpetrator and on the preventive work to stop the violence from arising and being repeated. This inquiry is an important step in moving from a project to a national programme with regard to the prevention of violence," says Minister for Children the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

"Effective work to prevent reoffending builds on a combination of intervention and supportive actions. With regard to men who exercise violence in close relationships, more measures are required that are adapted to the varying needs of that particular target group," says Nils Öberg, the Government's Inquiry Chair.

The remit of the inquiry is to:

- Conduct a survey of knowledge on effective methods and analyse activities aimed at preventing violence from arising and being repeated.
- Review the need for support and guidance to develop prevention of reoffending activities and submit proposals on how the support can be designed to enable streamlining the work.
- Review the Social Welfare Committee's responsibility for measures targeting perpetrators of violence and analyse the ability of the health and medical care system to identify individuals who may repeat violence against a close relative and how these individuals can receive treatment to change their behaviour.
- Promote and strengthen cooperation between and within social services, the health and medical care system and judicial authorities.
- Provide a current description of how municipalities and responsible authorities take account of and involve the perpetrator's social network in the work to prevent and combat violence in close relations.
- Conduct a survey of how safety considerations for women, children and other close relatives subjected to violence in the perpetrator's family are handled in the work with the perpetrator, and consider and propose measures to support the work on strengthening the safety of close relatives.

The report is to be presented by 1 June 2018.

Nils Öberg, Director-General of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service

Since 2012, Nils Öberg has been Director-General of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. Over several years, he has developed a knowledge-based approach to working on prevention of reoffending methods. Mr Öberg was previously Director-General for Administrative Affairs at the Ministry of Justice.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Employment,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven and President Jean-Claude Juncker to host Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth

Published 23 January 2017 Updated 23 January 2017

Together with President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, Sweden's Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will host a Social Summit in Gothenburg on 17 November 2017, focusing on promoting fair jobs and growth.

The Social Summit for Fair Jobs and Growth will gather heads of state and government, the social partners and other key players to work together to promote fair jobs and growth. Well-functioning and fair European labour markets, effective and sustainable social protection systems and the promotion of social dialogue at all levels will be at the heart of these discussions.

In spite of recent improvements in economic conditions, the legacy of the worst economic and social crisis in recent times has been far-reaching. The world of work and our societies are changing fast, with new opportunities and new challenges arising from globalisation, the digital revolution, changing work patterns and demographic developments. We share a responsibility and an interest in working for a more prosperous and 'future-proof' Europe, where economic and social developments go hand-in-hand.

The Summit will be an opportunity for key stakeholders to discuss the policy priorities and initiatives set at European level and to see how the European

Union, the Member States and social partners at all levels can deliver on their shared economic and social priorities.

President Jean-Claude Juncker said: “Since the start of my mandate, I have made clear that I wanted a more social Europe. We have taken important first steps to achieve that. This year will be crucial. Following the broad public consultation, it is time to establish the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Social Summit in Sweden will help us to deliver the momentum and put social priorities where they belong: at the top of Europe's agenda.”

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven said: “In these challenging times, we need to show that we can deliver results in peoples’ everyday lives. A more social Europe, with fair working conditions, effective labour markets and a strong social dialogue, should be a priority for all of us. I trust we can take important steps towards this goal at the Social Summit in November.”



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

International meeting on the role of business in efforts to end violence against children

Published 18 January 2017 Updated 18 January 2017

Wednesday 18 January a new step is being taken in the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children with an international meeting in Davos, Switzerland, focusing on the role of business in this work. The meeting was arranged in connection with the annual World Economic Forum. The Global Partnership is to help achieve the Global Goals of the 2030 Agenda on preventing and ending violence against and exploitation of children. Sweden has a prominent role to play as a pathfinder and was co-organiser of the meeting.

"To achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda on all girls and boys in the world being able to grow up free from violence and exploitation, it is crucial that all actors in society contribute and take action. The business sector has an important role to play in this regard. The Swedish Government is working together with the private sector, civil society, the education sector and children on this issue," says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

The other co-organisers of the meeting were Carlsson Wagonlit Travel, Ericsson, Telia, Zain Group and the UN Foundation. The Swedish Government will continue the dialogue with the companies that have operations in Sweden.

Executive Director of UNICEF Anthony Lake was also taking part in the

meeting.

The Global Partnership was launched in 2016

The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children was launched in July last year and is a joint initiative of UNICEF and the WHO for international collaboration between governments, civil society, the private sector and other actors to achieve change.

In December 2016, Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér took part in the partnership's fourth board meeting at the UNICEF headquarters in New York. The meeting dealt with how the partnership should work on global opinion formation and knowledge exchange between the participating countries, and how resources should be mobilised for efforts to end violence against children.

A number of nations, known as pathfinders, play a more prominent role in the partnership. Apart from Sweden, the other pathfinders are currently Indonesia, Mexico and Tanzania.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice

Swedish Government presents feminist policy for a gender-equal future

Published 18 November 2016 Updated 18 November 2016

The Swedish Government has presented a gender quality policy communication entitled *Power, goals and authority – a feminist policy for a gender-equal future*, including a ten-year National strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women. As one of the measures in the strategy, the Government intends to amend the degree descriptions in the Higher Education Ordinance for educational programmes where it is most necessary and where students will encounter perpetrators and victims of violence in their future careers.

"People who encounter perpetrators of violence and their victims in their work must have knowledge of how violence can be uncovered and prevented, and of the most effective measures. This should therefore be included in the teaching of particularly relevant higher education programmes. This measure is part of the first long-term national strategy to combat men's violence against women, which prioritises preventive efforts. This communication shows the Government moving up a gear in its efforts to make a difference in people's lives," says Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

"So-called honour-related crimes are unacceptable. More offences must be

uncovered and more must be done to prosecute the perpetrators. It must be clear that society takes a very serious view of these offences. We are therefore appointing an inquiry to investigate the possibilities of introducing honour-related motives as special grounds for tougher penalties," says Minister for Justice Morgan Johansson.

"Many people, often young women, are now confined by a pressure to achieve that is creating growing mental ill health. Many people, often young men, lack motivation to study and faith in the future. The gender structures and norms that constrain both girls and boys must be broken; we must strengthen young people's self-esteem and self-confidence if we are to improve school performance. This is the basis of the Government's major investments in school health and welfare services, special needs education support, and study and vocational guidance," says Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin.

Highlights of the gender equality communication

The communication Power, targets and agencies – a feminist policy for a gender-equal future encompasses political objectives, an organisational structure for implementation and a follow-up system. It also includes a national strategy with a programme of measures to prevent and combat men's violence against women. The programme of measures will apply from 2017 to 2020. Parts of the strategy are based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

Gender equality agency and national assignments

The Government intends to establish a new agency in 2018 to help ensure strategic, cohesive and sustainable governance and effective implementation of gender equality policy. The Left Party supports the proposal and has been keen to establish a gender equality agency.

The three national assignments concerning honour-related violence and oppression, prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes, and the assignment on support to authorities (including higher education institutions) for gender mainstreaming of their activities, will be made permanent.

Two new interim targets for gender equality policy

The Government is introducing two new interim targets – gender-equal

education and gender-equal health – to give these areas greater space in gender equality policy.

Focus on men's participation and responsibility

Men's participation is a prerequisite if a gender-equal society is to be realised. The Government intends to implement measures to strengthen the gender equality work focus on men and boys with respect to violence prevention, health and use of parental benefits.

Strategic, cohesive and long-term agency governance

During this electoral period, the Government intends to analyse which agencies' instructions require strengthened requirements and governance with respect to gender mainstreaming.

National strategy to combat men's violence against women

The communication includes a ten-year national strategy on men's violence against women, including honour-related violence and oppression, as well as prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes. To strengthen the prospects of achieving the interim gender equality policy target of ending men's violence against women, the Government will focus particularly on preventive measures.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Sweden to host international high-level conference on men and equal opportunities in 2018

Published 18 October 2016 Updated 18 October 2016

On 17–18 October, the 3rd International Conference on Men and Equal Opportunities is being held in Luxembourg. Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér announced on Monday that Sweden will host the conference in 2018.

- Achieving real change and a gender equal society requires men to become engaged, show solidarity for vulnerable women and participate in the process of change. I am delighted that Sweden will host the fourth conference in two years and help keep the international focus on the issue of men and gender equality, says Sweden's Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

The International Conference on Men and Equal Opportunities was held for the first time in Berlin in 2012, followed by Vienna in 2014. The overall theme is the role and responsibility of men in gender equality efforts and the focus at this year's conference in Luxembourg is care work.

At a reception on Monday evening, it was announced that Sweden would host the conference in 2018. Lydia Mutsch, Minister for Equal Opportunities in Luxembourg, was present to hand over the baton to Ms Regnér and Sweden.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Inspirational figures from around the world to inspire young Swedes in Stockholm

Published 05 October 2016 Updated 05 October 2016

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) have invited some twenty inspirational figures from around the world to Stockholm. At the #FirstGeneration Global Goals Forum on 5 October they will receive an award for their engagement in issues concerning fair and sustainable development, peace and climate change. Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér and Minister for the Environment Karolina Skog will attend the forum.

Through the United Nations, world leaders have taken on the challenge of creating a sustainable and fair future through 17 common goals. The Global Goals are to be achieved by 2030. The Government has a clear ambition to achieve the goals both in Sweden and internationally. This is the background to the #FirstGeneration Global Goals Forum, which will take place on 5 October.

The Forum, co-organised by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida, will give the leaders of tomorrow an opportunity to build global networks to exchange knowledge and experience, and recognition for their engagement for a sustainable world. The awards will be presented by State Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Ulrika Modéer. The inspirational figures come from countries including the Marshall Islands, France, Angola, Brazil,

Rwanda and Sweden. Some 300 young Swedes are also invited to be enthused by and learn more about the Global Goals and the inspirers' work.

The Forum will be opened by Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér, and Minister for the Environment Karolina Skog will take part in a 'sustainability grill'. The event will be moderated by presenter and YouTube star Clara Henry. She is Sweden's first youth ambassador for the Global Goals.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Budget reforms for increased welfare and security

Published 26 September 2016 Updated 26 September 2016

The Budget Bill for 2017 was presented on the 20th of September. Improvements in sickness and activity compensation, the establishment of a gender equality agency and better dental health for older people are some of the reforms in the areas for which the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is responsible. The Budget Bill for 2017 is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.

Sweden must have quality welfare services we can rely on. This is why the Government has made major investments in health, education and social services. As Sweden's population grows, strengthening welfare becomes particularly important. The Government continues to prioritise welfare services in this budget and proposes that SEK 10 billion a year be made available to municipalities and county councils in general government grants.

"We are continuing the important work to close the health gaps and develop the Swedish model. This is being achieved not least through the welfare billions, investments in better dental health for older people and additional resources to the Health and Social Care Inspectorate for supervisory activities. We are also increasing access to care for traumatised asylum seekers and new arrivals," says Minister for Health Care, Public Health and Sport Gabriel Wikström.

Several of these budget investments also affect the more vulnerable groups in society and target in particular single women, families with children on low incomes and people receiving sickness and activity compensation.

"People feeling safe is an important part of building our society. Our common insurance schemes were very badly looked after during eight years of a government led by the Moderate Party. This is why I am very pleased to support investments that strengthen the Swedish model and build up our social insurance system again," says Minister for Social Security Annika Strandhäll.

The Government also intends to establish a gender equality agency that will become active at the beginning of 2018 to ensure that political priorities gain traction in government agencies and activities.

"Our feminist policy must have a clear impact and make a difference to people's lives. To ensure the effective implementation of gender equality policy, a special gender equality agency is needed. The Government will also prioritise preventive action to combat men's violence against women in a new national strategy with an action plan for the period 2017–2020," says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

Below is some brief information about all reforms at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs under each Minister's areas:

Reforms in Gabriel Wikström's areas

Doubling of the general dental care subsidy for people aged 65–74

The general dental care subsidy will be raised for people aged 65–74 from currently SEK 150 to SEK 300 per year. The increase will take effect on 1 July 2017.

Additional funding to the National Board of Health and Welfare for validation

The National Board of Health and Welfare will be allocated additional funding amounting to SEK 5 million for 2017. This is in addition to an earlier investment of SEK 42 million per year for validation of foreign health and medical care training.

Reinforcing the Health and Social Care Inspectorate

The Health and Social Care Inspectorate will be allocated temporary additional resources for the processing and supervision of homes for care or residence due to the large number of unaccompanied refugee children. The

Health and Social Care Inspectorate will receive SEK 40 million in 2017 for this initiative. The Inspectorate will also receive permanent additional resources of SEK 70 million per year for staffing costs and to strengthen its supervision and licensing for personal assistance providers.

Investment to combat mental ill health among traumatised asylum seekers and new arrivals

SEK 40 million per year will be allocated to the care and treatment of asylum seekers and new arrivals who have had traumatic experiences, such as war, famine and torture, so as to combat mental ill health among this group.

Teams for long-term unemployed people to strengthen sports, outdoor activities and public health

The Swedish Sports Confederation will receive funds to create work teams of long-term unemployed people in five district sports associations. These work teams are to strengthen sports, outdoor activities and public health by organising activities, preparing walks, renovating facilities, etc.

Sports associations to receive stimulation for sports and youth leaders in socially vulnerable areas

SEK 14 million per year will be provided up to 2019 to enable more sports activities, leadership development, etc. in socially vulnerable areas. SEK 18 million per year will be provided during the period 2020–2025. These investments are expected to contribute to democratic values and physical activity.

Additional resources for sports activities for asylum seekers and new arrivals

The autumn amending budget contains an additional SEK 20 million for 2016 for asylum seekers' sports activities.

Reforms in Annika Strandhäll's areas:

Increased appropriation to Försäkringskassan

The appropriation to Försäkringskassan (the Swedish social insurance agency) will increase by SEK 130 million in 2017. These resources are to be used for the increased volumes in several social insurance benefits resulting

from the increased number of new arrivals. Moreover, the resources are to be used for reforms to sickness and activity compensation and financial support to families. The resources are also for improving the quality of investigations and strengthening efforts to combat benefit fraud in the area of assistance allowance.

A trial period for studies while maintaining activity compensation

The Government proposes that a person who has received activity compensation due to reduced working capacity for at least twelve months should be able to try studying while still receiving activity compensation payments for a period of at most six months. It is proposed that this amendment enter into force on 1 February 2017.

Greater security to people entitled to hold sickness compensation dormant while working

A monthly amount equivalent to 25 per cent of the sickness compensation that has been declared dormant can be paid each month for a period of 24 months when sickness compensation is held dormant while a person is in gainful employment. It is proposed that this amendment enter into force on 1 February 2017.

Full sickness compensation from 19 years

The age limit for when full sickness compensation can be granted will be brought down to 19. This only applies to full compensation and to people who will probably never be able to work at all. People with serious disabilities will receive secure compensation whereas young people receiving activity compensation can expect measures to help them develop their work capacity. It is proposed that this amendment enter into force on 1 February 2017.

Increased guarantee compensation in sickness and activity compensation

The guarantee level for full sickness compensation and activity compensation will be raised by 0.05 price base amounts, which for people receiving full guarantee compensation means an increase of SEK 187 per month before tax per year, using the 2017 price base amount. It is proposed that this amendment enter into force on 1 July 2017.

Increased housing supplement for people receiving sickness and activity

compensation

The compensation rate in the housing supplement will be increased from 93 to 95 per cent. This increase will provide at most an additional SEK 100 in housing supplement per month.

In total, the increase in guarantee compensation and the increase in the housing supplement mean that approximately 200 000 people will receive on average just over SEK 2 000 per year from 2018.

It is proposed that this amendment enter into force on 1 January 2017.

Raised income thresholds in housing allowance

It is proposed that the income thresholds in housing allowance provided to families with children be raised from SEK 117 000 to SEK 127 000 for single people and from SEK 58 500 to SEK 63 500 for couples. It is proposed that this increase enter into force on 1 January 2017.

Increased maintenance support for older children

The Government intends to submit legislative proposals for differentiation in the amount of maintenance support received by increasing it for children who are 15 and older.

Combined with the increase in maintenance support for older children, the Government will also look into increasing the basic income tax allowance for parents required to pay maintenance.

These increases are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2018.

Increased large-family supplement

The Government proposes an increase in the large-family supplement for the third child of SEK 126 per month. It is proposed that this increase enter into force on 1 January 2017.

Increased level for adoption allowance

The Government intends to raise the adoption allowance to SEK 75 000. This will mean that the allowance will cover 33 per cent of parents' average costs. It is proposed that the amendment enter into force on 1 January 2017.

Modernised support for parents living apart

The Government intends to introduce a new special allowance in the housing allowance for children who live alternately with both parents. This means that a certain form of housing is not favoured and that the child's registered residence does not determine his or her right to support.

Reforms in Åsa Regnér's areas

Plans to establish a gender equality agency in 2018

The Government intends to establish a gender equality agency, to be operational from the beginning of 2018. For the Government to ensure that gender equality policy priorities are reflected in the management of government agencies and activities, a permanent structure at national level is needed.

National strategy to combat men's violence against women

Before the end of the year, the Government will present a new national strategy to combat men's violence against women in the Government Communication on gender equality policy. The range of measures to prevent and combat men's violence against women comprise over SEK 900 million for the period 2017–2020.

Reinforced appropriation to the National Board of Institutional Care

The National Board of Institutional Care needs to expand the number of places available in its activities due to increased demand. The Government proposes increasing the appropriation by SEK 40 million in 2017 and estimates that the appropriation should increase by an additional SEK 10 million from 2018, which means a total of SEK 50 million per year.

National knowledge centre for unaccompanied minors

The Government intends to set up a national knowledge centre at the National Board of Health and Welfare for issues concerning unaccompanied minors. The aim is to disseminate knowledge, successful methods and effective processes to the municipalities, county councils and responsible agencies that implement measures for unaccompanied minors. The National Board of Health and Welfare will receive SEK 10 million per year in 2017 and 2018 for this initiative. It will then receive SEK 5 million per year in

2019 and 2020.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Swedish Government to establish gender equality agency

Published 16 September 2016 Updated 16 September 2016

In its Budget Bill, the Swedish Government states its intention to establish a gender equality agency. The agency will help ensure effective implementation of gender equality policy. Before the end of the year, the Government will also present a new national strategy, including an action plan for 2017–2020, to prevent and combat men's violence against women. Some of the initiatives in the strategy are the result of negotiations with the Left Party.

"The Government's feminist policy must have a clear impact and make a difference to people's lives. Several inquiries have concluded that the organisation of gender equality policy is fragmented and inadequate. A gender equality agency is needed to guarantee that political priorities gain traction, so that work towards a gender-equal society can be more strategic and effective. It is crucial to develop gender equality efforts as we modernise the Swedish model," says Sweden's Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality, Åsa Regnér.

In the Budget Bill, the Government states its intention to establish a gender equality agency, to be operational from the beginning of 2018. The need for such an agency was one important conclusion of the Gender Equality Inquiry, which presented its final report to Ms Regnér in October 2015. The Swedish National Audit Office report also deems that there is a need for an institutional structure that strengthens gender equality work and helps ensure a long-term approach and sustainability.

For the Government to ensure that gender equality policy priorities are reflected in governance of agencies and activities, a permanent structure at national level is needed. The precise details of its organisation, responsibilities, and interfaces and cooperation with existing structures will be prepared by an organising committee.

The gender equality agency's work will be based on the overarching gender equality policy objective that women and men must have the same power to shape society and their own lives, and the Government's associated sub-objectives.

The Left Party supports the proposal and has been keen to establish a gender equality agency.

National strategy to combat men's violence against women

Before the end of the year, the Government will present a new national strategy to combat men's violence against women in the Government Communication on gender equality policy.

Continued measures to combat men's violence against women are a gender equality policy priority for the Government. It is now particularly important to develop violence prevention measures. Efforts need to reach all groups in society and be developed in a variety of arenas. Overall, measures in this area will amount to more than SEK 900 million for the period 2017–2020.

The Budget Bill for 2017 is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Sweden to participate in the launch of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children

Published 08 July 2016 Updated 08 July 2016

On Tuesday 12 July, Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér will represent Sweden at the launch of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children at the UN Headquarters in New York. This partnership for global collaboration is part of the 2030 Agenda, and Sweden has a prominent role to play as one of the pathfinders in this work.

The Global Goals of the 2030 Agenda include preventing and stopping violence against and the exploitation of children. The Global Partnership is an initiative for international collaboration between governments, civil society, the private sector and other actors to achieve change.

"We are pleased that Sweden has been appointed a pathfinder in the partnership. This gives us the opportunity to share our national experience of efforts to end violence against children, but also to learn from the work of others. For Sweden, which has the first feminist government in the world, it is important to raise the gender equality perspective. Girls' and boys' vulnerabilities and needs are different and require different approaches," says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

State Secretary Pernilla Baralt is also part of the Swedish delegation.

Sweden one of ten pathfinders

During the launch of the partnership, Ms Regnér will also take part in a panel debate with ministers from Indonesia, Mexico and Tanzania.

A number of nations, known as pathfinders, have a more prominent role to play in the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children. Alongside Sweden, these are currently: El Salvador, Indonesia, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, the Philippines, Romania, Sri Lanka and Tanzania.

Ms Regnér will be available to the media in New York and via telephone. Please contact Press Secretary Joanna Abrahamsson if you wish to request an interview.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Sweden's Minister for Gender Equality spoke about gender budgeting at OECD meeting

Published 09 June 2016 Updated 09 June 2016

On 9–10 June, Sweden is hosting the annual meeting of OECD Senior Budget Officials, with a focus on current budgeting and policy issues. Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Regnér gave a speech about Sweden's work on gender budgeting as a tool in the pursuit of feminist policy. Ahead of the meeting, the OECD produced a report on gender budgeting in the member countries which will serve as background material for the discussions at the meeting.

"The design of economic policy and how resources are allocated are crucial factors in a gender-equal society. For Sweden's feminist Government, gender budgeting is an important tool in achieving real change in people's lives," says Sweden's Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

The meeting, which is taking place at the National Museum of Science and Technology in Stockholm, began with an opening address by Minister for Finance Magdalena Andersson. This is the annual meeting of the Working Party of Senior Budget Officials (SBO).

Ms Regnér spoke about Sweden's work on gender budgeting in connection with the presentation of the OECD report on the subject.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

New Swedish ambassador to combat trafficking in human beings

Published 04 May 2016 Updated 04 May 2016

The Government has decided to create a new position for an ambassador to combat trafficking in human beings. This decision will strengthen Sweden's international role as a leading human rights defender. Per-Anders Sunesson, currently head of department at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, will assume this new position on 16 May.

Through contact with other governments, the Swedish ambassador will be a driving force in efforts to combat trafficking in human beings, strengthen the EU's work and identify future partners.

"Sweden is a strong voice on the international stage for gender equality and human rights. Women and men must have the same power to shape society and their own lives. Creating a new position for an ambassador to combat human trafficking is a step in this direction," says Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström.

The ambassador will contribute to the achievement of Global Goal 16, target 2: "End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children".

"Through the ambassador's work, Sweden will help to ensure that the vulnerable situation of girls and women will be given particular attention in international efforts to combat human trafficking. The ambassador will also

have the important task of ensuring that our knowledge about human trafficking is continually updated so that the vulnerable receive the protection and support they need from the Swedish authorities," says Åsa Regnér, Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality.

Sunesson has coordinated action against human trafficking

The new Ambassador, Per-Anders Sunesson, has a legal background and in recent years has held various positions at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, including head of social services, disability issues and child rights. Sunesson has also previously worked at the Ministry of Justice, where his area was the standing of victims in criminal proceedings, and at the National Board of Health and Welfare, where he was responsible for supervision of health and medical care, and social services.

Per-Anders Sunesson has also been the Government Offices coordinator for issues related to vulnerable EU citizens and human trafficking. Until today he has led the work on developing the Government's new action plan to combat human trafficking. Sunesson has extensive experience of collaboration with a wide range of parties and organisations.

Human trafficking affects millions of people every year

Trafficking in human beings is one of the most serious forms of organised crime and a modern form of slavery. It is estimated that more than two million people are trafficked into slavery each year. Almost four fifths of the victims – mostly women and underage girls – are sold into the sex industry. Between 2012 and 2015, several hundred unaccompanied children who came to Sweden may have been victims of trafficking, according to data from the Stockholm County Administrative Board, which is responsible for coordinating national efforts.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Sweden's Minister for Gender Equality comments on the agreed conclusions following the meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women

Published 31 March 2016 Updated 31 March 2016

The 60th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), held in New York on 14–24 March, agreed on a set of conclusions urging gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Global Goals for Sustainable Development. The issues highlighted include the importance of combating all forms of violence against women and girls, involving men and boys in gender equality efforts, and the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls.

"Following intensive negotiations, the countries of the world have united on agreed conclusions urging gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sweden and the EU have expressed their disappointment over the lack of formulations in the agreement on violence and discrimination against women and girls on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. Formulations are also lacking that take into account the fact that there are various types of family formations," says Sweden's Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

Ms Regnér, who led Sweden's delegation in New York, gave a speech at the

UN General Assembly on the sexual and reproductive health and rights of girls and women from the perspective of Sweden's gender equality work.

Well-attended seminar on displaced women

Sweden organised a well-attended seminar focusing on the vulnerability of displaced women and girls. Ms Regnér also held a seminar – together with Unizon and Alternative to Violence, a Norwegian NGO – on the importance of efforts preventing men's violence against women.

During the three days that Ms Regnér was on site, private meetings were held at which gender equality issues were discussed with representatives from Argentina, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya, Mexico, the Netherlands, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the UK, Uruguay and Plan International. Together with representatives from Germany and Austria, Ms Regnér also met European Commissioner Věra Jourová, responsible for gender equality issues in the EU.

Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which was organised for the 60th time this year, took place in New York on 14–24 March. The meeting brings together the UN Member States and is the world's foremost intergovernmental body working globally to strengthen the situation of women and gender equality.

This year's overarching theme was women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development. Sweden organised a standing-room-only seminar on displaced women and girls and their vulnerable situation.

Hundreds of countries were represented at the CSW, which this year was attended by around 8 100 people from 1 035 NGOs.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Swedish Minister for Gender Equality highlights the vulnerability of women and girls in war at CSW session in New York

Published 11 March 2016 Updated 11 March 2016

On 14–16 March, Minister for Gender Equality Åsa Regnér will head Sweden's delegation at the annual session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York. This year's overarching theme is women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development. Sweden will organise a seminar on displaced women and girls.

This year's Commission on the Status of Women, which marks the 60th time the forum has been organised, brings together the UN Member States and is the world's foremost intergovernmental body working globally to strengthen the situation of women and gender equality. Last year, 4 400 participants from 640 civil society organisations took part.

"It is important that the world's countries gather at the UN to promote women's rights in these times of violence and conflict. In addition, there is now a new framework based on the Global Goals and the 2030 Agenda," says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér, who has attended the CSW forum a dozen or so times, of which this year will be her second as a government minister.

Ms Regnér will deliver a speech at the General Assembly and host Sweden's seminar on displaced women and girls. During the three days of the session, she will also have bilateral meetings on gender equality issues with the

Netherlands, Japan, Canada, Germany, Argentina and others. Ms Regnér will also meet with Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women.

In addition to politicians and government officials, Sweden's delegation will include two members of the Riksdag and four civil society representatives (the Swedish Women's Lobby, the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, the Girl Child Platform and the Swedish National Committee for UN Women).

Ms Regnér will be available for interviews. Please contact her press secretary, Joanna Abrahamsson, who will be on-site in New York.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women gives Sweden recommendations on gender equality work

Published 08 March 2016 Updated 08 March 2016

On 7 March, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) presented its overall observations on Sweden's gender equality work. The Committee's opinion was generally positive. However, it voiced criticism concerning the gender-segregated labour market, men's violence against women and shortcomings in the governance of gender equality work.

"I share the criticism of the Committee, not least regarding efforts to combat men's violence against women. Education initiatives in particular are needed. Sweden's gender equality work was previously fragmented and project-driven, whereas the current Government has taken a new direction and raised the level of ambition. This is why I am also very pleased about the positive feedback about our systematic efforts on issues such as gender-responsive budgeting and preventing men's violence against women. The recommendations provide valuable support for our continuing work," says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

On 18 February, Pernilla Baralt, State Secretary for Ms Regnér, represented Sweden in Geneva when the Committee had a constructive dialogue about

Sweden's gender equality work. Prior to the dialogue, Sweden had submitted a report on gender equality work during the period 2008–2014.

A selection of the Committee's recommendations to Sweden

The Committee considers that work on gender-responsive budgeting and integration is positive and important, but notes that there are major regional differences. The Committee recommends that Sweden adopt as soon as possible a strategy to combat violence against women and that it carefully investigate the causes of the low reporting rates among women subjected to violence, as well as the lack of convictions for perpetrators of violence. The Committee stresses that more governance is needed for effective coordination and greater gender equality. The Committee recommends that Sweden heed the proposal of the Gender Equality Inquiry to establish a special gender equality agency.

UN Member States report every four years

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is an independent expert body within the United Nations tasked with monitoring that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is followed. Under the Convention, States are obliged to submit a written report every four years on the implementation of the provisions in the Convention. The States are then called to a dialogue with CEDAW, after which the Committee submits recommendations to the States concerning the measures they should take to better live up to their commitments under the Convention.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Cooperation agreement on social welfare issues signed between Sweden and Bulgaria

Published 05 February 2016 Updated 05 February 2016

Åsa Regnér, Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality, and Ivailo Kalfin, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour and Social Policy, today signed a cooperation agreement between Sweden and Bulgaria. The agreement, which covers issues dealing with gender equality, children, the elderly and people with disabilities, aims to improve the situation of vulnerable EU citizens.

"This agreement places greater emphasis on issues dealing with the elderly and people with disabilities than the agreement we signed with Romania. This was requested by Bulgaria and is an area in which we have long experience, both in Sweden and internationally. Through the exchange of knowledge, experience and good practice, and by promoting cooperation between non-profit organisations, we can improve the lives of vulnerable people," says Ms Regnér.

Letter of Intent between Sweden and Bulgaria



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

National coordinator proposes giving coordination responsibility for vulnerable EU citizens to county administrative boards

Published 01 February 2016 Updated 01 February 2016

On Monday 1 February, the national coordinator for vulnerable EU citizens presented his final report, *Framtid sökes* (Wanted: a future), to Åsa Regnér, the minister responsible for the issue, at a press conference. Martin Valfridsson, whose remit now ends, proposes that county administrative boards be instructed to coordinate this work, with the overall responsibility resting with the Stockholm County Administrative Board.

"The coordinator's assignment has provided us with even greater insight into the situation of vulnerable EU citizens. This work will continue in Sweden, Romania, Bulgaria and at EU level," says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

"It's been an intensive year, we have had close and regular contact with municipalities, government agencies and civil society. We now have a clearer picture of the issue and proposals as to how the work can continue," says Martin Valfridsson, the national coordinator.

The national coordinator's conclusions

Mr Valfridsson considers that future handling of this issue should be

incorporated into existing social structures. Regional cooperation will continue to be very important. County administrative boards should therefore be tasked with coordinating efforts for vulnerable EU citizens. In its respective region, each county administrative board should build and maintain a general picture of the situation, encourage effective cooperation between relevant stakeholders and be responsible for sharing knowledge and best practice.

Mr Valfridsson also proposes that the Stockholm County Administrative Board should be given a more general task of putting the regional pictures together into a national picture of the situation.

According to the coordinator, the following should be included in the Stockholm County Administrative Board's mandate:

Regularly share information with other county administrative boards for further sharing in each region/county. Establish an advisory function to support municipalities in their efforts for vulnerable EU citizens, especially as regards children. Promote and facilitate collaboration between various actors, including the police, the enforcement authority and the country's municipalities.

Follow the legal situation regarding the right of residence, case processing and assessment of children of vulnerable EU citizens, emergency assistance, and rules and procedures for matters such as evictions, and share this knowledge with other county administrative boards, etc.

The final report, *Framtid sökes* (Wanted: a future), also calls attention to the legal situation of EU citizens staying temporarily in Sweden.

Cooperation agreement with Bulgaria to be signed on Friday

On Friday 5 February, Ms Regnér will be in Sofia to sign a cooperation agreement between Sweden and Bulgaria. As with the agreement with Romania, the agreement with Bulgaria will focus on exchanges of experts in the areas of social security and care, gender equality and children's rights.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Sweden's Minister for Gender Equality to visit US for high level talks

Published 15 January 2016 Updated 15 January 2016

Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér will be visiting New York and Washington on 17–20 January for meetings at the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank. The focus will be on gender equality – in particular men's violence against women – and children's rights.

"The world recently took a decision on goals for sustainable development. The purpose of my visit is to deepen the dialogue with the UN on important issues to do with gender equality and children's rights in this context. I will also be meeting UN ambassadors from Latin America to further deepen relations with that continent concerning the issues I am responsible for," says Ms Regnér.

The Swedish delegation will also include State Secretary Pernilla Baralt and Niclas Jacobson, Head of the Division for EU and International Affairs.

Meetings with UN bodies on sexual violence

In New York, Ms Regnér will meet Ms Zainab Hawa Bangura, the UN Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict, and Osotimehin Babatunde from the UNFPA for talks on gender equality and men's violence against women.

Ms Regnér will also visit UNICEF in New York for a dialogue on the

situation of unaccompanied refugee children and children's rights.

In Washington, Ms Regnér will meet Kyle Peters, Senior Vice President for Operations, and Caren Grown, Senior Director for Gender, at the World Bank for discussions on the new development agenda and to present Sweden's priorities in the area of gender equality. Ms Regnér will also stress the importance of the World Bank prioritising gender equality issues in its operational activities and talk about Sweden's work on gender-responsive budgeting.

In addition, Ms Regnér will meet Tina Tchen, Chief of Staff to First Lady Michelle Obama and Executive Director of the White House Council on Women and Girls, for talks about gender equality with a focus on women and economic development.

For questions about the programme and for interviews with Ms Regnér, please contact Press Secretary Darina Agha.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Åsa Regnér to speak about importance of new gender equality strategy in the EU at Council meeting

Published 07 December 2015 Updated 07 December 2015

Today, 7 December, Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér will take part in the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs (EPSCO) Council meeting in Brussels. Ms Regnér will speak about the need for a new gender equality strategy in the EU.

The current EU gender equality strategy expires this year, and the Council has asked the Commission to present a new strategy for the coming years. The Commission has stated that it plans to make new commitments in the area of gender equality, but not of the same status as previous strategies.

"I will state that a new gender equality strategy with the same formal status as previously is vital if the Commission and the Member States are to be able to work on gender equality in a more strategic and long-term manner," says Ms Regnér.

Minister for Employment Ylva Johansson and Minister for Health Care, Public Health and Sport Gabriel Wikström will also attend the meeting.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Gender equality and children's rights issues in focus during Åsa Regnér's visit to Japan

Published 13 October 2015 Updated 13 October 2015

Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér will visit Japan on 13–16 October to discuss issues concerning gender equality and children's rights. Ms Regnér will meet Japanese government representatives and members of parliament, visit the Tokyo office of UN Women and be the main speaker at Sweden Kids Week in Japan.

“I look forward to the visit as we have so much in common with Japan and can learn from each other. An ageing population, a need for increased labour force participation and gender equality. It is also important that we highlighted children's rights and I am pleased that we had an opportunity to talk about Swedish children's culture and literature,” says Ms Regnér.

During her visit, Ms Regnér had talks with Japanese government representatives and members of parliament and will also participate in a round-table discussion on gender equality. Further, Ms Regnér will meet Swedish and Japanese business representatives to discuss issues concerning equality between women and men in working life and at home.

A visit to the recently opened Tokyo office of UN Women is also scheduled.

Talks on the rights of the child

In her capacity as Minister for Children, Ms Regnér will speak about

Sweden's work on children's rights and our law against corporal punishment of children in a meeting with the Japanese Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare and during a visit to Save the Children.

Ms Regnér will also open a seminar that highlights Swedish children's literature in Japan arranged by Swedish embassy in collaboration with The Swedish Institute. She will also be the main speaker at Sweden Kids Week in Japan, arranged by Business Sweden to promote Swedish enterprises in the children's products sector.

Ms Regnér will also visit a children and youth centre, a women's centre and a home for elderly people.

Media representatives are welcome to follow parts of the programme. For more information, please contact Sweden's Embassy in Tokyo. The contact person is Sven Östberg: +81 3 5562 5050, sven.ostberg@gov.se.



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Pressrelease Key figures met to discuss how Sweden can support people

Published 11 September 2015 Updated 11 September 2015

Today's conference at Nalen on vulnerable EU citizens brought together Swedish values-based organisations, representatives of the business sector and the municipalities, and politicians from Sweden, Romania and Bulgaria. Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér was host.

“This is another important step in the Government's work to provide long-term support to vulnerable people in Romania and Bulgaria,” said Ms Regnér.

“I am pleased to see the willingness to cooperate and the commitment shown by the values-based organisations and we have had many rewarding discussions today,” said Martin Valfridsson, the Government's national coordinator for vulnerable EU citizens.

One representative from Romania was Ciprian Necula, State Secretary at the Ministry of European Funds, with a background in Roma rights issues. Representatives of the Swedish business sector and municipalities also took part in the conference.

Issues discussed at the conference included:

How can vulnerable people be supported in order to achieve long-term change?
How can values-based organisations work together?
How can the business sector be involved?



Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Pressrelease bilateral meeting between Minister Åsa Regnér and Minister Ivailo

Published 09 September 2015 Updated 09 September 2015

On 9 September Åsa Regnér, Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality met with Bulgarian Minister Ivailo Kalfin, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour and Social Policy to discuss the possibilities to strengthen the bilateral cooperation on social issues related to vulnerable citizens.

The ministers expressed readiness to step up the common action in the field of Social Policy, through exchange of knowledge, experience and good practices to enhance the lives of citizens in both countries. The proposed collaboration should have a special focus on gender equality and target the population groups most at risk, children from poor families in difficult circumstances, people with disabilities as well as women and girls at risk of being abused.

Officials from respective Ministries will start working on a common agreement with the aim to focus on specific areas of cooperation and target groups. The purpose is to establish a long term cooperation mechanism while at the same time achieving short term results in improving the lives of the most vulnerable ones.

Finally, Minister Kalfin invited Minister Regnér to visit Bulgaria. State Secretary Pernilla Baralt will also visit Bulgaria before the end of this year.



Press release from Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs,
Ministry of Justice

Combating vulnerability and begging – no one should have to beg

Published 17 August 2015 Updated 17 August 2015

On June 24, the Government presented a package of measures for vulnerable EU citizens staying temporarily in Sweden. The initiative aims to combat vulnerability and begging. The long-term goal is that no one should have to beg in Sweden.

The package of measures contains actions to promote cooperation within the EU and especially with Romania and Bulgaria, clearer rules in Sweden and close cooperation with civil society organisations.

“Today, the Government will present a first package of measures for vulnerable EU citizens in Sweden. It is a step on the road to reducing vulnerability and begging. The goal is that no one should have to beg,” says Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér.

The three reform areas:

- increased cooperation within the EU, especially with Romania and Bulgaria
- clearer rules in Sweden
- close cooperation with civil society organisations.

Important measures in the package include:

- Within the framework of the cooperation agreement with Romania,

continue work on development of welfare, children's rights and gender equality.

- Play an active role towards the European Commission in tackling the issue and promote EU efforts on Roma inclusion.
- Support Romania via the Cohesion Fund, the Social Fund and the Regional Development Fund.
- A government assignment to the Police to propose measures to stop violence against vulnerable EU citizens staying temporarily in Sweden. The assignment report is to be presented by 30 November.
- Supplementary terms of reference to the inquiry into trafficking in human beings about protection provided by criminal law against exploitation of vulnerable people who have come to Sweden.
- Better management of unlawful settlements on public and private land. An inquiry will analyse how landowners' possibilities to obtain help with measures in the event of prohibited settlements can be improved.
- Better cooperation and regular meetings with civil society organisations working with vulnerable EU citizens.

Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér, Minister for Justice and Migration Morgan Johansson and Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke took part in the press conference.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Press briefing with the Romanian Minister of Labour, Family, Social Protection and Elderly

Published 22 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

A meeting will take place on Friday between the Swedish minister for Social Security, Ms. Annika Strandhäll, minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality, Ms. Åsa Regnér and the Romanian Minister of Labour, Family, Social Protection and Elderly, Ms. Rovana Plumb. Thereafter a press conference will be held.

Friday 23 January 11:30 am
Rosenbad 4

The press conference will be held in English.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Committee on the Rights of the Child and Government in forward-looking dialogue

Published 16 January 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

The dialogue between the Government of Sweden and the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva has now concluded. The Government will continue to advance the rights of the child in cooperation with civil society and other actors.

- The dialogue has been extremely constructive and informative. The Government has high ambitions in the area of child rights and the Committee on the Rights of the Child has high expectations of Sweden. We will take these expectations on board and continue to work with civil society and other actors to ensure that Sweden is one of the very best countries to grow up in, says Pernilla Baralt, State Secretary to Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér, representing the Government in Geneva.

Directly following the dialogue, Ms Baralt is meeting child rights organisations to make an immediate start on further improving the situation of children in Sweden.



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 Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to visit New York

Published 14 November 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will visit New York on 19–21 November to attend the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality Åsa Regnér will also attend.

In connection with his visit to the UN, the Prime Minister will also hold a number of meetings aimed at strengthening Sweden's relations with the UN.

During his time in New York Mr Löfven will also visit the Swedish-American Chamber of Commerce and Spotify, and speak about the Nordic Model at New York University.

Media representatives are welcome to participate in large parts of the programme.

Please note that prior notification and, in some cases, accreditation are required.