

This is the Ministry of
Health and Social Affairs





The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs has two ministers: Minister for Health and Social Affairs Lena Hallengren and Minister for Social Security Ardalan Shekarabi. Lena Hallengren also heads the Ministry.

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in brief

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is responsible for issues concerning the welfare of the Swedish people. These include promoting people's health, ensuring sick people receive the care they need, and social insurance that provides financial security to people when they are sick or older, or when children are young.

The Ministry is also responsible for social services support to individuals

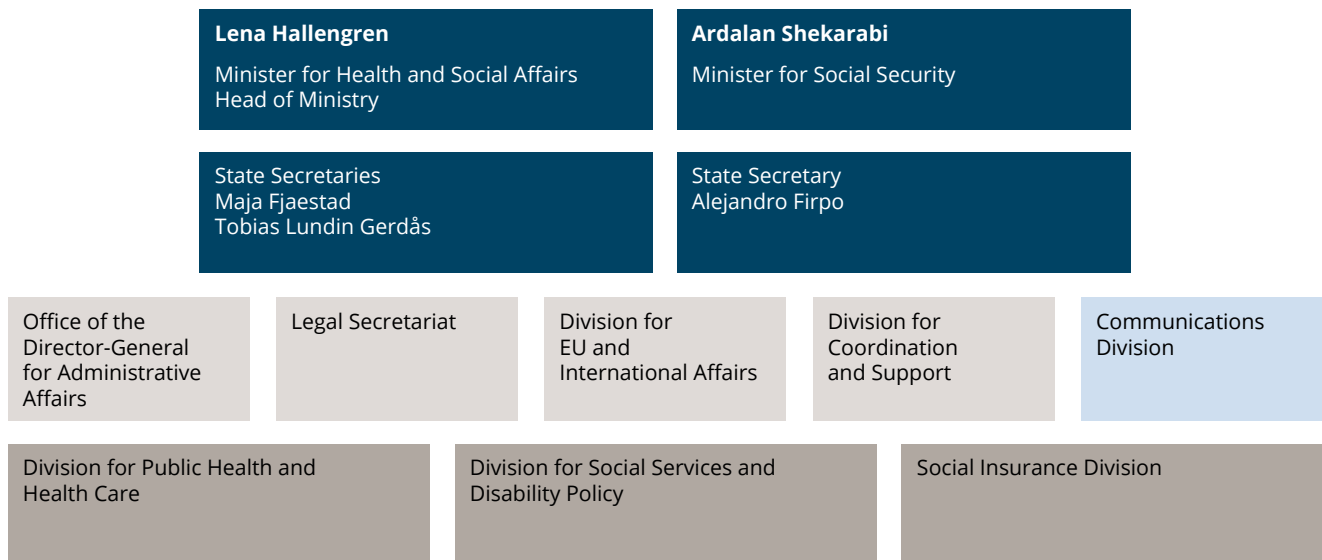
and families, care for people with disabilities, and older people. In addition, its work includes the rights of people with disabilities. The Ministry's areas of responsibility play a key role in Sweden's work towards the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Ministry is also responsible for the old-age pension system, which falls outside the central government

budget. In 2019, the old-age pension system is expected to pay out about SEK 329 billion.

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs employs around 200 people, around 50 of whom are politically appointed. It is one of the ten Government Offices ministries with responsibility for various policy areas.

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs – Organisation



■ The Communications Division is organisationally part of the Government Offices Communications Division, Office for Administrative Affairs.

Political leadership

Lena Hallengren is Minister for Health and Social Affairs and head of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. The Ministry has one other minister: Minister for Social Security Ardalan Shekarabi.

The political leadership also includes state secretaries. They are responsible for various policy areas directly under the ministers, and assist the ministers in planning, coordinating and monitoring the Ministry's activities.

The ministers and state secretaries have a staff of political advisers who assist the leadership with policy work, background material, policy assessments, planning and media relations.

Non-political appointees

The Ministry has a Director-General for Administrative Affairs and two Directors-General for Legal Affairs who, like the state secretaries, assist the ministers in managing, planning and coordinating the Ministry's activities. They ensure that ministry matters are dealt with in a legally compliant and consistent manner. The Directors-General for Legal Affairs also ensure that legislative and regulatory proposals are brought forward. These tasks are managed by the Office of the Director-General for Administrative Affairs and the Legal Secretariat.

The Ministry has several divisions for specific policy areas and for coordi-

nation and support. The policy divisions lay the groundwork for government decisions. Their work involves government bills, budget and governance issues relating to government agencies, and development in the form of ministry inquiries and assisting other inquiries.

The other divisions coordinate and support interdivisional issues, EU and international affairs, the central government budget and analytical work, agency governance and operational management, research issues and administration. Their work also includes internal accounts and human resources issues, and external and internal communication.



Ministers and their areas of responsibility

Lena Hallengren, Minister for Health and Social Affairs

Lena Hallengren is responsible for public health, health care and social services. Social services comprise individual and family care, support for people with disabilities and care for older people. She is responsible for disability policy.

Disability policy

Based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the national objective of disability policy is to achieve equal living standards and full participation of people with disabilities in a diverse society. This objective aims to increase gender equality and ensure that a child rights perspective is taken into account.

Disability policy is a cross-sectoral policy, making support and measures for accessibility and full participation of people with disabilities the shared responsibility of all ministries. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is responsible for coordinating and monitoring disability policy.

Individual and family care

Individual and family care involves social services' role in social care for children and young people, substance abuse and dependency care, homelessness, support and assistance for victims of crime, financial assistance, and national and international adoptions. The area also includes support to parents in their parenting role. The objective is to strengthen the capability and opportunities of people who are in economically and socially vulnerable situations to participate in society, and to strengthen the protection of children at risk.

Support to people with disabilities

This area covers support for people with disabilities provided by the social services. It includes accommo-

dation with special services, employment, companion services, relief services, personal assistance and state support in the form of assistance allowance and car allowance. These types of support are part of disability policy.

Care for older people

The objective of care for older people is to enable older people to lead an active life, participate in society and be in charge of their own lives. Older people should be able to age in security, maintain their independence and be met with respect. They should have access to good health and social care.

The area includes services and care for older people provided by the social services. Home-help services, service accommodation and daytime activities are among the services available to older people, and in most municipalities the social services also offer home health care.

Public health

The objective of public health policy is to create societal conditions that promote good health on equal terms throughout the population. This is primarily about promoting people's health and preventing diseases, and includes lifestyle factors, such as eating habits and physical activity, and structural factors such as socio-economic conditions, childhood circumstances and the physical environment. Protection against communicable diseases and other

threats to human health is also included in this area.

Furthermore, specific policy objectives apply for alcohol, narcotics, doping and tobacco (ANDT), and gambling. These objectives are a society free from narcotics and doping, reduced alcohol-related health and social harms, and reduced tobacco use. The objective of societal measures to fight gambling addiction is to reduce the harmful effects of excessive gambling.

Health and medical care

This area comprises health and medical care, pharmaceutical products and dental care. The objective of health care policy is to offer the population needs-based effective and quality health care. This care must be equitable, gender-equal and accessible.



Lena Hallengren,
Minister for Health and Social Affairs



Older people should be able to age in security, maintain their independence and be met with respect. They should have access to quality health and social care.

“Health and social care must work, regardless of who you are or where in the country you live. I see this as my most important task for the coming years. It is about creating a sense of security – people in Sweden expect health and social care of the very highest quality. And we will deliver it.”

Ardalan Shekarabi, Minister for Social Security

Ardalan Shekarabi is responsible for social insurance schemes – parental insurance and benefits to parents, sickness insurance and pensions. He is also responsible for gambling policy under the Ministry of Finance.

Parental insurance and benefits to parents

Financial family policy – parental insurance and benefits to parents – aims to contribute to a good financial standard of living for all families with children, and close the financial gap between households with children and those without. Financial family policy also aims to contribute to gender-equal parenting.

The area is divided into general allowances such as child allowance and adoption allowance, insurance schemes such as parental insurance, and means-tested allowances such as housing allowance and maintenance support.

Sickness insurance

The objective of sickness insurance is low and stable rates of sickness absence from work over time. This means that sickness absence should not vary more than is attributable to normal seasonal variation. There should be no unjustified regional disparities in sickness absence, and the level of sickness absence should be in line with equivalent systems and benefits in the EU and the OECD.

This area encompasses both sickness and disability compensation. It includes sickness benefit, rehabilitation cash benefit, activity and sickness compensation, disability allowance and occupational injury compensation.

Pensions

The old-age pension system comprises the income-based pension and the premium pension. It also includes basic protection for older people, consisting of a guarantee pension, a housing supplement for pensioners and maintenance support for older people. Moreover, there is compensation to surviving dependants, such as adjustment pension, child pension and survivor's benefit. The objective is to guarantee index-linked basic protection to women and men with low or no income-related pension. Surviving spouses must be given reasonable support to help them adjust following the death of their spouse.

The administration and management of the old-age pension system must be low-cost and for the benefit of pensioners and pension savers. The

information provided to pension savers should make them well positioned to assess their future pension and the factors affecting it. Women and men should gain a greater understanding of the importance of lifetime earnings for their future pension.



Ardalan Shekarabi,
Minister for Social Security



Sickness insurance should provide financial security in the event of illness. It should be easy to return to work after an illness. Rehabilitation and occupational health services are crucial.

“Those who have helped to build our country through their work have laid the foundations of our common welfare. They are entitled to security in their old age. Increasing pensions is therefore my highest priority.”

Decision-making and cooperation bodies

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs participates in various decision-making and cooperation bodies in the EU and at international level.

Parliamentary committees

The Ministry's issues are dealt with in three parliamentary committees, where the ministers regularly present issues that are on the table. The committees are:

- Committee on Social Insurance
- Committee on Health and Welfare
- Committee on EU Affairs.

EU bodies

The primary responsibility for social and healthcare-related issues lies with the Member States. However, the EU plays a part in supporting and complementing the Member States' policies in several of these areas.

Some of the Ministry's areas of responsibility are subject to governing rules in the form of regulations and directives. In other areas, strategies, action plans and programmes define the direction of the Member States' work. EU Member States also collaborate by measuring themselves against each other to learn from one another's experience and good practices.

Together with the European Parliament, the Council of the European

Union adopts EU legislation based on proposals from the European Commission.

The Council comprises government ministers from the Member States. The relevant minister from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs attends Council meetings that discuss the Ministry's priority issues. The issues are discussed in the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO).

The relevant European Parliament committees are primarily:

- Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI)
- Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL)
- Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO)

Primarily the following European Commission Directorates-General deal with the Ministry's issues:

- Health and Food Safety (SANTE)
- Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL)
- Justice and Consumers (JUST)

International bodies

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs also participates in various cooperation bodies outside the EU. These include:

- United Nations (UN)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- Council of Europe
- Nordic Council of Ministers
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC)
- Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS)
- Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)

Government agencies, boards, companies and foundations under the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

The Ministry's activities involve government agencies and boards responsible for the day-to-day activities of public administration.

The Government sets the objectives, determines the tasks and allocates the resources for the agencies' activities, but must not influence how the agencies apply laws or make decisions in individual cases.

The Ministry's areas of activity also include two state-owned companies and three foundations.

In a number of areas, the Government also has special agreements with

the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) and partnerships with private and non-profit organisations.

Government agencies and boards

Alcoholic Beverages Product Range Board
Swedish Inheritance Fund Commission
Swedish eHealth Agency Public Health Agency of Sweden
Swedish Research Council for Health Working Life and Welfare
Swedish Social Insurance Agency Medical Responsibility Board
Swedish Social Insurance Inspectorate
Health and Social Care Inspectorate
Medical Products Agency

Swedish Agency for Participation Family Law and Parental Support Authority
Swedish Agency for Health and Care Services Analysis
Swedish Pensions Agency National Board of Health and Welfare
Swedish Agency for Health Technology Assessment and Assessment of Social Services
National Board of Institutional Care
Dental and Pharmaceutical Benefits Agency

Companies

Apotek Produktion & Laboratorier AB (APL)
Systembolaget (Swedish alcohol retailing monopoly)

Foundations

General Practitioners Foundation
WHO Collaborating Centre for International Drug Monitoring
Children's Welfare Foundation
Sweden

This information is current as of 1 April 2020

Produced by: Springtime-Intellecta

Article: S2020/004

Date: June 2020

Printed by: Elanders

Photos: p. 1 Swedish News Agency, p. 3 Ninni Andersson/Government Offices of Sweden, p. 5 Swedish News Agency, p. 6 Kristian Pohl, Government Offices of Sweden, p. 7 Nils Petter Nilsson /Government Offices of Sweden, p. 8 Kristian Pohl/Government Offices of Sweden, p. 9 Kent Eng.

More about the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs website contains more information in English and Swedish about the Government's policies and the ministers' engagements.

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