

The Swedish Institute for Human Rights was established in 2022. It is Sweden's national human rights institution (NHRI) and has been accredited with A-status. The Institute's mandate is to monitor, investigate and report on how human rights are respected, protected and fulfilled in Sweden.

With our report and factsheets, the Institute contributes to the 4th UPR cycle review of Sweden on 5 May 2025 at the UN Human Rights Council.

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Introduction

In 2016 the Swedish Government adopted a national human rights strategy. The implementation of this strategy has stalled. The strategy needs to be evaluated and followed up in its entirety. The evaluation should form the basis of a new strategy. Moreover, there is a need to strengthen the Government's implementation and follow-up of recommendations made by international review bodies to Sweden. These efforts should be conducted in close collaboration with civil society and other stakeholders.

Suggested recommendations

- › Develop a new strategy and action plan with concrete measures to achieve strong and comprehensive human rights protection in Sweden.

Suggested questions for Sweden

- › Will the 2016 Human Rights Strategy be evaluated and followed-up in its entirety?
- › How does the Government intend to strengthen follow-up and implementation of recommendations, including legislative action, from human rights monitoring bodies?



Previous recommendations

- › The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights systematically recommends states to adopt an NHRAP. The High Commissioner called on Sweden to establish a national mechanism for reporting and follow-up in relation to recommendations from human rights monitoring bodies in the third UPR cycle review.¹
- › The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has recommended Sweden to establish a national mechanism to “coordinate and follow-up on the implementation of the Committee’s concluding observations and to continue to engage with non-Governmental organizations and other members of civil society”.²

1. Letter by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to the Foreign Minister of Sweden, 4 December 2020.

2. E/C.12/SWE/CO/7 Para. 44.

The need for a strengthened and more systematic approach to human rights

A national human rights strategy should be long-term and relevant to current human rights challenges. Since the Swedish national human rights strategy was adopted in 2016, Swedish society and the surrounding world have changed in various ways.

The Swedish Institute for Human Rights has identified the following needs:

- › A new strategy should be formulated based on an evaluation and follow-up of the 2016 strategy, and in close collaboration with civil society and independent actors.
- › The Swedish Parliament has an important role to play in the realisation of human rights in Sweden, making decisions on laws and budgets, and monitoring the Government’s work. The Government should therefore submit the new strategy to the Parliament for a decision.
- › The strategy should be supplemented with a concrete action plan in accordance with the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. The number of National Human Rights Action Plans (NHRAPs) has increased and since 2019, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) has a working group for national action plans for human rights.
- › Collective strategic work for human rights requires systematic and concrete follow-up and implementation of the recommendations Sweden receives from international monitoring bodies, including from United Nations Treaty Bodies. Collaboration between the Government, the legislature, national and regional authorities, civil society and independent actors is crucial for efficient follow-up and implementation. Such collaboration is currently lacking, which makes it difficult to monitor the work being done.