



Article from Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Modified restrictions as of 15 July

Published 14 July 2021

At a press conference on Monday, it was announced that a number of restrictions will be lifted as of 15 July. This is in line with step 3 of the Government's plan for phasing out restrictions introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In terms of the pandemic, the trends are heading in the right direction. The number of COVID-19 cases and the number of people requiring hospital treatment for COVID-19 are falling week by week. Almost 70 per cent of the adult population have now received at least one vaccine dose. Overall, the infection rates, the pressure on the health care system and the vaccination rate of the population are all at levels that allow restrictions to be lifted. For this reason, the Government and the Public Health Agency of Sweden have made the assessment that it is appropriate to proceed with step 3 of the Government's plan for phasing out the restrictions.

As of 15 July, the following applies.

Long-distance public transport

As of 15 July 2021, long-distance public transport operators will be able to operate at full capacity.

However, passengers are advised to continue to exercise care and vigilance. Anyone who has any symptoms or feels ill should not travel. They should stay home, isolate and take a COVID-19 test. Keeping a COVID-safe distance is still a crucial factor in minimising the risk of infecting and being infected.

Municipalities no longer able to ban people from certain public spaces

As of 15 July 2021, municipalities will no longer be able to ban the public from accessing certain spaces where crowding may occur.

The ban has been a tool for municipalities to use to limit crowding in public spaces – such as parks, beaches and parking areas – that could contribute to the further spread of infection when infection rates are high.

Public Health Agency decisions in line with the plan

In accordance with the Government's plan for phasing out restrictions, the Public Health Agency has also made a number of decisions on modifying and phasing out restrictions under step 3 of the plan. For example, the rule on the number of people per square metre in shopping centres, gyms, museums, amusement parks, etc. will be removed. The advice to amusement parks concerning, for example, how to place groups for rides and attractions, will be removed. The size of groups with designated seats at public gatherings or events, including football matches, will be increased from four people to eight people. This applies to both indoor and outdoor events.

For more information, visit the Public Health Agency of Sweden website.

The next step of the Government's phase-out plan – step 4 – is scheduled for September. The plan for phasing out restrictions can only proceed if infection rates and the pressure on the health care system remain low and the vaccination rate continues to rise.

Minister for Enterprise and Innovation Ibrahim Baylan and State Epidemiologist Anders Tegnell took part in the press conference.



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

Sweden's national life sciences strategy and COVID-19

Published 12 November 2020

Sweden's national life sciences strategy was launched in late December 2019 to strengthen the long-term competitiveness of Sweden as a life sciences nation.

Life sciences contribute to improving health and quality of life of the population, ensuring economic prosperity, advancing the country as a leading knowledge nation and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Data-driven innovative solutions and scientific advances will have a fundamental impact on developments in prevention, diagnostics, treatment, monitoring, habilitation and rehabilitation, paving the way for personalised care – or precision medicine.

Sweden's research and innovation is of the highest international standard, and the life sciences industry is one of the nation's basic industries. However, international competition is intensifying. To harness the potential in the sector, a national life sciences strategy – setting out clear objectives and outlining a strategic and integrated approach – was seen as essential. Cross-sectoral collaboration between national, regional and local levels was regarded as a particularly important factor for regional responsibility for health care planning and delivery, and for coordinating and facilitating regional development.

Based on input from sector stakeholders, the Government outlined objectives in eight priority areas in which change was considered particularly important:

1. Structures for collaboration
2. Unlocking the potential of health data for use in research and innovation

3. Responsible, secure and ethical policy development
4. Integration of research and innovation into care delivery
5. Assistive technologies for increased independence, participation and health
6. Research and infrastructure
7. Skills supply, talent attraction and lifelong learning
8. International attractiveness and competitiveness

The COVID-19 pandemic, which struck shortly after the launch of Sweden's national life sciences strategy, has demonstrated the importance of life sciences and cross-sectoral collaboration in crisis management and societal resilience. The COVID-19 experience has also provided additional support for the relevance and timeliness of the strategy's eight priority areas.

The Government is firmly committed to ensuring that Sweden is an attractive investment destination in a global, digital and knowledge-based world by offering an environment that includes world-leading universities, an innovative and high-quality health care system and government agencies mandated to contribute to policy development and systemic innovation. The Life Sciences Office at the Government Offices connects the Government and sector stakeholders; these include the cross-sectoral health and life sciences innovation partnership programme and the health and life sciences partnership group, which advises the Life Sciences Office and the innovation partnership programme.



Article from Prime Minister's Office

Social distancing and markedly reduced travel in Sweden

Published 18 June 2020 Updated 18 June 2020

Swedes are largely following the government agencies' advice and recommendations. This has been shown through surveys and data concerning movement patterns. Now travel within Sweden is permitted again – but if the guidelines are not followed, the Government is prepared to take measures.

More than eight in ten Swedes are keeping a greater distance from others than they normally would. Just as many are avoiding shaking hands and are washing their hands more often than usual. Over 60 per cent are taking part in social activities outside the home to a lesser extent and are avoiding public places where there are lots of people. This is clear from a survey on behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic conducted by analysis company Kantar Sifo on behalf of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency. In other words, Swedes are largely following the advice and recommendations issued by the Public Health Agency of Sweden.

Travel decreased by over 40 per cent

The travel advice of the Public Health Agency of Sweden has also been heeded. When the Agency advised against non-essential domestic travel at the end of March, travel in the Stockholm region decreased by over 40 per cent. Data on movement patterns from telecom company Telia's mobile network shows that, in Sweden as a whole, travel decreased by more than 20 per cent. Since 13 May, when the advice was changed to permit travel corresponding to one to two hours by car from home, travel in the country has gradually increased again.

According to the Public Health Agency of Sweden, it is not travel per se that spreads the virus, it is personal hygiene and social contact. Now that fewer Swedes are receiving care in hospital and tracing and testing have got under way, as of 13 June it is permitted for people with no symptoms to travel freely within Sweden.

“Common sense, a large portion of responsibility and caution are required. The vast majority have demonstrated this so far, and it still applies,” says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

New restrictions may be issued

A number of restrictions remain in place. These include the ban on visits to homes for older people, the ban on gatherings of more than 50 people and the rules concerning crowding in restaurants, bars and cafés. Businesses that do not follow the regulations may be closed after an inspection; so far, this has happened on some ten occasions in Stockholm and Gothenburg. The tourism and hospitality industry is also covered by the guidelines on crowding. The situation remains serious and if the curve indicating the number of seriously ill people turns upwards again, new restrictions may be issued.

“Although some restrictions are lifted, this does not mean that life can return to normal. Important restrictions will remain. It is important to hang on, otherwise the spread of infection might take off. We all need to continue to take great personal responsibility,” Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin says.

“If it turns out that this doesn’t work, we’re prepared to take measures and tighten the recommendations,” says Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation Ibrahim Baylan.



Article from Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of Finance

The Government has decided on a temporary discount for fixed rental costs in vulnerable sectors

Published 20 April 2020

After the European Commission approved the Government's state aid notification on Wednesday, the Government could today adopt an ordinance on a discount for fixed rental costs in vulnerable sectors as a way to mitigate the financial consequences of the virus outbreak. The new aid is based on an agreement between the Government, the Centre Party and the Liberal Party.

The COVID-19 virus outbreak has rapidly had a major economic impact across Sweden. The situation is now very serious for large parts of the hotel and restaurant sector, and the durable consumer goods sector. In its additional amending budget, the Government is allocating support of SEK 5 billion to reduce fixed rents for vulnerable sectors such as durable consumer goods, hotels, restaurants and certain other activities. This covers, for example, retailers, logistical activities, restaurants as well as the organisation of congresses/fairs, and also consumer services such as dentists, physiotherapist practices, and hair and beauty salons.

“This is one of several initiatives taken by the Government to help businesses in Sweden and it is an important that the rental discount is now made available to businesses,” says Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation Ibrahim Baylan.

Because it is a matter of state aid, the Government's notification of state aid

needed to be approved by the EU before the Government could take a decision. After the EU Commission approved the state aid on Wednesday, the Government could today adopt the ordinance.

“It serves both business operators and their landlords to get through this crisis. It is therefore important that central government can go in and make it easier for property owners to take responsibility and take a portion of the rent,” says Minister for Financial Markets and Housing Per Bolund.

Under this initiative, landlords who reduce fixed rents for tenants in these vulnerable sectors during the period of 1 April to 30 June will be able to apply for aid to compensate part of the reduction in rent. The compensation provided will be at most 50 per cent of the reduction in fixed rent, i.e. the actual discount, but at most 25 per cent of the original fixed rent.

Landlords apply online for the compensation retrospectively via the county administrative boards' websites and it is available to all landlords. Because the support is applied for retrospectively by the landlords, the county administrative boards will accept applications from 1 July, but 31 August at the latest. It is therefore important that landlords now take responsibility for entering into agreements so as to support their tenants.



Article from Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation on company initiatives during the virus outbreak

Published 02 April 2020

Listen to the Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation, Ibrahim Baylan, talk about company initiatives during the virus outbreak.

Some two weeks ago, Minister for Health and Social Affairs Lena Hallengren and I invited a large number of companies to come and discuss how they can help. This would be by increasing the production of protective equipment and, if companies do not already produce this equipment, how they can switch to this. So what do they need to do?

Since then, we have seen a large number of companies doing their utmost to help in this very difficult corona crisis. By increasing production, putting in more staff to help out and switching their own production to produce equipment and help the health care sector fight this virus.

I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart. We are in a situation where we all need to help. We will try and highlight this. I myself have seen companies such as Scania Bactiguard, Sekab and Absolut helping to try and produce goods and products they have not previously produced, just to help out in the situation we are now in. Keep up the good work and many thanks!

The Government, together with the Centre Party and the Liberal Party, is working intensively to mitigate the impact of the corona crisis on jobs and business. We have presented a large number of proposals in recent weeks. These are proposals to mitigate the impact in terms of costs for businesses and strengthened liquidity. On government.se, verksamt.se and tillvaxtverket.se you can find more information about these proposals and

what you should do. We are trying to get things moving swiftly, but not everything is up and running yet. Keep following these websites. We will post information as soon as it is ready so that we can – as far as possible – mitigate the impact on our country, together.

/Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation, Ibrahim Baylan



Article from Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of Finance

Temporary discount for fixed rental costs in vulnerable sectors

Published 30 March 2020 Updated 30 March 2020

The Government has proposed a temporary discount for fixed rental costs in vulnerable sectors to mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 virus outbreak. The proposal is based on an agreement between the Government, the Centre Party and the Liberal Party.

The COVID-19 virus outbreak has rapidly had a major economic impact across Sweden. The situation is now very serious for large parts of the hotel and restaurant sector, and the durable consumer goods sector. In its additional amending budget, the Government is allocating support of SEK 5 billion to reduce fixed rents for vulnerable sectors such as durable consumer goods, hotels, restaurants and certain other activities.

Under this initiative, landlords who reduce fixed rents for tenants in these vulnerable sectors during the period of 1 April to 30 June will be able to apply for support to compensate part of the rental reduction. The compensation provided will be at most 50 per cent of the reduction in fixed rent, but at most 25 per cent of the original fixed rent.

Compensation can be applied for after the fact from county administrative boards. The Government is currently working on producing a regulatory framework to ensure it is in place as soon as possible. As this initiative involves state aid, it must be approved by the EU. More information will follow.



Article from Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of Finance

Proposed central government loan guarantee programme for small and medium-sized enterprises

Published 27 March 2020

On Wednesday 25 March, a proposal was presented for loan guarantees to companies adversely affected by the COVID-19 virus outbreak. The aim is to make it easier for primarily small and medium-sized enterprises to access financing.

The proposal means that central government will guarantee 70 per cent of any new loans that banks provide to companies experiencing financial difficulties due to the COVID-19 virus. The guarantee will be issued to banks, which in turn will provide guaranteed loans to companies.

Opportunity for small and medium-sized enterprises to access financing

The loan guarantee programme primarily targets small and medium-sized enterprises, but there is no formal size limit on companies taking part in the programme. However, a limit of SEK 75 million per borrower has been proposed. The Swedish National Debt Office may grant exemptions from this limitation.

Conditions for providing loans

To take part in the programme, the COVID-19 virus must have adversely affected the company's finances. The Government expects that the guaranteed loans will not be used for bonuses or variable remuneration to

senior management, or for profit distribution other than what is comparable with regular salary withdrawals.

Companies apply for a loan by contacting a bank. The bank then conducts the normal credit assessment.

Banks that want to take part in the programme sign a guarantee agreement with the Swedish National Debt Office. The agreement covers aspects such as the guarantee fee that banks must pay, the loans concerned and other conditions.

Loans are provided through the banks

Central government issues the guarantee to the banks, which in turn provide guaranteed loans to companies. In practice, this means that central government compensates the bank for up to 70 per cent of any loss arising on a loan thus guaranteed.

The loans are paid out through the banks in order to provide loans to many companies as quickly as possible by using the banks existing networks and credit processes.

Costs to central government, banks and companies

Banks pay a risk-based guarantee fee to the Swedish National Debt Office. The fee is determined on the basis of the borrower's current risk class, which is set by the credit institution. The risk assessment is carried out in accordance with the credit institution's credit assessment process.

As usual, the borrower pays interest to the bank. This is determined by the bank and based on their credit risk assessment of the individual company, taking into account that central government is guaranteeing a large part of the loan. The borrower may defer paying interest on the loan for the first 12 months.



Article from Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

Almi receives SEK 3 billion capital injection to increase lending to small and medium-sized enterprises

Published 26 March 2020

Due to the COVID-19 virus, the Government, together with the Centre Party and the Liberal Party, on March 20 presented further measures that will make it easier for Swedish businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, to access financing at this difficult time. Resources and capital are being injected into Almi Företagspartner AB in order to increase lending to small and medium-sized enterprises throughout the country, thus facilitating their access to financing.

The spread of the COVID-19 virus has resulted in major disruptions to the financial system and the international capital market. It is a serious problem for the Swedish economy that deteriorating conditions are making it harder for companies to find financing. Employment and growth in sound companies are threatened, which is why it is urgent to take measures to facilitate these companies' access to financing as quickly as possible.

Almi has 40 offices throughout the country, staffed by skilled advisers who can make adjustments at short notice to meet companies' new needs. Experience from the 2008 financial crisis has demonstrated that Almi can play an important role for small and medium-sized enterprises in difficult times.

To ensure a well-functioning credit supply and mitigate the impact of the virus outbreak on Swedish jobs and businesses, Almi will receive a capital injection of SEK 3 billion and thus be able to increase its lending to small and medium-sized enterprises. This reinforcement will increase Almi's preparedness to meet the needs of companies whose activities have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 virus outbreak.

In addition to the capital injection into Almi, today the Government, together with the Centre Party and the Liberal Party, also presented more resources and expanded credit frameworks for the Swedish Export Credit Corporation and the Swedish Export Credit Guarantee Agency:

- The Swedish Export Credit Corporation's credit framework will be increased from SEK 125 billion to SEK 200 billion and can be used to provide both state-supported and commercial credit to Swedish export companies.
- The Swedish Export Credit Guarantee Agency's ceiling for credit guarantees will be increased to a total of SEK 500 billion, and the lower risk for banks will give companies new and improved credit opportunities.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation,
Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Discussions, meetings and collaboration for developing Sweden

Published 06 November 2019

Interesting discussions and new perspectives characterised the National Innovation Council meeting and thematic day at Linnaeus University in Kalmar on 23 October. The aim of the Council's regional meetings is to learn from local and regional experiences and to develop the national policy. Alongside the meeting, various workshops were also organised as part of the Innovation Council's thematic day.

The National Innovation Council meeting, which was led by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, focused on how society can address complex social challenges through innovation and cooperation. The Council meets 6 times per year, of which two meetings are regional. The meeting and thematic workshops in Kalmar were jointly planned by the county administrative board and Region Kalmar and, in addition to the core issues of cooperation and innovation, focused on two themes: eHealth and sustainable water use, which are important issues for the region. Meeting participants discussed the problems associated with water scarcity and the challenges arising from a steadily aging population that put a strain on the health and welfare sector, particularly eHealth. A great deal of attention was given to the solutions and opportunities that innovation and technology can present.

Lena Miranda, CEO of Science Park Mjärdevi and member of the National Innovation Council, participated in the meeting in Kalmar.

Why is it important for the Innovation Council to have meetings in different regions of Sweden?

“The Government has expressed the desire to see more innovation – not just in the business sector but in all areas – throughout the country, and not limited to metropolitan areas. I think this is the right way to go. Innovation happens everywhere, and our job is to create the best possible conditions to contribute to this. We have to make sure that people feel they are involved and create an impact – inclusion is very important to also ensure the survival of democracy,” says Ms Miranda, and continues:

“Around our country, there are many good examples at local and regional level that are important for us to see and understand at national level when decisions on new initiatives are to be taken. From this perspective, the Innovation Council’s visits around the country are important.”

The Prime Minister, other government ministers and Council members, together with regional actors from academia, the business sector and society, took part in the meeting. One of the participants was Cecilia Schelin Seidegård, Deputy County Governor of Kalmar County.

What do you consider to be important lessons from today’s meeting and which are also relevant to the national policy?

“Innovation takes place throughout the country. We need to find forms to spread good ideas between different regions in order to benefit from what already exists. Kalmar County will gladly be part of various testbeds, both when it comes to water issues and eHealth. There is a strong commitment to work together to make a difference. We can take the initiative and conduct tests on a small scale, which can then be implemented on a large scale,” says Ms Schelin Seidegård.

High level of activity at Innovation Council workshops

Running alongside the meeting was the Innovation Council’s thematic day, with activities in workshops under the guidance of Vinnova and Hack for Sweden. Participants had the chance to test cooperation methods and find common goals and ways to solve social challenges. The theme here as well was sustainable water use and eHealth.

The day’s programme concluded with a meeting of participants from both the Innovation Council meeting and the workshops to jointly report on

experiences from the day. Many people spoke about the benefit of different actors meeting to discuss and provide different perspectives and solutions to complex social challenges. In conclusion, Mr Löfven highlighted the importance of regional cooperation for innovation, and also open dialogue between local, regional and national activities. The ambition now is to continue working on the ideas, comments and proposals that emerged during the activities of both groups.



Article from Ministry of the Environment

International energy ministerial meetings in Öresund region

Published 20 December 2017

In May 2018, Sweden, the EU and the Nordic countries will together host major energy ministerial meetings. In connection with these meetings, the Öresund region will also host Nordic Clean Energy Week. Politicians, researchers and business representatives will come together to discuss future energy solutions.

"I am looking forward to discussions, in Sweden, with the world's energy ministers and decision-makers on how to take joint responsibility for developing the sustainable energy solutions of tomorrow. The meetings will also provide fantastic opportunities to market Nordic energy technology expertise," says Minister for Policy Coordination and Energy Ibrahim Baylan, who will represent Sweden and lead parts of the meetings.

The Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM) and the Mission Innovation Ministerial (MI) are parallel collaborations led by the energy ministers of the G20 and Nordic countries. The Third Mission Innovation Ministerial (MI3) will take place at Malmö Live on 23 May 2018, followed by the Ninth Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM9) in Copenhagen on 24 May.

On 22 May, the Nordic energy ministerial meeting will be held in Lund. Sweden will hold the Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2018.

Initiatives to accelerate clean-energy transition

The Clean Energy Ministerial and the Mission Innovation Ministerial bring together a group of countries that account for 75 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions and 90 per cent of the investments in clean energy. Initiatives aim

to strengthen experience exchanges and legislative cooperation that can help accelerate the transition to clean energy, thereby reducing the energy sector's impact on the environment. The MI focuses on new solution development, while the CEM focuses on spreading market-ready solutions.

The MI aims to rapidly accelerate the pace of cleantech innovation. It was launched at the Climate Summit in Paris (COP21) in 2015, and Sweden has been an active participant since the outset. The MI secretariat function is divided between several countries and is led by the European Commission.

The CEM aims to accelerate the global rate of energy efficiency improvement and increase the volume and accessibility of sustainable energy. The CEM was launched at COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009 and Sweden has been an active participant since the forum began in 2010. The CEM Secretariat has been hosted by the International Energy Agency since January 2017.

The practical work of the MI and CEM partnerships takes place through specific initiatives and activities in several selected key areas, which member countries can choose to join. Areas in which international collaboration is currently being stepped up thanks to the CEM and the MI include smart electricity grids, electric vehicles, energy-efficient products and the management of the increasing share of variable energy sources in electricity grids.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment

Swedish chairmanship at IEA Ministerial Meeting advanced energy transition

Published 22 November 2017

Minister for Policy Coordination and Energy Ibrahim Baylan chaired the International Energy Agency (IEA) Ministerial Meeting on 7–8 November in Paris. Swedish priorities regarding enhanced engagement with emerging economies to help accelerate global clean-energy transitions were raised at the meeting.

The IEA Ministerial Meeting, which is held every second year, brought together energy ministers from 40 countries and leaders of the world's 30 largest energy companies in Paris on 7–8 November. The aim of the meeting was to give direction and incentive to IEA efforts over the next few years.

Under the leadership of Executive Director Dr Fatih Birol, the organisation has begun a modernisation programme in three focus areas: enhanced engagement with emerging economies, the IEA as a global clean energy hub for energy technology and energy efficiency measures, and secure energy supply adapted to new market conditions. As chair, Mr Baylan had the important task of advancing and consolidating members' interests in these areas.

"At the meeting, we made the Swedish priorities clear regarding increasing the IEA's focus on engaging with emerging economies to help accelerate global clean energy transitions, in which opportunities offered by digital transformation also play a major role going forward. Our efforts yielded positive results and there was broad support among member countries to move ahead in these areas," says Mr Baylan.

The results of the Ministerial Meeting mainly contribute to:

- broadened, strengthened and more well-financed cooperation with emerging economies, with a focus on sustainable energy systems;
- increased cooperation between the public and business sectors, in both investments and digital transformation; and
- greater gender equality in the energy sector through strengthening women's leadership and participation in the clean energy transition.

At the meeting, Mexico was welcomed as the next and 30th member of the IEA.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment

Sweden shows leadership for greater gender equality in the energy sector

Published 09 November 2017

On 7 November, Sweden and the International Energy Agency (IEA) hosted the Women in Clean Energy side event in Paris to attract attention and generate engagement in the importance of promoting women's participation and leadership in energy transition. Representatives of governments, international organisations and the business world took part.

Promoting women's participation and leadership in the development of the energy sector has been a priority for the Government and Minister for Policy Coordination and Energy Ibrahim Baylan during this electoral period. To demonstrate international leadership, the Clean Energy Education & Empowerment (C3E) initiative was therefore launched by Sweden, Canada and Italy at the Clean Energy Ministerial 8 in China in June 2017.

"Women's participation and leadership is not just a question of fairness, it is a crucial strategic issue if we are to succeed with the energy transition," says Mr Baylan.

The event in Paris was a follow-up of the launch in China and presented an opportunity to bring together actors from countries, the business world and international organisations to generate further attention and interest in the importance of promoting women's participation and leadership in the energy sector.

The meeting opened with a presentation by Annika Viklund of Vattenfall and

Anita T. Perry from the United States. A number of sessions were also held during the morning in which participants could exchange thoughts and ideas on how actors can improve their cooperation and collaboration in the areas of data collection, analysis, career development and awards.

The interest in participating in C3E among other countries and organisations is growing. A number of countries have shown an interest in joining the initiative and will join soon, including Australia, Austria, Chile, Finland and the United States.



Article from Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

Innovation partnership programmes impact Swedish innovative environments

Published 04 September 2017

The collaborations, initiatives and projects that have resulted so far from the five innovation partnership programmes were presented when the National Innovation Council met on Monday 28 August. Together, the project managers and the Council looked to the future and discussed critical success factors, goals and opportunities for developing these partnerships. The experiences of partnership working, where the business sector, academia and organisations work together strategically, were highlighted and discussed by the Council.

The innovation partnership programmes originated from the three social challenges that the National Innovation Council highlighted at the beginning of the electoral period: digitalisation, life sciences, and environmental and climate technologies. The Council has followed the work over the year and provided input, stressing for example the importance of joining forces to increase skills supply.

The innovation partnership programmes were launched on 1 June 2016. The partnership groups associated with the programmes focused on identifying challenges and opportunities for each programme and priority setting of important areas for joint action. Several working groups have been established and a number of concrete partnership projects have been

developed.

Within the framework of a partnership project, available public resources and co-financing from the business sector can be used jointly to meet specified priorities. Even so, the Government has provided additional funds for measures related to the innovation partnership programmes, including through the Research and Innovation Bill adopted by the Riksdag in early 2017. These funds are primarily channelled through programmes and calls for projects from the Swedish Agency for Innovation Systems, the Swedish Energy Agency and the Swedish Research Council Formas.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment

Strengthened cooperation during meeting of energy ministers in China

Published 21 June 2017

The visit of Minister for Policy Coordination and Energy, Ibrahim Baylan, to Beijing in June contributed to strengthened relations with several of the world's largest economies and provided opportunities to promote Swedish know-how and companies. An action plan for Sweden's continued bilateral energy cooperation with China was also agreed.

Two thirds of global emissions of greenhouse gases come from the energy sector. The global transition to sustainable energy is crucial for achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement. To hasten progress, energy ministers from the world's largest economies were hosted by the Chinese government in Beijing on 6–8 June 2017 within the framework of the Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM) global forum and the Mission Innovation (MI) global initiative.

Mr Baylan represented Sweden and participated in ministerial discussions and activities during the week, as well as bilateral meetings with United States Secretary of Energy, Rick Perry, China's Minister of Science and Technology, Wan Gang, and President of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), Jin Liqun.

"Cooperation is the only way forward in order to manage the climate change challenge and transition to sustainable energy. Discussions during the week in Beijing confirmed that Sweden has common interests with several other countries and that there are good opportunities to develop our bilateral cooperation on the journey towards a sustainable energy system," says Mr

Baylan.

Mr Baylan also launched the C3E initiative, which is to highlight and strengthen women's leadership and participation in the energy transition. Together with European Commission Vice-President for Energy Union, Maroš Šefčovič, Mr Baylan also announced that next year's ministerial meetings will take place in Malmö and Copenhagen on 23–24 May, co-hosted by the EU, the Nordic countries and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Swedish-Chinese energy cooperation gathers pace

During the week, Mr Baylan and China's Director of the National Energy Administration, Nur Bekri, followed up the memorandum of understanding on Swedish-Chinese cooperation in the energy area, which was signed by the countries in March 2017, by signing an action plan for the coming years. According to the action plan, cooperation will particularly focus on the implementation of initiatives, activities and dialogue together with government agencies, researchers and industry in the following areas:

- The promotion and development of renewable energy technologies within the areas of wind power, solar energy and storage technologies.
- Energy efficiency and environmentally friendly technologies for sustainable urban development.
- The development of technologies for smart electricity grids and efficient electricity transmission.

Together with the Swedish Ambassador to China, Anna Lindstedt, and several Swedish companies, Mr Baylan also inaugurated the Swedish Energy Agency's Cleantech Hubs programme in China.

"I believe that the Swedish Energy Agency's Cleantech Hubs will create great opportunities for Swedish companies to expand in various markets. Increased business relations between Swedish and Chinese companies within cleantech help to contribute to our common objectives," says Mr Baylan.

The Cleantech Hubs programme will promote and spread world-leading Swedish renewable energy and energy efficiency innovations on the global market in the long-term.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment

Ibrahim Baylan prepares for international energy meeting to be chaired by Sweden

Published 12 June 2017

On 2 June, Minister for Policy Coordination and Energy Ibrahim Baylan met the Executive Director of the International Energy Agency (IEA), Fatih Birol, in Stockholm. The meeting was part of the preparations ahead of the IEA Ministerial Meeting in November 2017, which Mr Baylan will chair.

The meeting with Mr Birol in Stockholm was part of the preparations ahead of Mr Baylan chairing the IEA Ministerial Meeting in Paris on 7–8 November 2017. During the meeting, Mr Baylan received a status report on the preparations for the Ministerial Meeting, and the meeting's agenda and structure were also discussed.

"The IEA's work plays a very important role in energy transition and is important for global climate efforts. The organisation has its basis in world-leading statistics, analysis and policy materials, which facilitates dialogue in the energy area with many of the world's important energy nations. The fact that Sweden is chairing the Ministerial Meeting means that it will have a key role in moving the IEA's agenda and the global energy agenda forward," says Mr Baylan.

Focus of the Ministerial Meeting will be on security of supply under new market conditions, work on the energy transition through renewable energy, and energy efficiency and new energy technologies. The ministers will also discuss enhanced global cooperation, particularly with emerging economies in relation to global climate efforts. Part of the meeting will be devoted

specifically to discussions and strategies with the business sector.

The Ministerial Meeting will gather energy ministers from the IEA's 29 member countries and 10 partner countries, and some 30 business sector representatives from the Energy Business Council.

"I look forward to the IEA Ministerial Meeting this autumn. Renewable and efficient energy use is the key to solving the challenge of climate change. And just as in the work to curb global warming, the countries of the world must act together to deal with the energy transition," says Mr Baylan.



Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment

Ibrahim Baylan calls attention to the Swedish Lighting Challenge

Published 22 May 2017

The Swedish Lighting Challenge is celebrating its first anniversary, and to mark the occasion Minister for Policy Coordination and Energy Ibrahim Baylan visited Gröna Lund, one of the most recent actors to join the initiative. A lot has happened since the initiative was launched a year ago, and actors from both the public and private sectors are now involved.

In May 2016, Mr Baylan launched the Swedish Lighting Challenge in Sweden. A platform has since been put in place enabling public and private actors to work together to ensure that Sweden is a driving force in developing and disseminating the lighting solutions of the future.

"Exciting technological advances are taking place in the field of lighting. I hope that through the Swedish Lighting Challenge, Sweden finds a framework for cooperation between the public and private sector. The initiative is also an example of how the energy transition can be used to create growth and jobs," says Mr Baylan.

In 2017 Gröna Lund joined the Swedish Lighting Challenge as part of its sustainability efforts. The amusement park has the goal of replacing all 17 000 of its light points with LED lighting.

Experience from the first year of the Swedish Lighting Challenge has shown that there are a number of different reasons to invest in efficient lighting, including reduced expenditure and the fact that the rapid advance of lighting technology has enabled new lighting design possibilities. Increasing demand for better lighting has also created new possibilities for lighting schools and

hospitals, which may have good social spillover effects.

The Swedish Energy Agency has carried out a number of activities during the year as part of its Government assignment to implement the Swedish Lighting Challenge. The Agency is conducting close dialogues with municipal energy and climate change advisers in order to reach out to Swedish consumers and communicate the advantages of the new technologies. It is also working closely with the National Agency for Public Procurement to support public and private actors in their procurement of efficient and high-quality lighting.



Article from Ministry of the Environment

Summary of the Government's budget initiatives in the areas of environment, climate and energy

Published 29 September 2016 Updated 29 September 2016

In the Budget Bill for 2017, the Government is strengthening efforts towards a toxin-free everyday environment, a fossil-free welfare society and renewable energy. Sweden will be a pioneer on climate issues, and we will step up the pace to achieve the environmental objectives. This requires increased knowledge, new technological solutions and clear targets along the way.

Historic environment and climate budget

Since the Government took office in 2014, the appropriation to expenditure area 20, General environmental protection and nature conservation, has increased by 73 per cent, excluding environmental research. The Budget Bill for 2017 is the largest environment and climate budget ever presented in Sweden.

The Government's investments for the climate total SEK 12.9 billion for the period 2017–2020. The Climate Leap will be reinforced and extended through an investment of SEK 1.6 billion to continue to support regional and local initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In total, the Climate Leap encompasses more than SEK 3.5 billion for the period 2015–2020.

The urban environment agreements will be reinforced with an additional SEK 750 million for 2017–2018, and will encompass a total of SEK 2.75 billion by 2018. As of next year, it will also be possible to apply for

investment support for cycling infrastructure.

As part of efforts to reduce the total amount of carbon dioxide in the EU Emissions Trading System, the Government proposes a scheme to purchase and cancel emissions allowances, at a cost of approximately SEK 300 million per year from 2018 to 2040.

Knowledge-enhancing and preventive initiatives to adapt society to climate change continue. The appropriation for climate adaptation will be reinforced by SEK 10 million per year in 2017 and 2018, SEK 70 million in 2019 and SEK 120 million in 2020.

Research to meet social challenges

Strong environmental research is crucial to tackling climate and environmental challenges. It is proposed in the budget that the resources for climate and environmental research be reinforced to the tune of SEK 752.5 million in 2017–2020. The climate research appropriations to the Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning will almost double by 2018. The research initiatives will be described in greater detail in the research policy bill that the Government intends to present before the end of 2016.

A special energy research bill will also be presented before the end of the year. It contains guidelines and initiatives for prioritised and more intensely focused measures in the energy area. In the Budget Bill, the Government proposes that the resources for energy research be reinforced by a total of SEK 620 million in 2017–2020.

Fossil-free travel and transport for the climate and environment

In the area of transport, the super green car rebate will be extended by one year to 2017. The autumn amending budget boosts the rebate by SEK 180 million in 2016, and the Government is investing SEK 700 million for 2017. The scheme is being extended pending a 'bonus-malus' system whereby the purchase of more environmentally friendly vehicles is rewarded via a bonus, while vehicles that emit high levels of carbon dioxide are subject to higher vehicle tax.

The Government also wants to make it easier for consumers to make

informed and environmentally friendly fuel choices, and will therefore look into the possibility of making it obligatory to provide information on the environmental impact of fuels.

The Government continues efforts for a toxin-free everyday environment

The Budget Bill for 2017 outlines a range of initiatives in the area of chemicals to achieve the environmental objective on a toxin-free everyday environment, with a particular focus on children and young people. The Government's proposed initiatives total SEK 375 million up to 2020. The Swedish Chemicals Agency is tasked with charting hazardous substances in people's everyday environments. Funds will also be allocated to establishing a centre to help businesses substitute hazardous substances in products and goods.

More protected marine areas

The Government has previously undertaken major initiatives to protect valuable natural environments, including marine areas. To meet the interim objective of protecting ten per cent of Sweden's marine areas by 2020, the Government believes that the pace of these efforts needs to accelerate. The appropriation for measures in marine and aquatic environments in 2017 is therefore reinforced in the budget by SEK 15 million.

In the autumn amending budget, the Government also restores SEK 250 million to protecting valuable natural environments. This means that initiatives for valuable forests, for example, can be implemented according to the original timetable.

Hydro-electric power with modern environmental requirements

Hydro-electric power plays a key role in Sweden's electricity supply. The physical impacts of hydro-electric plants on watercourses have serious consequences for ecosystems and biodiversity. The Government is therefore investing SEK 25 million in water-related operations in 2017, and increasing the investment to SEK 30 million annually from 2018.

100 per cent renewable energy by 2040

The Government's ambition is for Sweden to become one of the world's first fossil-free welfare nations. Solar panels are a renewable energy technology that is beneficial from a climate perspective. The Government will therefore continue to encourage the expansion of solar power. The funds allocated to investment support for solar power in 2017 are eight times higher than in 2015.

The expansion of renewable energy places demands on the electricity grid and on the government agencies responsible for this area. The Government intends to increase the appropriation to the Swedish Energy Markets Inspectorate by SEK 10 million annually to cover the Inspectorate's work on network concessions, for example.

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



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of the Environment

Agreement on Swedish energy policy

Published 16 June 2016 Updated 16 June 2016

The Government, the Moderate Party, the Centre Party and the Christian Democrats have concluded an agreement on Sweden's long-term energy policy. The agreement consists of a common road map for a controlled transition to an entirely renewable electricity system, with a target of 100 per cent renewable electricity production by 2040.

The Government and the parties agree that Sweden must have a robust electricity system with high security of supply and low environmental impact, and offer electricity at competitive prices. This creates a long-term perspective and clarity for actors in the market and helps generate new jobs and investment in Sweden.



Article from Ministry of the Environment

Investments in climate change adaptation and energy

Published 28 September 2015 Updated 28 September 2015

The Government wants to take a climate leap that accelerates the transition to a more sustainable society. By taking responsibility for our climate impact in Sweden, we will show the countries of the world the way forward. Sweden must take the lead and become one of the world's first fossil-free welfare countries.

The Budget Bill for 2016 contains the Government's investments for the climate in four areas:

More renewable energy

In the long term, Sweden is to have one hundred per cent renewable energy. The Government proposes a considerable increase in solar investment support to speed up the expansion of solar cell plants. Significant interest in solar cells means that previous solar cell support is not sufficient and there is currently a waiting list. The Government therefore wants to increase support to SEK 390 million per year during 2017–2019. It is allocating SEK 225 million to this in 2016, and a total of SEK 1.4 billion by 2019.

The Government also proposes investing in electricity storage and the possibility of storing self-produced electricity. This investment would total SEK 25 million in 2016 and SEK 50 million per year during 2017–2019. The Government also wants to establish a national forum for smart electricity grids for SEK 10 million per year during 2016–2019.

The Government has previously announced investments totalling SEK 1 billion per year to renovate and improve energy-efficiency in multi-dwelling

blocks in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas.

International operations

The climate change challenge is global and requires a joint solution. The Government proposes an additional SEK 500 million in 2016 for climate financing in developing countries. Strengthening international climate work is particularly important now as it sends clear signals to the world ahead of the COP21 climate summit in Paris. The Government also proposes that the clean development mechanism projects the previous Government entered into agreements on should receive SEK 50 million per year over the next four years. Within the framework of the regular aid budget, Swedfund will be given a capital injection of SEK 400 million to enable more climate and environment investments in developing countries.

Fossil-free travel

A fossil-free vehicle fleet is a priority for the Government. The conditions for environmentally sound cars are being developed through the extension of the fringe benefit tax subsidy. New support is being introduced for electric buses and the super green car rebate is being reinforced. The effect of environmental taxes will increase. New public transport will be created and the Government is investing in the upgrade of the existing railways. Within the framework of a cycling strategy, SEK 100 million is being set aside for measures to promote cycling during 2016–2017.

Involving all of Sweden

Taking responsibility at home is a way of showing global leadership. Investments in environmental technology will increase by SEK 62 million to enable environment and climate technology companies to grow. The previously announced support for local and regional climate investments – the ‘Climate leap’ investment support – will make it possible for municipalities and regions to reduce their climate emissions. The Government is also investing in climate change adaptation. The money will enhance municipalities’ work on climate change adaptation and raise awareness among government agencies, municipalities, the business sector and individuals. A strategy for sustainable consumption is being developed, in which the Government is investing SEK 3 million per year over the next four years.

In total, the Government is investing SEK 4.5 billion in climate measure in the Budget Bill for 2016, including the investments announced in the Spring Fiscal Policy Bill for 2015. Of this, SEK 2.3 billion was also included in the jobs package presented previously. The new initiatives included investments in solar cells, international climate work, environmental technology and a cycling strategy.