

# Annual Financial Report 2023



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## **“We are a counterweight when the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms falters.”**

On 1 January 2022, a parliamentary decision established the Swedish Institute for Human Rights, a new government agency based in Lund. Thereby, Sweden had, for the first time, an independent national institution with a broad mandate to actively promote the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden, based on our constitutional laws and international human rights commitments.

It can be noted that the establishment of the Institute was timely. There is a great need for an independent institute to act as a watchdog. In 2023, proposals have been presented at a fast pace that challenge fundamental rights and freedoms in various ways. An important task for the Institute during the year has been to engage in dialogue with ongoing investigations, but also to put a lot of effort into examining the compliance of investigation proposals with our constitutional laws and international human rights commitments. The Institute has provided an important counterbalance in a time of rapid reforms and initiatives. There are not only many new legislative proposals, but also various fast-tracks, short investigation times and shortened response times for referral bodies. The Institute’s referral replies have partly influenced the final design of the proposals, and in other parts our arguments have at least helped to provide a clear picture of the consequences of the proposals.

The task of safeguarding human rights and using an independent mandate to promote and review human rights compliance among decision-makers is far from always popular. The Institute’s development was greatly hampered by the Government’s unclear response to political demands to close down the organisation in the spring. It was not until the budget bill that the Government clearly stated that Sweden would comply with the recommendations of the UN, the EU Committee of Ministers and the Council of Europe to ensure and safeguard an independent national human rights institution. A message that was also given to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, but only after the High Commissioner approached the Government.

It is hardly a coincidence that there is an international regulatory framework, the so-called Paris Principles, aimed at clarifying the protection and independence of national independent human rights institutions. Today, almost 100 countries have independent human rights institutions that fully comply with the so-called Paris Principles. This includes most EU countries and our Nordic neighbours. In 2023, the Institute applied for international recognition and our

accreditation with the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) will be assessed in 2024.

The Paris Principles state that a national human rights institution shall have a strong position in the implementation of its mandate by being guaranteed independence, in particular from the Government. In Sweden, this independence is established in the Act on the Institute for Human Rights (SFS 2021:642). The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights has issued a Legal Review proposing measures that would clarify and strengthen the Institute's mandate and compliance with the Paris Principles. On the basis of this opinion, the Board has written the Government on what measures the Government should take in the short term with a view to reviewing the accreditation of the Institute. It goes without saying that the situation in which the Institute found itself in 2023 must not be repeated.

The Institute's role is to take a holistic approach and provide an overview of the human rights to which individuals are entitled and to examine how these rights are realised in people's everyday lives, but also to complement other actors in promoting the safeguarding of human rights.

In addition to examining the human rights situation in Sweden - in dialogue with civil society and other actors - the Institute will make proposals and recommendations to the Government and other relevant actors. The work of monitoring, investigating and reporting on developments in Sweden has been intensified during the year, and the Institute has recognised areas where the central government needs to do more to safeguard the rights of individuals, including the human rights of older people, the right to freedom from hate and threats, and the rights of national minorities and indigenous peoples. The Institute has contributed to the development and dissemination of human rights knowledge through participation in various information and training programmes. We have also, based on the results of our surveys on public awareness of human rights, carried out an initial information campaign on the theme Human rights - dangerous to take for granted, important to defend. The Institute has also participated in international cooperation, including dialogue with corresponding independent human rights institutions in Europe. We have had discussions with the disability rights movement, relevant government agencies, but also had exchanges with our counterparts in other countries to develop how the Institute will fulfil its role as an independent mechanism to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Human rights are under severe pressure and we will always have to make tough priorities in our work. A natural priority will be issues that are relevant based on the reviews that international monitoring bodies regularly carry out of Sweden's international commitments in the field of human rights. Over the past year, the Institute has worked on the data for reports to two of the UN's monitoring bodies, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

(CESCR) and the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), where Sweden is up for review in 2024.

Extensive dialogue work has been carried out with various groups. A milestone in this regard during the year was the establishment of the Institute's Advisory Council, where 20 independent human rights experts took their seats after a qualified nomination process. Another milestone has been the many dialogues with civil society organisations and other actors during the preparation of our reports to the UN committees.

The year also saw a lot of work on the annual report that the Institute will submit to the Government by 1 April 2024. In the annual report, the Institute will highlight the most important human rights developments in 2023 and analyse what measures the Government and Riksdag should take.

I am proud of the great work done by the Institute's staff during an intense year of growth. Our work is increasingly making an impact both in Sweden and internationally, although it is important to recall that the Institute is still in a development phase.

**Fredrik Malmberg, Director**



# 1. About the Institute

## 1.1. Mission

The Swedish Institute for Human Rights (hereafter referred to as the Institute) was established on 1 January 2022 and is located in Lund, Sweden. The Institute's tasks are set out in the Act on the Institute for Human Rights (SFS 2021:642). The Institute was established to create an independent Swedish institution with a strong position and a broad mandate to promote the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden in accordance with the UN principles for national human rights institutions, the so-called Paris Principles.<sup>1</sup> The Institute has a broad mandate to promote the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden, based on the Swedish Instrument of Government, the Freedom of the Press Act and the Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression, the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR), the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (CFR), and other human rights obligations binding on Sweden under public international law. The Institute may propose to the Government that Sweden's obligations under public international law be expanded in the field of human rights. However, the Institute shall not examine individual complaints about human rights violations.

The Institute's tasks are to monitor, investigate and report on how human rights are respected and realised in Sweden. The Institute shall submit proposals to the Government on the measures needed to safeguard human rights, liaise with international organisations and otherwise participate in international cooperation. The Institute shall also promote education, research, upskilling, information and raise awareness of human rights. No later than by 1 April each year, the Institute shall submit a report to the Government on its observations of developments in the field of human rights in Sweden during the previous calendar year.

The Institute shall also fulfil the functions of an independent national mechanism pursuant to Article 33(2) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The independent mechanism shall promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the Convention (see also section 3.2.2).

The Institute Act also states that the Institute, within the scope of its tasks, determines its own organisation and the focus of its work. The Institute's independence is key to its ability to contribute to the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden. An important element of the independence is that the Institute's tasks are regulated by law and require parliamentary approval to be changed.

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<sup>1</sup> Government Bill 2020/21:143, The Swedish Institute for Human Rights.

## 1.2. Management

The Institute is managed by a Board appointed by the Government (the Government appoints seven of the eight members, who in turn appoint the eighth member, who is also the Director of the Institute). The Government shall request proposals for Board members from the Institute's Advisory Council (see section 3.2.4), the Swedish Bar Association and universities and higher education institutions (Section 8, para. 3 of the Act on the Institute for Human Rights (SFS 2021:642)). Members are appointed for five years, except for the Director, who has a six-year term of office.<sup>2</sup> On 1 January 2022, the Board appointed Elisabeth Rynning as Chair and Negin Tagavi as Vice-Chair.<sup>3</sup> The Board has an equal representation of women and men.

The Board has the ultimate responsibility for the Institute, including ensuring that:

- operations are performed efficiently and in accordance with applicable law
- operations are reported in a reliable and fair manner
- the Institute manages<sup>4</sup> state resources well.

According to the Ordinance (SFS 2021:1198) with instructions for the Swedish Institute for Human Rights, the Director is engaged by the Board. The Director is the head of the Agency and is responsible for the day-to-day operations in accordance with the Rules of Procedure adopted by the Board.<sup>5</sup>

On 18 October 2022, the Board decided to engage Fredrik Malmberg as Director for the period from 20 January 2023 to 19 January 2029.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, on 16 November 2022, the Board decided to appoint Charlotte Palmstierna as Deputy Acting Director for the period from 1 December 2022 to 19 January 2023, after which the regular Director took office.<sup>7</sup> On 13 June 2023, the Board decided to establish an organisation for the Institute as proposed.<sup>8</sup> The start date for this organisation was 1 October 2023. Since then, the Institute has been organised into three units: the Investigation and Analysis Unit, the Outreach and Cooperation Unit,

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<sup>2</sup> The first time board members were appointed, this approach was not applied (in accordance with the transitional provisions of the law). When the Government appointed the board members on 28 October 2021, two members were appointed for a period of three years, two members for a period of four years, and three members for a period of five years. The two board members with experience in qualified civil society work were appointed for a period of three years.

<sup>3</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Board meeting 1 January 2022, ref.no. 1.2.1-1/2022.

<sup>4</sup> Meaning, efficiently, in accordance with applicable law, with efficient management of state resources, and with reliable and fair accounting. See Government Agency Ordinance (2007:515).

<sup>5</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Rules of Procedure of the Swedish Institute for Human Rights, ref.no. 1.2.3-359/2023.

<sup>6</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Board minutes number 17, 18 October 2022, ref.no. 1.2.1-467/2022.

<sup>7</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Board minutes number 20, 16 November 2022, ref.no. 1.2.1-532/2022.

<sup>8</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Board minutes number 9, 13 June 2023, ref.no. 1.2.1-17/2023.

and the Management and Operational Support Unit. Each unit is headed by a Head of Unit whose tasks and mandate are set out in the Rules of Procedure<sup>9</sup> adopted by the Board. In 2023, heads of units were recruited and took up their posts in early 2024 (see more in section 4 and sub-objective 1).

## 1.3. The Paris Principles

The Institute was set up to establish an independent Swedish institution with a strong position and a broad mandate to promote the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden in accordance with the internationally recognised so-called Paris Principles on National Human Rights Institutions.<sup>10</sup> The principles were adopted in 1993 and also laid the foundation for an international cooperation body of national human rights institutions, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (hereafter GANHRI). GANHRI decides whether an institution sufficiently fulfils the Principles to be granted membership and so-called ‘A’ status. Today, there are at least 120 national institutions, 88 of which fully comply with the so-called Paris Principles. This includes most EU countries and our Nordic neighbours.<sup>11</sup> The purpose of the Paris Principles is to create conditions for independent and effective national human rights institutions, thereby strengthening their position nationally and internationally. The Paris Principles state that an institution shall have the broadest possible mandate. The mission shall be clearly formulated and enshrined in constitution or other legislation which also clarifies the composition and competence of the institution. The Paris Principles also specify the tasks of the institution, the importance of broad representation from civil society, and the working methods that the institution should be able to use. A national human rights institution shall also have a strong position in the implementation of its mandate by being guaranteed independence, in particular from the Government.

### 1.3.1. The Paris Principles and the funding of national human rights institutions

The Paris Principles state that human rights institutions should be funded in a way that facilitates their work and enables them to have the necessary staff and premises to carry out the work. As far as possible, the financial independence of the institution shall be guaranteed.

According to GANHRI’s interpretation of the Paris Principles, the appropriations for national human rights institutions must be sufficient to guarantee the institution’s independence and allow it to freely determine its priorities and activities. The appropriations shall allow for a

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<sup>9</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Rules of Procedure of the Swedish Institute for Human Rights, ref.no. 1.2.3-359/2023.

<sup>10</sup> UN General Assembly (1993), Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (The Paris Principles) (A/Res/48/134), available here: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/principles-relating-status-national-institutions-paris>

<sup>11</sup> See: <https://ganhri.org/membership/>

gradual, progressive reinforcement of the institution's activities, while enabling it to fulfil its regular tasks. More specifically, the appropriations must be sufficient to cover:

- premises that are accessible to the wider public, including people with disabilities. Under certain circumstances, the accessibility requirement may involve the establishment of regional offices.
- salaries and other benefits for staff, which shall be comparable to the levels of people with equivalent tasks in other institutions, such as staff in the Ombudsman institutions.
- remuneration of the members of the governing body
- the establishment of well-functioning communication systems, including telephony and internet.

If the mandate of the institution is extended to include specific monitoring tasks that must be compatible with the independent basic mission, the appropriation should be increased to cover all costs related to that mission.<sup>12</sup>

The Paris Principles further propose that the appropriations be allocated in a specific budget line, which can only be utilised on behalf of the institution. Appropriations shall be transferred at regular intervals and in a manner which does not adversely affect the institutions' powers or ability to carry out their activities or to retain staff. While the institutions shall have full autonomy in the planning and use of the budget, they are obligated to comply with the rules of fiscal responsibility and accounting requirements applicable to other independent actors in their respective States.

The 2023 budget bill included a separate appropriation for the Institute and the 2023 annual appropriation directions did not contain any specific requirements for objectives, reporting or assignments. This is fundamental to the Institute's independence and in line with the requirements of the Paris Principles.<sup>13</sup>

The remuneration of board members is earmarked in the appropriation. The level of fees is predetermined by the Government, as is the total amount, regardless of how many meetings the Board holds. The Ordinance (SFS 2021:1198) with instructions for the Swedish Institute for Human Rights does not contain any requirements that affect the organisation of the Institute or the detailed focus of its work. Chapter 3, section 2 of the Ordinance (SFS 2000:605) concerning the Annual Financial Reports and Budget Documentation states that the performance

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<sup>12</sup> From the beginning, the Institute has been assigned the task of fulfilling Sweden's independent national mechanism for Article 33(2) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Other examples of specific monitoring tasks that could be relevant for a national institution include national preventive mechanisms under the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT). The requirement for increased funding is set out in GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation (2018), General Observations, no. 2.8.

<sup>13</sup> Government Bill 2022/23:1 and the Swedish Institute for Human Rights, annual appropriation directions for the 2023 financial year for the Swedish Institute for Human Rights, ref.no. 1.1.1-615/2022.

report shall be submitted according to a classification determined by the government agency, unless the Government decides otherwise. It also states that the government agency shall break down the total revenue and cost of operations according to the classification.

## 2. Our Objectives and Reading Guide for Annual Financial Report

On 9 February 2023, the Board adopted an operational plan for the Institute for the financial year 2023.<sup>14</sup>

The operational plan established an overall objective for the organisation, an operational objective, and five sub-objectives. The first sub-objective focuses on the Institute's internal processes and the other four sub-objectives relate to operational work, i.e. the Institute's core tasks. The objectives are generally the same as for 2022, but some adjustments have been made.

### Overall objective

The activities of the Swedish Institute for Human Rights shall actively promote the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden, based on the constitutional laws and Sweden's international human rights commitments.

### Operational objective

The Institute shall operate in accordance with the Paris Principles and be an independent and leading actor in promoting the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden and fulfil the functions of an independent national mechanism pursuant to Article 33(2) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

### Sub-objectives

#### Management, governance and administration

The Institute shall ensure effective and transparent governance and management of its activities.

#### Analysis and reporting on the human rights situation in Sweden

The Institute shall monitor the human rights situation in Sweden and conduct independent and quality-assured studies and analyses of the situation in dialogue with civil society and other actors.

#### Proposals and recommendations

The Institute shall submit proposals and recommendations on how to ensure human rights in Sweden to the Government and disseminate them to other relevant actors.

#### Promotion of human rights

The Institute shall contribute to the development and dissemination of knowledge on human rights in collaboration with other actors.

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<sup>14</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Board minutes number 2, 9 February 2023, ref.no. 1.2.1-17/2023-2 and Operational Plan for 2023, ref.no. 1.2.2-78/2023.

**International cooperation**

The Institute shall participate in international cooperation to promote the safeguarding of human rights.

## 2.1. Structure of the Annual Financial Report

The Institute's sub-objectives cannot be clearly distinguished from one another as they are mutually supportive and interactive. On this basis, the Institute has judged that its activities should not be divided into different areas of operation. In 2023, a decision has been taken to organise the Institute in three units. However, this does not mean that the units have a clear focus on different operational objectives, but rather that the units shall, based on their respective assignments, work together to fulfil the Institute's common objectives.

The structure of the performance report (chapter 3) follows the adopted operational plan. Thus, following a financial overview, the results linked to the internal processes (sub-objective 1) are presented. This is followed by the results for each of the operational sub-objectives (sub-objective 2-5). This is followed by a section detailing the work on skills supply.

According to Chapter 3, Section 1 of the Ordinance (SFS 2000:605) concerning the Annual Financial Reports and Budget Documentation, government agencies shall analyse and assess the results and development of their activities. Work on developing such indicators started in 2023, involving the Board and the Management Group together with employees. Although the work cannot be said to be finalised, steps have been taken and the work that has been done will be reflected in the 2024 operational plan, and continue in coming years, which will also be reflected in the 2024 annual report. However, this year's report continues to emphasise the reporting of activities, measures taken, and products that illustrate the Institute's structure and work in 2023.

According to the same ordinance, the individual-based statistics included in the performance report shall be broken down by gender. This is done wherever possible, but as the Institute is still a relatively new government agency, statistics are scarce. Also, the Agency does not assess individual cases and the organisation does not process any large number of cases.

The final part of the performance report is Chapter 3.7 on human resources and skills supply. Chapter 4 presents the financial statements.

The Board's signing of the annual report is at the end of the annual report.

## 3. Performance report

### 3.1. Financial overview

This section presents the revenue and expenses of the Swedish Institute for Human Rights.

The Agency's various tasks are considered indistinguishable from each other and the Institute has therefore chosen not to divide its activities into different areas of operation.

The Institute's activities are funded by the central government budget's expenditure area 1, Governance.

#### 3.1.1. Revenue and expenses from operations

Revenue and expenses (kSEK)	2023	2022
Revenue from appropriations	40,385	26,591
Revenue from fees and other sources	1	0
Revenue from grants	9	0
Financial revenue	482	161
Costs	40,877	26,752
<b>Results</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

The allocation of appropriations for the year was kSEK 50,518 and the Institute used kSEK 40,385 of this. Other revenue includes revenue from fees and other sources of kSEK 1, revenue from grants of kSEK 9 and financial revenue of kSEK 482. The Institute has spent a total of kSEK 40,877 in expenses, which represents about 81 percent of the allocated appropriation of kSEK 50,818.



### 3.1.2. Revenue from operations

Revenue (kSEK)	2023	2022
Revenue from appropriations	40,385	26,591
Revenue from fees and other sources	1	0
Revenue from grants	9	0
Financial revenue	482	161
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,877</b>	<b>26,752</b>

Revenue from appropriations are funded by the central government budget's expenditure area 1 Governance. The financial revenue is interest on the interest-bearing account with the Swedish National Debt Office.

### 3.1.3. Expenses from operations

Expenses (kSEK)	2023	2022
Expenses for personnel	25,025	13,979
Expenses for premises	4,432	3,856
Other operating costs	9,952	8,129
Financial expenses	302	38
Depreciations and write-downs	1,166	750
Total	40,877	26,752
<b>Proportion of personnel expenses</b>	<b>61 %</b>	<b>52 %</b>

### 3.1.4. Personnel

Expenses for personnel amounts to kSEK 25,025, which corresponds to 61% of the total expenses consumed for the year. Labour recruitment was sequential and only completed in the second half of 2023, contributing to personnel cost staying below the expected budget.

### 3.1.5. Rented premises

Expenses for rent and cleaning during the year amounted to kSEK 4,432.

### **3.1.6. Other operating costs**

The majority of other expenses consist of purchases of services. The Institute is still in a start-up phase and consultancy support has been used for, among other things, the procurement of a register and case management system. The Agency also pays fees to the National Government Service Centre for financial and payroll administration and to an external IT provider for IT operations.

Other expenses are for business representation, travel, hotels, purchase of expendable equipment, licences and other operating costs.

### **3.1.7. Financial expenses**

Loans have been raised from the Swedish National Debt Office for the purchase of fixed assets. The interest rate at the Swedish National Debt Office averaged 3,5% during the year and generated a total cost of kSEK 302 for the year.

### **3.1.8. Depreciations and write-downs**

Investment volume in 2023 was lower than in the previous year when the Institute was established. This is reflected in higher depreciations in 2023 than in 2022 when investments were depreciated only during part of the financial year. The purchases have included equipment and improvements to leased property.

## **3.2. Sub-objective 1: Management, governance and administration**

The first sub-objective means that the Institute shall ensure effective and transparent governance and management of its activities in order for the Institute to comply with the Paris Principles and to be an independent and leading actor in promoting the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden and to fulfil the tasks of an independent national mechanism pursuant to Article 33(2) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

All development of activities under the sub-objective shall be in accordance with the Paris Principles. This is a fundamental condition for the satisfactory fulfilment of the following sub-objectives.

In line with the 2023 operational plan, the Institute has focused in particular on:

- preparatory work to apply for membership of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) at the appropriate time and achieve so-called A status
- identifying and defining how to fulfil the Institute's tasks as an independent national mechanism pursuant to Article 33(2) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- the development of a long-term strategic approach to actively promote the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden
- the establishment of the Advisory Council and the development of other forms of dialogue with civil society and other actors
- continuing to develop methods and work practices for monitoring, investigating and reporting on the human rights situation in Sweden
- development of the Institute's organisation
- the creation of a new registry and case management system
- ensuring appropriate and accessible premises
- development of the graphic profile and
- continued recruitment with the aim of achieving a diversity of knowledge and experience among the Institute's employees (see section 3.7).

### 3.2.1. Applying for GANHRI membership and achieving A status

In 2022 and 2023, the Institute has been working on preparations to apply for membership of the Global Alliance for National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) at the appropriate time and achieve A status.

To apply for membership in GANHRI, a national human rights institution must have joined the regional network of national human rights institutions and completed at least one full annual report. The Institute joined the European Network for National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) in October 2022 and submitted its first full annual report on the human rights situation in Sweden to the Government on 3 April 2023 (see more in section 3.4.1).<sup>15</sup> Against this background, the Institute requested to be subject to accreditation on 14 April 2023.<sup>16</sup> In October 2023, GANHRI's accreditation committee, the SCA, announced that it has scheduled the review of the Institute's application for its autumn 2024 meeting.<sup>17</sup>

The data supporting the application must be completed by 1 June 2024. The application will lead to an assessment of the Institute's compliance with the Paris Principles. If the institution is deemed to be in compliance with the Paris Principles, it receives an A status membership.

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<sup>15</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2023, ref.no. 1.1.1-163/2023.

<sup>16</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Request for accreditation, ref.no. 1.4.1-199/2023.

<sup>17</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Proposal regarding accreditation, ref.no. 3.4.2-31/2024.

Although the Paris Principles formed the basis for the establishment of the Institute, there is reason to further analyse the extent to which any gaps or deficiencies in the Swedish regulatory framework may affect the Institute's application. Such analysis work was initiated in 2022 and has continued in 2023.<sup>18</sup> Some key issues identified in early 2023 were presented by the Institute in its annual report to the Government on the human rights situation in Sweden, namely:<sup>19</sup>

- that the law should specify that the annual report shall be considered by the Riksdag,
- that both the nomination and appointment process for senior decision-makers shall be regulated by law.

As part of the analysis, the Institute asked the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODHIR)<sup>20</sup> to provide a Legal Review of the Act on the Institute for Human Rights (SFS 2021:642).<sup>21</sup> The Legal Review was submitted on 28 August 2023 and was presented at a high-level webinar on the Paris Principles organised by the Institute on 18 October 2023.<sup>22</sup> The high-level webinar was organised to gather additional knowledge of value for the accreditation and for prioritising the proposals for measures made by ODIHR and other actors with whom the Institute has been in contact.

In December 2023, the Board decided to instruct the Director of the Institute to submit an official letter to the Government to draw the Government's attention to the urgent need to strengthen the implementation of the Paris Principles and thus strengthen the conditions for the Institute's application for international accreditation and membership in GANHRI in both the short and long term.<sup>23</sup>

The official letter<sup>24</sup>, submitted to the Government on 16 January 2024, presented the following four measures that need to be implemented based on the Paris Principles, the GANHRI General Observations, the OSCE Legal Review on the Act on the Institute for Human Rights (SFS 2021:642) and the conclusions of the high-level webinar held on 18 October 2023:

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<sup>18</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Decision on the establishment of an A Status Strategy Working Group, ref.no. 1.2.1-502/2022.

<sup>19</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2023, pp. 39-40, ref.no. 1.1.1-163/2023.

<sup>20</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Request for legal review (2023-06-14), ref.no. 1.4.1-304/2023.

<sup>21</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Request for legal review, ref.no. 1.4.1-304/2023.

<sup>22</sup> OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Opinion on the Act on the Institute for Human Rights of Sweden (NHRI-SWE/476/2023) 28 August 2023, available here: Final ODIHR Opinion on the Act on the Institute for Human Rights SWEDEN ENG.pdf (legislationline.org).

<sup>23</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Board minutes number 16, 5 December 2023, ref.no. 1.2.1-17/2023-16.

<sup>24</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Official Letter of 16 January 2024, ref.no. 3.4.2-31/2024.

- Mandate the 2023 Freedom and Rights Committee<sup>25</sup> to develop proposals for constitutional protection of the Institute's mission, independence and foundation in the Paris Principles.
- Ensure the long-term funding of the Institute in line with the Paris Principles' provisions on budget management and the Venice Commission's recommendation on minimum guarantees for the funding of Ombudsman institutions.
- Clarify the rules for the appointment and dismissal of the Institute's Board members. In the short term, this can be clarified in written procedures and then, in the long term, be clarified by legislation.
- Otherwise ensure favourable conditions for the Institute's ability to comply with the Paris Principles.

### 3.2.2. The role of an independent national mechanism under Article 33(2) of the CRPD

In 2023, the Institute has continued to identify and define how to fulfil its tasks as an independent national mechanism pursuant to Article 33(2) of the CRPD. The Institute is in the process of development and it is important to allow time for this to happen, including the identification and definition of the Institute's tasks as an independent national mechanism for the CRPD. Furthermore, the active involvement of the disability rights movement is necessary. This follows from both the consultation and involvement obligation in Article 4(3) and the obligation to ensure that organisations are involved and fully participate in the tasks in accordance with Article 33(2) of the CRPD. The Institute's newly established Advisory Council also has an important role to play here (see also section 3.2.4).

In 2023, the Institute has continued to develop structures and methods in its internal work to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the Convention, while carrying out external activities.

In its work in accordance with Article 33(2), the Institute is following two different tracks. The first track consists of a focused effort to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the CRPD. The second track focuses on raising important perspectives related to persons with disabilities in all relevant contexts. A coordinator was appointed in 2023 who is responsible for internally coordinating the work on the Institute's specific mandate as an independent mechanism under Article 33(2), including the integration of the work throughout the organisation.<sup>26</sup>

More on the work in these two tracks is developed under the following headings.

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<sup>25</sup> JU 2023:05, Dir. 2023:83.

<sup>26</sup> The coordinator was appointed on 13 November 2023 by Acting Head of Unit Charlotte Palmstierna.

## Promoting, protecting and monitoring the CRPD

A key part of the focused work on promoting, protecting and monitoring the CRPD is the preparation of submissions to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the Committee). In 2023, the preparation of an alternative report with supplementary information to the Committee has been a priority for the Institute.

### Reporting to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

In preparing the report with supplementary information to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, two open dialogues with the disability rights movement were conducted, partly to gain knowledge of shortcomings and challenges, and partly to obtain opinions on principles for priorities within the limited space in the report.<sup>27</sup> In addition, a number of smaller meetings have been held with a specific thematic focus or with a specific organisation. For example, the Institute has met with the Youth Network for Accessibility (NUFT) to learn about the specific obstacles faced by young people with disabilities.<sup>28</sup> In addition, four meetings have been organised with various representatives of newly arrived migrants with disabilities.<sup>29</sup> The report was submitted to the Committee on 2 February 2024.<sup>30</sup> The Institute intends to participate in the review process on 11-12 March 2024.

### Cooperation to strengthen the implementation of the CRPD

Another key task in promoting, protecting and monitoring the implementation of the CRPD is to follow up the recommendations made by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to Sweden to strengthen the implementation of the Convention at local, regional and national level.

In 2023, the Institute worked on preparations for an annual conference in collaboration with other key actors for the implementation of the Convention in Sweden. The annual conference aims to contribute to the Institute's mission to promote, protect and monitor the Convention and also provides an opportunity to follow up on the recommendations the Committee makes to Sweden. The conference also aims to enable other actors responsible for safeguarding rights in different ways to clarify their roles, strengthen networks among themselves and raise awareness of current issues in the field of disability rights.

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<sup>27</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Invitation to open meeting 22 February, ref.no. 2.7.3-28/2023 and Notes from open meeting ref.no. 3.1.2-356/2023.

<sup>28</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Memorandum NUFT 7 June 2023, ref.no. 6.1.1-165/2023.

<sup>29</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Dialogue meeting, ref.no. 6.1.1-165/2023.

<sup>30</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Supplementary information to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - Regarding the 2nd/3rd State party review procedure of Sweden, ref.no. 6.1.1-165/2023.

During the year, meetings have been organised with civil society, with relevant government agencies, including the Equality Ombudsman, the Ombudsman for Children in Sweden and the Swedish Agency for Participation, and with the Government Offices to discuss the establishment of the annual conference.<sup>31</sup>

### Continued development of the dialogue with the disability rights movement

The Institute's dialogues with the disability rights movement are fundamental to the work carried out as part of its role as an independent national mechanism under the CRPD. The Convention requires the involvement and participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of the monitoring process. To meet these requirements, the Institute is working to establish a structured and predictable cooperation with the movement. One important actor in this context is the Institute's Advisory Council. Of the 20 members of the Council, four have been nominated by organisations representing persons with disabilities (see also section 3.2.4). More long-term forms of cooperation remain to be established in 2024 following the Committee's review of Sweden's compliance with the Convention.

### Promotional activities

The Institute has participated in a number of conferences related to the implementation of the CRPD in Sweden. Among other things, the Director participated as moderator in a conference organised during Sweden's EU Presidency by the European Disability Forum and Swedish Disability Rights Federation in April 2023.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, the Director participated in the Communication Carnival focusing on the right to communication from a rights perspective, including Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).<sup>33</sup> A mini-seminar was organised during the Human Rights Days in Helsingborg on the Institute's work on the report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.<sup>34</sup> The Institute also held a presentation at the National Gathering for Participation, a conference organised annually by the county administrative boards and the Swedish Agency for Participation.<sup>35</sup> In addition to participating in conferences and meetings, the Institute has commented publicly, in the form of an interview, on a report from the Swedish Health and Social Care Inspectorate (IVO) on

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<sup>31</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Roundtable, ref.no. 3.3.2-495/2023.

<sup>32</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Invitation to moderate session, ref.no. 2.7.4-43/2023. See also <https://funktionsratt.se/sidor-utanfor-menyn/aiconference31march2023/>

<sup>33</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Participation in the Communication Carnival on 24 October, ref.no. 2.7.4-62/2023.

<sup>34</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Agreement, ref.no. 2.3.5-267/2022. See also Programme | Human Rights Days 2023 ([invitepeople.com](https://invitepeople.com))

<sup>35</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Participation in National Gathering for Participation, ref.no. 2.7.4-677/2023. See also <https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/vastra-gotaland/om-oss/kalender/kalenderhandelser---vastra-gotaland/2023-11-29-nationell-samling-for-delaktighet.html>

coercive and restrictive measures in Housing with special services for adults (LSS)<sup>36</sup> and was interviewed for an article in the journal Funktionshinderspolitik on the process of writing a report to the Committee.<sup>37</sup>

## International cooperation

Three study visits have been carried out in 2023 to develop work on the Article 33(2) mission. Among others, the Institute has visited the Norwegian Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, which has the Article 33(2) mission in Norway, and the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution (NIM), whose mandate covers the CRPD to the same extent as other conventions.<sup>38</sup> A study visit to the German Institute for Human Rights with a specific focus on Article 33(2) was also carried out in 2023.<sup>39</sup> The Institute also participates in international cooperation, including participation in a working group on the Convention<sup>40</sup> within the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) and collaboration with the Nordic Welfare Centre.<sup>41</sup>

## Continued analysis in relation to the Paris Principles

During the year, the work on identifying and defining the Institute's role as an independent national mechanism for the CRPD has been included as part of the ongoing analysis of the extent to which the Institute complies with the Paris Principles (see section 3.2.1 above). As part of that work, the Institute identified, inter alia, a need to compile and analyse relevant information, mainly from the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA), as a basis for further developing the role of independent mechanism.

In 2023, an assignment was given to Anna Bruce at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of producing such a compilation. The assignment included analysing both the requirements imposed on the Institute by the Committee and the requirements of the Paris Principles with regard to the activities related to Article 33(2) of the Convention. The mission also included mapping the roles of different actors in relation to the implementation of Article 33(2). Actors whose role was to be analysed included the Equality Ombudsman, the Ombudsman for Children in Sweden, the Parliamentary Ombudsman and the Swedish Agency for Participation. An interim report was submitted in December 2023 and a second was submitted in January 2024.<sup>42</sup> These reports aim

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<sup>36</sup> See <https://mrinstitutet.se/nyheter/allvarliga-krankningarna-av-rattigheter-for-personer-med-funktionsnedsattning-maste-upphora/> (published 2023-09-25).

<sup>37</sup> <https://funktionshinderpolitik.se/de-ger-alternativa-bilder-nar-sverige-granskas/>.

<sup>38</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Study visit NIM, ref.no. 2.7.4-0087/2023.

<sup>39</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Exchange between the Swedish and German CRPD-monitoring bodies, 29 June Berlin, ref.no. 2.7.3-676/2023.

<sup>40</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Membership of the ENNHRI working group on CRPD, ref.no. 3.4.2-91/2024.

<sup>41</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Nordic Welfare Centre Council, ref.no. 3.5.2-100/2024.

<sup>42</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Contract desk study, ref.no. 2.3.4-294/2023 and RWI report Article 33 Ver. 1, ref.no. 3.4.1-24/2024.



to provide a good basis for further planning, development and prioritisation of the promotion, protection and monitoring of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in dialogue with the Institute's Advisory Council, the disability rights movement and other actors.

## The disability rights perspective must permeate the organisation

The second track focuses on recognising important perspectives related to persons with disabilities in all relevant contexts of the Institute's activities. In fulfilling its mandate as an independent national mechanism pursuant to Article 33(2), the Institute endeavours to integrate a disability rights perspective into all its work and processes to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the Convention. The Institute's Special Coordinator for the CRPD plays an important role in this work.

## Surveys and reports

### Knowledge and experiences of human rights

In 2023, a survey on knowledge and experiences of human rights in Sweden in 2023 for persons with disabilities was conducted by the Swedish Agency for Participation's Rivkraft Panel.<sup>43</sup> The aim was to complement the Institute's survey conducted in autumn 2022 to examine people's awareness of human rights.<sup>44</sup> Parts of the results were published in the Institute's report Knowledge and experiences of human rights in Sweden 2023 and the results will be presented in their entirety in spring 2024.<sup>45</sup>

The survey shows that few people have detailed knowledge of the CRPD. One conclusion from the survey is that persons with disabilities in Sweden today are still largely affected by the obstacles described in the Convention and that these barriers are blocking their opportunities for full participation in society.

### Rights of the elderly in Sweden

The Institute is also currently conducting a major survey analysing the situation of the elderly with extensive care needs from a rights perspective. More than 46 percent of the elderly in the world have a disability, and older people make up the majority of the total population of

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<sup>43</sup> The Rivkraft Panel was established by the Swedish Agency for Participation. More than 3 500 people with disabilities participate in the Rivkraft Panel. The purpose of the panel is to capture barriers to participation in society experienced by persons with disabilities and identify possible solutions. The panel responds to surveys sent out four times a year.

<sup>44</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Survey, ref.no. 2.3.3-345/2022.

<sup>45</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Knowledge and experiences of human rights in Sweden 2022-2023, ref.no. 3.1.1-436/2023.

people with disabilities. As the population ages, the proportion of older people with disabilities increases. As the target group of the survey overlaps with the target group of the CRPD, the Institute can benefit from the perspectives it brings to the survey.

Closely related to the survey on the rights of the elderly, the Institute has been involved in a collaborative project with the Faculty of Law at Lund University and RWI. On behalf of the Institute, the report Age and disability - An examination of Swedish law in accordance with the CRPD was written by participants in the specialised course of the LL.M. programme Human Rights Clinic (JUFN34) offered by RWI and the Faculty of Law. The aim of the report has been to map the standard set by the CRPD on the intersection of age and disability. The report has a particular focus on the access of older persons with disabilities to support services and care under Swedish law and practice, and the compliance of law and practice compared with the Convention. The authors of the report identify areas where they believe that Swedish law does not fulfil the requirements of the Convention.<sup>46</sup>

### International monitoring

The report with supplementary information prepared by the Institute in 2023 and submitted to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in early 2024 also highlighted issues related to the rights of persons with disabilities (see more in section 3.6.1).<sup>47</sup>

### A strategic and active referral body

The Institute responds to referrals with a clear link to the national implementation of the CRPD, such as the inquiry that was referred in 2023 on state personal assistance services – Increased equality, sustainability and quality of personal assistance.<sup>48</sup> In other issues concerning legislative proposals such as eviction of families when a young person commits a crime, welfare crime, Incitement to ethnic or racial hatred and establishment programmes for newly arrived migrants, a disability rights perspective has been highlighted by the Institute.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Contract on Human Rights Clinic, ref.no. 4.1.1.-367/2023.

<sup>47</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Supplementary information to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for consideration of the seventh periodic report of Sweden, ref. no. 6.1.1-604/2023.

<sup>48</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Referral reply, ref.no. 1.1.2-290/2023. See also <https://mrinstitutet.se/remissvar/ett-statligt-huvudmannaskap-for-personlig-assistans-okad-likvardighet-lang-siktighet-och-kvalitet-sou-20239/>.

<sup>49</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, ref.no. 1.1.2-473/2023, ref.no. 1.1.2-444/2023, ref.no. 1.1.2-404/2023 and ref.no. 1.1.2-339/2023. See also <https://mrinstitutet.se/om-institutet/remisser/atgarder-for-tryggare-bostadsomraden-och-starkt-hyresrattsligt-skydd-for-valdsutsatta-kvinnor/>, <https://mrinstitutet.se/ett-starkt-och-samlat-skydd-av-valfardssystemen/>, <https://mrinstitutet.se/om-institutet/remisser/en-tydligare-bestammelse-om-hets-mot-folkgrupp/> and <https://mrinstitutet.se/om-institutet/remisser/etablering-for-fler-jamstallda-mojligheter-till-integration/>.

### 3.2.3. Long-term strategic focus

The Swedish Institute for Human Rights has, and should have, a broad mandate. Given the resources at the Institute's disposal, prioritisation will constantly be required to ensure relevance and effectiveness in order to achieve the overall objective of actively promoting the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden, based on the constitutional laws and Sweden's international human rights commitments.

Furthermore, based on the Paris Principles, there is a need for openness and transparency on how priorities are made, not least towards our real clients, namely those whose rights we are working to strengthen.

In 2023, the Institute has continued to develop a long-term strategy for promoting the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden, which will in turn form the basis for annual priorities and focus areas. The long-term strategy will be based, among other things, on an external analysis that was partially presented in the Institute's Annual Report 2023.<sup>50</sup>

The external analysis considers the global trends we can see in human rights and how these are reflected in a Swedish context. Furthermore, the recommendations that Sweden receives from various monitoring bodies and national and international legal developments are important for the focus of the strategy. The survey on people's knowledge of human rights, their experience of opportunities to claim their human rights and whether there are human rights that are perceived to be threatened in Sweden today, which was initiated by the Institute in 2022 and which was partially presented in Annual Report 2023 and in its entirety in a report<sup>51</sup> in autumn 2023, will also form an important part of the external analysis. As well as the supplementary survey from spring 2023 that the Institute, with the help of the Swedish Agency for Participation, specifically targeted participants with various disabilities, the so-called Rivkraft survey. The results of the survey will be published in a report in the beginning of 2024 (see also sections 3.2.2 and 3.3.1.1).

The dialogues with representatives of rights holders and other civil society actors are also important elements of the external analysis. These dialogues were complemented and strengthened by the Institute's newly formed Advisory Council (see more in section 3.2.4 below). The Institute's external analysis was presented and discussed at the first Council meeting in September 2023 as part of the development of a long-term strategy for the Institute's activities.<sup>52</sup> The strategy is planned to be finalised in spring 2024.

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<sup>50</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2023, pp. 55-60, ref.no. 1.1.1-163/2023.

<sup>51</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Knowledge and experiences of human rights in Sweden 2022-2023, ref.no. 3.1.1-436/2023.

<sup>52</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Convening Notice and Agenda, item 3 of the memorandum, ref.no. 1.2.1-426/2023-2.

### 3.2.4. Establishment of the Advisory Council

According to the Act on the Institute for Human Rights (SFS 2021:642), there shall be an advisory body that provide the Institute with knowledge and experiences from civil society and other actors' work on human rights.

#### Tasks and work practices of the Council

In 2023, the Institute established a Advisory Council. On 9 February 2023, the Board decided on the tasks and working methods of the Council.<sup>53</sup>

The Institute's Rules of Procedure<sup>54</sup> state that the Council shall have a broad membership and consist of a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 20 members. Members shall be representatives of civil society and other actors, as well as individuals. The Council shall also have at least two representatives from organisations representing persons with disabilities (Section 10 of the Act on the Institute for Human Rights (SFS 2021:642)).

The Board appoints members of the Council following an open nomination process. Members are appointed for terms of two or three years and meet four times a year. When electing members, special consideration shall be given to the requirements of the law and the Paris Principles for a broad composition, as well as the members' knowledge and experiences of practical human rights work in different sectors of society.

The Council's task is to provide knowledge and experience-based advice to the Institute to promote the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden. The Council shall be invited to provide advice and support regarding:

- the Institute's strategic focus,
- focus of external analysis and prioritisation of areas of rights,
- the monitoring of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and
- orientation and focus of the Institute's annual report

In addition, the Council may be invited to provide advice and support regarding:

- focus of surveys and reports,
- forms of dialogue and cooperation with civil society and other actors,
- forms of active involvement of civil society, in particular persons with
- disabilities and the organisations that represent them,
- other issues that the Council considers important for the Institute's mission.

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<sup>53</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Board minutes number 2, 9 February 2023, ref.no. 1.2.1-17-2023-2.

<sup>54</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Rules of Procedure of the Swedish Institute for Human Rights, ref.no. 1.2.3-359/2023.

## Members of the Council

To achieve a broad composition of the Council, the Institute launched an open call for applications in spring 2023 to recruit members.<sup>55</sup> When the call for applications closed on 28 April, 137 nominations had been received from civil society and individuals.<sup>56</sup>

In June 2023, the Board appointed 20 members to the Institute's Advisory Council. The members appointed are representatives from civil society organisations, but also other actors and individuals.<sup>57</sup> When selecting members, the legal requirement for a broad composition and the members' knowledge and experiences of practical human rights work in different sectors of society, as well as the requirements of the Paris Principles, were given special consideration.

## Council meetings

The new Council has met twice in 2023 and at the first meeting it appointed Hewan Temesghen as Chair and Ignacio Vita as Vice-Chair. Council members have been given the opportunity to advise on the Institute's development of a long-term strategy for its operations, input on the Institute's annual report and reports with supplementary information to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>58</sup>

### 3.2.5. Dialogues with civil society

In 2022, dialogues were initiated with representatives of rights holders and civil society actors to hear their analysis and experiences with human rights issues and to discuss the modalities for further dialogue.<sup>59</sup> These dialogues have continued in 2023, including with organisations representing LGBTI people, national minorities, the indigenous peoples (the Sámi) and women's rights.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, dialogues have been conducted with organisations representing older persons prior to the survey on the situation of the elderly with extensive care needs from a rights perspective (see section 3.3.1.2).<sup>61</sup> The Institute has also consulted with civil society in preparation for the launch of a survey on hate and threats against Jewish and Islamic organisations initiated in 2023 (see section 3.3.1.3).

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<sup>55</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Call for applications, ref.no. 1.2.1-88/2023.

<sup>56</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Nominations, ref.no. 1.2.1-88/2023.

<sup>57</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Board minutes number 10, 22 June 2023, ref.no. 1.2.1-17/2023-10.

<sup>58</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Convening Notice and Agenda, item 3 of the memorandum, ref.no. 1.2.1-416/2023-2.

<sup>59</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2022 pp. 22-23, ref.no. 1.1.1-71/2023.

<sup>60</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, The Institute's dialogue meeting with LGBTI organisations, ref.no. 3.1.2-599/2022.

<sup>61</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Dialogue meeting, ref.no. 3.1.2-405/2023.

The dialogues held in 2022 and 2023 will form a basis for the further development of dialogue and contact with civil society. One important actor in developing forms of dialogue and collaboration with civil society and other actors is the Institute's Advisory Council, which was established during the year (see section 3.2.4).

In 2022 and 2023, the Institute has also held dialogues with civil society for the reports prepared in 2023 to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (see sections 3.3.1.2 and 3.3.1.3).<sup>62</sup>

### **3.2.6. Information from and dialogue with government agencies, municipalities and regions**

On 1 September 2022, a new provision entered into force (Section 11 of the Act on the Institute for Human Rights (SFS 2021:642)) stating that public administrative authorities, municipalities and regions must, at the request of the Institute, provide information on the measures taken in their own activities to safeguard human rights.<sup>63</sup>

In 2023, the Institute requested information from the National Board of Institutional Care (SiS) and the Health and Social Care Inspectorate (IVO) on measures taken in their operations to safeguard human rights, as part of the follow-up of Sweden's recommendations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC).<sup>64</sup>

### **3.2.7. Developing methods and work practices**

The development of methods and work practices needs to be continuous in an organisation, but as the Institute is in its start-up phase, the development of methods and work practices is key to a functioning organisation.

Systematic monitoring is fundamental to the Institute's ability to monitor the human rights situation in Sweden. One objective for 2023 was to continue to develop methods and work practices to monitor, investigate and report on the human rights situation in Sweden. As part of this work, in 2022 the Institute began developing a dedicated external monitoring and analysis process, including by designating focal points for different issues and areas.<sup>65</sup> In 2023, the Institute has identified the need to further develop the external monitoring and analysis process, particularly in relation to the production of the Institute's annual report on the human rights situation in Sweden.

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<sup>62</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Service note, dialogues with the SFHR for the report to CESCR, autumn 2023, ref.no. 6.1.1-604/2023.

<sup>63</sup> The obligation does not apply to quasi-judicial boards or administrative bodies with similar tasks. The obligation shall also not apply to the Office of the Chancellor of Justice or the Swedish National Audit Office.

<sup>64</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, The Institute's letter of 31 March 2023 to IVO, ref.no. 6.1.5-171/2023, and SiS, ref.no. 6.1.5-172/2023.

<sup>65</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2022, pp. 23-24, ref.no. 1.3.1-184/2022.

In addition, work on developing the Institute's methods for in-depth studies of the human rights situation in various areas begun in 2023 within the scope of the surveys initiated during the year. In 2023, initiatives have also been taken to develop project templates and project work (see also section 3.2.8.2).

### 3.2.8. Continued set-up of the organisation

During the year, work continued to develop the Institute's organisation and activities.

#### Organisation

On 13 June 2023, the Board decided to establish the organisation of the Institute as proposed. The start date for this organisation was 1 October 2023. Since then, the Institute has been organised into three units: the Investigation and Analysis Unit, the Outreach and Cooperation Unit, and the Management and Operational Support Unit. Each unit is headed by a Head of Unit whose tasks and mandate are set out in the Rules of Procedure adopted by the Board.<sup>66</sup> The responsibilities of the various units are set out in Appendix 1 to the current Rules of Procedure. The Investigation and Analysis Unit is responsible for ensuring an effective, knowledge-based and systematic approach to monitoring, investigating and reporting on the human rights situation.<sup>67</sup> The Outreach and Cooperation Unit is responsible for ensuring coherent communication and information work and a systematic dialogue with duty bearers and rights holders, as well as systematic work with international actors.

The Management and Operational Support Unit is responsible for ensuring effective implementation and, where appropriate, support and standardisation in operational issues such as finance, procurement, employer issues, skills supply, work environment, IT, provision of premises and facilities management, administrative law issues, coordination and follow-up of, for example, contracts, information security and environmental management, and ensuring effective administrative procedures.

#### Project model

In 2023, the Institute carried out procurement of a contract for access to a project tool, "Practical Project Management" (PPS). In 2023, a number of employees completed training in project management according to the PPS model. The purpose of using the PPS model is to create uniformity, efficiency and transparency in the way the Institute conducts project work.

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<sup>66</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Board minutes number 9, 13 June 2023, ref.no. 1.2.1-17/2023-9 and Rules of Procedure of the Swedish Institute for Human Rights, ref.no. 1.2.3-359/2023.

<sup>67</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Appendix to the Rules of Procedure, ref.no. 1.2.3-267/2023.

In 2024, these employees will develop and adapt the model to the Institute's needs and train employees in the use of the model and associated templates and support tools.<sup>68</sup>

## Internal governance and control

In 2023, the Institute continued to focus on developing the procedures and policy instruments needed in an administrative authority. The Institute has focused particularly on the development of internal governance and control procedures, including the adoption of a revised internal governance and control guideline and an internal control plan for 2023.<sup>69</sup>

## Information management

During the year, the Institute continued to develop a process-based classification structure and associated information management plan. The Institute announced a procurement of a document and case management system before summer 2023. However, the procurement was cancelled due to a lack of competition amongst suppliers.<sup>70</sup> An evaluation of the procurement was carried out with the suppliers concerned and work is now underway on renewed feasibility studies with the intention being for the Institute to be launching a new procurement procedure in the next year.<sup>71</sup> In 2024, the Institute intends to carry out a renewed procurement process to contract and implement a registry and case management system as part of streamlining and quality-assuring the work within the Agency. The record system will follow the process-based structure underlying the Agency's classification structure, which was decided in an updated version on 20 December 2023.<sup>72</sup> In 2023, it was also decided to appoint a Data Protection Officer for the Agency.<sup>73</sup> The Institute's Board then decided on an IT policy for the Institute.<sup>74</sup> In 2024, the Institute will focus on continuing to develop its information security work by further developing guidelines and support procedures for handling sensitive information and technical systems and following up on their implementation among employees.

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<sup>68</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Contract PPS, ref.no. 2.3.4-464/2023.

<sup>69</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Guideline for the internal governance and control process within the Swedish Institute for Human Rights, ref.no. 1.2.3-261/2023-2. and Internal Control Plan 2023, ref.no. 1.2.2-360/2023.

<sup>70</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Cancellation decision, ref.no. 2.3.1-393/2023.

<sup>71</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Experience Report, ref.no. 2.4.1-481/2022.

<sup>72</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Classification structure, ref.no. 2.6.1-632/2023.

<sup>73</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Decision to appoint a Data Protection Officer, ref.no. 1.2.1-245/2023.

<sup>74</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Board minutes number 12, 19 September 2023, ref.no. 1.2.1-17/2023-12 and IT policy, ref.no. 1.2.3-387/2023.



## Premises and technical equipment

During the year, the Institute has continued its efforts to design and adapt its premises in Lund for accessibility. As part of this, an accessibility inventory was carried out by the Accessibility Database (TD), which resulted in a report gathering various proposals for improving physical accessibility.<sup>75</sup> The accessibility inventory has also formed the basis for the renegotiation of the lease agreement with the current landlord, which means that, in connection with the extension of the lease agreement concluded with the landlord, the Institute has also gained access to an investment grant to be used within the coming year for further improvements in terms of accessibility in the physical environment.<sup>76</sup>

The Institute will work in coming years to implement improvements in line with the report's proposals.

The Institute has also made major investments in technical equipment to improve digital accessibility in internal and external meetings, such as the purchase of a hearing loop for the central meeting room.<sup>77</sup>

## Graphic profile and communication work

During the year, the Institute continued to develop and decide on a new graphic profile and visual identity for the Institute.<sup>78</sup> On the basis of this work, a new logo, new fonts, and a new colour palette can be seen on the Institute's website and in information materials. The purpose of the new graphic profile is to clarify the Institute's mission and role in society and to simplify the production of accessible communication. The Institute has also commissioned the development of a number of accessible templates in line with the graphic profile.<sup>79</sup>

## 3.3. Sub-objective 2: Analysis and reporting on the human rights situation in Sweden

The second sub-objective means that the Institute shall monitor the human rights situation in Sweden and conduct independent and quality-assured studies and analyses of the situation in dialogue with civil society and other actors.

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<sup>75</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, TD follow-up report, ref.no. 2.5.2-593/2023.

<sup>76</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Supplementary Agreement to Lease Agreement, ref.no. 2.3.5-599/2023.

<sup>77</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Offer acceptance hearing loop, ref.no. 2.3.2-493/2023.

<sup>78</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Board minutes number 1, 25 January 2023, ref.no. 1.2.1-17/2023-1.

<sup>79</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Order of templates, ref.no. 2.7.5-107/2023.

In line with the 2023 operational plan, the Institute has focused in particular on:

- economic, social and cultural rights
- rights of persons with disabilities
- compliance with the UN's International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- national minorities and indigenous peoples' rights
- promoting the development of methods and work practices intended to produce data to measure inequality
- mapping the possibilities for individuals to claim their human rights in different areas.

### 3.3.1. Surveys on the human rights situation in Sweden

The Institute has been monitoring the human rights situation on a wide scale through its external monitoring programme. In order to be relevant and to be able to conduct in-depth studies and analyses of the human rights situation in Sweden and to fulfil the Institute's tasks as an independent national mechanism pursuant to Article 33(2) of the CRPD, we have had to prioritise. In 2023, the Institute conducted two surveys and worked on four additional surveys on the human rights situation in Sweden, as described in detail below.

#### Knowledge and experiences of human rights 2022–2023

To investigate people's awareness of human rights, their experience of opportunities to claim their human rights and whether there are human rights that are perceived as threatened in Sweden today, the Institute conducted an online survey in the autumn of 2022. The results were presented in a report in autumn 2023.<sup>80</sup> Based on the results presented in the report, the Institute draws the following conclusions, in summary, that there is a need in Sweden to:

- develop the work to disseminate in-depth knowledge of human rights
- remove practical obstacles for people to realise their rights
- create a more level playing field for people to effectively access
- their rights
- strengthen the enforceability of human rights.

As a complement, the report also presented some of the results from another online survey from the spring of 2023 that the Institute conducted with the help of the Swedish Agency for Participation. This survey specifically targeted participants with different disabilities.<sup>81</sup> The latter will be presented in full in a separate report in early 2024.

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<sup>80</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Knowledge and experiences of human rights in Sweden 2022-2023, ref.no. 3.1.1-436/2023.

<sup>81</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Contract for the compilation of survey, ref.no. 2.3.4-331/2023.

## Rights of the elderly in Sweden

In 2023, the Swedish Institute for Human Rights has been working on a survey on the human rights situation of older people in Sweden, with a specific focus on people with extensive care needs. The design of the survey was preceded by dialogue with organisations representing older persons and other actors.<sup>82</sup>

One important aim of the survey is to analyse deficiencies in elderly care from a holistic human rights perspective that looks at the whole person, not just as a care user or patient. What are the main challenges for older people to enjoy their human rights? What can be done to ensure that human rights are used as a tool in elderly care? How do deficiencies in elderly care relate to human rights and state obligations to respect, protect and fulfil these rights? These are key questions in the survey, which also aims to clarify how Sweden's human rights obligations are reflected in legislation and regulatory frameworks and in the recommendations of international monitoring bodies. The survey will result in, among other things, a main report, which is planned to be published in 2024.

## Impact of hate and threats on religious freedom

In 2023, the Institute worked on two studies on Jewish and Islamic associations' experiences of hatred and threats, how these experiences affect their ability to organise themselves and what consequences this may have for religious freedom.<sup>83</sup> The results of the surveys will be presented in 2024. The surveys form an important basis for the forthcoming reporting on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (see also section 3.6.1.3).

## Sámi rights and the climate transition

In 2023, the Institute has been working on highlighting indigenous peoples and Sámi rights with a focus on the climate transition, the results of which are planned to be presented in a report in 2024.

The institute held a research conference in Luleå/Julevu in cooperation with Luleå University of Technology and the Silver Museum in September 2023 to discuss current research and issues related to indigenous rights (see also section 3.5.2.2).

During the conference, it was recognised that there is a gap between the content of international law and the national system for environmental assessments and licensing processes, for

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<sup>82</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Information on the elderly survey, ref.no. 3.1.1-656/2023 and Dialogue meeting, ref.no. 3.1.2-405/2023.

<sup>83</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Survey on Jewish associations' exposure to hate, threats and discrimination, ref.no. 3.3.1-96/2024 and Survey on Islamic organisations to associations' exposure to hate, threats and discrimination, ref.no. 3.3.1-97/2024.

example. There was a hope that the Institute would help highlight the issues and the legal situation, thus addressing the discrepancy between national and international law. The conference in Luleå saw input, perspectives and approaches on the purpose and content of a report. The conference report<sup>84</sup> produced will form a basis for continued work. In its work, the Institute will also continue its dialogue with various representatives of indigenous peoples and experts in the field to analyse the legal situation on the matter and take advantage of the experiences of the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution (NIM) in this area.

### 3.3.2. Monitoring of topical issues and specific analyses

To ensure the Institute's activities are relevant and topical, the Institute considered it important to also maintain some flexibility and keep options open to focus on current events in the world around us. As previously mentioned, systematic monitoring is fundamental to the Institute's ability to monitor, analyse and report on the human rights situation in Sweden. Monitoring is an important basis for identifying current issues during the year to work on in addition to those identified in the operational plan, and a key function in the work on the annual report on the human rights situation in Sweden (see also section 3.4). During the year, the Institute has therefore also focused on other relevant rights areas than those identified in the operational plan.

#### Quran burnings and human rights

One issue that the Institute has monitored and analysed in both 2022 and 2023 is the occurrence of Quran burnings in Sweden and Swedish Muslims' experiences of violations in connection with these. The Institute highlighted the issues in Annual Report 2023, published in April 2023.<sup>85</sup> Questions about the limits of freedom of expression and assembly in connection with Quran burnings were also raised in 2023, and the issue took on new security policy dimensions with Sweden's NATO application. The issue of the Quran burnings was discussed in the United Nations Human Rights Council in the summer of 2023 and the Institute recognised this by publishing information on its website.<sup>86</sup>

#### Gang-related violence and human rights

Another topical issue raised by the Institute in Annual Report 2023 was the issue of gang-related violence. The issue remained topical in 2023 and the Institute published an analysis

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<sup>84</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Conference report on Indigenous Peoples and Sámi rights in the context of climate transition, Luleå/Julevu 25-26 September 2023, ref.no. 3.1.2-334/2023.

<sup>85</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2023, pp. 83-85, ref.no. 1.1.1-163/2023.

<sup>86</sup> <https://mrinstitutet.se/nyheter/manskliga-rattigheter-och-koranbranningar/> (published 2023-07-05).

on gang-related violence and human rights on its website.<sup>87</sup> During the year, the Institute also responded to several referrals with legislative proposals aimed at increasing security and reducing crime.<sup>88</sup> Recruitment of lay judges

One issue raised by the Institute in 2023 is the need to investigate the system for recruitment of lay judges. During the year, a parliamentary committee, in an inquiry aimed at strengthening democracy in Sweden, proposed that the Instrument of Government should enshrine that the administration of justice is carried out by independent courts. The Institute welcomes this but considers it important that the Instrument of Government also states that courts shall be impartial. The fact that courts shall be, and shall be perceived as, impartial also raises the question of the Swedish system of lay judges appointed by the political parties.<sup>89</sup>

Lay judges have the same voting rights as the professional judge and thus exercise power over individuals in their judgements. During the year, the issue of the impartiality of lay judges and their link to political parties was highlighted in the aftermath of the so-called 'Snippa' case.<sup>90</sup>

In view of this, the Institute prepared a special official letter at the end of 2023 on the need to analyse the design of a new recruitment system for lay judges. The official letter is planned to be submitted to the Ministry of Justice in 2024. The need has also been expressed in two referral replies during the year.<sup>91</sup>

## Serious violations of the rights of persons with disabilities in their home environment

Another issue analysed in 2023 was serious violations of the rights of persons with disabilities in their home environment. The report "Att inte få rätten att leva som andra, Redovisning av den nationella tillsynen av gruppboheter för vuxna enligt LSS" [Not having the right to live

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<sup>87</sup> <https://mrinstitutet.se/nyheter/det-gangrelaterade-valdet-och-manskliga-rattigheter/> (published 2023-10-09).

<sup>88</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, see referral reply *Vistelseförbud på allmän plats och vissa andra platser* [Exclusion order for public spaces and certain other places] (Ds 2023:17), ref. no. 1.1.2-340/2023, Referral reply to the interim report *Anonyma vittnen* [Anonymous witnesses] (SOU 2023:67), ref.no. 1.1.2-544/2023, Referral reply to the memorandum *Säkerhetszoner – ökade möjligheter för polisen att visitera för att förebygga brott* [Security zones – increased scope for the police to stop and search to prevent crime] (Ds 2023:31), ref. 1.1.2-634/2023, and, referral reply on *Utökade möjligheter att använda preventiva tvångsmedel* [Extended possibilities to use preventive coercive measures] (SOU 2023:60), ref.no. 1.1.2-499/2023.

<sup>89</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Referral reply *Förstärkt skydd för demokratin och domstolars oberoende* [Strengthened protection for democracy and judicial independence] (SOU 2023:12), ref.no. 1.1.2-187/2023.

<sup>90</sup> Judgment of the Court of Appeal for Western Sweden of 23 February 2023 in case B 6074-22.

<sup>91</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Referral reply *Förstärkt skydd för demokratin och domstolars oberoende* [Strengthened protection for democracy and judicial independence] (SOU 2023:12), ref.no. 1.1.2-187/2023, and *En översyn av vissa frågor om offentliga biträden* [A review of certain issues regarding public counsels] (Ds 2023:14), ref.no. 1.1.2-442/2023.

like others, Report on the national supervision of group homes for adults according to LSS] published by the Swedish Health and Social Care Inspectorate (IVO) in 2023 revealed worrying information about how adults with disabilities are subjected to serious rights violations in their home environment in adult group homes. Among other things, IVO had noted that people were being locked up, restrained and prevented from leaving their flats. People were also administered pharmaceuticals without their knowledge and are monitored in various ways in their flats and bathrooms.<sup>92</sup> The Institute analysed IVO's review from a human rights perspective, with a particular focus on the rights set out in the CRPD. The analysis was published on the Institute's website in autumn 2023.<sup>93</sup> The situation of persons with disabilities living in accommodation with special support and services has also been highlighted in the Institute's Alternative report to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, before its review of Sweden in March 2024.<sup>94</sup>

### 3.3.3. Promote the development of methods and work practices for the production of data to measure inequality

One recurring criticism from the UN human rights treaty bodies over the years concerns the lack of data on the situation of different groups in Sweden, also known as equality data.<sup>95</sup> The Institute highlighted the need to develop methods and work practices for producing data to measure inequality in its Annual Report 2023.<sup>96</sup> Accurate and comparable data is essential to assess and analyse the degree of equality in society. It is needed to monitor access to human rights and developments over time, as well as the extent and nature of discrimination affecting certain groups.

The Institute has continued to monitor the issue during the year and will continue to follow developments in this area. During the year, the Institute participated in conferences held during Sweden's EU Presidency where equality data was discussed and where representatives of the European Commission's Subgroup on Equality Data and the EU's rights agency, FRA, urged the Member States to develop methods for producing equality data.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Pursuant to the Act Concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (LSS).

<sup>93</sup> <https://mrinstitutet.se/nyheter/allvarliga-krankningarna-av-rattigheter-for-personer-med-funktionsnedsattning-maste-upphora/> (published 2023-09-25).

<sup>94</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, 2024, "Supplementary information to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Regarding the 2nd/3rd State party review procedure of Sweden 2024", ref.no. 6.1.1-165/2023.

<sup>95</sup> The European Commission defines equality data as any qualitative or quantitative information that can be used to describe and analyse the state of equality (European Commission, European Handbook on Equality Data 2016 revision, December 2016, pp. 15-16).

<sup>96</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2023 pp. 110-111, ref.no. 1.1.1-163/2023.

<sup>97</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, From Plan to Action- High level Conference on the implementation of National action plans against racism 16-17 February 2023, ref.no: 2.7.4-27/2023 and Invitation to Conference on Equality Data and Non-Discrimination, ref.no. 2.7.4-675/2023.

The Institute has also reported on the development of data collection in the field of disability rights in its report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.<sup>98</sup> The question of how equality data can be collected, analysed and used in Sweden in a rights-based manner was also raised in the Institute's report to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>99</sup>

### 3.4. Sub-objective 3: Proposals and recommendations

The third sub-objective is that the Institute shall submit proposals and recommendations on how human rights can be ensured in Sweden to the Government and disseminate these to other relevant actors.

The annual report, which shall be submitted to the Government by 1 April each year, is an important part of the Institute's reporting on the human rights situation in Sweden and for making proposals and recommendations to the Government. In accordance with the Paris Principles, it is important that the Institute's annual report, as well as other reports and opinions, are also made available to and are discussed in the Riksdag. It is also important that they are disseminated to other stakeholders and made available to the general public.

In line with the 2023 operational plan, the Institute has focused in particular on:

- disseminating the annual report on the human rights situation in Sweden in 2022, other reports and opinions to the Riksdag and other relevant actors, and promoting dialogue based on the annual report<sup>100</sup> the preparation of the annual report on the human rights situation in Sweden in 2023<sup>101</sup> actively monitoring legal developments and ensuring that human rights are promoted and protected in the legislative process
- monitoring that human rights implications are analysed in the Swedish Government Official Reports and the subsequent preparation of proposals
- being an active referral body by monitoring that human rights are considered in the proposals.

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<sup>98</sup> Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Supplementary information to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Regarding the 2nd/3rd State party review procedure of Sweden 2024, ref.no. 6.1.1-165/2023.

<sup>99</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Supplementary information to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for consideration of the seventh periodic report of Sweden, ref. no. 6.1.1-604/2023.

<sup>100</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2022, ref.no. 1.3.1-184/2022.

<sup>101</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2023, ref.no. 1.1.1-163/2023.

### 3.4.1. Dissemination of Annual Report 2023

Each year, in accordance with Section 3 of the Act on the Institute for Human Rights (SFS 2021:642), the Institute submits a report to the Government on its activities and its observations of developments in the field of human rights during the previous year.

In Annual Report 2023, the Institute highlighted several societal challenges that affect the conditions for human rights, internationally and in Sweden. The major challenges of our time - such as the climate crisis, geopolitical conflicts, the decline of democracy and increasing threats to privacy - affect people's ability to enforce their rights, including in our country. Annual Report 2023 also describes the work on setting up an independent national human rights institution from scratch.

Annual Report 2023 was submitted to the Government on 3 April 2023 and presented to Minister Paulina Brandberg.<sup>102</sup> The annual report was distributed to all MPs and presented to the Riksdag's Committee on the Constitution on 9 May 2023.<sup>103</sup> In dialogue with the Speaker of the Riksdag, Andreas Norlén, and in cooperation with the Bureau of the Riksdag's Committee on the Constitution, the Swedish Social Democratic Party and the Moderate Party, a seminar was organised in the Riksdag on 30 November 2023 (see section 3.5.1.1). The Swedish Riksdag's seminar was organised to mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to address the Institute's annual report in the Riksdag. The theme of the seminar was based on Annual Report 2023, which highlighted the development of hate, threats and polarising rhetoric in Sweden.<sup>104</sup> The external analysis presented in Annual Report 2023 will also form an important basis for the long-term strategy to be developed in 2024. The external analysis was presented and discussed by the Institute's Advisory Council at its first meeting (see sections 3.2.3 and 3.2.4).

The annual report was downloaded around 2000 times from [mrinstitutet.se](http://mrinstitutet.se).<sup>105</sup> The annual report generated 18 articles or features immediately following its launch on 3-5 April, reaching over 5 million readers. These included segments in Ekot and Swedish Radio/Sameradion. Also, Dagens Samhälle published an opinion article signed by the Director of the Institute. Altinget also published an interview with the Director on the annual report.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2023, ref.no. 1.1.1-163/2023, and Annual Report of the Human Rights Institute, presentation at handover, ref.no. 1.1.1-163/2023.

<sup>103</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Sending of the annual report to the Riksdag, ref.no. 2.7.4-242/203 and Agreed time for presentation to the Committee on the Constitution, ref.no. 2.7.4-181/2023.

<sup>104</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Swedish Riksdag's seminar on 30 November on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ref.no. 2.7.4-671/2023.

<sup>105</sup> According to statistics from the Matomo tool.

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.altinget.se/artikel/mr-institutets-aarsrapport-till-regeringen-borde-gaa-till-riksdagen-ocksaa> and "Mänskliga rättigheter kränks även i Sverige" [Human rights are violated in Sweden, too] - Dagens Samhälle ([dagenssamhalle.se](http://dagenssamhalle.se)).



### 3.4.2. Preparation of Annual Report 2024

The annual report is one of the ways in which the Institute communicates its observations on human rights developments in Sweden to the Government and Riksdag. Much of the work in 2023 was devoted to monitoring and analysing the human rights situation in preparation for the Institute's Annual Report 2024.

Systematic monitoring is fundamental to the Institute's ability to monitor, analyse and report on the human rights situation in Sweden.

Given the resources available to the Institute, monitoring also requires prioritisation. Our priorities have been made based on, among other things, the current international and regional review processes (see section 3.6.1), and issues that have been particularly relevant from a human rights perspective during the year, as well as the in-depth surveys and analyses that the Institute has worked on (see section 3.3).

Annual Report 2024 is planned to be submitted to the Government on 25 March 2024.

### 3.4.3. Monitor the promotion and protection of human rights in the legislative process

One of the main assignments of a national human rights institution is to be able to promote and protect human rights by submitting proposals and/or commenting on current legislative issues. One way in which the Institute fulfils this mission is by responding to referrals. This provides an opportunity for the Institute to draw attention to whether the proposals submitted promote the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden, and to highlight rights aspects of the proposals that may not have been fully considered by the inquiry. Another way is early contact and dialogue with inquiries whose mandate has a significant impact on human rights.

#### Active referral body

In 2023, the Institute responded to 30 referrals. A recurring theme in many of the Institute's referral statements is that the inquiries lack detailed analyses of the consequences of the proposals for human rights. The Institute has therefore, in the majority of the opinions, reminded of its previous position on the need for a regulatory framework for such impact assessments.<sup>107</sup> On a few occasions, the Institute has also stated that the preparation of legislation has not lived up to the requirements of the Instrument of Government. This has involved situations where the

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<sup>107</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Referral reply, ref.no. 1.1.2-407/2022.

referral period for some proposals has been shorter than normal, or where the inquiry has not been able to shed sufficient light on an area due to strict guidelines or insufficient resources.<sup>108</sup>

The majority of the Institute's referral statements have been submitted after the Institute was requested by the Government to comment, by being included in a list of referral bodies. In several cases, however, the Institute has recognised that proposals from public inquiries not received by the Institute on referral can have a significant impact on human rights. The Institute has responded on its own initiative. In these cases, the Institute has asked whether the Government Offices' list of referral bodies can be adjusted or whether the referral reply can be published on the Government's website, so that the Institute's opinion has the same distribution as the proposals from other referral bodies. In 2023, the referral replies were published on the Government's website following dialogue with the respective ministries, but the list was only adjusted once.<sup>109</sup>

## Dialogue with inquiries

We believe that early contact with inquiries whose remit has a major impact on human rights can be important in increasing the incidence of detailed impact assessments and raising awareness of human rights. In 2023, the Institute had dialogues with five inquiries. Dialogue has been conducted with the inquiry on a national strategy to strengthen Jewish life in Sweden, the inquiry on more knowledge about children and students with disabilities in the school system, the inquiry on custodial sentences for young people, the inquiry on incentives and opportunities in income support and the inquiry on stop-and-search zones.<sup>110</sup> In the dialogues, the Institute has conveyed knowledge about human rights and the importance of carrying out detailed analyses of the consequences of the inquiry's proposals for human rights and the grounds on which such an analysis should be carried out.

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<sup>108</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Referral reply to the Draft proposal to the Swedish Council on Draft referred to the Council on Legislation *Vissa skärpta villkor för anhöriginvandring och begränsade möjligheter till uppehållstillstånd av humanitära skäl* [Certain stricter conditions for family immigration and limited possibilities for residence permit due to humanitarian reasons], ref. no. 1.1.2-105/2023, and Referral reply to the memorandum *Säkerhetszoner – ökade möjligheter för polisen att visitera för att förebygga brott* [Security zones – increased scope for the police to stop and search to prevent crime] (Ds 2023:31), ref. 1.1.2-634/2023.

<sup>109</sup> Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Referral of the memorandum *Fler verktyg i socialtjänsternas arbete för att förebygga brott och stärka skyddet för barn* [More tools for Social Services to prevent crime and strengthen the protection of children] (S2023/02226), 2023-07-07, revised 2023-10-27.

<sup>110</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, see, inter alia, Meeting notes (Ku 2022:01), ref.no. 3.1.2-123/2023, Invitation to meeting (U Dir 2022:73), ref.no. 2.7.4-65/2023, Request for meeting and summary of meeting, ref.no. 2.7.4-663/2023, Dialogue on consultation (S2022:16), ref.no. 1.1.2-316/2023 and Meeting with inquiry (Ju2022/03671), ref.no. 2.7.4-69/2023.

## 3.5. Sub-objective 4: Promotion of human rights awareness

The fourth sub-objective is that the Institute shall contribute to the development and dissemination of knowledge about human rights in collaboration with other actors. This includes the Institute contributing to the development and dissemination of methods for rights-based work in government agencies, municipalities and regions.

To ensure that human rights are taken into account in decisions in the public sector and to enable the Government and Riksdag to ensure that all legislation complies with human rights, it is important that the consequences of decisions and proposals are analysed in relation to Sweden's human rights commitments. The Institute sees a need to increase knowledge on how such impact assessments can be done and will therefore promote the development of a guide on how human rights can be considered in official investigations.

The promotion mandate also includes monitoring, promoting and disseminating research on human rights. The ultimate task within the sub-objective is to increase public knowledge and awareness of human rights.

In line with the 2023 operational plan, the Institute has focused in particular on:

- contributing to raising public awareness of human rights and how they can be enforced
- dialogue with other actors on collaboration to raise awareness of human rights and strengthen the capacity to work in a rights-based manner
- monitoring and disseminating information on national and international legal developments relevant to human rights
- monitoring, promoting and disseminating human rights research, dialogue with universities and higher education institutions on the focus of higher education and human rights research
- promoting the development of a guide on how human rights can be considered in official investigations.

### 3.5.1. Efforts to promote awareness of human rights

All work undertaken by the Institute as part of its mandate has a promotional purpose and contributes to increasing knowledge of human rights and raising awareness of the human rights situation.

A key tool in the promotional work is the Institute's annual report, but also other reports, analyses and opinions that the Institute publishes and disseminates on the human rights situation in Sweden, including national and international legal developments of importance to human rights (see sections 3.3, 3.4 and 3.6). Key channels for disseminating knowledge are the Institute's website and social media.

In addition, the Institute's Director and various employees participated in a number of different conferences and events during the year, partly to increase knowledge of the Institute's mission and role, and partly to increase knowledge of human rights in various contexts. The other promotional activities carried out in 2023 and the channels used by the Institute to disseminate knowledge are described below.

## Swedish Riksdag's seminar on hate, threats and polarising rhetoric in Sweden

A seminar was held in the Riksdag on 30 November to mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 2023. The seminar focused in particular on the increasing prevalence of hate, threats and polarising rhetoric in Sweden and the consequences it may have. Participants included Volker Türk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Kerstin Lundgren, Third Deputy Speaker of the Riksdag, Debbie Kohner, Secretary General of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI), Jens Mattsson, Director General of the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), Ida Karkiainen, Chair of the Swedish Riksdag's Committee on the Constitution, Erik Ottosson, Vice Chair of the Committee on the Constitution, and Thomas Bull, Justice of the Supreme Administrative Court. Participants from the Institute included Elisabeth Rynning, Chair of the Board, and Fredrik Malmberg, Director.<sup>111</sup>

The theme of the seminar was based on Annual Report 2023, which highlighted the development of hate, threats and polarising rhetoric in Sweden.<sup>112</sup> In connection with the seminar, the Institute's report Knowledge and Experiences of Human Rights in Sweden 2022-2023 was also launched.<sup>113</sup> The seminar was jointly organised by the Institute and the Bureau of the Committee on the Constitution, the Moderate Party and the Swedish Social Democratic Party.<sup>114</sup>

## Campaign to mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Human rights. Dangerous to take for granted. Important to defend. That was the message when the Institute launched its first campaign in December 2023.<sup>115</sup> The campaign was carried out to mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 2023, but above all to highlight that human rights are being violated and challenged in Sweden today.

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<sup>111</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Swedish Riksdag's seminar on 30 November on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ref.no. 2.7.4-671/2023.

<sup>112</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2023, pp. 78-91, ref.no. 1.1.1-163/2023.

<sup>113</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Awareness Report, ref.no. 3.1.1-436/2023.

<sup>114</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Swedish Riksdag's seminar on 30 November on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ref.no. 2.7.4-671/2023.

<sup>115</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Information campaign on the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ref.no. 2.7.5-505/2023.

The campaign consisted of four films about how human rights are challenged and violated in people's everyday lives, such as when moving around in the public space, going to school, or trying to do their job. The campaign was digital and consisted mainly of videos and animated banners that appeared on social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and LinkedIn. It was also visible on major news sites such as Aftonbladet and Omni. A special campaign site was created on the Institute's website to provide more information, including where to turn to claim your rights.<sup>116</sup> The campaign was well publicised. Digital advertisements on news sites have been shown to 2 million readers. Digital advertisements on social media have been shown to almost 4.5 million account users<sup>117</sup>. The campaign site has had over 23 000 visits.<sup>118</sup> During the campaign period, visits to our website have increased by 500 percent.<sup>119</sup>

## Information Network for Human Rights Specialists

One platform being developed to promote human rights is the National Network for Human Rights Specialists (NNHRS), established in 2020. At the end of 2022, the Institute took over the convening role in collaboration with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute, in accord with the respective human rights networks of civil society, county administrative boards and municipalities and regions. In 2023, four digital meetings were held. There were around 120 specialists on the meeting invitation list.<sup>120</sup> Examples of issues highlighted include current reviews for Sweden within the UN system, how local actors can contribute to the preparation, hearing and follow-up of UN monitoring bodies, the Swedish Agency for Public Management's evaluation<sup>121</sup> of the work carried out by Uppsala University, the county administrative boards and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) on behalf of the Government within the framework of the strategy for national human rights work. Furthermore, issues related to threats to human rights work and issues related to climate and the environment were discussed, including with the participation of the UN Special Rapporteur on Environmental Defenders, Michel Forst. On 26 October, the Network met with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, during his official visit to Sweden.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, [mrinstitutet.se/rattigheter75](http://mrinstitutet.se/rattigheter75)

<sup>117</sup> The term account user is used here because the same person can have an account on several platforms. See also ref.no. 2.7.5-505/2023.

<sup>118</sup> Statistics from Matomo.

<sup>119</sup> The campaign ran for two periods: 13 December - 18 December 2023 and 24 December 2023 - 4 January 2024. The number of visits is calculated from 13 December 2023 until 4 January 2024. The increase is calculated in comparison with the corresponding number of days before the campaign started (20 November to 12 December). The statistics are calculated using the tool Matomo, Ref.no. 2.7.5-505/2023.

<sup>120</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Human Rights Briefing, ref.no. 3.1.2-366/2023.

<sup>121</sup> Swedish Agency for Public Management, Follow-up of certain initiatives in the field of human rights (2022:13).

<sup>122</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, HC Letter to Director of Swedish NHRI 2023-11-13, ref. no. 3.1.2-366/2023.

## Cooperation with actors with specific human rights assignments

Several government agencies also have tasks that are particularly closely linked to promoting and monitoring Sweden's safeguarding of human rights, such as the Ombudsman for Children in Sweden, the Equality Ombudsman, the Swedish Agency for Participation, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency and the Living History Forum. During the year, the Institute has had contact and a dialogue with these government agencies to exchange experiences.<sup>123</sup> Several of the government agencies are part of the information network described above. The Institute intends to contribute to a more coordinated and continuous interaction and dialogue with these government agencies. A special dialogue has been held during the year with several of these government agencies and civil society regarding the role of the Institute as a national independent mechanism and the roles of other actors under Article 33 of the CRPD (see section 3.2.2).<sup>124</sup>

As part of the Government's national strategy for human rights, the county administrative boards and Uppsala University have special assignments, and previously the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) also had a special agreement with the Government. As part of the information network mentioned above, the Institute has had exchanges with these actors. In addition, the Institute has had a dialogue with SALAR and SALAR's Democracy Committee was visited in the autumn.<sup>125</sup>

The Institute has also met with the Stockholm County Administrative Board based on their task of coordinating and following up the national minority policy.<sup>126</sup>

## Human Rights Days 2023

On 23–25 November 2023, the Institute participated in the Human Rights Days in Helsingborg, Sweden. The Human Rights Days are organised as a collaborative project between nine different civil society organisations and one academic institution where Föreningen Ordfront is the financial and legal principal. This is the second time the Institute has participated in the Human Rights Days, a major forum for debate and dialogue on human rights.

The Institute organised two seminars. The main seminar was organised under the theme Human rights developments in Sweden - the Swedish Institute for Human Rights reports. Among other things, issues that the Institute highlighted in Annual Report 2023 and the report Knowledge and experiences of human rights in Sweden 2022-2023 were addressed. The smaller seminar discussed the Institute's specific mandate to promote, protect and monitor the

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<sup>123</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, see e.g. Dialogue meeting The Ombudsman for Children in Sweden, ref.no. 2.7.4-575/2023, Participation in meeting, ref.no. 2.7.4-479/2023.

<sup>124</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Roundtable, ref.no. 3.3.2-495/2023.

<sup>125</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Invitation to the Democracy Committee, ref.no. 2.7.3-392/2023.

<sup>126</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Request for meeting, ref.no. 2.7.4-504/2023.

implementation of the CRPD. The Institute also invited people to talk about current rights issues at our stand in the exhibition hall.<sup>127</sup>

## Human Rights Festival 2023

The Swedish Institute for Human Rights also participated in the annual Human Rights Festival in Lund in December 2023, organised by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute and Altitude Meetings. The Institute organised a seminar on the theme of Human rights developments in Sweden - the Swedish Institute for Human Rights reports. The focus was the Institute's report Knowledge and Experiences of Human Rights in Sweden 2022-2023. A dialogue was held on both the obstacles and opportunities for demanding human rights in Sweden.<sup>128</sup>

## Channels for dissemination of knowledge

The Institute's website [mrinstitutet.se](http://mrinstitutet.se) is a key channel for communicating information and spreading knowledge about human rights and the Institute's activities. During the year, we have worked to develop the content and functionality of the website, including adjusting the information structure and navigation of the website.

The website has had more than 66,000 visits in 2023, more than doubling the number of visits from the previous year.<sup>129</sup> The increase has taken place throughout much of the year, but individual events, such as the publication of new reports by the Institute, have also contributed to more visits to the website. Last year, for example, the annual report was downloaded more than 2,000 times. The information campaign carried out by the Institute at the end of the year has also been instrumental in increasing visits to the website.

To reach the media, the Institute uses the digital press tool via TT to issue press releases. The press releases are also simultaneously published on the Institute's website to optimise their impact. In 2023, the Institute issued 17 press releases<sup>130</sup> (compared to nine in 2022) and was interviewed by, for example, SVT Rapport, Ekot, TV4, Dagens Juridik and Advokaten.<sup>131</sup> Two debate articles from the Institute were also published in 2023, one in *Sydsvenskan* and one in

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<sup>127</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Agreement, ref.no. 2.3.5-267/2022

<sup>128</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Decision Guidance Document on participation, ref.no. 2.7.5-474/2023.

<sup>129</sup> Statistics retrieved from the Matomo tool.

<sup>130</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Collection of press releases, ref.no. 2.7.5-149-2023.

<sup>131</sup> See, i.a. <https://www.svt.se/nyheter/lokalt/vast/polisen-vistelseforbud-ger-effekt-i-biskops-garden--11m228>, <https://www.tv4.se/klipp/va/20511033/l-kan-inte-lova-att-institutet-for-manskliga-rattigheter-blir-kvar>, <https://www.tv4.se/artikel/5TyAlxMqRNdEGzg13lZMG3/avsoejar-sd-vill-avveckla-bidrag-till-arbete-mot-rasism>, <https://sverigesradio.se/artikel/kritik-mot-vistelseforbud-for-personer-med-gangkoppling>, <https://www.dagensjuridik.se/nyheter/institutet-for-manskliga-rattigheter-vill-ha-internationellt-erkannande/>, MR-institut ska ge helhetsbild av mänskorsläget - Tidningen Advokaten

Dagens Samhälle.<sup>132</sup> Other interviews conducted in 2023 will not be published until 2024, including a longer report in the magazine *Senioren* on the rights of the elderly.

At the end of April, we launched the Institute's presence on LinkedIn, where we regularly report on our activities and share knowledge on human rights. By the end of the year, we had published almost 100 posts and had more than 3,300 followers.

## Monitor and raise awareness of legal developments

Monitoring national and international legal developments and case law of relevance to human rights is also part of the Institute's broad external monitoring (see section 3.2). External monitoring will continue to develop in 2024, which includes monitoring national and international legal developments and case law of relevance to human rights.

Knowledge is disseminated, as previously mentioned, through the Institute's annual report, but also through various reports, analyses and opinions, as well as the Institute's website and other channels. A more systematic dissemination of legal developments and case law will be developed further.

## 3.5.2. Efforts to promote research

### Conference on human rights in higher education

On 19–20 October 2023, the Conference on Human Rights in Higher Education was organised. The conference was organised together with Lund University's profile area in Human Rights, the Faculty of Theology at Uppsala University and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute. The aim was to explore human rights as an area of knowledge in higher education and initiate this as an interdisciplinary research field, in Sweden and internationally.<sup>133</sup> The themes addressed on Day 1 were the challenges of combining research-based and critical knowledge seeking with training for professional life, an emerging human rights profession, human rights as a distinct field of knowledge in higher education, and the role of law in human rights as a field of knowledge. Day 2, which was in English, covered topics such as Human rights in higher education as an emerging field of research, Integrating research, education, and practice in human rights, Looking ahead - How can we do cross-disciplinary research on human rights in higher education.

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<sup>132</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Opinion article *Dagens samhälle*, ref.no. 2.7.5-177/2023-1, and Opinion article *Sydsvenskan*, ref.no. 2.7.5-177/2023-2.

<sup>133</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Conference 19-20 October - Human Rights in Higher Education, Lund University, ref.no. 2.7.4-672/2023.



Participants represented Lund University, Uppsala University, Malmö University, University of Gothenburg, Stockholm University, University College Stockholm, Queens University Belfast, Global Campus of Human Rights Venice, Newcastle University and Raoul Wallenberg Institute.

## Sámi rights and the climate transition

The Institute held a research conference in Luleå/Julevu on 25-26 September 2023 together with Luleå University of Technology and the Silver Museum in Arjeplog. The theme of the research conference was Indigenous peoples and Sámi rights in connection with climate transition. The programme included discussions on the Minority Act and what this means for the Sámi's right to their culture and influence, the Consultation Act and Human Rights Protection Against Interferences in Traditional Sámi Areas.<sup>134</sup> The aim of the conference was to create a platform for knowledge exchange and discussion on current research and legal developments in Sámi law from a legal perspective. The conference was aimed at active legal professionals in academia, civil society, the judiciary, central government administration, and Sámi representative institutions who work with Sámi rights issues using law as a tool. The Institute published a report on the conference in December 2023. With the conference and the conference report, the Institute aims to help highlight the issues and promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences on national and international legal developments.<sup>135</sup>

## 3.6. Sub-objective 5: International cooperation

Under the fifth objective, the Institute shall promote the safeguarding of human rights through international cooperation. The Institute shall inform and engage in dialogue with monitoring bodies within the UN and the Council of Europe, as well as with actors within the EU. The Institute shall also engage in dialogue with other national human rights institutions, including through close cooperation with the Nordic human rights institutions and the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) with the aim of applying for membership and A status in the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

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<sup>134</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Invitation to research conference, ref.no. 3.1.2-334/2023-1.

<sup>135</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Conference report, ref.no. 3.1.2-334/2023-2.

In line with the 2023 operational plan, the Institute has focused in particular on:

- follow-up on recommendations from various international and regional review bodies
- preparing the alternative report and dialogue with the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR).
- preparing the alternative report and dialogue with the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD).
- preparing the alternative report and dialogue with the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
- Council of Europe's review on the rights of indigenous peoples and national minorities
- dialogue with the Nordic human rights institutions
- monitoring human rights issues in the EU, including the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the Council of Europe
- participation in the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) and its various working groups relevant to the Institute's priorities
- continued dialogue with the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

### 3.6.1. International and regional review processes

#### Supplementary information to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

The Institute's work on collecting and analysing data for an alternative report with supplementary information to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) review of Sweden's implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) began as early as spring 2022, when the Institute participated in an open seminar in the Swedish Riksdag organised by the Swedish Foundation for Human Rights (SFHR) and in which other representatives from several civil society organisations, anti-discrimination agencies, county administrative boards and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs participated. In 2023, the work intensified.

It has been important for the Institute to have an open dialogue with civil society to ensure that the Institute contributes relevant perspectives.<sup>136</sup> In autumn 2023, close dialogues were also maintained with the members of the Institute's newly established Advisory Council, which consists of 20 representatives of civil society organisations and independent experts in the field of human rights in Sweden.<sup>137</sup> The Council's opinions have greatly impacted the focus of the report.

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<sup>136</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, ref.no. 2.7.2-164/2022, ref.no. 2.7.2-94/2022, ref.no. 2.7.2-175/2022, ref.no. 2.7.2.218/2022, ref.no. 2.7.2-296/2022, ref.no. 3.1.2-599/2022 and ref.no. 3.1.2-122/2023.

<sup>137</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, The Council, ref.no. 1.2.1-416/2023.

As a result of the dialogues, the Institute has chosen to focus on a number of horizontal issues relating to the status and implementation of economic, social and cultural rights in Sweden. This includes the low level of awareness of the rights, the need for a review of the status of the rights in Swedish law, the conditions for being able to claim one's rights, shortcomings in the use of equality data, but also questions about how the central government uses its resources to provide the rights without discrimination of any kind. The report also focuses on a number of cross-cutting issues that affect several of the rights contained in the Convention, including climate change, discrimination, and increased financial vulnerability and inequality.

The report was submitted to the Committee in January 2024 for the review of Sweden that will take place on 21-22 February 2024.<sup>138</sup>

## Alternative report to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

As an independent national human rights institution mandated to fulfil the task of an independent national mechanism pursuant to Article 33(2) of the CRPD, the Institute is given the opportunity to contribute to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' review of Sweden's implementation of the Convention, including by submitting an alternative report to the Committee.

Given that the report to the Committee may not contain more than 10,700 words, it has not been possible to cover all relevant aspects and rights in the Institute's report, so a selection had to be made. In the selection process, the Institute has placed great emphasis on the views of persons with disabilities and their organisations.

In 2023, the Institute held several meetings with civil society and persons with disabilities, both in the form of larger open meetings and in smaller formats.<sup>139</sup> For example, the Institute organised two major meetings with the disability rights movement to gather their thoughts and ideas on what needed to be included in the report. The first meeting was held on 24 February and gathered around 75 participants from organisations representing persons with disabilities. A follow-up meeting was organised in September with about 30 participants.<sup>140</sup> Through the follow-up meeting, the Institute enlisted civil society to help prioritise the areas and aspects to be included in the report.

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<sup>138</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Supplementary information to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for consideration of the seventh periodic report of Sweden, ref. no. 6.1.1-604 / 2023.

<sup>139</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Awareness of Human Rights, Open meetings, ref.no. 6.1.1-165/2023, and Follow-up meeting for report to UN, CRPD, ref.no. 3.1.2-356/2023.

<sup>140</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Dialogue meeting, ref.no. 6.1.1-165/2023 and Follow-up meeting, ref.no. 3.1.2-356/2023.

In autumn 2023, close dialogues were also held with the members of the Institute's Advisory Council. The Council has several members with personal experience of disability. The Council's opinions have also greatly impacted the focus of this report.

The Institute submitted its alternative report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 2 February 2024 in preparation for Sweden's review on 11-12 March 2024.<sup>141</sup>

## **Alternative report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination's (CERD) review of Sweden has been postponed from 2024 to provisionally August 2025.<sup>142</sup> Against this background, the Institute's work on an alternative report to the CERD has also been postponed.

## **Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities**

The Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities includes provisions on the protection and promotion of languages, the protection and safeguarding of minority cultures, traditions, cultural heritage and religion, and participation in the cultural, social, economic and public life affecting them. The purpose of the Convention is to protect the survival of national minorities. This means, among other things, that any discrimination against a national minority is prohibited and the central government must take measures to achieve equality between the majority population and minorities. Sweden ratified the Convention in February 2000 and Jews, Roma, Swedish Finns, Sámi (also indigenous peoples) and Tornedalers were recognised as national minorities.

Countries that have signed the Framework Convention shall provide regular reports with information on legal and other measures taken to comply with the Convention. The reports are reviewed by a committee that conducts country visits to meet with the Government, representatives of national minorities, government agencies and relevant actors. The Committee then makes observations and recommendations to the reviewed country.

In March 2023, the Committee visited Sweden and conducted the fifth review of the country. On the basis of dialogue meetings with representatives of national minorities, the Institute sent the Committee a document containing challenges highlighted in the dialogue meetings. The document also suggested questions for the Committee to ask the Government during the

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<sup>141</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, 2024, "Supplementary information to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Regarding the 2nd/3rd State party review procedure of Sweden 2024", ref.no. 6.1.1-165/2023.

<sup>142</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Collective case of the Institute's alternative report to the CERD, ref.no. 6.1.1-674/2023.

country visit. The Institute also met with the Committee during their visit to Sweden.<sup>143</sup> The Council of Europe's observations and recommendations to Sweden were adopted in October. Sweden then has four months to comment on the content before the results of the review are presented.

### 3.6.2. Follow-up on recommendations from monitoring bodies

#### Recommendations of the CRC

In 2022, the Institute submitted an alternative report with supplementary information to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC). In March 2023, the Committee submitted its conclusions and recommendations to Sweden.<sup>144</sup> The recommendations covered a number of areas. In 2023, the Institute has started a follow-up of the recommendations.

#### Follow-up by government agencies

In 2023, the Institute requested information about the measures taken by the National Board of Institutional Care (SiS) and the Health and Social Care Inspectorate (IVO) in their own operations to safeguard human rights, as part of the follow-up of Sweden's recommendations from the CRC concerning, in particular, children and young people deprived of their liberty.<sup>145</sup> Dialogues based on the information received from each government agency are planned to be held in early 2024 (see also section 3.2).

A large number of people, mainly women and children, have been deprived of liberty for more than five years in prisons and camps in north-eastern Syria in the aftermath of the collapse of the Islamic State (IS). Among them are a number of Swedish citizens, including several children. In its conclusions and recommendations from 2023, the CRC recommended that Sweden undertake and prioritise measures to repatriate them to Sweden.<sup>146</sup> During the year, the

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<sup>143</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, see, inter alia, Invitation to dialogue meeting, ref.no. 2.7.2-296/203 and Report on Dialogue meeting, ref.no. 3.1.2-122/2023, Dialogue with STR and Met Nuoret, ref.no. 3.1.2-22/2023, Response and appendix, ref.no. 6.1.2-38/2023, and Meeting with the Council of Europe's Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, ref.no. 6.1.2-38/2023.

<sup>144</sup> Concluding observations on the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Sweden, 7 March 2023, UN Doc no. CRC/C/SWE/CO/6-7.

<sup>145</sup> Request for information from IVO, 31 March 2023, ref.no. 6.1.5-171/2023, and from SiS, 31 March 2023, ref.no. 6.1.5-172/2023.

<sup>146</sup> United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child, CRC/SWE/co/6-7, 7 March 2023 J, p. 47C. See also general recommendations from the CRC and Special Rapporteur Fionnuala Ní Aoláin. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2023/03/children-northeast-syria-must-be-urgently-repatriated-un-experts>.

Institute has contacted the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to initiate a dialogue on what is being done to fulfil the recommendations on repatriating children to Sweden.<sup>147</sup>

### 3.6.3. International cooperation

#### Meeting with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, made an official visit to Sweden on 26–27 October 2023. The Institute was invited to participate in a separate meeting with the High Commissioner on 26 October.<sup>148</sup>

The meeting took the form of a conversation between the High Commissioner and the Institute's management on the Government's attitude towards the Institute's work, Swedish and international human rights developments, possible cooperation between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Institute during the upcoming 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and an in-depth discussion on Quran burnings, detention of young people and the high rate of legislation.

Immediately following the Institute's separate meeting, the Institute and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute organised a digital meeting between the High Commissioner and the National Network for Human Rights Specialists, as an item on the agenda prepared by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.<sup>149</sup>

In addition to this occasion, the Institute held bilateral meetings with representatives of the OHCHR, in particular its National Institutions and Regional Mechanisms Section (NIRMS), which is the GANHRI Secretariat. Some of the contacts were about the preparation of the high-level webinar organised by the Institute on 18 October 2023 in relation to the application for accreditation.

#### Global cooperation between NHRIs

In March 2023, the Institute attended the GANHRI annual meeting as an observer<sup>150</sup> and has since had bilateral meetings with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner

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<sup>147</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Official Letter to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, ref.no. 2.7.4-496/2023.

<sup>148</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, HC letter to Director of NHRI, ref.no. 3.1.2-366/2023.

<sup>149</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, HC Letter to Director of Swedish NHRI 2023-11-13, ref. no. 3.1.2-366/2023.

<sup>150</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, press release, Svensk närvaro för första gången när nationella institutioner för mänskliga rättigheter från hela världen samlas i Genève [First Swedish attendance when NHRIs from around the world gather in Geneva], press release 2023-03-16, ref.no. 2.7.5-149/2023.

for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the GANHRI representative in Geneva, Switzerland. The Institute also participated in GANHRI's 14th International Conference of National Human Rights Institutions on 6-8 November 2023 in Copenhagen. The theme of the conference was Torture and other ill-treatment - the role of National Human Rights Institutions.<sup>151</sup>

### 3.6.4. Dialogue with UN special rapporteurs and working groups

#### UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief

On 11-20 October, the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Nazila Ghanea, visited Sweden. The visit was prompted by a resolution adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in the summer of 2023. The resolution expressed strong concern about incidents of Quran burnings, including in Sweden.

However, the Special Rapporteur's visit was not only about Quran burnings but aimed to get an overall picture of the conditions for freedom of religion and belief and the existence of religiously based discrimination and intolerance in Sweden. The results will be published in a report to the United Nations Human Rights Council in March 2024.

During their visit, the Rapporteur met with several Government and Riksdag representatives, including several ministers and the Speaker of the Riksdag. She also met with several government agencies, faith communities and non-governmental organisations. On 16 October, she visited the Institute, which included a roundtable discussion with researchers and experts on freedom of religion and belief in Sweden. The discussions covered topics such as the limits of freedom of expression and demonstration and the legal protection of freedom of religion and belief, but also the interplay between religiously based intolerance and racism in Swedish society.<sup>152</sup> At the end of the visit, the Rapporteur submitted a number of preliminary observations and recommendations to the Government.<sup>153</sup>

#### UN Special Rapporteur on Environmental Defenders

In the framework of the GANHRI annual meeting and ENNHRI's 10th anniversary, the UN Special Rapporteur on Environmental Defenders presented their assignment and early

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<sup>151</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, 14th International Conference of National Human Rights Institutions in Copenhagen 6-8 November 2023, ref.no. 3.4.2-678/2023.

<sup>152</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Roundtable Discussion on Religious Intolerance in Sweden, 16 October 2023, ref.no. 6.1.4-381/2023.

<sup>153</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Several challenges for freedom of religion and belief in Sweden, 27 October 2023, <https://mrinstitutet.se/nyheter/flera-utmaningar-for-religions-och-trosfrihet-i-sverige/>. Also available here: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/10/sweden-must-strengthen-dialogue-faith-communities-combat-religious-or-belief>

findings on the situation of environmental defenders in different European countries. On both occasions, national human rights institutions were encouraged to review their capacity to contribute to the Special Rapporteur's mandate, for example by facilitating dissemination of information and visits.

In cooperation with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute, the Special Rapporteur was invited to present their work to the National Network for Human Rights Specialists on 23 November.<sup>154</sup> After the meeting, the Institute shared relevant parts of its annual report as well as a few additional sources of information on the conditions of environmental defenders in Sweden.<sup>155</sup>

## UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights

The UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights<sup>156</sup> invited input for a report to the UN General Assembly in October 2023 titled "Extractive Sector, Just Transition and Human Rights."

The Institute submitted an official letter to the Working Group in spring 2023, focusing on Sámi rights in relation to climate change and extractive industries. The Institute collaborated with researchers from the Rights and Equity Team at the Stockholm Environment Institute, an independent international research institute.

In the official letter, the Institute highlighted, among other things, the gaps in the protection of Sámi rights in legislation at different stages of issuing of permits and that Sweden still lacks legislation on a mandatory human rights due diligence process, including for state enterprises. The Institute also highlighted weaknesses related to meaningful participation.<sup>157</sup>

## Expert meeting on local authorities and human rights

In August 2023, the Institute participated in the OHCHR expert meeting on human rights and local governance, based on Human Rights Council resolution 51/12 on Local Government and Human Rights. The Institute then responded to the subsequent invitation to provide input to describe the situation in Sweden on these issues, focusing on both challenges and good practice.<sup>158</sup> The input will be used in the next OHCHR report on Local Governance and Human Rights to the United Nations Human Rights Council, scheduled for 2024.

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<sup>154</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Invitation to NNHRS 23 November 2023, ref.no. 3.1.2-366/2023.

<sup>155</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Annual Report 2023, p. 74 f., ref.no. 1.1.1-163/2023.

<sup>156</sup> Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/wg-business>

<sup>157</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Official Letter, ref.no. 6.1.2-285/2023.

<sup>158</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Response to Call for Inputs, ref.no. 6.1.2-437/2023.



### 3.6.5. Regional cooperation

#### European cooperation between NHRIs

In autumn 2022, in preparation for accreditation with GANHRI, the Institute became an associate member of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI).

In 2023, the Institute participated in several ENNHRI activities including the annual meeting and the 10th anniversary of ENNHRI.<sup>159</sup> Furthermore, the Institute has been in close contact with the Secretariat and the Chair of the Board during the year, in particular in relation to the Institute's application for accreditation on 14 April and the high-level webinar on 18 October.<sup>160</sup> The Secretary General of ENNHRI also participated in the parliamentary seminar to mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

ENNHRI has several thematic working groups and in 2023 the Institute participated in the Working Group on the CRPD<sup>161</sup>, the Working Group on Business and Human Rights<sup>162</sup>, the Working Group on AI and Human Rights<sup>163</sup> and the Working Group on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>164</sup>.

In August, the Institute participated in a meeting in Oslo focusing on the rule of law together with several other European NHRIs. The meeting was organised by ENNHRI in cooperation with the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution (NIM) and focused largely on regional trends in the principle of the rule of law. The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) also attended the meeting and presented its rule of law work with NHRIs.<sup>165</sup> An in-depth dialogue has also been conducted with sister institutions in the Nordic countries and Germany regarding accreditation procedures and work on the CRPD.

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<sup>159</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, ENNHRI membership questions, ref.no. 3.4.2-65/2024.

<sup>160</sup> ENNHRI welcomes the accreditation request of the Swedish Institute for Human Rights - ENNHRI (published 2023-04-14: available here: ENNHRI welcomes the accreditation request of the Swedish Institute for Human Rights - ENNHRI, <https://ennhri.org/news-and-blog/ennhri-welcomes-the-accreditation-request-of-the-swedish-institute-for-human-rights/#::~text=EN-NHRI%20welcomes%20the%20accreditation%20request%20of%20the%20Swedish,further%20strengthening%20the%20human%20rights%20framework%20in%20Sweden>

<sup>161</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Membership of the ENNHRI working group on CRPD, ref.no. 3.4.2-91/2024.

<sup>162</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, ENNHRI Working Group on Business and Human Rights, ref.no. 3.4.2-105/2024.

<sup>163</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Participation in ENNHRI Working Group, Digitisation, AI and Human Rights 28 September 2023, ref.no. 3.4.2-679/2023.

<sup>164</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Invitation to the 13th meeting of the COE-FRA-ENNHRI-EQUINET Collaborative Platform on Social and Economic Rights, 28 September 2023, ref.no. 3.4.2-421/2023.

<sup>165</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Participation in ENNHRI meeting, Oslo 30 August, ref. no. 3.4.2-394/2023.

### 3.6.6. Promotional activities within the EU

In the first half of 2023, Sweden held the EU Presidency. Within the framework of the Presidency, several conferences were organised on human rights themes, LGBTI rights, discrimination and the institutional protection of human rights in crisis management, during which a selection of Swedish actors were able to interact with actors at European level. The Institute attended all conferences and participated in the conference organised in Lund on human rights in crisis, where the Institute's Director Fredrik Malmberg was one of the main speakers.<sup>166</sup>

### The European Commission's annual Rule of Law Report

On 23 March, the Institute met with representatives of the European Commission's work on Rule of Law, in connection with the Commission's digital visit to Sweden. During the meeting, the Institute shared its views on the current situation in relation to the Commission's legal certainty issues, including developments in the establishment of the Institute. With this, the Institute contributed to the compilation of the Swedish chapter of the 2023 Rule of Law Report from the European Commission.<sup>167</sup>

The Institute has also been invited to contribute information to ENNHRI's annual Rule of Law report in 2023. The Institute submitted the information to ENNHRI on 22 January 2024.<sup>168</sup> The information will be used for the European Commission's annual Rule of Law report and for ENNHRI's annual NHRI Rule of Law report.

### 3.6.7. Nordic cooperation

In 2023, the Institute continued to exchange experiences with its Nordic sister organisations and made a study visit to the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution (NIM) in April 2023.<sup>169</sup> A study visit was also carried out in June 2023 to Kautokeino, where NIM has a regional office with a special role in working on Sámi and minority rights.<sup>170</sup> Furthermore, the Institute has exchanged experiences with the Nordic institutions in various ways in preparation for the application and assessment of accreditation for A status.

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<sup>166</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, High level Conference on LGBTIQ Equality in the European Union, 12 April 2023, ref.no. 2.7.4-100/2023, High-level Conference on Institutional Protection of Fundamental Rights in times of crises, Lund 20-21 April 2023, ref.no. 2.7.4-376/2023, and Invitation to Conference on Equality Data and Non-Discrimination, ref.no. 2.7.4-675/2023.

<sup>167</sup> Available here: [https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-07/61\\_1\\_52635\\_coun\\_chap\\_sweden\\_en.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-07/61_1_52635_coun_chap_sweden_en.pdf) For the Swedish chapter, see the foot of the page

<sup>168</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Contribution of the Swedish institute of human rights to the ENNHRI 2024 reports on the state of Rule of Law, ref.no. 3.4.1-46/2024.

<sup>169</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Study visit NIM, ref.no. 2.7.4-87/2023.

<sup>170</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Study visit to NIM in Kautokeino, ref.no. 3.4.2-333/2023.

During the year, cooperation was also established with the Nordic Welfare Centre on the exchange of Nordic experience in implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.<sup>171</sup> During the year, the Institute also participated in a meeting in Oslo on the rule of law organised by ENNHRI in cooperation with NIM (see more above).

## 3.7. Human resources and competence provision

### 3.7.1. Competence provision

It is of importance for the Institute to obtain employees with deep and broad knowledge in the field of human rights, as well as employees who can contribute to creating good working conditions and a stable organisational platform. During the Institutes initial period, it was crucial that employees in the core activities had extensive experience of working with human rights in Sweden. It has also been necessary for the Institute to have the competence required to build a government agency with functioning administrative procedures and systems, as well as to be able to offer good working conditions and a good work environment as an employer, and to promote an internal culture that helps the Institute fulfil its mission and to be seen as a credible actor.

The Institute works to enable the recruitment of employees of different ages, experiences and perspectives to achieve diversity in accordance with the Paris Principles (see also section 1.3 and sub-objective 1). In spring 2023, recruitment guidelines were developed. These were evaluated in the autumn by an external evaluator. In 2024, the Institute will continue to work on developing the recruitment process based on the recommendations made from the evaluation.<sup>172</sup>

The Institute has also investigated the possibility of cooperating with other government agencies on lending employees to ensure competence provision, which has also been done for the controller function. However, when borrowing or lending personnel, the Institute must always consider whether it could interfere with its independence.

### 3.7.2. Recruitment

The 2023 operational plan states that the Institute should continue to recruit during the year with the aim of achieving a diversity of knowledge and experience among the Institute's employees. The Institute has therefore continued to focus on recruitment in 2023 to ensure sufficient knowledge for the implementation of its mission. At the end of 2022, the Institute

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<sup>171</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, collaboration with the Nordic Welfare Centre, ref.no. 2.7.3 - 86/2023.

<sup>172</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Report, ref.no. 2.1.8-582/2023.

had 18 monthly salaried employees. At the beginning of 2023, the Institute consisted of ten investigators, one HR specialist, one registrar, one IT and office services employee, one controller, one fixed-term administrator and two fixed-term communicators, totalling 17 monthly salaried employees. On January 20, 2023, the permanent Director took up his duties and since then, a permanent administrative lawyer, communications officers and an administrator, as well as nine additional investigators and three heads of unit, have been recruited.

The group of investigators consists of more than twice as many women as men - thirteen women and six men respectively. Most of the support services are provided by women. The average age has dropped slightly since last year but remains relatively high (45.5 years for investigators and 51 for support services) due to the need for employees with extensive experience in all fields.

Number of employees Start of 2022	Turnover (+/-) Employees in 2022	Number of employees End of 2022	Number of employees Start of 2023	Turnover (+/-) Employees in 2023	Number of employees End of 2023
5	+13	18	17	+10	27

At the start of 2022, the Institute had five employees. In 2022, 16 new employees were recruited. By the end of 2022, two fixed-term contracts had expired and one permanent employee had resigned. At the start of 2023, another fixed-term contract had expired. In 2023, 13 more people were hired, while two fixed-term and one permanent employee left.

### 3.7.3. Work environment and equal opportunities

The Institute is located in newly renovated facilities in Lund. The majority of the employees are situated in open-plan offices, but it is also possible to sit in private rooms if necessary. The Institute also provides the opportunity to do some work remotely. During the autumn, all employees were offered training in ergonomics and an individual ergonomic review via the occupational health service. Risk assessments of the organisational and social work environment as well as of violence and threats were carried out during the year and measures were planned and implemented. Several of the areas identified under active measures have been investigated and measures have been scheduled for the future. The Institute’s recruitment process has been evaluated based on how it contributes to creating conditions for recruiting employees with a wide range of experience as well as how it ensures non-discrimination.<sup>173</sup>

<sup>173</sup> The Swedish Institute for Human Rights, Report, ref.no. 2.1.8-582/2023.

## Sickness absence

Sickness absence %	2023	2022
Total	1,24 %	0,66 %
Proportion 60 days or more	-	-
Women	1,53 %	-
Men*	-	-
Employees –29 years*	-	-
Employees 30–49 years*	-	-
Employees 50 years	1,34 %	-

\* Sickness absence broken down by men and the age group 30–49 is not provided because the number of employees in the group is too small and the data can be attributed to a single individual. Sickness absence for the age group 29 years or younger is not available as the Institute has no employees in this age group.

The total sickness absence is low, and there is no-one on long-term sick leave at the Institute. Women’s sickness absence is of a higher percentage than the men’s, and the group over 50 has a slightly higher sickness absence rate than the group between 30–49. However, sickness absence in all categories is at a low level. No sickness absence has been reported as work-related.

### 3.7.4. Overall assessment

The Swedish Institute for Human Rights assesses that access to expertise has been good in relation to the recruitments made during the year. There have been qualified applicants for all advertised positions in the core activities. Extensive recruitment has taken place, and the Institute has largely hired the employees that can be accommodated within the current budget as well as made the necessary preparations for further growth. Continued efforts to develop the onboarding process of new employees have been undertaken with the aim of creating an inclusive working environment that provides the conditions for continuing to develop the organisation. The investments made for onboarding and work environment are deemed to have had an impact, which was noted in the external evaluation of the recruitment process carried out in the autumn, and the development work will continue in 2024.

## 4. Financial statement

### 4.1. Income statement

Income statement (kSEK)	Note	2023	2022
<b>Revenue from operations</b>			
Revenue from appropriations	1	40,385	26,591
Revenue from fees and other sources	2	1	0
Revenue from grants		9	0
Financial revenue	3	482	161
<b>Total</b>		<b>40,877</b>	<b>26,752</b>
<b>Expenses from operations</b>			
Expenses for personnel	4	-25,025	-13,979
Expenses for premises		-4,432	-3,856
Other operating costs	5	-9,952	-8,129
Financial expenses	6	-302	-38
Depreciations and write-downs		-1,166	-750
<b>Total</b>		<b>-40,877</b>	<b>-26,752</b>
Operational outcome		0	0
Change in capital for the year		0	0

### 4.2. Balance sheet

Balance sheet (kSEK)	Note	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
<b>Assets</b>			
Tangible fixed assets			
Cost of improvements to leased property	7	2,718	3,513
Machinery, equipment, fixtures and fittings, etc.	8	3,250	2,530
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,968</b>	<b>6,043</b>
<b>Current receivables</b>			

Balance sheet (kSEK)	Note	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
Receivables from other public authorities	9	1,011	1,050
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,011</b>	<b>1,050</b>
<b>Accruals and deferrals</b>			
Prepaid expenses	10	1,484	1,165
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,484</b>	<b>1,165</b>
<b>Settlement account with the government</b>			
Settlement account with the government	11	-11,633	-23,409
<b>Total</b>		<b>-11,633</b>	<b>-23,409</b>
<b>Cash and bank</b>			
Balance of interest account with the Swedish National Debt Office	12	15,599	25,359
<b>Total</b>		<b>15,599</b>	<b>25,359</b>
Total assets		12,430	10,208
<b>Capital and liabilities</b>			
Government agency capital	13		
<b>Total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Provisions</b>			
Other provisions	14	69	26
<b>Total</b>		<b>69</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Liabilities etc.</b>			
Loans with the Swedish National Debt Office	15	6,015	6,043
Current liabilities to other government agencies	16	1,166	709
Accounts payable – trade		3,372	2,337
Other current liabilities	17	464	329
<b>Total</b>		<b>11,017</b>	<b>9,419</b>
<b>Accruals and deferrals</b>			
Accrued expenses	18	1,344	764
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,344</b>	<b>764</b>
Total capital and liabilities		12,430	10,208

## 4.3. Statement of appropriations

Accounting against appropriations

Appropriations (kSEK)	Note	Opening transfer amount	Allocation for the year according to appropriation directions	Withdrawal	Total amount available	Expenditure	Closing transfer amount
Bud. ex. area 1 6:6 app. 1 Swedish Institute for Human Rights Framework appropriation							
Ap.1 The Swedish Institute for Human Rights – to the Swedish Institute for Human Rights (Framework)	19	23,409	50,518	-21,909	52,018	-40,385	11,633
<b>Total</b>		<b>23,409</b>	<b>50,518</b>	<b>-21,909</b>	<b>52,018</b>	<b>-40,385</b>	<b>11,633</b>

## 4.4. Supplementary information

All amounts are presented in thousands of Swedish krona (kSEK) unless otherwise stated. As a result, totalling differences may occur.

### 4.4.1. Accounting principles

#### Accounting principles applied

The government agency's accounting complies with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and the Bookkeeping Ordinance (2000:606) and the National Financial Management Authority's (ESV) regulations and general guidance on this ordinance. The annual report has been prepared in accordance with the Ordinance (SFS 2000:605) concerning the Annual Reports and Budget Documentation and ESV's regulations and general recommendations with regard to this Ordinance.



In accordance with the National Financial Management Authority's regulations to Section 10 of the Bookkeeping Ordinance, the Agency applies the cut-off date of January 5th.

After the cut-off date, invoices in excess of SEK 50 thousand have been recorded as accruals and referrals items.

There has been cost-based settlement of appropriations.

## 4.4.2. Valuation principles

### Fixed assets

Proprietary computer programs, acquired licences and rights, as well as machinery and equipment with an acquisition value of half a price base amount and an estimated economic life of at least three years are reported as fixed assets.

The monetary limit for cost of improvements to leased property and proprietary computer systems is kSEK 100.

Depreciation is calculated using the straight-line method of depreciation.

Depreciation in the year of acquisition is applied from the month the asset comes into use.

Depreciation periods applied	
3 years	Proprietary computer programs, licences, rights
5 years	Machinery and technical Equipment Other office machinery
10 years	Fixtures, fittings and furniture

The depreciation period for cost of improvements to leased property is the estimated useful life, but not less than three years.

### Current assets

Receivables are recognised at the amount at which they are expected to be received. Receivables in foreign currency have been valued at the exchange rate on the balance sheet date.

### Liabilities

The liabilities have been recognised at their nominal amount. Liabilities in foreign currency have been valued at the exchange rate on the balance sheet date. Remuneration and other benefits.

### 4.4.3. Senior executives

Senior executives	Compensation (kSEK)
<b>Fredrik Malmberg</b> *total compensation includes temporary dual residence allowance Benefits Director 20230120–20231231	1,396* 71
<b>Charlotte Palmstierna</b> Benefits Acting Director 20230101–20230119	876 1
Board members	
<b>Board Chair Elisabeth Rynning</b> Board member of Advokatfirman Jan Rynning AB	78
<b>Vice Chair Negin Tagavi</b> Compensation for loss of earnings Board member of Urban properties AB Board member of Urban i Temoata Holding AB Board member of Urban i Kakoura AB	60 27
<b>Board member Titti Mattsson</b> Expert in the Swedish National Council on Medical Ethics (Smer) Expert in SBU	40
<b>Board member Annika Jyrwall Åkerberg</b> Compensation for loss of earnings No other commitments	40 34
<b>Board member Leif Ljungholm</b> Member of the Swedish Economic Crime Authority's Advisory Council Board member of Ljungholm & Boström Advokater AB Member of the Board of L & B Förvaltnings AB	40
<b>Board member Niklas Martti</b> Compensation for loss of earnings No other commitments	40 25
<b>Board member Pål Wrangle</b> Board member Bengt-Eric Wrangle AB	40

## 4.5. Notes

All amounts are presented in thousands of Swedish krona (kSEK) unless otherwise stated. As a result, totalling differences may occur.

### 4.5.1. Income statement

Note 1. Revenue from appropriations	2023	2022
Revenue from appropriations	40,385	26,591
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,385</b>	<b>26,591</b>
Expenditures in the appropriations report	-40,385	-26,591
<b>Balance</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Note 2. Revenue from fees and other sources	2023	2022
Revenue pursuant to Section 4 of the Fees Ordinance	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

Note 3. Financial revenue	2023	2022
Balance of interest account with the Swedish National Debt Office	482	161
<b>Total</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>161</b>

The interest rate for interest accounts with the Swedish National Debt Office has averaged 3.5 percent in 2023, compared to an average of 1.6 percent in 2022.

Note 4. Expenses for personnel	2023	2022
Payroll expenses (excluding employer's contributions, pension contributions and other statutory and contractual contributions).	-15,151	-9,292
Of which payroll, non-employees	-411	-469
Social security contributions	- 8,227	- 4,215
Total expenses for personnel	- 1,647	- 472
<b>Balance</b>	<b>-25,025</b>	<b>-13,979</b>

The comparative figures for social security contributions and other expenses for personnel have been adjusted. The number of FTEs has increased by 9 employees during the year.

Note 5. Other operating costs	2023	2022
Repairs and maintenance	-66	-53
Public law charges, taxes, bad debt losses	-15	-31
Travel, business entertaining, information	-1,355	-720
Purchase of goods	-742	-1,411
Purchase of services	-7,775	-5,914
<b>Total</b>	<b>-9,952</b>	<b>-8,129</b>

The increase in operating costs compared to 2022 is due, among other things, to an increase in the number of physical meetings, thus increasing travel, hotel and accommodation expenses. Expenses for consulting services have also increased as the organisation develops and creates greater need for external expertise.

Note 6. Financial expenses	2023	2022
Balance of interest account with the Swedish National Debt Office	-94	0
Interest on loans with the Swedish National Debt Office	-204	-37
Other financial expenditure	-3	-1
<b>Total</b>	<b>-302</b>	<b>-38</b>

Interest costs have increased compared to the previous year due to an increase in the interest rate.

#### 4.5.2. Balance sheet

Note 7. Cost of improvements to leased property	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
Opening acquisition value	3,996	0
Acquisitions for the year	0	3,996
<b>Total acquisition value</b>	<b>3,996</b>	<b>3,996</b>
Opening accumulated depreciation	-483	0
Depreciations for the year	-795	-483
<b>Total accumulated depreciation</b>	<b>- 1278</b>	<b>-483</b>
<b>Closing book value</b>	<b>2,718</b>	<b>3,513</b>

Cost of improvements to leased property refers to adaptations of premises carried out at the start-up of the Institute in 2022 and no further capitalisation of adaptations of premises has taken place in 2023.

Note 8. Machinery, equipment, installations, etc.	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
Opening acquisition value	2,797	0
Acquisitions for the year	1,091	2,797
<b>Total acquisition value</b>	<b>3,888</b>	<b>2,797</b>
Opening accumulated depreciation	-267	0
Depreciations for the year	-370	-267
<b>Total accumulated depreciation</b>	<b>-638</b>	<b>-267</b>
<b>Closing book value</b>	<b>3,250</b>	<b>2,530</b>

Note 9. Receivables from other public authorities	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
Input VAT claim	1,011	1,050
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,011</b>	<b>1,050</b>

Input VAT for December 2023 was reclaimed in January 2024.

Note 10. Prepaid expenses	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
Prepaid rental expenses	1,068	1,006
Other prepaid expenses	416	159
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,484</b>	<b>1,165</b>

Other prepaid expenses refer to IT- services and operational leasing as of 2024.

Note 11. Settlement account with the government	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
<b>Appropriations in interest-bearing flow</b>		
Opening balance	-23,409	0
Recognised against appropriations	40,385	26,591
Funds allocated to the interest account	-50,518	-50,000
Repayment of grant funds	21,909	0
<b>Liabilities related to appropriations in interest-bearing flow</b>	<b>-11,633</b>	<b>-23,409</b>
<b>Total Settlement account with the government</b>	<b>-11,633</b>	<b>-23,409</b>

Note 12. Balance of interest account with the Swedish National Debt Office	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
Balance of interest account with the Swedish National Debt Office	15,599	25,359
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,599</b>	<b>25,359</b>
Authorized credit granted through annual appropriation directions	5,000	10,000
Maximum credit used	0	57

Note 13. Government agency capital	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
-	-	-

There is no government agency capital and therefore no breakdown table is presented.

Note 14. Other provisions	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
<b>Provision for local conversion work</b>		
Opening balance	26	0
Change for the year	43	26
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>26</b>

In 2024, the Agency has planned to use local conversion funds.

Note 15. Loans with the Swedish National Debt Office	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
<b>Refers to loans for investments in fixed assets</b>		
Opening balance	6,043	0
New loans during the year	1,137	6,793
Amortisation for the year	- 1166	-750
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>6,015</b>	<b>6,043</b>
Granted credit line according to annual appropriation directions	11,000	15,000
Utilised credit line including financial leasing	6,015	6,043

Note 16. Current liabilities to other government agencies	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
Output VAT	62	40
Employer's contributions	486	322
Accounts payable to other authorities	617	348
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,166</b>	<b>709</b>

Note 17. Other current liabilities	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
Employee withholding taxes	464	329
<b>Total</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>329</b>

Note 18. Accrued expenses	2023-12-31	2022-12-31
Accrued holiday pay including social security contributions	789	479
Other accrued wages and salaries including social security contributions	241	45
Other accrued expenses	314	241
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,344</b>	<b>764</b>

Accrued costs consist largely of holiday leave accrued in 2023 and estimated costs for consulting services provided by the National Government Service Centre and the Swedish National Audit Office.

### 4.5.3. Statement of appropriations

#### Note 19. Uo 1 6:6 ap.1 The Swedish Institute for Human Rights

##### The Swedish Institute for Human Rights – to the Swedish Institute for Human Rights

The Swedish Institute for Human Rights may use 3% of the previous year's allocation according to the annual appropriation directions.

According to the annual appropriation directions, the Swedish Institute for Human Rights has an appropriation credit of kSEK 1,515. In 2023, the Agency has not utilised the appropriation credit.

## 4.6. Compilation of essential data

All amounts are presented in thousands of Swedish krona (kSEK) unless otherwise stated. As a result, totalling differences may occur.

Credit line at the Swedish National Debt Office	2023	2022
Approved	11,000	15,000
Utilised	6,015	6,043
<b>Overdraft facilities at the Swedish National Debt Office</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Approved	5,000	10,000
Utilised	-	57
<b>Interest account at the Swedish National Debt Office</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Interest income	482	161
Interest expenses	94	0
<b>Fee revenues allocated</b>		
Estimated amount according to annual appropriation directions	-	-
Fee revenues	-	-
Other fee revenues	1	-
<b>Appropriations</b>		
Framework funding		
Appropriation savings	11,633	23,409
<b>Authorisations</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>	
<b>Personnel</b>		
Number of FTEs	22	13
Average number of employees *	23	14
<b>Operating cost per annual work unit (AWU)</b>	<b>1,791</b>	<b>1,997</b>
Change in capital		
for the year	-	-
brought forward	-	-

\*The calculation of the average number of employees includes personnel on leave.



## 5. Signing of the annual financial report

We certify that the annual financial report provides a true and fair view of the organisation's results and of its costs, revenue, and the Agency's financial position.

Stockholm, 16 February 2024

**Elisabeth Rynning**  
Ordförande

**Negin Tagavi**  
Vice ordförande

**Annika Jyrwall Åkerberg**  
Ledamot

**Leif Ljungholm**  
Ledamot

**Niklas Martti**  
Ledamot

**Pål Wrangé**  
Ledamot

**Titti Mattsson**  
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**Fredrik Malmberg**  
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