



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Culture

Government Offices takes part in Pride 2018

Published 18 July 2018

The Government Offices will take part in Stockholm Pride for the 14th time. Advancing equal rights and opportunities for LGBTI people is a priority for the Government. Taking part in Pride is one way of increasing awareness about the Government's work.

The Government Offices will take part in EuroPride Park Stockholm to raise awareness about the Government's policies with regard to LGBTI people. EuroPride visitors will be able to meet several ministers in the Government Offices tent, test their LGBTI knowledge in a quiz and hear about what it's like to work at the Government Offices.

EuroPride is an international event attracting visitors from across Europe. This year, EuroPride 2018 is being jointly organised between Sweden's two Pride festivals, Stockholm Pride and West Pride, and will take place in Stockholm on 27 July–5 August and in Gothenburg on 14–19 August.



Article from Ministry of Culture

More culture to more children and young people

Published 16 April 2018

In the spring amending budget for 2018, the Government is proposing that the Swedish Arts Council receive SEK 10 million to go to culture for children and young people as a temporary initiative during 2018. The funding supplements the comprehensive grants towards culture for children and young people already provided by the Swedish Arts Council. The initiative is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

"To be able to sing, draw, dance and access culture from an early age is important for all children, regardless of where in the country they live. With this initiative, we are strengthening the important work carried out by the Swedish Arts Council and other actors throughout the country," says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

A central objective of culture policy is to promote the opportunities for children and young people to access high quality arts and culture, both in rural areas and in larger towns and cities, and to increase the opportunities for their own creativity. It is particularly important to reach more target groups.

The funds will constitute a complement to the comprehensive funding currently allocated by the Swedish Arts Council. The new funds raise the level of ambition in order to give more children and young people the possibility to access arts and culture and stimulate their own creativity. The Government will provide more information on how the assignment to the

Swedish Arts Council will be formulated at a later date.



Article from Ministry of Culture

The Government enhances support to smaller cinemas throughout the country

Published 11 April 2018

In the spring amending budget for 2018, the Government is investing an additional SEK 15 million in 2018 to provide temporary enhanced support to smaller cinemas and film festivals. This is a boost in addition to the investment of SEK 25 million being made annually in 2016–2019. The investment is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

“Culture throughout the country is a priority issue for me. There has been great demand for the funds we have already earmarked for cinemas in smaller towns and to film festivals. We will therefore provide an additional SEK 15 million to this initiative this year,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

The Swedish Film Institute will be tasked with deciding on the details of how the support will be used, based on the needs of the target group. This could entail an increase in the amount of support provided per application, or of making support available to broader target groups. It could also entail enhanced support to other actors that contribute to a dynamic film culture throughout the country, such as film festivals.

This is one of several investments in Swedish film and film production the Government has made during this electoral period.



Article from Ministry of Culture

The new media support scheme

Published 13 March 2018 Updated 13 March 2018

The Government has presented a bill on media support to the Riksdag. The bill proposes introducing a supplementary new media support scheme while preserving the existing press subsidy scheme.

The bill will include proposals to supplement the existing press subsidy scheme with a new technology-neutral and platform-neutral media support scheme to help innovation and reinforce local news coverage in areas currently with little or no journalistic coverage. The media support scheme is based on the model proposed by the recent independent Media Inquiry commissioned by the Government.

Introducing two new forms of technology-neutral media support

The new media support scheme will be open for all general news media without any restrictions as to platform, technology or form. The aim of the scheme is to strengthen democracy by supporting a diversity of general news media with editorial content of high quality. This will help to increase the accessibility of independent news coverage in all parts of the country. One part of the scheme is support intended to give incentives for new initiatives from general news media to provide local news coverage in areas currently with little or no journalistic coverage. The practical details of this support will be designed to promote long-term engagement. A maximum allocation of SEK 1 million per designated area is proposed (normally such an area would be the same as a municipality). The new media support scheme also includes expanded innovation and development support. Subject to the approval of the European Commission, the full scheme will enter into force on 1 January 2019.

Expanding and extending existing press subsidies

The existing press subsidy scheme has two parts: the main operational subsidy for newspapers and a small distribution subsidy for collaborative distribution schemes for printed newspapers. Both are allocated according to set tariffs which are determined according to size of circulation. It is proposed that the distribution subsidy increase by 50 per cent and that the operational subsidy within the same scheme increase by 10 per cent for high and medium periodicity newspapers. Subject to the approval of the European Commission, the scheme will be extended without any other changes from 1 January 2019.

Increased appropriation for media support

The total budget of the two support schemes – the existing press subsidy scheme and the supplementary new media support scheme – will be raised by SEK 55 million for 2019 and by an additional SEK 55 million per year from 2020. The total budget, including the present press subsidy scheme, will be SEK 622 million (\approx EUR 62 million) in 2019 and SEK 677 million (\approx EUR 68 million) from 2020.



Article

The Government is increasing the budget for culture by SEK 745 million

Published 17 October 2017

In the Budget Bill for 2018, the Government is increasing the budget for culture by SEK 745 million. This includes SEK 275 million to be invested in libraries and SEK 115 million in freedom of the arts. In addition, further investments will be made on democracy policy and anti-discrimination policy. The Budget Bill for 2018 is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.

"This is the largest increase ever in the budget for culture that any Minister for Culture has presented. The increase in the culture policy share of the central government budget is a historic victory for culture, which shows that this Government is committed to giving priority to the role of culture in our society," says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

A selection of culture policy initiatives in the Budget Bill for 2018

SEK 250 million for better libraries throughout the country

The Government proposes that SEK 250 million be allocated each year in 2018–2020 to increase the range and accessibility of library activities throughout the country. A total of SEK 25 million per year of this investment will be provided to the cultural cooperation model, which allocates funds to

libraries and activities to promote reading and literature.

[Link to press release](#)

Digital library initiative to improve source criticism

In the Budget Bill for 2018, the Government proposes that the National Library of Sweden receive an extra SEK 25 million per year for three years. The aim is to improve people's digital skills and ability to critically appraise sources.

[Link to press release](#)

SEK 115 million to enhance freedom of the arts

To enhance freedom of the arts throughout the country, the Government proposes an investment totalling SEK 115 million per year in the Budget Bill for 2018. This investment represents an increase of the grants and remunerations allocated directly to artists, independent performing arts groups and cultural publications.

[Link to press release](#)

Sweden to get its first national stage for children and young people

The Government has decided to designate the 'Unga Klara' theatre company a national stage for children and young people. State support to the theatre company will amount to an estimated SEK 16.2 million in 2018, and then SEK 15.4 million per year.

[Link to press release](#)

SEK 10 million to a national cultural school centre

In the Budget Bill for 2018, the Government proposes an allocation of SEK 10 million to the Swedish Arts Council from 2018 for the establishment of a national cultural school centre at the agency. This investment will be made to enable the Swedish Arts Council to serve as a national hub.

The Government intends to strengthen architecture and

design for sustainably shaped habitats

Architecture and design affect people every day. In the Budget Bill for 2018, the Government presents a proposal of increased funds to strengthen and develop the architecture and design area, and work on sustainably shaped habitats, of SEK 28 million per year in total for 2018–2020, and of SEK 5 million from 2021.

Government is investing in free genealogy research

The Government proposes that appropriations to the National Archives be increased by SEK 10 million from 2018 so the fees to access digital archive material can be removed. This will make some 100 million digital archive images freely available, reducing costs for private individuals who conduct genealogy or area research.

[Link to press release](#)

Ingmar Bergman centenary initiatives

On 14 July 2018, Ingmar Bergman would have celebrated his 100th birthday. He was one of Sweden's internationally most renowned and important artists ever. The Budget Bill for 2018 proposes allocating grants to the Royal Dramatic Theatre, the Ingmar Bergman Foundation, the Fårö Bergman Centre Foundation and the Swedish Film Institute for initiatives to highlight the centenary nationally and internationally.

[Link to press release](#)

The Government invests in new Nationalmuseum

The Government proposes that the Nationalmuseum be allocated SEK 65 million for 2018 and SEK 42 million per year from 2019. The one-time increase of SEK 23 million for 2018 is related to the increased costs in connection with Nationalmuseum's move into the renovated premises at Blasieholmen.

Conservation of cultural heritage to receive an additional SEK 25 million

In the Budget Bill for 2018, the Government proposes an increase of appropriations to the conservation of the cultural heritage by SEK 25 million a year from 2018. This investment means that the Government will improve conditions to enable cultural environment initiatives to address important objectives. Examples include the establishment of cultural reserves and making cultural environments accessible.

Investment in digital broadcasts in the performing arts

The Government proposes that SEK 15 million per year during 2018–2020 be allocated to the Royal Dramatic Theatre, the Royal Opera and the Swedish National Touring Theatre for investment in digital broadcasts of performances.

A selection of media policy initiatives in the Budget Bill for 2018

SEK 110 million for new media support

In the Budget Bill for 2018, the Government proposes allocating SEK 55 million to prepare an increased and long-term investment on local journalism and news coverage through a new form of media support starting in 2019. An additional SEK 55 million will be allocated from 2020.

Allocations to film will remain at the same level

The Government proposes that an additional SEK 25 million per year be allocated to film from 2020. This means the level of allocations to film will remain the same after 2019, when the special initiative on cinemas in rural areas and small towns is concluded.

A selection of democracy policy initiatives in the Budget Bill for 2018

Investments totalling SEK 85.1 million ahead of the 2018 general elections and the 2019 European Parliament elections

The percentage of people voting rose in the last three general elections. The

same is also true for the past two European Parliament elections in Sweden. At the same time, large differences remain in voter turnout between different groups in the population and electoral districts. In the Budget Bill for 2018, the Government therefore proposes a number of measures totalling SEK 85.1 million to raise interest and participation in the 2018 and 2019 elections.

The Government to invest additional millions to safeguard the democratic dialogue against threats and hate

The democratic dialogue must not be limited by threats and hatred. The Government is therefore strengthening preventive efforts to safeguard the democratic dialogue against threats and hate by an additional SEK 5 million annually in 2018–2020. This is a further increase to the SEK 5 million per year for the period 2017–2020 that was allocated in the Budget Bill for 2017.

The Government wishes to support security-enhancing measures in civil society

Special measures will be conducted to support civil society's continued opportunities to spread knowledge, mobilise and strengthen capacity in human rights efforts, and to protect democracy.

A selection of initiatives in the Budget Bill for 2018 on anti-discrimination policy, Sami policy, and the policy on national minorities

The Government proposes strengthened anti-discrimination initiatives

Discrimination must be combated. The Government therefore wishes to strengthen anti-discrimination efforts by increasing appropriations to the Equality Ombudsman by SEK 10 million, which is an increase of 9 per cent compared with the current appropriation level. The Government proposes the allocation of an additional SEK 15 million to local anti-discrimination offices, which is double the previous amount.

Strengthened support to the Sami people and national minorities' culture

The Government proposes a considerable increase of support from the Sami Parliament and the Swedish Arts Council to the Sami people and the national minorities' culture. For the first time, the Government will also allocate long-term funds to children and young people's films in minority languages.

Investments in more administrative municipalities for Finnish, Meänkieli and Sami

In the Budget Bill for 2018, the Government proposes that new municipalities join the administrative areas for Sami, Finnish and Meänkieli. To fund this, appropriations will be increased by SEK 16 million in 2018 and by SEK 20 million per year from 2019.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Ingmar Bergman centenary initiatives

Published 22 September 2017

On 14 July 2018, Ingmar Bergman would have celebrated his 100th birthday. He was one of Sweden's internationally most renowned and important artists ever. The Budget Bill for 2018 proposes allocating grants to the Royal Dramatic Theatre, the Ingmar Bergman Foundation, the Fårö Bergman Centre Foundation and the Swedish Film Institute for initiatives to highlight the centenary nationally and internationally.

“The importance of Ingmar Bergman to Swedish cultural life cannot be overestimated, either in Sweden or abroad. This is why we must preserve, promote and share his legacy,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

This initiative involves the following.

- The Royal Dramatic Theatre, the Ingmar Bergman Foundation and the Fårö Bergman Centre Foundation will be allocated a total of SEK 8 million in 2018.
- The Swedish Film Institute will be allocated SEK 5 million from 2018 and an additional SEK 10 million from 2019 for preserving Ingmar Bergman's film heritage.
- Starting in 2019, it is proposed that the Fårö Bergman Centre Foundation receive annual support.

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



Article from Ministry of Culture

Digital library initiative to improve source criticism

Published 22 September 2017

The Government proposes in the Budget Bill for 2018 to give the National Library of Sweden an extra SEK 25 million per year for three years. The aim is to improve people's digital skills and ability to critically appraise sources.

“At a time when more and more people are unable to differentiate between fact and opinion, we all need to be equipped with a better ability to critically appraise sources. Libraries play a particularly important role in this,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

Under the Library Act, libraries should promote the development of democratic society by contributing to the dissemination of knowledge and the free formation of opinion. Public libraries should also promote knowledge about how to use information technology for knowledge acquisition, learning and participation in cultural life.

The initiative means that in 2018–2020 the National Library will support regional library activities in their efforts to make greater use of the opportunities offered by digital transformation and open available knowledge.

The initiative will enter into force on 1 January 2018.

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



Article from Ministry of Culture

SEK 250 million for better libraries throughout the country

Published 22 September 2017

The Government proposes that SEK 250 million be allocated each year in 2018–2020 to increase the range and accessibility of library activities throughout the country. A total of SEK 25 million per year of this investment will be provided to the cultural cooperation model, which allocates funds to libraries and activities to promote reading and literature. The Budget Bill for 2018 is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

“Now, as the icy winds of polarisation and deliberate disinformation blast against us, we need welcoming spaces full of knowledge and guidance. Those who are serious about important concepts like freedom of opinion need to ensure that libraries are open, accessible and staffed. The Government is now demonstrating its firm belief that libraries are a guarantee for a living democracy,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

The Swedish Arts Council will be instructed to implement the initiative and allocate the funds.

Over time, the number of public libraries and library branches has declined, which is an alarming trend. At the same time as the number of libraries is declining, there has also been a drop in the number of visits and physical loans, and proportion of the population who are active borrowers.

More libraries will enable more people to borrow books and read

newspapers. It will also give more people access to other library activities, such as 'language cafés', reading-promotion activities, lectures and exhibitions.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Government invests in free genealogy research

Published 22 September 2017

The Government proposes that the appropriation to the National Archives be increased by SEK 10 million from 2018 to abolish fees to access digital archive material. This will make some 100 million digital archive images freely available, reducing costs for private individuals to conduct genealogy or area research.

“Our ancestral history is part of our shared cultural heritage. Genealogy research has become a popular movement that makes our cultural heritage tangible and brings it to life. People’s curiosity about their own background can also make it easier to understand and learn from our history,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

In its cultural heritage policy bill, the Government held it to be contradictory that the National Archives charges for access to archive material at the same time as it has been tasked by the Government to promote open data in central government administration.

There has long been a desire for archive material to be freely available.

The digital material that will be made freely available through the Government’s initiative can also be used in a variety of digital products and services. It is suggested that the proposal enter into force on 1 January 2018.

This investment is part of the Budget Bill for 2018, which is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Sweden to get its first national stage for children and young people

Published 21 September 2017

The Government has decided to make the ‘Unga Klara’ theatre company a national theatre institute for children and young people as of 2018. State support for the theatre company will amount to an estimated SEK 16.2 million in 2018, and then SEK 15.4 million per year. This means that state support to Unga Klara will be more than doubled compared with today.

“It’s fantastic that Sweden is finally getting a national stage for children’s and young people’s performing arts. A lot of people have been working hard for a long time to make this happen,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

This is the first theatre company focusing exclusively on children and young people to receive the status of a national institute. By making Unga Klara a national theatre institute, the Government is working to give children and young people in Sweden access to high-quality and pioneering theatre throughout the country. In its remit, Unga Klara is to cooperate with other actors that contribute to this aim. Unga Klara’s work on theatre for children and young people – which is in many ways unique and pioneering – has for many years now made the theatre an institute of national interest with the opportunity to be a leading institute in its area, like other national stages.

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



Article from Ministry of Culture

Investments in more administrative municipalities for Finnish and Meänkieli and Sami

Published 20 September 2017

The Government proposes in the Budget Bill for 2018 that new municipalities join the administrative areas for the national minority languages of Sami, Finnish and Meänkieli. To fund this, the appropriation will be increased by SEK 16 million in 2018 and by SEK 20 million per year from 2019. The Budget Bill for 2018 is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.

“The results of the process initiated when the Government took office are now being seen. More and stronger administrative municipalities are central to the Government’s policy to strengthen the rights of national minorities and live up to what is stated in the law,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

New administrative municipalities joining the administrative areas will mean enhanced rights for national minorities around Sweden. This applies to preschools, elderly care, language, culture and empowerment opportunities for more people.

The appropriation will increase as of 2018. The Government will now examine the requests to be included in one or more administrative areas ahead of 2018 that were submitted to the Government Offices by 1 April 2017.

Administrative areas

The administrative areas offer enhanced protection of the Sami, Finnish and Meänkieli languages. In these areas, individuals have the right to use their minority language in contacts with government agencies and have access to preschools and elderly care in their minority language. Municipalities, county councils and regions in these administrative areas receive government grants to cover the extra costs entailed by the legislation.



Article from Ministry of Culture

SEK 115 million to enhance artistic freedom

Published 20 September 2017

To enhance artistic freedom throughout the country, the Government proposes an investment totalling SEK 115 million per year in the Budget Bill for 2018. This investment represents an increase of the grants and remunerations allocated directly to artists, independent performing arts groups and cultural publications.

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“Cultural freedom and independent cultural practitioners are essential to all free societies. In a world where those in power are restricting the conditions for independent artists, the Government is moving in the opposite direction,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

The package to enhance artistic freedom includes the following.

- Grants and remunerations allocated directly to artists will be increased by SEK 60 million per year. Some of this funding may also be allocated to innovative activities under the Culture Bridge project.
- The Swedish Arts Council’s appropriations to independent performing arts groups will receive an additional SEK 25 million per year.
- Independent actors in the area of visual art and design will receive an additional SEK 12 million per year.
- The Public Art Agency Sweden’s support to artistic design of the shared

environment will receive SEK 10 million per year.

- The Swedish Arts Council's support for publishing literature and cultural magazines will be increased by SEK 8 million per year.

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



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Culture

Ending Impunity for Crimes against Journalists

Published 29 June 2017

Op-ed by Swedish Minister of Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke and Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General, Huffington Post 29 June 2017 The safety of journalists is deteriorating across the globe. Journalists and media workers are victims of censorship, pressure, threats, physical abuse, violent attacks or mortal violence. Tackling this challenge successfully calls for political will and intensified cooperation. We call on all governments to join UNESCO in a renewed and stronger commitment to defend freedom of expression.

The protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is a priority of the Swedish government. The issue is at the top of the national agenda as well as in Swedish development cooperation across the world. Sweden works hand-in-hand with UNESCO, and the leadership of the United Nation is essential to successfully address a complex, sensitive and global challenge affecting most countries.

In this, special attention and resources must go to women journalists and media workers. Women face specific forms of threats, including sexual harassment and gender-based violence, both online and offline, with deep impact in terms of self-censorship and the ability of women journalists to carry out their chosen profession.

At the core of the problem is impunity. It is unacceptable that human rights continue to be violated today and still meet with impunity. It is unacceptable that journalists and media workers are being kidnapped, tortured and killed and that perpetrators are not held accountable. We cannot accept impunity

for serious crimes, which, in addition to being tragic in themselves, threaten to weaken societies by curbing peoples' right to free expression and information.

Over the last ten years, 845 journalists and media workers have been killed across the world. This means that one journalist or media worker has been killed on the job every four days over the last decade. In more than nine out of ten cases, the perpetrators of these crimes go unpunished. According to figures reported to UNESCO by Member States, in the majority of cases, there is no information on any judicial follow-up.

This has to end, and the only way is for all governments to make ending impunity an absolute priority. This means ensuring judicial follow-up. It means strengthening laws, training legislators and law enforcement agencies. It means ensuring quality journalist education and supporting media organisations, including measures that protect individual and freelance journalists.

To support national action, UNESCO is spearheading the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. The Plan encompasses all key actors -- States, UN agencies, civil society organizations, media agencies and experts with a view to deepen cooperation and intensify action at national level.

On 29 June, all of these actors are meeting in Geneva to set new commitments to take forward the UN Plan of Action. In addition to action at the global level, the Swedish government will shortly present a national action plan to protect journalists, media workers, artists and elected officials, within the scope of safeguarding democratic debate.

We need more governments to adopt national plans for comprehensive action, guided by the principles of three Ps -- prevention, protection and prosecution. In this, UNESCO is supporting individual countries in establishing journalist safety mechanisms, such in Colombia, and in reinforcing the capacities of judges and legal professionals -- successful experience in Latin America will soon be replicated in African countries. In addition, security forces should be trained on obligations connected to freedom of expression and the safety of journalists, as UNESCO has done in Tunisia, Mali, Burkina Faso, Iraq and recently in The Gambia.

Lastly, we must join forces to raise awareness. In 2013, the United Nations designated November 2 as the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists. In a short time, this annual occasion has contributed to putting the issue of impunity higher on both the international and national agendas.

Awareness of freedom of expression and impunity have also increased by the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 16 of the 2030

Agenda, calls for peaceful and inclusive societies with effective, accountable and inclusive institutions.

We need strong action to protect journalists and media workers. We must all stand up today to defend the women and men who as journalists defend our rights and freedoms. If we cannot protect them, then our democracies and societies are at grave risk. Journalists and media workers are the backbone of healthy society and functioning democracy, and they play a crucial role in ensuring good governance and the rule of law.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Waldemarsudde to be independent of Nationalmuseum

Published 18 April 2017

In the 2017 Spring Budget, the Government proposes that the Prins Eugen's Waldemarsudde art museum be separated in organisational terms from Nationalmuseum. This change will give Prins Eugen's Waldemarsudde better opportunities to operate in accordance with the provisions in Prince Eugen's will. The proposal is expected to enter into force on 1 July 2017.

This issue has been under investigation and preparation for a long time. By separating Prins Eugen's Waldemarsudde from Nationalmuseum, the Government is resolving the organisational problems that have existed since the state took over responsibility in 1995. In future, the museum will be included in its entirety in the foundation, and the funding that currently goes to Prins Eugen's Waldemarsudde via the agency Nationalmuseum and Prins Eugen's Waldemarsudde will instead be channelled via appropriation 8:3 Grants to certain museums.

The agency's name will be changed from Nationalmuseum and Prins Eugen's Waldemarsudde to Nationalmuseum.



Article from Ministry of Culture

School elections initiative inspires young voters

Published 18 April 2017

In the spring amending budget for 2017, the Government is allocating SEK 5 million to the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society to make preparations for school elections in connection with the 2018 national general election and the 2019 European Parliament election. The initiative will benefit a large number of pupils; approximately 1 800 schools took part in the school elections ahead of the 2014 parliamentary elections.

School elections offer a concrete experience of what it is like to vote, and provide schools with the opportunity to discuss the democratic system and the principles of democracy. The initiative will target pupils in upper secondary school and the higher grades of compulsory school in connection with the elections in 2018 and 2019. Special focus will be placed on making school elections available in schools located in socio-economically disadvantaged areas.

Since 2002, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society has received funds to coordinate school elections in connection with parliamentary elections. The year 2014 was the first time the Agency coordinated school elections ahead of European Parliament elections.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation, Ministry of the Environment

A forum for shaping the future of the Baltic Sea region

Published 16 November 2016 Updated 16 November 2016

Creating a common future based on trust and dialogue is necessary for the prosperity and security of the Baltic Sea region. This was Prime Minister Stefan Löfven's message when he delivered the opening speech at the 7th Strategy Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.

The overarching purpose of this year's Forum was to encourage a discussion about how the Baltic Sea region should equip itself ahead of future challenges and opportunities from a 2030 perspective and within the framework of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. The Strategy Forum was held at The Brewery Conference Centre in Stockholm on 8–9 November and brought together a record number of participants – over 1 300 people from all over the Baltic Sea region. The participants represented the political level, the business sector, academia and civil society.

From social entrepreneurship to EU-Russian cooperation

During two intensive days, some 40 political seminars, workshops and other activities were held focusing on digital and social entrepreneurship, EU-Russian cooperation, bioeconomy, circular economy and sustainable seas.

This was the seventh Strategy Forum in a row, and the first to be held in Sweden. The Forum was hosted by the Swedish Government together with the Nordic Council of Ministers, in close cooperation with the European

Commission. In addition to the Prime Minister, participants from the Government included Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke, Minister for Rural Affairs Sven-Erik Bucht, Minister for Infrastructure Anna Johansson and Minister for the Environment Karolina Skoog.

Common security

In his opening speech, Mr Löfven stressed the importance of cooperation that is both a driving force and forward-looking.

"We are here because we want to have our own hands on the rudder, and not simply be steered by events elsewhere. We are here to shape the future of the Baltic Sea. So welcome to Sweden, welcome to Stockholm, and welcome to the incredibly important work we have ahead of us.

"I am a firm believer in the idea of common security. Common security is a term coined by one of my predecessors, Olof Palme, and is based on the idea that we must cooperate across national borders and create a common future built on trust and dialogue. Which is exactly what we are doing here today," said Mr Löfven.

Speech by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven at the Strategy Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region



Article from Ministry of Culture

New reading initiative will get more children and young people to read

Published 22 September 2016 Updated 22 September 2016

The Government is investing a total of SEK 60 million over four years in reading promotion initiatives in the area of culture. Initiatives will also be carried out in the schools sector. The aim is to improve reading skills and increase reading among children and young people throughout the country. The initiatives are part of the Budget Bill for 2017, which is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.

The importance of reading comprehension and the ability to assimilate written information cannot be overstated. Through reading, we learn to understand the way other people think, to reflect, draw conclusions and construct arguments. From an early age, literature and reading experiences are important for building up language and reading skills.

Even if, on the whole, reading habits among the Swedish population are stable, there are some worrying trends. There are large differences between different population groups and the proportion of young people who read regularly is decreasing. In addition, the reading skills of Swedish pupils have deteriorated noticeably over a fairly short period of time. The Government therefore proposes the following initiatives in the area of reading promotion:

Bokstart (Book Start)

The reading promotion initiative Bokstart, which was launched by the Swedish Arts Council, will receive an additional SEK 10 million annually between 2017 and 2020. The additional funds means that the initiative can

be extended to include more regions and that it can be more clearly linked to preschool. Bokstart is a collaboration between child health services and public libraries, aimed at stimulating young children's language development. The initiative was expanded in 2016 to cover five areas in different parts of the country.

Läslov (Reading holidays)

The Government proposes that SEK 5 million be committed annually between 2017 and 2020 to reading promotion activities during school holidays. To support the initiative Läslov vecka 44 (reading holiday week 44), which was launched by Läsrörelsen (the Reading movement), the Government wants to provide support to reading promotion activities ahead of and during school holidays. There is also a need for literature and reading promotion initiatives in the national minority languages.

All of Sweden reads with children

The Government has appointed a delegation tasked with compiling the reading promotion measures carried out in and outside schools within the framework of the initiative Hela Sverige läser med barnen (All of Sweden reads with children). The aim is to help give all children and young people more equal opportunities to develop an adequate reading ability and to stimulate their desire to read.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Continued efforts for a Sweden that stands together – Government to invest SEK 132 million

Published 21 September 2016 Updated 21 September 2016

The Government is mobilising efforts to foster an open and democratic society. Initiatives within the framework of ‘a Sweden that stands together’ were presented in the 2016 Spring Fiscal Policy Bill. This work will continue with additional initiatives for a society with open meeting places, more local cultural activities and an enhanced civil society, as well as measures against discrimination, extremism, threats and hate. A total of SEK 132 million is being committed in the Budget Bill for 2017 and the autumn amending budget for 2016. The initiatives are included in the Budget Bill for 2017 and the autumn amending budget for 2016, which are based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.

The Government will address the challenges facing Sweden with increased investments for an open and democratic society. A Sweden with widening gaps and increased segregation risks becoming ever more polarised when meeting places and points of contact between different people disappear.

Our country is characterised by pluralism and diversity, which represents a

major resource, but we are also vulnerable to mistrust between groups. This mistrust can also be exploited by racist and violent extremist movements.

Those who make their voices heard, such as journalists, elected representatives and cultural practitioners, are all too often subjected to hate and threats. There is a risk that the hardening tone in the public debate will silence voices that should not be silenced, and media developments lead to an increasing number of media consumers being in information bubbles where their own opinions are only confirmed, rarely challenged.

Investments for a Sweden that stands together

To curb the trend towards a more divided society, the Government is investing in a Sweden that stands together. The investments aim to improve access to clubhouses and community centres (particularly in socio-economically disadvantaged areas) to increase knowledge about violent extremism and radicalisation and how they can be prevented, and to strengthen children and young people as critical media users.

The Budget Bill for 2017 also contains an action plan to safeguard the democratic dialogue against threats and hate. The public sphere must be protected from online hate. Journalists, politicians and cultural practitioners must be able to work without being subjected to threats and hate. The autumn amending budget commits SEK 35 million to civil society and religious communities to strengthen their activities that focus on asylum seekers, and for the introduction of new arrivals.

Investments in the area of culture also aim at a cohesive and open Sweden. The Government's proposals include providing funds to the National Historical Museums and the National Museums of World Culture to improve the prospects for a knowledge-based and reflective historiography. Furthermore, it is proposed that the cultural cooperation model be reinforced so that more people in Sweden have access to a free and dynamic culture life.



Article from Ministry of Culture

A living and shared cultural heritage

Published 21 September 2016 Updated 21 September 2016

The Budget Bill for 2017 contains several initiatives and reforms to safeguard an open and accessible cultural heritage. The proposals include committing resources to digitisation of the Swedish film heritage and to more museums so as to promote democracy and increase participation. The initiatives are included in the Budget Bill for 2017, which is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.

The basic idea behind the Government's cultural heritage policy is that cultural heritage is constantly being developed and shaped jointly by people. Everyone is to have the right to help shape our cultural heritage. Together with other reforms, including in the area of culture, cultural heritage policy will also contribute to an inclusive Sweden that stands together.

Museum agencies promote democracy

The National Historical Museums and the National Museums of World Culture will each receive SEK 4 million per year over a period of four years to improve the prospects for a knowledge-based and reflective historiography. The way people use history and cultural heritage is an important force in the democratic development of society. At present, our society can be characterised as increasingly polarised. It is therefore important that the state museums have resources to contribute to a Sweden that stands together.

Possibility for civil society to apply for new support in

the cultural heritage field

The Government will develop and strengthen the grant to cultural environment conservation to enable support to be provided to civil society actors in the field of cultural heritage, such as the Swedish Local Heritage Movement. The involvement of civil society is an important prerequisite to reach many people throughout the country. To accomplish this, SEK 3 million will be allocated to the grant annually over a period of four years.

Increased investment in more accessible film heritage

The current initiative to digitise our film heritage will receive an additional SEK 2.5 million from 2017. A total of 141 films were already digitised between 2014 and 2015. Thanks to digitisation, more films from the common film heritage can be screened in Sweden and abroad, and preserved for the future.

National Museums of World Culture's work with threatened cultural heritage

The National Museums of World Culture will receive SEK 1.3 million from 2017 to develop a long-term project aimed at promoting the protection of threatened cultural heritage in, for example, Syria and Iraq. Ongoing international conflicts have resulted in the widespread destruction of priceless relics and illegal trade in cultural objects. The National Museums of World Culture have established contacts with international actors, and have good prospects of developing this work.



Article from Ministry of Culture

The Government is investing in better conditions for culture

Published 21 September 2016 Updated 21 September 2016

In the Budget Bill for 2017, the Government is investing in better conditions for culture by strengthening the performing arts and increasing the public lending right. The purpose of the Government's increased investments is to provide more culture for more people throughout the country. The initiatives are part of the Budget Bill for 2017, which is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.

SEK 259 million to strengthen music throughout the country

The Government is strengthening the performing arts by providing a total of SEK 259 million in 2017–2020. This reinforcement is intended to secure a broad range of high-quality music and good access to music activities throughout the country. In this way, culture will be able to reach more people. The main part of this reinforcement will be distributed within the cultural cooperation model. The Swedish Arts Council and the county councils will therefore pay particular attention to music in their grant allocation. Part of the reinforcement will also be allocated to the Royal Opera and Drottningholms Slottsteater.

In addition to this investment in music, the Government is strengthening the entire cultural cooperation model by providing a total of SEK 120 million in 2017–2020.

Better conditions for cultural creators

The Government's agreement with authors' organisations will mean a significant reinforcement of the public lending right also in 2017. The public lending right was raised this year as well.

For 2017, the total public lending right is expected to amount to approximately SEK 156.8 million, which is an increase of SEK 7.8 million compared to 2016. The appropriation for compensation and grants to artists will be almost SEK 15 million higher next year than in 2016. The appropriation will total SEK 395.5 million.

Individual cultural creators are important parts of cultural life. To retain a living and vibrant cultural life, it is important for all cultural creators to have reasonable working conditions. The Government sees a continued need to analyse and review the conditions for cultural creators.



Article from Ministry of Culture

The Government is investing in more local culture throughout the country

Published 21 September 2016 Updated 21 September 2016

The Government proposes that an additional SEK 120 million in total be allocated over four years to the cultural cooperation model, a model that gives the county councils greater responsibility to allocate certain central government grants to local and regional cultural activities. The purpose of this investment is to create a more equitable cultural offering throughout the country and to give more people access to culture. This investment is part of the Budget Bill for 2017, which is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.

Access to a free and vibrant cultural life is a prerequisite for an open society that promotes participation and democracy. One of the fundamental ideas of the Government's efforts to build our society is that cultural life needs to be accessible for more people and throughout the country.

The Government considers that reinforcing culture locally and regionally – both within the framework of the regional institutions' activities and within the non-institutional cultural sphere – is also important in light of the growing gap between urban and rural areas.

The Government therefore proposes allocating an extra SEK 30 million per year to the cultural cooperation model in 2017–2020. The extra resources

will go to more regional and local culture and provide greater opportunities for regional priorities and a diverse cultural offering.



Article from Ministry of Culture

More films to more people

Published 21 September 2016 Updated 21 September 2016

The Government is proposing new initiatives so that more films reach more people. By abolishing classification fees, strengthening the initiative to digitise our film heritage by SEK 2.5 million annually and increasing the film subsidy by SEK 20 million from 2019, the Government is taking a yet another step toward this goal. The initiatives are included in the Budget Bill for 2017, which is based on an agreement between the government parties and the Left Party.

The Government's goal is that more films reach more people. Swedish films are to be a natural and accessible choice for audiences. They are to be distributed and screened in various screening formats throughout the country. Film is a key art form in modern society. It reaches the majority of people regardless of age and background, and thus has a unique impact. Film as an idiom helps to both describe and challenge the times we live in – to entertain and question.

Classification fees to be abolished

To enable more films to reach more people, the Government wants to abolish classification fees in 2017. In the Budget Bill, the Government announces that such a proposal will be presented in autumn 2016. Once the fees disappear, costs for film distributors will decrease by SEK 3–4 million per year. This will free up resources that the film industry can use for other purposes, such as increased funds for the promotion of films or for investments in the production of new films. Abolishing the fees will also make it possible for distributors to age rate more films. Small distributors of non-mainstream films in particular have not always had the financial means

to have their films age rated. If more films are submitted for classification, more films can also be made accessible to children and young people under the age of 15.

At present, film distributors pay a classification fee so that the Swedish Media Council can set an age rating on the films screened in cinemas for children under the age of 15.

A more accessible film heritage

The Government proposes increasing the current funding to digitise our film heritage by SEK 2.5 million annually from 2017. Just as new films can provide new insights into our present time, films from the common film heritage can provide useful insights into the lifestyles, values and issues of other times. It is therefore important that the digitised film heritage is preserved for the long term and can be screened for more people in Sweden and abroad.

Increased film support

It is proposed that the new film policy be strengthened by allocating an additional SEK 20 million annually in film support from 2019. Making a film takes time. It requires long-term and stable economic conditions.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Culture

Investment in a new Swedish-Jewish museum

Published 15 April 2016 Updated 15 April 2016

It is proposed that the Jewish Museum in Stockholm receive a contribution of SEK 1.5 million in 2016 for the establishment of a new Swedish-Jewish museum. This is proposed in the Government Bill 'Spring Amending Budget for 2016' following an agreement with the Left Party.

The new museum will focus on Swedish-Jewish history and highlight questions about the conditions of integration. The Government considers that the State should contribute funds for this initiative so as to promote dialogue and opportunities for learning.



Article from Ministry of Culture

More resources for libraries and access to civic information safeguards open society

Published 15 April 2016 Updated 15 April 2016

The Government is investing SEK 11 million to promote libraries as meeting places for the free formation of opinion, information exchange and opportunities for shared knowledge, and to advance the accessibility of literature and civic information. This is proposed in the Government Bill 'Spring Amending Budget for 2016' following an agreement with the Left Party.

It is proposed that SEK 10.5 million be allocated to public libraries. The aim is to strengthen the role of libraries as important meeting places, where people with different backgrounds and circumstances can meet and access knowledge, literature and culture. Libraries have adapted their activities in various ways so as to better support refugees and people who have recently come to Sweden. SEK 0.5 million will be set aside, for example, for the purchase of literature.

More people should be able to access civic information on their own terms

People who have recently come to Sweden have a great need to quickly access literature and civic information. The Swedish Agency for Accessible Media is being tasked with advancing accessibility to easy-to-read literature and civic information for groups of people with reading difficulties who do not have Swedish as their mother tongue. In the Spring Amending Budget for 2016, the Government is proposing that the Agency's allocation be increased

by SEK 500 000 for this assignment.



Article from Ministry of Culture

A concerted effort for a Sweden that keeps together

Published 15 April 2016 Updated 15 April 2016

In the spring budget for 2016, the Government is focusing on safeguarding our open society and democracy, and combating polarisation, racism and violent extremism. SEK 31.5 million will go to measures in 2016 for a Sweden that keeps together. This is proposed in the Government's spring budget for 2016 following an agreement with the Left Party.

Today, there is risk of an increasingly divided society. There are groups and organisations in our country doing all they can to set various population groups against each other, and that view people with a background from other countries as the main problem in society. It is also far too common that politicians, journalists and other opinion-makers are subjected to hatred and threats.

For this reason, the Government is focusing efforts on a Sweden that keeps together – where a diversity of opinions and lifestyles can meet and enrich each other; where democratic conversations can be held in an open social climate and respect for the value of all people and efforts to combat racism and discrimination are key. Sweden is, and has long been, an open country, receptive to knowledge, culture, lifestyles and innovations from around the world. At a time when these values are under threat, it is more important than ever to defend them.

Increased support for work to combat violent extremism

The advance of violent extremism and terrorism is a serious concern, and

people are worried about terrorist attacks and extremist violence. The Government is therefore investing an additional SEK 18 million in 2016 in efforts to combat violent extremism. SEK 8 million will go to measures taken by municipalities together with civil society. SEK 10 million will go to preventive work in schools, using the 'Kungälv model'. This work focuses mainly on young people who are in or near violent extremist environments.

Everyone should be able to take part in the democratic conversation

Polarisation risks creating a tougher climate for discussions. When people are silenced or become silent due to threats and hatred, it becomes a threat to democracy. There is a great need to safeguard the democratic conversation so as to ensure that everyone can take part without anxiety or fear. The Government is therefore preparing an action plan to guard against threats to the democratic conversation. SEK 3 million will be provided in 2016 for preparatory data collection on threats and hatred.

More support for civil society efforts to combat racism and similar forms of hostility

Civil society organisations are central actors in creating conditions for a Sweden that keeps together. In the shadow of developments over the past year, including arson at asylum centres and racist murders, the Government sees a need for concerted efforts in 2016. SEK 7 million will be devoted to civil society efforts to combat racism and similar forms of hostility, and to special initiatives to strengthen public preparedness to manage crises with racist overtones.

The Living History Forum must reach more people

The Living History Forum will be allocated an additional SEK 3.5 million in 2016. The aim is to provide better conditions for the authority to reach many places in Sweden and people in various social groups. The Living History Forum can reach more people through regional projects, and thus more forcefully promote work on democracy, tolerance and human rights.



Article from Ministry of Culture

SEK 10 million for work to combat violent extremism

Published 25 September 2015 Updated 25 September 2015

The Government proposes enhancing efforts to combat violent extremism with an additional SEK 10 million.

With the new remits given to the National Coordinator in 2015, the Government has considerably strengthened efforts to protect democracy against violent extremism. It is now proposed that this reinforcement be made long-term. The reason is the worrying growth of extremism and terrorism in Sweden and the world. In Sweden, there are violent rightwing and leftwing extremist groups that are active. In the EU's neighbourhood and throughout the world, a number of armed conflicts are raging that create breeding grounds for violent extremism and terrorism, both in these countries and outside them. Several EU countries are also experiencing increased polarisation where racist and xenophobic parties have gained stronger support.

The proposals and the strategy that the National Coordinator has been tasked with drawing up, and the pilot project for a national helpline, can be implemented and further developed with the help of this additional SEK 10 million.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Support for religious communities' security work

Published 25 September 2015 Updated 25 September 2015

The Government proposes giving continued support for security-enhancing measures among religious communities through the Swedish Commission for Government Support to Faith Communities. SEK 7 million will be allocated.

Freedom of religion is key in Sweden. It must be a given that everyone is able to practise their faith without having to fear threats and violence.

Developments around the world have led to an increase in threats and hatred directed at religious targets.

Religious buildings and other institutions, such as schools, are vandalised. People who wear obviously religious symbols are also at risk of being exposed to threats, violence and harassment purely on the grounds of their religious affiliation.

The judicial authorities are ultimately responsible for public order and safety, but the Government considers that an important supplement to the work of these authorities is to provide continued support for security-enhancing measures among religious communities through the Swedish Commission for Government Support to Faith Communities.



Article from Ministry of Culture

More people are to be given the opportunity to attend municipal schools for music and the arts

Published 22 September 2015 Updated 22 September 2015

The Government is investing SEK 100 million per year in promoting low fees for municipal schools for music and the arts. This is proposed in the Government's Budget Bill for 2016 following an agreement with the Left Party.

There are several obstacles to attending municipal schools for music and the arts, one of which is high fees. This is why the Government wants to help secure low fees for municipal schools for music and the arts. The aim is to make municipal schools for music and the arts more accessible and equitable.

The Swedish Arts Council will be tasked with administering and distributing the grant.

Background

In the 2014 Statement of Government Policy, the Prime Minister announced that a national strategy for schools for music and the arts would be drawn up. An Inquiry Chair, Professor Monica Lindgren, has been tasked with drawing up a proposal for a national strategy for municipal schools for music and the arts.

One important part of the remit is to survey and describe the municipal schools for music and the arts and identify obstacles to attending. We already know that the fees are not the only obstacle to attending;

socioeconomic background and geographical differences also mean that not all children have the same opportunities to take part in activities. The conclusions of the Inquiry will provide important material for the Government's future deliberations.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Free admission to certain state museums

Published 22 September 2015 Updated 22 September 2015

Following an agreement with the Left Party, the Government proposes that, starting in 2016, the appropriation for state museums be raised by SEK 80 million to introduce free admission at certain state museums.

The Government considers that equal access to our shared cultural heritage should be seen as a democratic right and that it is important for as many people as possible to feel that the museums are there for them.

The reform introducing free admission to state museums that was implemented in 2005 and 2006 enabled many more groups in society to have access to our shared cultural heritage. It is now time once again to open up state museums for everyone.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Culture

Nationalmuseum will receive SEK 2 million to enhance culture in the regions

Published 22 September 2015 Updated 22 September 2015

The Government is providing Nationalmuseum with an additional SEK 2 million per year from 2016 to strengthen the museum's regional presence.

This investment is to improve access to and participation in culture throughout the country. Enhanced regional cooperation may help to spread the museum's art and collections and make them more accessible. The investment may enable regional cooperation with the county museum Jamtli in Östersund and the establishment of a Nationalmuseum North.



Article from Ministry of Culture

The Government is supporting plans for a national migration museum

Published 22 September 2015 Updated 22 September 2015

The Government proposes that Malmö Municipality be given a grant for a feasibility study into the prospects of establishing a national democracy and migration museum. The grant should also be used for an international academic conference in Malmö in spring 2016 to provide the starting point for the feasibility study. The proposal is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

Migration has been a relevant topic throughout history as people in all periods have had cause to move to new areas, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. Famine, war, persecution and lack of jobs are some of the reasons forcing people to leave their local communities. During the 1800s and early 1900s, approximately 1.5 million Swedes chose to emigrate to find a better life. Since the Second World War, people have come to Sweden to find protection or because they have been offered work. Many of these people settled in or passed through Malmö and they carry valuable stories of their experiences that can contribute to greater understanding for the conditions of migration and democracy.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Reorganisation of film policy

Published 22 September 2015 Updated 22 September 2015

The Government proposes that, as of 2017, the State is to take overall responsibility for national film policy. The State will end the Film Agreement, which has for a long time financed and governed parts of state film policy.

To finance the reorganisation, the Government is setting aside SEK 25 million in 2016 and SEK 235 million a year in 2017 and 2018. This includes a special investment of SEK 25 million per year during the period 2016–2019 to strengthen smaller cinemas in rural areas and small towns.

Film in all its forms is one of the most important forms of expression of our time. It is an art form that reaches the majority of people, irrespective of age and background. Sweden is a small market for films. Without joint investments it is impossible to maintain Swedish film production at a high level.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Cinemas throughout the country

Published 22 September 2015 Updated 22 September 2015

The Government proposes investing SEK 25 million per year during the period 2016–2019 to strengthen smaller cinemas in rural areas and small towns. This investment is part of the Government’s larger investment in the reorganisation of film policy.

Cinemas are important meeting places that play a key role in the distribution and screening throughout the country of films, as well as concerts and operas, for example.

Despite positive developments thanks to digitisation, cinemas in rural areas and small towns face major financial challenges. Financial margins are narrow and these businesses are often run fully or partially by volunteers.

This investment is intended to promote screening activities and contribute to the distribution and screening of films throughout the country.

A dynamic cultural life is a key part of democracy. The Government prioritises investments that enable everyone in all parts of the country to experience cultural life.

The proposal is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Work to continue on a national plan to combat racism

Published 21 September 2015 Updated 21 September 2015

The Government, in agreement with the Left Party, is strengthening efforts to prevent and combat racism and similar forms of hostility. SEK 20 million is being set aside for a period of four years (2016–2019) for projects in this area to be brought together and systematised within the framework of a national plan.

The Government is investing a total of SEK 20 million over a period of four years to strengthen efforts to prevent and combat racism and similar forms of hostility. By bringing together and systematising projects within the framework of a national plan, the Government will lay the foundation for long-term and results-oriented efforts to combat racism and similar forms of hostility.

During the autumn, Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke will, in the context of an Action against racism, meet relevant actors in various parts of the country to talk about the challenges that exist in the area and what measures are needed. This will form an important part of the material for the national plan that will be drawn up. SEK 5 million per year will be provided during the period 2016–2019.

Action against racism

During the autumn, Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke will host awareness-raising activities for the general public and dialogues with vulnerable groups on racism and similar forms of hostility in various locations throughout the country. Representatives of civil society, politicians and officials will take part in the activities, which are part of the ongoing

work in this area, but are also intended as preparation for the national strategy that is being planned.



Article from Ministry of Culture

The Government is strengthening efforts to combat discrimination

Published 21 September 2015 Updated 21 September 2015

The Government is strengthening efforts to combat discrimination at national, regional and local level through increased support to the Office of the Equality Ombudsman and the anti-discrimination offices. A total investment of SEK 12 million is proposed. The proposal is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

To improve the prospects of combating discrimination and to ensure that more individuals have their rights safeguarded, the Office of the Equality Ombudsman will receive SEK 10 million permanently. Local anti-discrimination centres, known as anti-discrimination offices, will receive a permanent additional injection of SEK 2 million, as action is needed from civil society organisations at regional and local level.

The anti-discrimination offices play an important role in combating and preventing discrimination at local level. As civil society actors, they also have other possibilities than those of a government agency to support and help individuals. There are indications, for example, that it may feel strange for some people to contact a government agency and that they would rather turn to a local contact for advice.



Article from Ministry of Culture

The Sami Parliament and Sami culture

Published 21 September 2015 Updated 21 September 2015

As of 2016, the Sami Parliament's administrative appropriation will be raised by SEK 2 million. The state grant for Sami culture will also increase by SEK 1 million per year. The Government is proposing this in agreement with the Left Party in the Budget Bill for 2016.

The purpose of the investment is to give the Sami Parliament greater opportunities to play an active role in work on future Sami policy. The day-to-day work also needs to be strengthened to provide good conditions for meeting the demands and expectations placed on the Sami Parliament, and for the Sami Parliament in other respects to have resources for its own raised ambitions.

The Government is also permanently increasing the grant for Sami culture by SEK 1 million. The aim is to promote a dynamic Sami culture and create better conditions for the Sami art scene and cultural life. The Sami Parliament, which is the administrative authority for Sami culture, has the task of deciding how to allocate the state grant.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Culture

Preparing a library strategy for all of Sweden

Published 01 June 2015 Updated 01 June 2015

SEK 23 million is being allocated in 2015–2018 to produce a strategy for the Swedish library system.

The public library system is intended to promote the development of democratic society by contributing to the dissemination of knowledge and the free formation of opinion. A library should also be a meeting place that promotes democratic dialogue and fosters the ability to select information and engage in critical analysis and source criticism. The Government intends to instruct the National Library of Sweden to draft a strategy to promote cooperation and quality development throughout the Swedish library system. This task will also include continuing the work of making eBooks available via the national Libris catalogue. SEK 5 million will be allocated for this purpose in 2015. The allocation is projected to increase to SEK 6 million per year in 2016–2018.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Lower voter turnout among people with impairments

Published 15 May 2015 Updated 15 May 2015

Voter turnout was somewhat lower among people with impairments compared with the rest of the population in both the European elections and the parliamentary elections in 2014.

In the elections to the European Parliament, voter turnout was 49 per cent among those with impairments, compared with 53 per cent in the rest of the population. For the parliamentary election, the equivalent proportions were 85 and 88 per cent respectively.

Voter turnout varies according to type of impairment. The lowest voter turnout was among those with severely impaired mobility, at 64 per cent for the parliamentary election and 30 per cent for the European election respectively, compared with 88 per cent and 53 per cent respectively for those without impaired mobility.

“It is important that all voters are given as equal conditions as possible to make use of their right to vote in general elections, irrespective of impairments,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

Statistics Sweden has investigated voter turnout among people with impairments in the European election and the parliamentary election in 2014. The study is the first of its kind and the results are important in order for the Government to gauge the need for future initiatives to facilitate the participation of people with impairments in future general elections.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Roma inclusion – a conference on the right to inclusion

Published 15 May 2015 Updated 15 May 2015

For two days on 22–23 April 2015, representatives of Roma organisations, politicians, experts, officials, pupils and teachers came together in Luleå to discuss human rights, minorities and majorities, and terms such as ‘a multicultural society’ from the perspective of the Roma situation.

The conference was organised by Norrbotten County Council and Luleå Municipality, together with the association Romani kvinnans rätt i samhället (Roma women’s rights in society). The discussions focused on basic values, prejudices and how our norms and structures can seem inclusive or exclusive to different groups.

The strategy on Roma inclusion remains in place

Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke was one of the speakers at the conference. In its statement of government policy, the Government made it clear that anti-Ziganism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and Afrophobia have no place in our society. This is the first time the term anti-Ziganism – and thus the situation of the Roma in Sweden – has been mentioned in a statement of government policy. Just over three years ago, the previous government presented a strategy for Roman inclusion with the overarching objective that a Roma person who turns 20 in 2032 is to have the same opportunities in life as a non-Roma person.

“I want to state clearly that the strategy objectives remain in place and the Government will continue to work on creating the conditions for the inclusion of the Roma in society,” said Ms Bah Kuhnke, adding:

“Since I took up my role as minister, my staff and I have met many Roma representatives and organisations. The impression I have taken from these meetings and from agencies’ reports of their work on the strategy is that progress is being made on achieving the strategy objectives, but there are several challenges remaining.”

Government setting aside SEK 58 million

The Government therefore announced, in the Spring Fiscal Policy Bill, that the financing of an initiative for Roma inclusion will continue. This means that the Government will set aside SEK 58 million for activities linked to the strategy over the coming four years.

“How this funding will be allocated during the next phase of the strategy is something we will come back to. We need to look at other reports that are due to be submitted to the Government, we must analyse the needs, and above all, we need to continue to have a dialogue with Roma civil society about what we should do next and how,” said Ms Bah Kuhnke.

Five pilot municipalities

Luleå is one of five pilot projects at municipal level and is a key part of the strategy’s implementation. The other pilot municipalities are Linköping, Gothenburg, Malmö and Helsingborg. It is at local level that a real difference can be made in the everyday life of Roma people, helping to change established expectations, attitudes and structures. One fundamental challenge lies in bridging the trust gap between the Roma minority and the majority society. This should happen in cooperation with the Roma themselves. Work on this is now in its third year and the aim is, in line with the strategy, to further develop efforts on Roma inclusion and to investigate how they can be spread to other municipalities around the country.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Creative Schools initiative supplemented to include preschool

Published 13 May 2015 Updated 13 May 2015

The Government wants to create conditions for professional artistic and cultural activities for children in the very early years. The Government therefore proposes increasing the allocation to the Creative Schools initiative by SEK 10 million for 2015. This investment will go to professional cultural activities in preschools.

The Government believes it is important for children to experience various cultural expressions as young as possible and to be given the opportunity to grow with cultural creation. The possibility to access culture and express themselves through their own creation is to be a part of every child's life and everyday experience in preschool. In expanding the initiative to include preschool, the Government considers that the appropriation should also be raised correspondingly for the period 2016–2018.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Culture placed on the map with the cultural cooperation model

Published 13 May 2015 Updated 13 May 2015

On Friday 17 April, some 40 county council and regional politicians gathered for a dialogue meeting with Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke and State Secretary Per Olsson about the cultural cooperation model.

The cultural cooperation model is an important reform that the Government is supporting, and an initial step in this work is reinforcing the model with SEK 15 million. This reverses the cut decided by the Riksdag in the central government budget for 2015. Ms Bah Kuhnke was able to communicate this important restoration of the appropriation during the meeting, which focused on national and regional cultural policy on the basis of the cultural cooperation model. “Art that is not free is meaningless and this is the whole point of the cultural cooperation model. It is important that decisions are taken close to the people living in every part of Sweden.” These were the words of Ms Bah Kuhnke as she opened the meeting, and she stressed the fact that she wanted to listen to the regions’ experiences, thoughts and ideas about the future of the model.

Culture has become more important through the cultural cooperation model

The day could be summed up with the words ‘no detailed control but preferably long-term political signals’. And also with the fact that culture has a value in itself but that it is of benefit in other contexts such as health care, schools, tourism, etc. At the same time, it is dependent on other sectors, such

as public transport, to reach an audience. One of the positive aspects of the model that was highlighted is that it promotes a clear shared responsibility for culture on the basis of regional needs. It has also contributed to greater cross-sectoral cooperation, e.g. with schools, and neglected areas, such as dance, have been focused on. However, it is important to be aware that the model is resource-intensive and an administrative burden, and to ensure that the dialogue with central government must continue to develop.

A few voices from the meeting:

Culture should not just be something on the side

Maria-Louise Rönmark, Municipal Commissioner in Umeå and Chair of the Culture and Recreation Committee of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, stressed the importance of not setting too strict parameters:

There is a balance to be struck between creating culture for its own sake and it giving energy to society in other areas. Municipalities and regions that invest in culture get better research, better health, more creativity and better growth, both economic and social.

The meeting was about how we should continue to work on the model and about continuing to develop the dialogue and aim for an infrastructure that provides the conditions for long-term work. Long-term plans must also apply to culture.

The cultural cooperation model requires trust between the parties, and dialogue, communication and long-term thinking are key aspects. The model also needs to be free from micro-management. Regarding the development of the appropriation that was discussed, we have a joint responsibility to continue to raise the issue.

The dialogue meeting provided us with energy and confidence in the future, and it shows that we want to do something together. This is what I will take with me in my role as Committee Chair at the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions.

Some way to go on the model

Lars Nordström is Chair of the Regional Executive Committee and Chair of the Västra Gotland Culture Committee. He was one of the first to be

involved in designing the cultural cooperation model:

The cultural cooperation model has begun to take shape but a great deal remains to be done. There are still uncertainties as to the division of roles between the regions, the Swedish Arts Council and the Ministry. Who decides what and who will require a detailed account? The model will preserve the cultural sector around the country if central government does not provide additional funding corresponding to the increase in costs. We would also like to see long-term thinking in the approval of grants as many cultural activities have to be planned five years in advance. The atmosphere at the meeting was positive, but we had hoped for more scope for a general discussion, for example about cooperation with central government.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Culture strengthened in Spring Fiscal Policy Bill

Published 11 May 2015 Updated 11 May 2015

In the Government's Spring Fiscal Policy Bill, initiatives are presented that are intended to strengthen the conditions for creativity, participation and diversity in Sweden. The Government's initiatives include increasing the allocation to the Creative Schools initiative, drafting a national library strategy and initiating an extensive education campaign about racism and intolerance.

"This is a budget that means more culture for more people. In reality it means that more children and young people will have the chance for early contact with culture. Libraries will also receive the recognition they deserve, and the Spring Fiscal Policy Bill also means that regional culture will regain the resources that were lost last autumn," says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

Creative Schools initiative supplemented to include preschool

The Government proposes increasing the allocation to the Creative Schools initiative by SEK 10 million for 2015. This investment will go to professional cultural activities in preschool. By expanding the initiative to also include preschool, opportunities are created for professional artistic and cultural activities for the youngest of children. The Government's assessment is that the allocation should also be increased by the equivalent amount annually in 2016-2018.

Preparing a library strategy for all of Sweden

SEK 23 million is being allocated in 2015-2018 to produce a strategy for the Swedish library system.

The Government proposes that the National Library of Sweden be instructed to draft a strategy to promote cooperation and quality development throughout the Swedish library system. This assignment will also include continuing the work of making eBooks available via the national Libris catalogue. Therefore, SEK 5 million will be allocated for this purpose in 2015. It is estimated that the allocation will subsequently be increased by SEK 6 million annually in 2016-2018 for this purpose.

Major education campaign about racism and intolerance

SEK 25 million will be set aside in 2015-2017 to implement an education campaign about racism and different forms of intolerance. The Living History Forum will be assigned this task, in cooperation with the National Agency for Education, and include awareness-raising initiatives about racism and similar forms of intolerance, such as Afrophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-Ziganism, Islamophobia, homophobia and transphobia. The aim is to create an equal society characterised by respect for the equal value and rights of all people and to promote democracy.

Work for Roma inclusion remains a priority

The overall goal of the strategy for Roma inclusion, which is in effect until 2032, is that Roma who turn 20 years of age in 2032 are to have the same opportunities in life as non-Roma. The Government's work on the strategy for Roma inclusion therefore remains important and will be allocated SEK 13 million annually for the period 2016-2019.

Ongoing culture initiative in Million Homes Programme areas

The Swedish Arts Council and the Public Art Agency Sweden will receive a total of SEK 2 million to prepare a culture initiative in the Million Homes Programme areas. The Government will subsequently contribute a total of SEK 170 million to the initiative in 2016-2018.

Access to cultural activities and a stimulating living environment are crucial to both our wellbeing and democratic participation. This funding will support cultural initiatives from local civil society organisations that want to become involved in the development and artistic configuration of their neighbourhoods.

Cultural cooperation model to receive additional SEK 15 million

The Government proposes raising the allocation to regional cultural cooperation models by SEK 15 million. The Government's ambition is for culture to reach more people throughout the country and be more equal. Regional culture plays an important role in this.

The aim of the cultural cooperation model is for regional priorities and variations to have a greater impact, and to promote cooperation among state, regional and local actors.

Re-election in Båstad Municipality

SEK 14 million is being allocated in 2015 to conduct a re-election to the municipal council in Båstad Municipality. The Election Review Board has decided to hold a re-election in Båstad Municipality following an appeal against the 2014 election results. The re-election will be held on 10 May 2015. Funds will therefore be allocated to the Election Authority for its costs, and to government subsidies to the municipalities for their participation.

Increased support to faith communities' security management

In 2015, SEK 7 million will be allocated to the increased security management of faith communities. Following the attacks in Paris and Copenhagen, there has been an increase of vandalism and threats targeting various faith communities and their representatives.

Freedom of religion is central in a democracy and it is very important that all citizens have the opportunity to practice their religion.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Culture initiative started in Million Homes Programme areas

Published 11 May 2015 Updated 11 May 2015

The Government wants to invest in culture in the Million Homes Programme areas by giving the Swedish Arts Council and the Public Art Agency Sweden a total of SEK 2 million to prepare a culture initiative.

The Government then wants to develop the initiative by allocating a total of SEK 170 million during the period 2016–2018 for the creation of meeting places for cultural activities, for people’s own creativity and for the artistic design of the residential environment in these areas.

Access to cultural activities and a stimulating living environment are crucial to both our wellbeing and democratic participation. Equal access to culture is a priority for the Government. Regardless of where you live, you should be able to access culture and experience a stimulating living environment. The Government wants to draw attention to and support the diverse commitment that exists in many Million Homes Programme areas throughout the country. This funding will support cultural initiatives by local civil society organisations that want to become involved in the development and artistic shaping of their neighbourhoods.



Article from Ministry of Culture

Government investing in a sustainable media policy for the future

Published 11 May 2015 Updated 11 May 2015

Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke has appointed Anette Novak as Inquiry Chair for the inquiry into ‘A media policy for the future’ (ToR 2015:26). The Government has also presented the Bill ‘State support for the daily press’ to the Riksdag.

“Anette Novak’s background as a publicist and innovator provides her with important skills to lead the work of drawing up a media policy that will function long-term. Her experience of working in the media world far beyond the boundaries of Stockholm is another asset in the assignment, which is to provide better conditions for local journalism,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

The Government has also presented the Bill ‘State support for the daily press’ to the Riksdag. The Bill contains proposals aimed at creating greater incentives for daily newspapers with operational subsidies to increase their readership revenue and promote technological development and the development of business models.

“These changes mean that we are using press subsidies to provide the conditions for journalists to fulfil their role in our democracy. In the longer term we will need to further review and adapt press subsidies, but now a lot of newspapers are being given the chance to survive, especially those active outside the major cities,” says Ms Bah Kuhnke.

What will happen next?

- The Press Subsidies Council will be phased out and its tasks should be incorporated into the Swedish Broadcasting Authority. A council for press subsidies should be established as a special decision-making body within the Swedish Broadcasting Authority. This organisational change is to be complete by 1 July 2015.
- The Press Subsidies Council is to present proposals for new support for innovations to the daily press by 15 May 2015. The aim of this support is to provide the conditions for the long-term development of electronic publishing services. This support could enter into force in 2016.
- The Government intends to report back with proposals on subsidies for the press in major cities and subsidy levels for high and medium periodicity newspapers in the Budget Bill in the autumn.
- The Inquiry is to present an analysis of the needs for initiatives by 31 October 2015. Proposals for new media policy tools are to be submitted by 30 April 2016.



Article

Major educational project against racism

Published 27 January 2015 Updated 27 February 2015

Holocaust Remembrance Day was 27 January. In cities in Europe and around the world, the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau was commemorated. Throughout Sweden, demonstrations and seminars were arranged to commemorate one of the darkest chapters of human history.

At the same time, we must acknowledge that anti-Semitism, racism and intolerance still exist today. There are representatives of Sweden's Riksdag who question whether it is possible to be both a Jew and Swedish. Around Sweden and Europe, the Jewish minority often lives in fear of putting on a yarmulke or in some other way showing their religious affiliation. At the Government's meeting with the Jewish minority, Jewish representatives spoke about parents who choose not to allow their children to take part in Jewish school activities out of fear for their safety.

"We see how racism and intolerance are increasing in society, and the dire consequences this has. For this reason, the Government will carry out a national education campaign, targeted towards pupils in compulsory school and upper secondary school, about different forms of racism and intolerance throughout history and today," says Prime Minister Stefan Löfven.

This Thursday, the Government will instruct the Living History Forum to carry out an educational project called *Detta behöver vi förstå* (This we must understand) during the period 2015-2017.

To carry out this task, an additional SEK 5 million will be allocated to the Living History Forum in 2015. In 2016 and 2017, the Forum will receive an

additional SEK 10 million annually.

"Anti-Semitism spreads hate and fear, and limits people's personal freedom and their opportunities to express their beliefs and their opinions. The fact that it exists in our society today is nothing less than a failure, but also a reminder that we must step up our efforts against racism and intolerance," says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.