



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Culture

Alice Bah Kuhnke to chair meeting of Nordic Council of Ministers for Culture in Oslo

Published 31 October 2018

Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke will chair the meeting of the Nordic Council of Ministers for Culture in Oslo on 31 October. The meeting is being held in connection with the annual session of the Nordic Council, where the Nordic Council prizes are also awarded. Sweden holds the Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2018.

Among the topics the Nordic culture ministers will discuss is the importance of culture for maintaining and revitalising small languages, including the national minority languages. The role that Sami and Greenlandic cultural operators have played in this will be highlighted. This discussion is a follow-up to a workshop on language revitalisation organised within the framework of the Swedish Presidency in September 2018.

The ministers will also discuss the process for selecting one or more joint Nordic cultural projects by 2021. Previous projects include Nordic Cool 2013 in Washington DC and Nordic Matters 2017 in London. Also, a report containing conclusions from the Nordic Cultural Political Summit in Malmö on 8–9 May 2018 will be discussed.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven presented the Swedish programme for the 2018 Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers

Published 01 November 2017

The 69th Session of the Nordic Council is taking place in Helsinki between 31 October and 2 November. Sweden is represented by Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Nordic Cooperation Margot Wallström, Minister for the Environment Karolina Skog and Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

At the opening of the Nordic Council's session in Helsinki on 31 October, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven presented the priorities of the 2018 Swedish Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers. Sweden's Presidency programme, entitled 'An inclusive, innovative and secure Nordic region' is based on three themes.

The first theme, 'An inclusive Nordic region', focuses on the Nordic social model whose hallmarks are trust, equality, gender equality and openness. The starting point is a number of challenges that the Nordic countries share in these areas.

The second theme, 'A sustainable and innovative Nordic region', focuses on Nordic innovation as a driving force for sustainable social transformation. Engagement in environmental issues is, and historically has been, strong in

the Nordic countries, but considerable efforts are needed if we are to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda both in the Nordic region and globally.

The third theme is 'A secure and open Nordic region'. Here, the focus is on cooperation on broad security issues, with security and openness as the watchwords.

In 2018, Sweden will also lead the work of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, and coordinate informal Nordic and Nordic-Baltic foreign and security policy cooperation (N5 and NB8). The ambition is to find points of contact between these forms of cooperation and all countries in the Baltic Sea region to strengthen regional cooperation horizontally.



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Press release from Ministry of Culture

Alice Bah Kuhnke presents Per Anger Prize

Published 19 October 2017

At 13.00 on Thursday 19 October, Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke will present the Per Anger Prize to women's rights activist Gégé Katana Bukuru, in honour of her work for human rights and women's rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The prize ceremony will take place at Södra Latin Upper Secondary School in Stockholm.

The Per Anger Prize is an international prize instituted in 2004 by the Swedish Government to promote initiatives supporting human rights and democracy. This year's prize winner, Gégé Katana Bukuru, is the Secretary-General of the Solidarity Movement of Women's Rights Activists (Solidarité des Femmes Activistes pour la Défense des Droits Humains, SOFAD) in Uvira, Democratic Republic of the Congo.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Culture

Kieran Long new director of ArkDes

Published 09 February 2017 Updated 10 February 2017

The Government today appointed Kieran Long as the new director of ArkDes, the Swedish Centre for Architecture and Design. Mr Long will take up his position on 18 April 2017.

"Kieran Long is an internationally renowned leader in the field of architecture and design. The fact that he wants to lead ArkDes is a recognition of both this national centre and Sweden's strong position in the sector. This is a very good start to a year that will continue to strengthen the role of culture in building our society," says Minister for Culture and Democracy Ms Bah Kuhnke.

"I am so excited to have the opportunity to direct the National Centre for Architecture and Design and I believe it can build on its strengths to become one of the most important places in Europe for the discussion of the relationship between design and public life. Its collection, its spaces and its national role in leading the debate about architecture and design provide a unique opportunity. I hope I can bring an international perspective to the Swedish debate and help ArkDes continue to be an exciting visitor experience, a place of research and study and a place of debate about how we will live in the future," says Mr Long.

Kieran Long

Kieran Long has extensive experience in the field of architecture and design, museums and exhibitions. Since 2013 he has been Keeper of the Department Design, Architecture and Digital at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and has previously worked at the Venice Architecture Biennale and the Royal College of Art. Mr Long has also worked as an architecture critic for several publications and has been a television presenter for the BBC

since 2009.



Press release from Ministry of Culture

The Government is investing in a Sweden that keeps together

Published 15 April 2016 Updated 15 April 2016

In the spring budget for 2016, the Government is investing SEK 44 million in safeguarding our open society and democracy, and combating polarisation, racism and violent extremism. This is proposed in the Government's spring budget for 2016 following an agreement with the Left Party.

"We need to invest in a Sweden that keeps together. In the Government's commitment to building our society, we therefore give priority to investing in culture throughout the country, and efforts to combat polarisation in society. Civil society and libraries have a key role in the ambition to create meeting places," says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

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.

More resources for libraries safeguards open society

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.

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.

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.

Investment in a new Swedish-Jewish museum

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. 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.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to attend Nordic Council in Reykjavik on 27–28 October

Published 27 October 2015 Updated 27 October 2015

Prime Minister Stefan Löfven will be in Reykjavik on 27–28 October for the annual session of the Nordic Council. His schedule includes meetings with the Nordic prime ministers, the Nordic Council Presidium and the three self-governing territories of Greenland, the Faroe Islands and Åland. Subjects including migration, climate, the environment and Syria will be on the agenda.

On Tuesday 27 October, the Prime Minister will take part in the award ceremony for the Nordic Council prizes.

While in Reykjavik, Mr Löfven will also attend a meeting of the Nordic and Baltic prime ministers, focusing on security policy cooperation in our neighbourhood.

In connection to the Nordic Council session, the Nordic–Baltic heads of government will also meet the Prime Minister of the UK within the Northern Future Forum.

Attending alongside Mr Löfven will be Minister for Strategic Development and Nordic Cooperation Kristina Persson, Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist, Minister for Climate and the Environment Åsa Romson, Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke and Minister for International

Development Cooperation Isabella Lövin. For details of the respective programmes, please contact the relevant press secretaries.

Press briefings

Wednesday 28 October

11.15–11.45 Press conference with the Nordic prime ministers.

Venue: Harpa – Kaldalón

14.00–14.30 Press conference with the Nordic and Baltic prime ministers.

Venue: Harpa – Kaldalón



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Culture

SEK 25 million to cinemas outside metropolitan areas

Published 22 September 2015 Updated 22 September 2015

The Government proposes investing SEK 25 million per year during the period 2016–2019 in strengthening smaller cinemas in rural areas and small towns. The proposal is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

“Cinemas outside the metropolitan areas are important if we are to have a dynamic cultural life throughout the country. This proposal can improve the finances of existing cinemas and increase the chances of more cinemas opening,” says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

A dynamic cultural life is a key part of democracy. Cinemas are very important as a cultural meeting place and for the distribution and screening of films throughout the country.

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.

The funds will be allocated by the Swedish Film Institute.



Press release from Ministry of Culture

Introduction of free admission to state museums

Published 21 September 2015 Updated 22 September 2015

The Government proposes in the Budget Bill that SEK 80 million be set aside for the introduction of free admission to certain state museums. The proposal is based on an agreement between the Government and the Left Party.

"The treasures held at museums belong to us all, the collections are there for us. This is why it is self-evident that we also ensure that everyone has the opportunity to access what we own together. Free admission will also make it easier for new groups to visit the museums," says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke.

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.

Free admission will apply at the following state museums:

- The Army Museum
- The Museum of Ethnography
- The Swedish Air Force Museum (Flygvapenmuseum) in Linköping
- The Hallwyl Museum
- The Swedish History Museum
- The Royal Coin Cabinet
- The Royal Armoury
- The Naval Museum in Karlskrona
- The Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities (Medelhavsmuseet)

- Moderna Museet in Stockholm and Malmö
- Nationalmuseum
- The Swedish Museum of Natural History
- The Maritime Museum
- Skokloster Castle
- The Swedish Centre for Architecture and Design (ArkDes)
- The Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg
- The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities (Östasiatiska museet)



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

Combating vulnerability and begging – no one should have to beg

Published 17 August 2015 Updated 17 August 2015

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

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

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

The three reform areas:

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

Important measures in the package include:

- Within the framework of the cooperation agreement with Romania,

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

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

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



Press release from Ministry of Culture

Culture strengthened in Spring Fiscal Policy Bill

Published 15 April 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

In the Government's Spring Fiscal Policy Bill, which is being published today, 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.



Press release from Ministry of Culture

The Government invests in culture and democracy

Published 23 October 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

“The extensive cultural initiatives presented today show that the Government prioritises culture. A living cultural life – accessible to everyone – provides education as well as cultural and intellectual stimulation, and helps deepen our democracy.” So says Minister for Culture and Democracy Alice Bah Kuhnke following the Government’s presentation of the Budget Bill to the Riksdag today.

SEK 252 million increase in culture budget

In its Budget Bill, the Government proposes increasing the budget for culture in 2015 by SEK 252 million compared with 2014. This includes the appropriation’s price and wage indexing, which amounts to some SEK 41 million. The entire budget for culture comprises SEK 7.1 billion.

“The Government’s policy for culture is clear: it is to create the conditions – a fertile ground – in which free culture can grow,” says Ms Bah Kuhnke.

Free admission to state museums

Free admission will be introduced for state museums that are government agencies. In its Budget Bill, the Government proposes that SEK 80 million per year be allocated to the reform from 2015.

The Government intends to introduce free admission to the relevant museums in spring 2015. The exact date on which the reform will be

introduced has not yet been determined.

More information as to which state museums will offer free admission can be found in the press release below.

A national library strategy to be developed

The Government proposes that a national library strategy be designed to promote cooperation and quality development throughout the library system. A total of SEK 10 million will be allocated annually between 2015 and 2018 for this purpose. Of these funds, the Government expects SEK 6 million to be allocated to the National Library of Sweden for the development of a national library strategy and to make eBooks accessible via the national catalogue Libris.

“A national library strategy will mean that cooperation between all of Sweden’s libraries can be deepened. It is important that everyone, in both urban and rural areas, has good access to the collected resources of our libraries,” says Ms Bah Kuhnke.

SEK 4 million will be allocated to the Swedish Arts Council’s reading promotion efforts in cooperation with the library system.

SEK 400 million to be invested in schools for music and arts

The Government wants to give children and young people equal access to culture and cultural activities. It therefore proposes that a total of SEK 400 million be allocated in 2015–2018 to strengthen municipal schools for music and arts. The funds will allow schools for music and arts to reduce their fees. The Government intends to provide information on the design of the initiative at a later date.

“Schools for music and art are vital for children and young people to have an opportunity to focus on aesthetics and creativity. They must therefore be of high quality and accessible to everyone. In light of this, I am very pleased that the Government is now presenting extensive initiatives for schools for music and art,” says Ms Bah Kuhnke.

The Government also intends to appoint an inquiry tasked with developing a national strategy for schools for music and arts.

Cooperation for culture in schools

The Government proposes providing an extra SEK 25 million to the Creative Schools initiative in 2015, bringing the total amount to SEK 199 million. SEK 30 million will subsequently be added annually between 2016 and 2018. The Government proposes that the Creative Schools initiative be broadened and deepened, and that an opportunity be created for municipal culture schools to act as a partner with, for example, compulsory schools.

“Education and culture are linked. Collaboration between culture schools and compulsory schools should therefore be strengthened. Greater opportunities for collaboration will mean that the services offered by culture schools will also be of benefit to compulsory schools. Aesthetics and creativity in schools promote learning, development and creative thinking,” says Ms Bah Kuhnke.

SEK 230 million to culture initiative in Million Homes Programme areas

The Government will invest a total of SEK 230 million between 2015 and 2018 in cultural activities in Million Homes Programme areas and artwork in housing environments in these areas, of which SEK 50 million will be allocated for 2015. The initiative is meant to promote local civil society organisations’ actions to develop cultural activities.

“All people, regardless of background, place of residence or stage of life, have the right to a rich and diverse cultural life. This initiative is an expression of our ambition to make culture available to everyone,” says Ms Bah Kuhnke.

SEK 20 million provided to performing arts alliances

Performing arts alliances help increase the social and economic security for freelance culture workers.

The alliances in theatre, dance and music will be given an additional SEK 20 million from 2015, which means an increase from SEK 62 million to SEK 82 million. The additional funds mean that the number of employees can be increased.

A characteristic feature of the labour market for theatre, dance and music

practitioners is few permanent positions and a large proportion of time-limited commissions. Performing arts alliances were established to improve the conditions for performing artists by providing professional actors, dancers and musicians with employment and remuneration during periods in which they lack employment in the performing arts.

“Free culture workers often work under tough conditions. The Government’s initiative makes it possible for more culture professionals to work under better conditions,” says Ms Bah Kuhnke.

SEK 25 million to education campaign against racism

The Government expects a total of SEK 25 million to be provided to the Living History Forum between 2015 and 2017 to conduct a major education campaign, together with the National Agency for Education, on various forms of racism throughout history and today. The campaign will target all compulsory and upper secondary schools. SEK 10 million will be provided in 2015.

Protecting democracy against violent extremism

SEK 16 million will be allocated annually between 2015 and 2018 for measures to protect democracy and take preventive action against violent extremism.

The measures include preventing radicalisation and recruitment to combat abroad, strengthening the task of the national coordinator and providing support to civil society. Several civil society organisations do important work to promote democratic awareness, counteract radicalisation and promote defections from violent extremist organisations.

“Preventing and combating extremism require long-term and persistent democracy efforts. When people feel a sense of meaning and participation, there is less risk that they will be attracted to extremist messages,” says Ms Bah Kuhnke.