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Human Rights Committee

Eighth periodic report submitted by Sweden under article 40 of the Covenant, due in 2026^{*, **, *}**

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The present document was submitted pursuant to the simplified reporting procedure. It contains the responses of the State Party to the Committee's list of issues prior to reporting (CCPR/C/SWE/QPR/8).

*** The annex to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



Introduction

1. An introductory provision of the Swedish Constitution states that public power shall be exercised with respect for the equal worth of all and the liberty and dignity of the individual. The objective of Sweden's human rights policy is to ensure full respect for the country's international human rights obligations. During the last reporting period, while progress has been made in Sweden's work to strengthen human rights, challenges remain. Sweden hereby submits its eighth periodic report under Article 40 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).
2. This report covers legislative, administrative and other measures connected to individual substantive provisions in the ICCPR taken during the reporting period. The report is based on the list of issues adopted by the Committee at its 144th session (CCPR/C/SWE/QPR/8).
3. Some statistical material replying to paragraph 4, 5, 15 and 22 is included in an Annex.

Reply to paragraph 1

4. Sweden is committed to respecting and protecting human rights through national legislation and through international agreements. Reports and international reviews indicate that ongoing work is needed to achieve the objective of ensuring full compliance with Sweden's international human rights obligations.
5. The strategy adopted by the Government on the national implementation of human rights in 2016 (Govt Comm 2016/17:29) is still valid. The Agency for Public Management is now tasked with monitoring and analysing the Government's Strategy on the national implementation of human rights including its fitness for purpose and effectiveness. In addition, the Agency is to submit proposals on how its unified structure can be developed. The Agency will submit the report on the task in 2026.
6. In 2022, the Swedish Institute for Human Rights was established. In 2024, the Institute received GANHRI's fully compliant (A) accreditation. See also under reply to paragraph 3.
7. In the previous report (CCPR/C/SWE/7, points 28–30), Sweden reported on its handling of the Committee's views on individual complaints. It also applies to situations where the Committee found that the rights of the complainant would be violated if a national decision were to be enforced. Since the vast majority of complaints concern the principle of *non-refoulement*, in most cases the measure consists in a re-examination of the matter of a residence permit (individual measures). Where general measures are deemed necessary, such measures are also taken. The views are published on the Government's human rights website: [International human rights reviews by Sweden – Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/om-regeringen/utrikespolitiska-omraden/human-och-menskligheter/human-och-menskligheter-i-sverige/)
8. Information on developments and measures taken since the Committee's recommendations from the last review and the information requested in the follow-up report are addressed in each area below.

Reply to paragraph 2

9. Conspiracy to commit coercion to marry was criminalised in 2016, and in 2020 a specific child marriage offence was introduced to strengthen the protection against child marriage. In May 2026, a bill was passed that included a proposal to expand the criminalised area for deception for the purpose of marriage abroad

(its name also being changed to marriage abroad offence), and of coercion to marry; that tougher penalties are imposed for these offences and for child marriage offence, and that a new offence, child marriage abroad offence, be introduced. The bill also included a proposal to remove the exemption from the prohibition on recognising certain illegal foreign marriages. The legislative amendments will enter into force in July 2026.

10. A new Social Services Act (2025:400) entered into force in July 2025. The legislative proposals mean better conditions for social services that are long-term sustainable, more preventive, easily accessible and evidence-based. The new Social Services Act has been supplemented by proposals for a unified regulatory framework for social services data registers that will expand the compilation of national social services statistics.
11. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Act (2018:1197) came into force on January 1, 2020. In its bill (Govt Bill 2017/18:186) on incorporating the CRC, the Government presented a package consisting of an act regarding the CRC and a number of measures in connection with the Act that should be seen as a comprehensive package for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In this context, the Government emphasised the importance of ongoing, systematic transformation efforts and in 2018 the Government appointed an inquiry tasked with mapping how well national legislation and practice align with the CRC. The Government has also commissioned the Agency for Public Management to monitor and analyse the Government's strategic work concerning the rights of the child, focusing on the work the Government has carried out in connection with the National strategy on strengthening the rights of the child (Govt Bill 2009/10:232). The Agency for Public Management has also been tasked with proposing how the Government can strengthen the effectiveness and impact of its work at the central government, regional and municipal levels.
12. For the period concerned, there are several court rulings that mention the ICCPR. In particular, a judgment from 2022 in which the Stockholm District Court held that the act that the defendant had participated in and which took place in Iran in 1988 was in violation of the ICCPR. The defendant was convicted of serious international law offences and murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. The essentials of the judgment were affirmed by the Svea Court of Appeal in December 2023.
13. There are no specific training courses or the like for judges or prosecutors concerning the ICCPR. However, the rights emanating from the ICCPR are largely protected by the Constitution and law and permeate the education of both judges and prosecutors. For example, prosecutors regularly receive courses in personal coercive measures, such as the conditions under which prosecutors may detain suspects, and the rights they have as a person in custody. This also includes courses on the bases on which prosecutors may decide on physical violations, such as blood tests and urine tests, as well as encroachments on private life, such as search warrants. Prosecutors also receive special courses in the use of personal coercive measures against young offenders and children's rights in criminal investigations and court proceedings. The rule of law enshrined in the ICCPR is fundamental in all education given to judges. In particular, the education of assistant judges (prospective judges) and regular judges addresses questions related to the role of judges, such as how to uphold principles such as the right to effective remedies and the right to a fair trial by independent judges, i.e. how judges contribute to upholding the rule of law.
14. Since 2014, Uppsala University's education task, to educate relevant personnel at different levels of public administration in human rights, is still ongoing. The aim of these competence development efforts

is to provide employees in public administration with a sufficient understanding of their role on matters that affect human rights issues and knowledge of the meaning of human rights.

15. A review of Sweden's reservations was presented in the Government's Strategy on the national implementation of human rights (Govt Comm 2016/17:29). In the Strategy, the Government states that the reasons for all previous reservations regarding the named conventions still apply.
16. For enhanced protection against racism, hate crime and hate speech, see reply to paragraph 5.

Reply to paragraph 3

17. The Swedish Institute for Human Rights was established in 2022. To comply with the Paris Principles, and to strengthen the Institute's independence from the Government, its tasks and management and certain fundamental matters pertaining to its organisation and ways of working are regulated in the Act on the Institute for Human Rights (2021:642).
18. The Institute is governed by a Board of Directors composed of the Institute's Director and seven other members. The other members are appointed by the Government for a term of five years. The Act contains provisions concerning the expertise and experience required among the members, and other provisions requiring the Government to request proposals for members from the Institute's Council, the Swedish Bar Association, and higher education institutions.
19. Under the Act, the Institute is to promote the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden. In the Government Bill that was preparatory to the Act, the assessment was made that the expression "promote the safeguarding" includes both protecting and promoting human rights.
20. The Institute's funding is assured through the regular central government budget process. The Institute's appropriation for 2026 amounts to SEK 54.8 million. Within the framework of its tasks, the Institute itself determines its organisation and the direction of its work in detail, for example in terms of regional cooperation and involvement with different parts of the community.

Reply to paragraph 4

Scope of the Discrimination Act

21. Work to safeguard effective and comprehensive legislation against discrimination continues. The goal of anti-discrimination policy is a society free of discrimination. Challenges remain in the area of discrimination.
22. Today, a prohibition on discrimination applies in certain parts of the public sector, such as labour market policy activities and social services. In other parts of the public sector, protection is limited to when the individual has contact with a government agency, for example when the agency provides information, guidance or advice. The current legislation means that individuals have weaker protection against discrimination in their contacts with some government agencies compared to others. In its report *Ett utökat skydd mot diskriminering* (SOU 2021:94) (Enhanced protection against discrimination), an inquiry proposed enhanced protection against discrimination in public activities. The proposals in the report are being prepared in the Government Offices.

The remit of the Equality Ombudsman

23. The Equality Ombudsman (DO) has a central role in combating discrimination. The DO's remit is broad and covers many different areas. In recent years, the DO has altered the direction of its activities, investigating more reports of discrimination with the goal of obtaining redress for more victims of discrimination. This means making more requests for compensation for discrimination and, where appropriate, bringing the case to court.
24. The DO's appropriation increased by SEK 25 million for 2026 and will increase by SEK 34 million for 2027 and beyond.
25. For information on the work to combat hate crimes, see reply to paragraph 5.

Reply to paragraph 5

Statistics

26. In 2024, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) identified hate crime motives in 2 731 reports, which is about the same level as 2022 (2 695 reports). Xenophobic and racist motives were the most common, comprising more than 1 400 motives (50%), and within that category Afrophobic hate crimes were the most common, accounting for 466 motives (16%). Among the reported crimes where Brå has identified hate crimes against religious groups, antisemitic hate crimes have increased from 111 (4%) in 2022 to 217 (8%) in 2024, and are now about as common as Islamophobic hate crimes comprising 199 motives (7%). LGBTIQ-related hate crimes were reported in 371 (13%) reports, and in that category homophobic hate crimes were the most common, comprising 196 reports (7%). Molestation was the most common offence category among all identified hate crimes, accounting for 23% of all offences with a hate crime motive. Agitation against a population group and criminal damage (often in the form of graffiti) occurred in 20% of complaints each, followed by defamation (14%) and unlawful threats (11%). The breakdown of offence categories is similar to that for 2022.
27. Hate crime statistics consist of offences reported to the police where a hate crime motive has been identified, along with data on how these crimes were handled by the judicial system. Statistics on hate crimes reported to the police are published every two years.
28. From 2020, the statistics on hate crimes reported to the police include a survey of all police reports that the police have flagged as possibly having a hate crime motive. Since the new method differs so significantly, comparisons with the past before 2020 are not true and fair.

Information material from the Swedish Crime Victim Authority

29. In 2022, the Swedish Crime Victim Authority was tasked by the Government with producing information material for people who are at risk of being or have been victims of hate crime with Islamophobic motives. The material was intended to inform these individuals about, inter alia, the rights of victims, how to make a police report, what happens after making the report, and about compensation to which victims of crime may be entitled. The purpose of the task was to get more victims to report incidents that may constitute hate crimes with Islamophobic motives to the police.

30. In 2024, the Crime Victim Authority was tasked with producing and disseminating information material for those who are at risk of being or have been victims of hate crime regardless of motive if the offence aims to insult the victim's identity. Here too, the objective of the task was that it would lead to more people reporting incidents that may constitute hate crime to the police.

Legislation

31. There is strong criminal protection against racist hate speech, primarily through the offence *agitation against a population group* in Sweden's Freedom of the Press Act and Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression and in the Criminal Code. There is also a provision in the Criminal Code which means that if a motive for the offence was to insult a person or a population group on grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or gender expression, or another similar circumstance, it must be deemed an aggravating circumstance when assessing the penalty value of each specific type of offence.
32. The main criminal law provisions of relevance in combating racist and similar hate speech are technology neutral. In 2019, the provisions were expanded to now cover transgender people. In 2024 the protection under criminal law was further strengthened by legislative amendments clarifying and expanding the provision on agitation against a population group in the Criminal Code by also including individuals belonging to the protected groups, meaning granting victims of the offence injured party status and the right to damages. Furthermore, the provision now explicitly states that denial of the Holocaust and certain other international crimes are criminalised. In addition, it is now clear that the provision also covers incitement to violence. Corresponding legislative amendments are proposed to enter into force in the Freedom of the Press Act and the Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression in 2027. In 2025, the protection under criminal law from gender-based hate crimes were strengthened and gender can now also constitute grounds for tougher penalties. In 2026 an inquiry proposed that the new offence *gender-based online hate* should be introduced. A person would be guilty of the new offence if, in a statement or other communication that is disseminated by means of a technical device, they incite violence, threaten or express contempt in relation to a group of people or an individual by allusion to gender. The proposals in the report SOU 2026:34 are being prepared in the Government Offices.

Swedish Police Authority

33. Since the last report, the Swedish Police Authority has created better conditions for the early identification of hate crimes and for improving the legal certainty of the assessments.
34. The Swedish Police Authority has formulated a goal for its work: that all hate crimes will be investigated by a special resource with in-depth knowledge in the area. The Swedish Police Authority has also decided to establish regional cybercrime centres in the seven police regions.
35. In light of developments in the law at EU level through the EU's Digital Services Act (DSA) and Regulation on addressing the dissemination of terrorist content online (TCO Regulation), government agencies now have new tools to combat the spread of illegal content online. The Swedish Police Authority has established an Internet Referral Unit to counter the spread of terrorism-related and other illegal material on digital platforms. The Swedish Police Authority also cooperates with several online platforms and contributes knowledge about illegal content to enable service providers to develop their own countermeasures. In Sweden, oversight of the DSA is exercised by the Swedish Post and Telecom Authority, the Swedish Consumer Agency, and the Swedish Agency for the Media. The DSA has meant

that online platforms are required to report suspected offences that involve a threat to the life or safety of one or more people to a law enforcement agency; in Sweden's case the Swedish Police Authority.

Swedish Prosecution Authority

36. Within the Swedish Prosecution Authority the Prosecution Development Centre (UC) in Malmö is responsible for supervision and the development of methods regarding investigations of hate crimes. There are specialised hate crime prosecutors at each prosecutor's chamber, and there is also a designated subject specialist within this legal area. The Swedish Prosecution Authority has developed a Legal Guideline in this area to support prosecutors in their handling of this type of cases. The Legal Guideline was last updated in 2022.

Swedish Defence Research Agency

37. Since 2022, the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) has a permanent mission to map and analyse racism and violent extremism in digital environments. This knowledge is important for the preventive efforts of government agencies and municipalities.

National Action Plan to combat racism and hate crime

38. A large number of measures have been implemented within the framework of the previous national action plan to combat racism, similar forms of hostility and hate crime and the supplementary action programmes to combat Afrophobia, antisemitism, antigypsyism, Islamophobia and racism against the Sami, which were decided in 2022. Among other things, the Living History Forum has implemented extensive educational initiatives about various forms of historical and contemporary racism. According to the Living History Forum's evaluations, the initiatives have helped to increase awareness of racism among school staff and other occupational groups and provided them with concrete tools to both identify and counter racism. An evaluation of the national action plan showed that it has added value but that there was also a need to develop the structure for this work for the plan to be able to deliver results, including clear objectives and good conditions for the government agencies to achieve them.
39. In 2024, the Government decided on a new action plan to combat racism and hate crime that lays the foundation for efforts in this area that are better targeted, are easier to evaluate and have a long-term focus. The action plan aims to prevent and combat all forms of racism in our society but also aims to highlight and, through various measures, to combat the following specific forms of racism: anti-Muslim racism, antisemitism, anti-Black racism, antigypsyism and racism against the Sami. The work is based on concrete targets linked to four focus areas that will be used to monitor progress towards the objective: Schools, the Judiciary, the Welfare system and public sector activities, and Working life. The action plan is intended to contribute to the work at local and regional level, for example by enabling the knowledge and tools developed to reach and be used in municipal and regional activities.

National strategy to strengthen Jewish life and combat antisemitism

40. In 2025, the Government decided on a national strategy to strengthen Jewish life and combat antisemitism in Sweden. The strategy provides a structure for national efforts in the period 2025–2034. The aim is to lay the foundations for more targeted and coordinated efforts and to create better conditions for Jewish life in Sweden. The Strategy has three focus areas that are considered to be central to strengthening Jewish

life and combating antisemitism: Knowledge, education and research on Jewish life, Swedish-Jewish cultural heritage and Jewish culture, and Safety and openness – efforts to combat antisemitism. The Government has also decided on several measures aimed at achieving the strategy's objectives.

Reply to paragraph 6

41. Based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the national goal for disability policy is to achieve equal living conditions and full participation for persons with disabilities in a society based on diversity. The goal is also intended to enhance gender equality and consideration of the child rights perspective.
42. In addition, the Government has decided on a ten-year strategy for monitoring the national goal for disability policy, the Strategy for systematic monitoring of disability policy 2021–2031. The strategy stipulates that disability policy is monitored by 29 government agencies and that the Swedish Agency for Participation provides support to them. The Government has also announced that an action plan for disability policy will be decided in 2026.

Definition of disability

43. In Sweden there are no official criteria for determining who is included in the group of persons with disabilities. Against this background, Statistics Sweden (SCB) has been tasked by the Government with developing a definition of the group “persons with disabilities” for statistical purposes based on the internationally harmonised Washington Group (WG) Short Set of Questions on Functioning.
44. The Discrimination Act defines disability as a “permanent physical, mental or intellectual limitation of a person’s functional capacity that as a consequence of injury or illness existed at birth, has arisen since then or can be expected to arise.” (section 5).

Institutional care and compulsory care

45. Institutional youth care is adapted to the individual needs of each young person. Many have mental illnesses and neurodevelopmental disabilities, and the activity is therefore based on the fact that most children and young people have special needs that require adaptations. In 2024, the Government appointed an inquiry, which was expanded in 2025, to reform the mandate of the National Board of Institutional Care (SiS) for children and young people in order to ensure safe, legally certain and knowledge-based care. The introduction of separate child and youth departments in prisons changes the target group and creates opportunities to develop the content of care for those children and young people who will continue to be cared for within SiS. The goal is an environment free from degrading treatment, violence, mistreatment and unjustifiable coercive measures, minimising isolation through high-quality care, adequate staffing and evidence-based methods. The inquiry will review the care and housing environment and ensure that children and young people have access to healthcare through improved cooperation with healthcare providers such as child and adolescent psychiatry. A report on the task will be presented in 2026.

Legal assistance for persons with disabilities

46. The Government's strategy for systematic monitoring of disability policy for the period 2021-2031 is based on there being essential areas of society that are important for people with disabilities to achieve equality and participation. The judicial system is one such area and the National Courts Administration has therefore been given a particular task to monitor the national objective for disability policy. In 2025, the Inquiry on legal representatives and costs submitted its report to the Government (The price of legal certainty, SOU 2025:111). Among other things, the Inquiry proposes that the right to counsel for certain particularly vulnerable victims of crime should be strengthened. The proposal entails a clarification that, when determining whether to appoint a counsel for the injured party, the court must consider in particular whether there is a need for counsel, taking into account the age, illness or disability of the injured party. The report has been referred for consultation.

Situation for women with disabilities in the labour market

47. Statistics Sweden was tasked by the Government with producing proposals concerning the statistics that can be used and analyses made to describe economic equality among women and men with disabilities. The final report on the task was submitted in 2024 and showed that the income discrepancies between women and men with disabilities are relatively small in Sweden.
48. People with disabilities who have reduced working capacity (ages 16–65) still generally have significantly lower rates of employment and labour force participation than the remainder of the population (age 15–65). According to Statistics Sweden's report "The labour market situation for people with disability 2024", around 5 million people in the population aged 16–65 are employed, of whom approximately 414 000 have a disability. Among persons with disabilities, the employment rate is 53%, compared with the rest of the population (80%). The employment rate is lower among persons with reduced working capacity (46%). Among persons with disabilities without reduced working capacity, the employment rate is 75% which, according to Statistics Sweden, is in line with the remainder of the population. However, the employment rate for men with disabilities without reduced working capacity differs from that of men in the remainder of the population: 73% compared with 82%. Women with disabilities without reduced working capacity have the same employment rate as women in the remainder of the population.
49. Statistics Sweden's report also shows that unemployment is significantly higher among people with disabilities – 18% compared with 8% in the remainder of the population. Statistics Sweden notes that there is no statistically significant difference in the rate of employment between women and men, either for persons with disabilities or in the remainder of the population. The report finds no differences among people with disabilities based on whether their work capacity is reduced or not. This suggests that other factors have a greater impact on unemployment, and that access to work or barriers to entering the labour market do not differ due to gender.

Measures to improve the labour market situation of persons with disabilities

50. According to the Ordinance for the Swedish Public Employment Service, the Service is required to work to improve the labour market situation for persons with disabilities and maintain the Service's own knowledge and skills and activities to support persons with a disability that entails a reduced working capacity to get or keep a job. In recent years, the Government has added several objectives and tasks that concern people with disabilities in its instructions and other ordinances to government agencies.

51. Since 2019, the Swedish Public Employment Service has been mandated to integrate a gender equality perspective across its operations in accordance with the gender equality policy objectives (Govt Comm. 2016/17:10). This requirement was reinforced in the 2021 appropriation directions, which specified its application across all activities, in particular key programmes such as subsidised employment, labour market training, job matching services, and the introduction programme.
52. According to the Swedish Public Employment Service's reporting, during the period 2022–2025 the Service has worked to strengthen internal governance for integrating gender equality into its core activities. Since 2022, the action plan has included objectives to improve gender equality in access to interventions, but despite known and quantitative targets, these have not been achieved. Reasons stated are a gender-segregated labour market and internal governance challenges. Development has been particularly weak in terms of women's access to subsidised positions for people with disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 7

Differences between men and women in the labour market

53. The delegation of the employer responsibility within central government to the government agencies is far-reaching. This means that the government agencies have been delegated a great deal of authority and operational responsibility for these matters. In practice, this responsibility includes the government agency's supply of skills, the development of the agency's knowledge and skills, pay and other terms and conditions of employment, the work environment and work with the basic values of central government. The Government steers the employer policy of central government through objectives and monitoring. One of central government's employer policy objectives is to reduce the pay gap between men and women, and another objective is to strive for an equal gender distribution in senior management positions.
54. In 2020, the Commission for gender-equal lifetime incomes was tasked with producing proposals to increase economic gender equality long-term between women and men. The results include surveys of gender differences in public support, analyses of pay transparency models and recommendations for measures to strengthen gender equality in working life and government agencies' information.
55. An example of tasks that the Commission's work led to was that the National Mediation Office was given a multi-year task to analyse not only wage income, but also other income that affects individuals' disposable income over their lifetime from a gender equality perspective.
56. The Government wants parents to have wider options to choose how parental leave is to be used, and that the parental benefit should therefore be more flexible. Since 2024, parents have been given the option to be on parental leave together for a longer period of time, and there is also an option for additional adults in the child's circle to utilise the parental benefit. That men and women should have the same opportunities and conditions regarding paid work that provides economic independence throughout their lives is an important priority of the Government.
57. Pay discrimination must be combated. Work is ongoing regarding the Directive (EU) 2023/970 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 May 2023 to strengthen the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women through pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms (the Pay Transparency Directive).

Pensions

58. The old-age pension system is individualised, with a uniform regulatory framework that applies equally to everyone, regardless of gender. The system is also based on the lifetime earnings principle, which means that the national pension is determined on the basis of the individual's income throughout his or her life. The main explanation for the differences between men's and women's pensions is therefore differences in pay and labour force participation.
59. Since 2020, a number of legislative amendments have been implemented that have reduced the difference in disposable income between men and women over the age of 65. These include increases in the guarantee pension and the housing supplement for pensioners, which are means-tested benefits that are provided to those who have had low or no income at all during their lives. In 2024, the average income for pensioners, including the occupational pension, was SEK 20 600 per month for women and SEK 27 700 for men. Women's pensions thus on average amounted to 74% of men's. The corresponding figure for 2020 was 70%. Thus, the pension gap has narrowed. If we exclude the occupational pension and only take into account the national pension, in 2024 women's pensions on average amounted to 85% of men's.
60. In 2025, the Pensions Group, with representatives from all Riksdag parties, initiated a review of the basic protection afforded by the old-age pension system in order to make it more effective and better targeted and to simplify its design. In this work, the importance of the basic protection for gender-equal pensions will be highlighted.
61. In addition to these measures, it should be emphasised that the pension system contains important components that reduce the gender gap in pensions. Pension entitlements are credited, for example, during parental leave with parental benefit, during studies undertaken with student finance, and for a child's first four years, as a rule to the parent who has the lower income. Pensions are also calculated by dividing accrued pension entitlements by a life expectancy assumption that is gender-neutral.

Women in decision-making positions including in the Swedish Riksdag

62. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency annually distributes central government grants amounting to SEK 48 million to promote and support women and girls' participation in the democratic process and in civil society.
63. Regarding women in leading positions, including the Riksdag, only marginal changes have occurred in the gender distribution in recent years. The most even gender distribution is found in central government activities. In the municipalities and regions, there is a preponderance of women in managerial roles, and in the private sector the opposite is true. The proportion of women who are managers in the regions has been 74% since 2019. The proportion of men who are chairs of the boards of listed companies has been on average 91% since 2019. The proportion of women in CEO positions in listed companies has increased somewhat, from 9% in 2019 to 11% in 2025. After the elections in 2022, 46% of the members of the Riksdag are women, which corresponds to about 161 out of a total of 349.

Reply to paragraph 8

Criminal law measures to strengthen the protection of women

64. Since the last reporting period, Sweden has taken a large number of measures to strengthen the criminal law protection against men's violence against women and domestic violence. The following examples can be mentioned:

the scale of penalties for gross assault and exceptionally gross assault was increased;

a new offence was introduced; unlawful breach of privacy;

the sexual offences legislation was reformed so that it is now an offence to perform a sexual act with someone who is not participating voluntarily, a separate negligence liability for certain serious sexual offences was introduced, and the minimum penalty for gross rape was increased;

new offences were introduced on encouraging suicide and negligently encouraging suicide;

the minimum penalty for the gross violation of integrity offences was increased;

the provisions governing rape and sexual assault were expanded so that criminal liability not only applies to a person who performs a sexual act with someone else but also a person who induces another person who is not participating voluntarily to undertake or submit to such an act; the rules on rape were made more neutral with regard to gender and sexual orientation; a new penalty provision on gross sexual molestation was introduced; and the minimum penalties for rape, sexual assault and gross sexual assault were increased;

the severity of penalties for the offences of unlawful threat and gross unlawful threat was increased;

the special ground for tougher penalties was expanded and now covers crimes with gender as a hate crime motive, while the Non-Contact Orders Act (1988:688) was amended to make it possible to issue a non-contact order in more cases and strengthen the crime prevention function of non-contact orders;

a new, indefinite custodial sanction was introduced for persons who have committed certain serious offences and who have a high risk of recidivism.

65. In February 2026, the Government submitted a bill to the Riksdag with a proposal for a special penalty provision for psychological violence. In April, a bill was passed that included proposals that the presumption of detention that currently applies to offences whose minimum sentence is 18 months should be expanded to also cover violation of integrity offences; and that the penalties for gross rape, gross rape of a child, and exceptionally gross assault should be made tougher, and that it should be possible to impose the sentence of life imprisonment when sentencing someone convicted of multiple such offences.

Harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace

66. In 2020, the Government appointed an inquiry to assess whether there is a need for additional measures to protect employees who are discriminated against, harassed and threatened by persons who are not employed at their workplace. In the report *Ett utökat skydd mot diskriminering* (SOU 2021:94) the inquiry proposed expanding the protection against harassment and threats to employees.

67. In 2026, the Government submitted Bill 2025/26:134, the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and ILO Safe and Healthy Working Environment (Consequential Amendments) Convention (No. 191) to the Riksdag. In the bill, the Government proposes that the Riksdag adopt ILO Convention (No. 190) on and ILO Convention (No. 191).

Measures to prevent men's violence against women and domestic violence, and to strengthen the protection for victims of violence

68. In 2026, the Government decided to establish *Rådet för kvinnofrid* (the Council for Women's Safety) under the leadership of the Prime Minister. Work in the Council is guided by a vision zero approach towards deadly violence against women and is part of the Government Offices.
69. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has a national responsibility to promote measures to prevent men's violence against women, honour-related violence and oppression, prostitution and human trafficking, and against violence in same-sex relationships, as well as to make visible and combat honour-related violence and oppression, with a focus on developing knowledge at a national level and general strategic issues.
70. For 2026, the Government added SEK 100 million in permanent funding to the municipalities and regions. The funding is to be distributed via the Ordinance on central government grants (2025:838) to strengthen and develop regional and local efforts to combat certain forms of violence. Supportive interventions to enable individuals to leave violent relationships or situations and the development of regional resource centres for combating honour-related violence and oppression are to be prioritised.
71. The Government has increased the central government grant to women's and girls' shelters and certain other organisations in the area of victims of crime to SEK 185 million in 2026 with the aim that support will reach those affected by men's violence against women, domestic violence, sexual violence, honour-related violence and oppression, and prostitution and human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation. The Government has also taken other initiatives to facilitate the purchase of sheltered housing by municipalities from non-profit actors.
72. Since 2023, the National Board of Health and Welfare has a permanent task to develop national coordination and knowledge to prevent recidivism among violent offenders. The National Board of Health and Welfare is also tasked with operating a national helpline for detainees who have perpetrated or are at risk of perpetrating violence and for professionals working with these individuals.
73. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service and the National Board of Health and Welfare are tasked with implementing and evaluating the treatment programme *Predov* for individuals who have perpetrated domestic violence. The aim is for more individuals to receive treatment to stop their violent behaviour and to enable an evaluation of the effects of the programme's treatments in the activities of Social Services.
74. The National Board of Health and Welfare is tasked with making an inventory and supplementing knowledge support on men's violence against women, domestic violence, honour-related violence and oppression, and exploitation in prostitution and human trafficking, and to support implementation in Social Services, dental care and the healthcare system in this area.

75. The Government is funding a national helpline at Karolinska University Hospital that aims to prevent sexual violence. The target group is people with self-perceived risk behaviours, compulsive preoccupation with sexual thoughts and acts, sexual interest in children, and the impulse to force someone to have sex.
76. Uppsala University (National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women – NCK), in collaboration with the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, has developed an online course on the causes, extent and consequences of this violence with a special focus on the judicial system. In 2026, NCK has been awarded funding to continue to develop and disseminate the online course to include information on prostitution, human trafficking, honour-related violence and oppression.
77. In 2024, new rules for sheltered housing came into force. The amendments regulate sheltered housing as a temporary housing measure under the Social Services Act for those who need support and protection because of threats, violence or other forms of assault.
78. In 2025, the Swedish Crime Victim Authority was tasked with developing and expanding the information in the guide for victims of crime (the website *Brottsofferguiden*), and implementing communication campaigns on how the guide can help victims of crime, with a special focus on information for victims of men's violence against women, domestic violence, and honour-related violence and oppression, as well as victims of prostitution and human trafficking and offences of a similar kind.

Measures by the Swedish Police Authority

79. In 2026, the Government tasked the Swedish Police Authority and the National Board of Health and Welfare with proposing measures to prevent acts of insanity. The purpose of the task is to map perpetrated offences of unprovoked non-relational lethal, or potentially lethal, violence, and to learn from these. The inquiry will present its report in January 2027.
80. In 2024, the Government tasked the Swedish Police Authority, the Swedish Prosecution Authority, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, and the National Board of Health and Welfare with strengthening their cooperation to prevent and combat men's violence against women, domestic violence, and honour-related violence and oppression, including cases where children are involved. The Swedish Police Authority will submit a consolidated report on this task to the Government Offices in October 2026.
81. The Swedish Police Authority has initiated multiple initiatives aimed at strengthening both the clear-up rate and preventive work to combat men's violence against women. Among other things, a national police operation (Beta) was launched in 2023 to strengthen the police's capacity to reduce men's deadly violence against women, and from 2024 a recurring national information initiative was introduced to spread information about the fact that domestic violence is an offence.
82. Training regarding domestic violence and men's violence against women is mandatory in police officer education, and in the Swedish Police Authority's basic training for civilian employees who work with criminal investigations. Since 2022, the Swedish Police Authority has been tasked by the Government with enhancing police employees' competence in how to respond to people with mental illness in cases of domestic violence. The task resulted in a newly developed basic study programme for criminal investigators in 2024.

Measures by the Swedish Prosecution Authority

83. The investigation method developed in 2010–2012, a best practice, has evolved into the current method – the method for investigating offences against particularly vulnerable victims (Legal Guideline 2023:6, “the SUB-method”). The investigation method is comprised of various success factors that have been identified and developed within the Swedish Prosecution Authority in cooperation with the Swedish Police Authority, which strengthen the prospects for prosecution and effective investigation. The proactive, crime-preventive dimension of the method should also be emphasised. By prioritising early evidence collection in cases assessed as being able to lead to prosecution, there are greater chances of both prosecution in the individual case, and of disrupting cycles of violence and thus reducing the risk of the criminal behaviour continuing.
84. Based on the Legal Guideline concerning the SUB-method, the Authority’s development centre has provided specialised guidelines in various areas, including “Honour-related crime and female genital mutilation”, “Domestic violence offences and unlawful harassment”, “Offences against children”, and three legal guidelines on sexual offences. In addition, the Authority has undertaken specific measures to ensure that awareness of the legal guidelines is spread, and in particular activities concerning the Legal Guideline about the SUB-method.

Training and knowledge support for courts and others

85. The Courts of Sweden Judicial Training Academy currently provides a course on sexual offences and domestic violence, where participants receive in-depth knowledge about crisis reactions, how violence expresses itself and its mechanisms in relationships.
86. In order to increase knowledge regarding the rights of the child and children exposed to violence, the Swedish Crime Victim Authority has been tasked with developing and disseminating specifically targeted knowledge support and training for relevant actors, such as lawyers, legal counsels and other relevant practitioners. The task resulted in an online course that is currently under development.

Reply to paragraph 9

Legislation and other measures

87. In 2022, the Terrorist Offences Act (2022:666) was introduced. The Terrorist Offences Act essentially involves a restructuring and revision of the provisions of the three previous acts, the Financing Act, the Act on Criminal Responsibility for Terrorist Offences and the Recruitment Act, in order to achieve appropriate, effective and transparent regulation. The Act also contains a number of changes in substance relation to the previously existing rules. In 2023, a new offence was introduced into the Terrorist Offences Act – participation in a terrorist organisation. The new offence also covers those who participate in the activities of a terrorist organisation in a way that is liable to promote, strengthen or support the organisation. Several of the provisions in the Terrorist Offences Act impose restrictions on the fundamental rights and freedoms protected by, for example, the Instrument of Government and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. The amendments to the Act, which expand the criminalised area, have consequences regarding, for example, the possibilities of using coercive measures when investigating the offences. When drafting the provisions

governing criminal liability and coercive measures, the compatibility of the provisions with fundamental rights and freedoms has been carefully examined.

88. Since 2024, Sweden has a new national strategy to combat violent extremism and terrorism. The strategy covers all forms of violent extremism, including lone perpetrators. In developing the strategy, national government agencies, municipalities, researchers and civil society organisations were given the opportunity to identify relevant challenges and possible measures. The strategy is based on these consultations.
89. The aim of the strategy is to provide support for the work of government agencies and for long-term interventions. When combating violent extremism and terrorism, the methods used must be consistent with the democratic principles of the rule of law. An important premise for the Government is that fundamental rights, freedoms and the rule of law must be respected in all interventions. Work to combat violent extremism and terrorism is ultimately about protecting democracy and Sweden's free and open society. The strategy states that interventions should not contribute to stigmatisation or risk leading to discrimination that can provide a breeding ground for polarisation and further radicalisation. Concerning the risks of discrimination, it is important that the work is not done using means or methods that risk becoming discriminatory ethnic profiling; in other words, that the law enforcement authorities discriminate in selecting which individuals become the object of various forms of police operations that are connected to their ethnicity or origins.

Measures to ensure equal treatment of suspects

90. Within the Swedish Prosecution Authority there is a specialist office that works with terrorist offences: the National Security Unit. This office works with the Swedish Security Service. Since 2014, the Prosecution Authority has had ethical guidelines that were last updated in 2019. The Prosecution Authority works actively to ensure that these ethical guidelines are applied throughout the entire organisation and that all prosecutors are trained in the ethical guidelines. The training consists of seven sessions on the topic "Ethics and the role of the prosecutor" and three sessions on the topic "Equal treatment and discrimination". The guidelines mean that the Swedish Prosecution Authority's activities must be characterised by objectivity and impartiality, and that employees must not take irrelevant circumstances or intentions into account. In their contacts with parties, legal representatives, courts and others, the employees of the Prosecution Authority must act correctly and in such a way that there can be no doubt that the employee has not taken irrelevant circumstances into account, or that there is a risk of a conflict of interest or any equivalent circumstance.
91. The Detention Act (2010:611) and the Imprisonment Act (2010:610) state that each inmate must be treated with respect for their human dignity. All permanently employed prison officers working with detained persons undergo an eight-week basic training. The training deepens the participants' knowledge of human rights, including through studies of how the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's regulations relate to international declarations and conventions in the area of human rights.

Reply to paragraph 10

92. Sweden intends to pursue an ambitious and effective climate policy all the way to net zero emissions by 2045. Sweden has among the lowest per capita emissions in the EU. Sweden's environmental policy is about creating a society that is free from emissions and toxins that are dangerous for people, animals and

the natural environment. It is also about creating a sustainable society that is adapted to a changing climate. Sweden's national climate change adaptation strategy, adopted in 2018 and revised in 2024, states that Sweden must be adapted to climate change, resilient and seize the opportunities that come with a changed climate. With the strategy, the Government clarifies its intention to ensure that the conditions created for effective work with climate change adaptation are also inclusive and do not reinforce inequality and marginalisation. It mentions the need for support to municipalities and other actors to assess how fairness and gender equality aspects can be included in climate change adaptation work, and that the Government must work to ensure that government agencies contribute guidelines for this work. The need for children and young people, who are affected by climate change adaptation decisions, to participate is highlighted in the strategy. Through guidelines and the dissemination of knowledge, the Government must work to ensure that a gender equality dimension is included in the implementation of climate change adaptation by Swedish society.

93. The dissemination of knowledge to the public is also highlighted as central to enabling participation and a better understanding of climate change adaptation work. A number of government agencies, such as SMHI (Sweden's expert body in meteorology, hydrology, oceanography, and climatology) and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, are currently working actively to spread knowledge about climate change and climate change adaptation. The legislated requirement for consultation processes also allows the public to gain insight and to participate in decisions.
94. Sweden works according to the EU Climate Law, which states that Member States must address the growing climate-related risks to health. This includes ensuring that climate change adaptation policy includes relevant policy in the socio-economic and environmental arenas. They must focus, in particular, on the most vulnerable and impacted population groups. The Government's ambitions are emphasised in the climate change adaptation strategy, which highlights the socio-economic effects of climate change for vulnerable groups, leading to ill health. To counteract this, the Government intends to strengthen efforts to increase knowledge about how a changed climate affects people's mental and physical health.
95. In the 2026 Budget Bill, the Government has proposed the number of initiatives for reduced emissions, a fossil-free energy supply, and a clean environment. These include SEK 558 million set aside for initiatives in the area of a clean natural environment and everyday life free from toxins. A total of approximately SEK 19.6 billion from the central government budget for 2026 goes to the climate, the environment and the natural environment. This includes EUR 89.5 million allocated to central government agencies specifically for climate change adaptation work. The funds allocated aim to increase the accumulation of knowledge in the area of climate change adaptation and to implement concrete measures in vulnerable areas.
96. The definition of climate adaptation in the Ordinance on government agencies' climate change adaptation efforts (2018:1428) includes implementing measures which aim to protect people's lives and health. Based on this Ordinance, a large number of government agencies are actively working with climate change adaptation issues within their sector area. These include the Public Health Agency of Sweden, which has developed an action plan for the Agency's work with climate change adaptation for the period 2025–2029. The plan sets out the needs and measures for managing health risks in a changing climate such as higher temperatures. Other government agencies such as the Swedish Civil Defence and Resilience Agency (MCF); the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning; and the National Board of Health and Welfare also work with climate change adaptation issues in their sector areas under this Ordinance.

97. The right to reindeer husbandry and the Sami culture are both protected by Swedish Constitution, and the Sami also have protection in international law as an Indigenous People. According to the Act on consultation on matters concerning the Sami people (2022:66), referred to as the Sami Consultation Act, which came into force in 2022, the Government, central government administrative authorities, and since 2024 also Sweden's regions and municipalities, are obliged to consult Sami representatives in matters that may have special significance for the Sami people. For example, in accordance with the Sami Consultation Act, the Government has consulted the Sami Parliament concerning the section in the national climate change adaptation strategy that deals with reindeer husbandry and Sami culture.
98. The Sami Parliament is among the agencies covered by the Climate Change Adaptation Ordinance (2018:1428) and has developed goals and a strategy and action plan for the climate change adaptation work of Sami livelihoods and Sami culture. For example, an extensive cooperation project has been carried out between the county administrative boards, the Sami Parliament, Svenska Samernas Riksförbund (SSR), which is the national Sami Association in Sweden, and SMHI, where climate and vulnerability analyses have been developed for a number of reindeer herding communities in order to strengthen their resilience to risks related to climate change. A number of projects are also underway to adapt reindeer industry to climate change.

Reply to paragraph 11

Regulation of the use of firearms

99. The basic rules on the use of force by the police are laid down in the Police Act (1984:387). A condition for the use of force is that other means are insufficient and that the force used is justifiable given the circumstances.
100. The use of firearms by the police is not specifically regulated in the Police Act, but in the Police Use of Firearms Decree (1969:84). The Government has proposed a new Act on the use of firearms by the police, which more clearly sets out in which situations and under what conditions the police may use firearms (Govt Bill 2024/25:186). The Act will enter into force on 1 July 2026. In its design, the proposed legislation has taken into account the United Nations' Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials. For more detailed information on the use of firearms by the police, see the reply to issues raised under paragraph 19 in Sweden's ninth periodic report to the UN Committee against Torture (CAT/C/SWE/9).

Special Investigations Department

101. The Special Investigations Department (SU) is an independent department within the Swedish Police Authority, separate from other police activities, which investigates complaints filed against police officers, prosecutors, judges, Riksdag politicians and others in specific positions. Its independence is ensured by a wide range of measures, mainly the fact that the investigations are led by an independent prosecutor, that the Government appoints the head of SU, that SU has its own appropriation item, that SU submits a separate annual report to the Government, and that the Department's premises are physically separated from other police activities.
102. Since 2023, SU's cases are processed in a separate official register, which ensures that the investigations are conducted with a high degree of legal certainty and privacy, since no other department in the Swedish

Police Authority has any control over this official register. SU's IT systems are separated from the remainder of the Swedish Police Authority by firewalls and its own platforms, among other things. On the other hand, SU can obtain information from the Swedish Police Authority's various IT systems without assistance from other units which is of great importance for its capacity to conduct criminal investigations efficiently and to protect the privacy of the individual. In 2025, SU also introduced its own office for receiving complaints. The person making the complaint can apply directly to this office without contacting the Swedish Police Authority's contact centre or a police station.

Judicial review of police use of force

103. A police officer who goes beyond his authority and who does not act in self-defence can be prosecuted and convicted for crimes such as assault, gross assault and official misconduct. The prosecution of a police officer is dealt with in a court in the same way as other prosecutions. With regard to the judicial review of a police officer's use of force in the line of duty, the Supreme Court has stated that the situation as a whole must be considered. The judicial review of whether other means were insufficient and whether, in the circumstances, it was justifiable to use force in the way that has occurred, must therefore consider all the factors involved in the intervention. The importance of the measure in the course of duty, the need to repel violence, and the extent to which the need for rapid intervention precluded other measures are among the factors that are important to take into account when making this assessment. The assessment must also take into account the risks of various kinds that a specific use of force may entail. When it then comes to assessing negligence, it is in the nature of the matter that a high bar is set for thoroughness and care when the police consider using force. At the same time, the bar must not be set higher than is required for it to be feasible, in the individual case, to comply with it (NJA 2017 p. 491).

Reply to paragraph 12

A separate torture offence

104. See the responses in points 42–46 of Sweden's seventh thematic report. In addition, the following may be mentioned. Regarding the information provided in point 43 of the named report, it may be added that the inquiry investigating whether there is a need for a separate torture offence in Swedish criminal law submitted its report in 2015 in the memorandum *Ett särskilt tortyrbrott?* (Ds 2015:42) (A separate torture offence?). For more detailed information on a separate torture offence, see the reply to issues raised under paragraph 2 and 9 in Sweden's ninth periodic report to the UN Committee against Torture (CAT/C/SWE/9).

Possibility of reporting torture offences

105. In 2022, a legislative amendment was introduced meaning that Swedish courts have full jurisdiction in respect of acts covered by the term 'torture' in Article 1 of the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 10 December 1984; or attempted offences of this kind even if the offence has been committed outside Sweden (universal jurisdiction). For more information regarding the possibility of reporting torture offences see the reply to the issues raised in paragraphs 2 and 9 in Sweden's ninth periodic report to the UN Committee against Torture (CAT/C/SWE/9).

Training of police officers and prison officers

106.Regarding information on training of police officers and prison officers see the reply to the issues raised in paragraph 12 in Sweden's ninth periodic report to the UN Committee against Torture (CAT/C/SWE/9). In addition to that information the Swedish Police Authority has had a handbook for questioning that describes a basic way of working that should be used in all interviews and interrogations since 2024. The Swedish Police Authority's interrogation model is structured according to the PEACE model for interrogation and includes cognitive interview methodology. Central in the model is building rapport and allowing the subject to tell their story uninterrupted. In order to further promote legal certainty, the handbook includes a new requirement that all interviews are recorded with sound, whenever possible. The handbook is based on the Mendez principles on effective interviewing, which are international guidelines for ethical, non-coercive interviewing which aim to gather reliable information effectively and prevent torture and ill-treatment.

107.The Swedish Prison and Probation Service has a whistleblower function for information about misconduct in work-related contexts, or about misconduct that involves an act or omission that violates Swedish or EU law.

Reply to paragraph 13

Remand in custody

108.In 2021, new rules were introduced on time limits for pre-trial detention and decisions on restrictions. The legislative amendments are intended to make the management of pre-trial detention more efficient and mean, among other things, that the basic rule is that a suspect may be detained for a maximum of nine months before prosecution (Chapter 24, Section 4a of the Swedish Code of Judicial Procedure). If the suspect has not reached the age of 18, the corresponding period is three months (Section 23a of the Act with special provisions on young offenders [1964:167]). The time limits may be exceeded only in exceptional circumstances, for example when the suspected offence is particularly difficult to investigate because it is part of organised or gang-related crime. Just like before, a person may only be detained if the reasons for detention outweigh the intrusion or other detriment to the suspect or some other opposing interest. Alternatives to detention, i.e. a travel ban, obligation to report and probation, should be used if possible.

109.The new rules also require permission from a court for the prosecutor to be able to order restrictions of a certain kind. The legislative amendments aim to ensure that restrictions are decided only when they are actually needed and not made more extensive than necessary. See also the reply to paragraph 15 of Sweden's report to the UN Committee against Torture (CAT/C/SWE/9) from 2025 concerning the review obligations of courts and prosecutors, and the rights of the suspect in custody.

Right to public defence counsel

110.If the suspect is arrested or detained, a public defender must be appointed for them, if they request it (Chapter 21, Section 3a of the Swedish Code of Judicial Procedure). A public defender is appointed by the district court. If the need arises for a defence counsel outside of normal working hours, the judicial system has a duty service that appoints public defenders during the daytime on weekends. In addition, the district courts have a standby service every evening until midnight to review questions regarding

public defenders for suspects who are arrested or detained where there is a particularly urgent need for a defender.

Rights of detainees remanded in custody

111. The right to information about one's rights follows from the law, but to further safeguard this right in practice, there are provisions in the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's regulations and general advice on remand in custody (KVFS 2011:2) and in the Swedish Police Authority's handbook and checklists. The design of the Swedish Police Authority's digital system for the documentation used in arrest operations also helps to ensure that the right is satisfied.
112. Chapter 2, Section 5 of the Detention Act (2010:611) states that, as a general rule, a detainee should be given the opportunity to spend time during the day with other detainees (association).
113. The general recommendations on Chapter 2, Section 5 of the Detention Act in the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's regulations and general advice on remand in custody provides examples of different types of measures to reduce isolation.
114. The Prison and Probation Service works daily with measures to reduce isolation for all detainees. In 2022, the Service's handbook on time spent alone and time spent with others in custody (2018:13) was updated with definitions of isolation and measures to reduce isolation based on the Nelson Mandela rules. According to the definitions, for a detainee not to be deemed isolated they must be offered the option of spending at least two hours in total per day with others.

Young offenders

115. Since 2021, persons under the age of 18 who are detained have a legal right to spend time with staff or someone else for at least four hours every day (Chapter 2, Section 5a of the Detention Act). In order to comply with the provision, the Prison and Probation Service documents daily the time when spending time with another person occurred or been offered. In order for spending time with another person to be documented and monitored, it must be considered meaningful and the young offender must spend time physically with another person. Through engagement and support, the Prison and Probation Service tries to get young offenders to participate in measures to reduce isolation. For inmates who choose not to participate in these activities, the Prison and Probation Service follows up with motivating efforts. The Service works actively to increase time spent with others. For more information on the specific provisions on young offenders, see reply to paragraph 22.

Reply to paragraph 14

Measures to prevent and combat human trafficking and human exploitation

116. In all police regions in Sweden, there is either a section, a group or investigative resources that are responsible for investigating human trafficking and human exploitation. In Stockholm, there is a specific prostitution group and in Malmö there is a coordinator against prostitution in each local police district.
117. At national level, the Swedish Police Authority conducts operational development and intelligence activities in the area of human trafficking. The Swedish Police Authority also participates in government

agency joint efforts and the development of methodologies at different levels and in different contexts, as well as international cooperation through, for example, Europol/EMPACT.

118. In 2025, the Government tasked the Swedish Police Authority and the Swedish Prosecution Authority with strengthening efforts to combat human trafficking and human exploitation. Among other things, the intention of the task is that these government agencies will improve their working methods to increase their capacity to investigate and prosecute these offences, and to ensure that victims receive the right support and protection. The task also requires the Swedish Police Authority to strengthen its outreach and preventive activities, both physically and online. The final report will be submitted in 2026.
119. In 2024, the Government presented government communication *Resistance and decisive action – a national strategy against organised crime* (Govt Comm. 2023/24:67). Human trafficking and human exploitation are highlighted in particular in several parts of the communication as an example of offences that actors within organised crime engage in.
120. Since 2024, cases concerning human trafficking and human exploitation have been handled by prosecutors at the National Unit against Organised Crime (RIO) within the Swedish Prosecution Authority. At the national level there is also a specialist in the area. In 2025, the Authority published its first legal guidelines on the topic of human trafficking and human exploitation (Legal Guideline 2025:1). Work is underway to develop a Legal Guideline with the working title “Procuring and purchase of a sexual act and these offences’ links to human trafficking”. It is expected that the guidelines will be published in the second half of 2026.
121. Sweden has taken a large number of measures to strengthen the protection in criminal law in this area. Among other things, in 2018 the criminal provision concerning the offence *trafficking in human beings* was amended to clarify what is meant by “improper means”, to clarify that criminal liability for offences against a person under the age of 18 applies in the case of negligence with regard to the age of the victim, to increase the minimum penalty for less serious trafficking in human beings and to criminalise human exploitation as a separate offence. In 2025, the criminalised area covered by *purchase of a sexual act* and *procuring* was expanded to include sexual acts performed remotely, such as via the Internet. For other measures concerning the exploitation of children, see reply to paragraph 21.
122. In 2025, the Inquiry on the implementation of amendments to the Human Trafficking Directive submitted its report *Ett nytt brott och andra åtgärder mot människohandel* (SOU 2025:119) (A new offence and other measures to combat human trafficking). The Inquiry was tasked with proposing legislative amendments and other measures intended to adapt Swedish law to Directive (EU) 2024/1712 amending Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. The Inquiry proposes the introduction of a new offence concerning the use of services provided by victims of human trafficking or human exploitation and several proposals intended to strengthen the protection of victims of trafficking in human beings.
123. In the 2026 Budget Bill, the Government have strengthened the funding for the upcoming action plan to combat prostitution and human trafficking, which is being prepared within the Government Offices. For the period 2026–2028, SEK 14 million per year has been set aside specifically for the action plan, but the Government has already decided in 2026 on measures to combat prostitution and human trafficking. In 2025, the Government tasked the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, the National Board of Health and Welfare, the County Administrative Boards and the Swedish Agency for Health Technology Assessment

and Assessment of Social Services (SBU) to prepare for regional and national support for people who have been victims of human trafficking for sexual purposes, prostitution or linked to mistreatment in the production and distribution of pornography. The final reports on the task's different parts will be submitted in 2027 and 2029.

124. In 2025, the Government tasked the Swedish Gender Equality Agency with mapping the current state of knowledge about the digital dimensions of men's violence against women, domestic violence, and honour-related violence and oppression, as well as prostitution and human trafficking. The task includes proposing measures for increasing knowledge and skills and measures to reduce exposure to the digital dimensions of violence.

125. The Swedish Work Environment Authority has the task of reporting on how the Authority works and can develop its work to combat human trafficking and human exploitation in the Authority's annual report, in accordance with the Authority's joint task with other government agencies to work to combat work-related crime, as well as to make an inventory of the support needs of people who have been victims of labour exploitation and to submit proposals for targeted support measures.

126. In its 2026 appropriation directions, the Swedish National Board of Institutional Care has been tasked with strengthening and adapting institutional care for children and young people who have been the victims of various forms of violence, including domestic violence, honour-related violence and oppression, sexual violence; and sexual exploitation, including sexual exploitation for pornographic purposes. This work involves analysing the risks and preventing children and young people from being subjected to sexual violence, sexual exploitation or prostitution and human trafficking. A report will be presented in 2029.

Effective remedies at law for victims

127. See response in point 103 of Sweden's seventh thematic report (CCPR/C/SWE/7) regarding the right to damages and criminal injury compensation from central government funds.

128. Social welfare committees provide victim support. The intervention can target both the victim of the crime and their immediate family. The responsibility requires that the social welfare committee is conscious of the fact that people may need interventions to change their situation. Furthermore, victims are offered help within the healthcare system, especially in psychiatry, and several municipalities have special support centres for young victims. In addition, the initiatives of non-governmental organisations span a wide range of victims of crime who have more or less pronounced specific needs for protection and support, in particular from victim support centres.

129. The Swedish Police Authority has an obligation to inform victims of and witnesses to crime about their rights. The Authority is also responsible for certain protection matters, such as conducting an individual assessment to determine the victim's need for special protection measures during the preliminary investigation and the trial.

130. In 2025, the Swedish Crime Victim Authority was tasked with analysing what measures are needed to ensure that victims of human trafficking and human exploitation receive sufficient support to apply for criminal injury compensation. The task includes developing proposals for measures within the Authority's own activities and for other actors.

Reply to paragraph 15

Non-refoulement

131. Sweden applies the principle of non-refoulement in accordance with international law. The protection against refoulement is absolute and applies in all cases where a person is at risk of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or other irreparable injury. This protection is integrated into the Aliens Act (2005:716) and applied by the Swedish Migration Agency, the Migration Courts and, where the Government is the decision-making body, also by the Government. In previous reports (CCPR/C/SWE/7), Sweden has reported on the provisions in the Aliens Act.
132. Sweden makes individualised risk assessments in all asylum cases based on personal circumstances, current country information, national case-law and EU law. The process includes opportunities for oral proceedings, legal counsel and the opportunity to appeal. These guarantees strengthen the legal certainty and reduce the risk of refoulement by identifying individual risks before an expulsion is enforced.
133. 'Security cases' according to Chapter 1, Section 7 of the Aliens Act means cases in which the Swedish Security Service (Säpo) recommends that a decision on, for example, a residence permit, refusal-of-entry or expulsion concerns national security or public security. These cases are dealt with within the framework of the Aliens Act and are covered by its basic procedural safeguards. They should not be confused with qualified security cases under the Act on Special Control of Certain Aliens (2022:700), which is regulated in a separate system.
134. Any changes to asylum and migration legislation are prepared in accordance with the legislative process, where proposals for legislative amendments are sent for referral to the relevant government agencies and organisations, impact assessments are carried out, and compatibility with international commitments is assessed. Sweden has procedural safeguards and protection mechanisms that are applied throughout the process, with special consideration for particularly vulnerable groups, such as children.

Detention

135. In previous reports (CCPR/C/SWE/7), Sweden has presented the basic principles that govern its use of detention. Detention is only used when necessary, proportionate and in accordance with the Aliens Act and EU law. The alien's freedom may not be limited more than is necessary in each case (Chapter 1, Section 8 of the Aliens Act). Decisions on detention can be made by the Swedish Migration Agency, the Swedish Police Authority, the Swedish Security Service and, in some cases, a court. Detention can be used when there is a risk of the alien absconding, pursuing criminal activities or when the alien's identity and right to stay in the country need to be investigated. Detention decisions are reviewed on an ongoing basis and may not be maintained if the circumstances justifying the detention no longer exist. The individual is entitled to legal counsel during the detention process. Children are only taken into detention in very limited exceptional cases and for the shortest possible time.
136. The government agencies must first examine whether supervision is a sufficient less intrusive intervention option before deciding on detention. Supervision means that a foreigner is obliged to remain available to the authorities, for example by means of a duty to report, but without being deprived of their liberty. The conditions and time limits for detention and supervision are regulated in Chapter 10 of the Aliens Act.

Qualified security cases

137. In 2022, the Act on Special Control of Certain Aliens (2022:700) (LSU) came into force. The Act replaces a previously existing law. The Act contains provisions enabling the expulsion of aliens who pose the most serious threats to Sweden's security. It also provides scope for control measures in cases where enforcement of an expulsion order is not possible. The Act aims to create a more appropriate, effective and transparent regulation for those aliens who pose qualified threats to Sweden's security, while at the same time ensuring that the regulation is consistent with well-functioning protection of fundamental rights and freedoms. The restrictions on fundamental rights and freedoms that the legislation entails are compatible with both the Swedish Constitution and international obligations in this area. The Act includes an explicit and general proportionality provision that applies to all measures taken under the Act. In addition, there are rules on oral proceedings, appeal options and legal counsel in the process.
138. If it has been decided that an alien is to be expelled under LSU but there are impediments to enforcement, the deciding authority must, in accordance with the principle of non-refoulement, order that the decision may not be enforced until further notice (suspension) or grant the alien a temporary residence permit.
139. According to LSU, under certain circumstances an alien may be detained prior to a decision on expulsion, or in connection with the enforcement of the expulsion order. The detention must be for the shortest possible time and the detention decision must be reviewed regularly. Oral proceedings must be used where the alien is to be questioned, and the alien is entitled to legal counsel during the detention process. Subject to certain conditions, the alien may be placed under supervision instead of in detention.
140. Upon application, the Swedish Security Service may be authorised to use certain coercive measures or covert coercive measures if an expulsion order under LSU cannot be enforced until further notice. Decisions on coercive measures can be appealed and have a limited period of validity. In the case of covert coercive measures, a legal representative monitors the interests of the individual. Furthermore, the Swedish Agency for Oversight of Privacy Protection in Law Enforcement supervises government agencies' handling of covert coercive measures and there is clear regulation governing how surplus information may be used.
141. Introducing an opportunity for aliens to have enforced expulsion orders revoked in certain cases also results in greater legal certainty.

Reply to paragraph 16

Independence of the courts

142. In Govt Bill 2024/25:165, the Government submitted proposals for amendments to the Instrument of Government's provisions on the basic principles of the form of government which make clear that justice is administered by independent courts. Amendments to the Instrument of Government are also proposed with the aim of reducing the risk of political control of the Swedish National Courts Administration, in part by ensuring that the government agency responsible for the administration of the courts is governed by a Board where the majority of members are judges. It should not be possible for the members of the Board to be removed from their roles involuntarily except by a Riksdag decision made by a qualified majority of at least three-quarters of votes and more than half of the members of the Riksdag. The Bill also proposes that provisions should be included in the Instrument of Government on the maximum and

minimum numbers of Justices of the Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court. To increase the independence of judges, it is proposed to amend the rules on mandatory retirement on the ground of age for ordinary judges. It is also proposed that government agencies under the Government should no longer be able to supervise the administration of justice by the courts. It is proposed that the legislative amendments will enter into force in April 2027. The Riksdag has adopted the proposals as pending. A final vote on the proposals can be held after the next Riksdag election.

143. The Government is also working on further proposals in law to strengthen the independence of courts and judges. These include proposals for further regulation to strengthen the independence of courts and judges submitted by the 2020 Constitutional Committee in the report *Förstärkt skydd av domstolarnas och domarnas oberoende* (SOU 2023:12) (Enhanced protection of the independence of courts and judges). The same legislative project also includes proposals submitted by the 2024 Judges Inquiry in its report *Stärkt skydd för domstolarnas och domarnas oberoende* (SOU 2025:56) (Enhanced protection of the independence of the courts and judges). These proposals include the establishment of a new review system for the accountability of judges. It is proposed that the legislative amendments should enter into force at the same time as the constitutional amendments in April 2027.

Lay judges

144. Lay judges must be impartial and objective in their adjudication. Lay judges may not pursue their political views in court and may not be influenced by personal values. Like professional judges, they must always comply with the applicable legislation and be objective. Lay judges are representatives of the Swedish population, and the aim is to give the public insight into the courts' activities. Lay judges are appointed by decision of the Municipal Council and the Regional Council. A court must dismiss a lay judge who, by committing a crime or otherwise, has shown themselves to be unsuitable for the task.
145. In 2023, an inquiry was given the task of, among other things, taking a position on the need for further measures to clarify that appointment as a lay judge is not a political appointment and to otherwise ensure that the requirement of objectivity and impartiality is complied with. The inquiry's assessment was that the current regulation of the suitability of lay judges is appropriate and well-balanced, and that there is no need for further measures to clarify that appointment as a lay judge is not a political appointment. However, issues related to the nomination and appointment of lay judges were not included in the task and the inquiry therefore made no proposals regarding the recruitment and appointment of lay judges.
146. To achieve broader recruitment of lay judges, the Government has given the National Courts Administration the task of communicating information to prospective lay judges and nominating and electing bodies before the lay judge elections, which take place every four years.

Anonymous witnesses

147. For an anonymous witness to be interviewed during a preliminary investigation or examined in a trial in a criminal case, the offence about which the witness is to be interviewed or examined must be serious, with a minimum sentence of at least two years' imprisonment. Furthermore, there must be a concrete risk that the witness, or their relatives, will be the victim of a serious offence if their identity is revealed. Other protective measures must also be inadequate or very difficult to implement. It must also be appropriate to interview or examine the witness anonymously, and the reasons for anonymity must outweigh the disadvantages it entails for the suspect to prepare their defence.

148.To ensure that anonymity does not jeopardise a defendant's right to a fair trial, the regulation has been combined with several procedural safeguards: The court ruling in the case may not know the identity of the witness. This prevents the court from having an information advantage over the defendant and ensures that the court cannot base its ruling on circumstances to which the defendant has not been able to respond. When a prosecutor has applied to examine a witness anonymously, the court must also appoint a legal representative. The role of the legal representative is to monitor relevant rule of law issues in the matter, which means that the representative must ensure that the circumstances of the matter are fully elucidated and the court's decision is compatible with the law. A decision to allow a witness to be interviewed or examined anonymously may also be appealed against to a higher court.

Processing times

149.To ensure that the courts can continue to decide cases and matters within a reasonable time, the Government has allocated additional resources to the courts, the funding of which has increased by SEK 250 million from 2025 and is estimated to have increased further to approximately SEK 500 million by 2027.

Reply to paragraph 17

150.Signals intelligence is subject to clear statutory regulation by for example the Signals Intelligence Act (2008:717), the Foreign Intelligence Court Act (2009:966), and the Act on the processing of personal data at the National Defence Radio Establishment (2021:1172).

151.Signals intelligence is safeguarded by strong secrecy to protect both Sweden's national security and that of individuals. This means that the details of the operations cannot be described openly. Instead, the legislation has been designed to be clear and transparent about the conditions under which such operations may be carried out and how data may be processed. In addition, there are government agencies that have a special responsibility for ex-ante and ex-post control of operations. In this way, protection of the rights and freedoms of the individual is maintained.

152.Since the last reporting period, the Swedish legislation on and the application of signals intelligence has been the subject of a review by the European Court of Human Rights (Centrum för rättvisa v. Sweden, No 35252/08 [GC], judgment of 25 May 2021). The Court concluded that the regulations essentially met the requirements of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR). The European Court of Human Rights found three shortcomings: 1) the absence of a clear rule on destroying intercepted material which does not contain personal data; 2) the absence of a requirement in the Signals Intelligence Act or other relevant legislation that, when making a decision to transmit intelligence material to foreign partners, consideration is given to the privacy of individuals; and 3) the absence of effective ex-post facto review.

153.The shortcomings identified by the European Court of Human Rights have been addressed and reported to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. In 2025, the Committee of Ministers adopted a resolution terminating the supervision of the execution of the judgment in question (Resolution CM/ResDH(2025)135). The first two points have been implemented through regulations in the Signals Intelligence Act and in the Act on the processing of personal data at the National Defence Radio Establishment. In addition, a special decision-making body has been set up by means of an Act and an

Ordinance. This body is responsible for checking, at the request of an individual, whether the individual's communications have been collected and, if so, whether this was done in accordance with the law. This task was previously carried out by the Swedish Foreign Intelligence Inspectorate. Through the new decision-making body, checks are carried out at the request of an individual by a body that is independent of the Swedish Foreign Intelligence Inspectorate. The statutory amendments relating to points 1 and 2 entered into force in 2024 and the provisions relating to the special decision-making body in 2025.

154. Swedish signals intelligence legislation has thus been examined by the European Court of Human Rights and the Court's three observations have been addressed.

Reply to paragraph 18

Stop-and-search zones

155. The establishment of a stop-and-search zone requires that, in view of a conflict between groups, there is a manifest risk of criminal activity involving shootings and explosions. Furthermore, the zone must be of particular importance for preventing or impeding this criminal activity, and the reasons for the zone must outweigh the harm or prejudice that this measure may entail for individuals or an interest opposing the measure, i.e. the measure must be proportionate. A stop-and-search zone must be confined to a specific area and may apply for a maximum of two weeks. The police must inform the public when they introduce a stop-and-search zone and explain why they are doing so and what it means.

156. In a stop-and-search zone, a police officer may conduct body searches or search a means of transport for weapons or other dangerous objects, to the extent necessary to prevent or impede the criminal activity that the zone has been established to counteract. For someone to be subjected to a body search in a stop-and-search zone, there must be a need in the individual case and it must subsequently be possible to indicate the circumstances that formed the basis for this intervention. The legislative history makes it clear that any intervention must be proportionate and that an intervention must never occur solely or mainly on the basis of a person's actual or presumed ethnicity or nationality.

157. To reduce the risk of abuse and arbitrariness, the regulation provides for the possibility to appeal against a decision on a stop-and-search zone to a court, and an obligation to document every intervention in a zone. The rules must also be evaluated once they have been in place a time.

158. Malmö University is conducting a study on stop-and-search zones. The research project runs for the period 2024–2027. Within the framework of the study, the researchers will compare areas where stop-and-search zones are introduced with areas that have similar levels of gang violence but where stop-and-search zones have not been introduced. Within the framework of the study, the researchers will also investigate how stop-and-search zones affect police work and whether they affect trust in the police.

Preventive exclusion orders

159. The regulation on preventive exclusion orders means that a public prosecutor may prohibit a person from being in a limited area in a public place, on school grounds or in similar areas outdoors at preschools and out-of-school centres, if the person knowingly promotes that a group of persons engages in criminal activities there and there is a risk of firearms or explosives being used. Persons who promote criminal

activities that are otherwise likely to be seriously harmful to the safety of the public may also be issued with a preventive exclusion order.

160. The legislation on preventive exclusion orders contains several procedural safeguards. Exclusion orders may only be issued to prevent and impede criminal activities that are likely to be seriously harmful to the safety of the public, for example shootings and explosions. It must be possible to link the person to whom the exclusion order refers to the criminal activity. Furthermore, an exclusion order is always limited in time and space, is reviewed regularly and may be appealed to a general court. The proportionality of an exclusion order is examined on a case-by-case basis, and an exclusion order must include specific exceptions and limitations where necessary. If there are grounds for doing so due to changes in circumstances, a decision may also be rescinded or amended.

161. In the same year as the regulation on preventive exclusion orders was introduced, the Swedish Police Authority was commissioned, for the period 2024–2026, to report on the extent to which preventive exclusion orders were used, for what purposes, and how the Authority assesses the effect of the orders decided, both in the areas in which the orders apply and otherwise. In the autumn of 2025, the Government appointed an inquiry with the task, inter alia, of submitting proposals to make preventive exclusion orders more effective. The inquiry will present its proposals in this regard in July 2026.

Camera surveillance

162. For camera surveillance to be permitted by government agencies, and persons other than government agencies, that perform a task of public interest, the surveillance must be necessary to perform this task. Camera surveillance may also be carried out by a government agency if the surveillance is necessary for a purpose specified in the Criminal Data Act (2018:1177) or the Act on the processing of personal data by the Swedish Security Service (2019:1182). Before starting camera surveillance, the controller for the processing of personal data for the surveillance must also consider the interests involved. Camera surveillance may only be carried out if the interest of such surveillance outweighs the individual's interest in not being surveilled. The Camera Surveillance Act (2018:1200) sets out what must be taken into account particularly when assessing the interest of camera surveillance. The Act also sets out what must be taken into account in particular when assessing the individual's interest in not being surveilled. In the case of law enforcement agencies, for example, this is about whether the surveillance is needed to prevent, impede or detect criminal activities or investigate or prosecute offences in a place where, given the circumstances, there is a risk of serious or extensive criminal activities. A new assessment must be made before the surveillance is changed in a material way that increases the risk of violating the individual's personal integrity, or if the conditions at the place under surveillance change in a material way that reduces the interest in the surveillance or increases the risk of violating the individual's personal integrity. The assessment must be documented and the documentation kept for at least five years after the surveillance has ceased.

163. In addition, information about camera surveillance must be provided by means of clear signage or in some other effective way. There are some exemptions from these requirements.

164. The Swedish Authority for Privacy Protection supervises camera surveillance and has a number of powers. The Authority may, for example, impose a fine on a person carrying out camera surveillance who fails to comply with the requirement for a documented assessment or the requirement to provide information about the surveillance.

Reply to paragraph 19

Freedom of religion

165. Freedom of religion has constitutional protection under both the national fundamental law and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR). According to the Instrument of Government, in their relations with public institutions each person is guaranteed the freedom to practise their religion alone or in the company of others (Chapter 2, Article 1, first paragraph, point 6). In addition, the ECHR provides constitutional protection for religious freedom. Under the *lag (1994:1219) om den europeiska konventionen angående skydd för de mänskliga rättigheterna och de grundläggande friheterna* (the Act on the European Convention on Human Rights and the Fundamental Freedoms), the ECHR, applies as law in Sweden. The law has been afforded a semi-constitutional status given that the Constitution stipulates that no act of law or other provision may be adopted which contravenes Sweden's undertakings under the ECHR (Chapter 2, Article 19 of the Instrument of Government). Under Article 9(1) of the ECHR, everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes the freedom to change religion or belief, and the freedom, alone or in the company of others, in public or in private, to manifest their religion or belief in worship, teaching, practise and observance. The right to practise a religion is thus already a constitutionally protected part of freedom of religion. No measures in addition to the already existing protections in law with semi-constitutional status provided by the ECHR have been taken. Nor are there any plans to take such measures at present.

Freedom of expression

166. Freedom of expression in Sweden confers a very far-reaching right for individuals to express thoughts and ideas on any topic. However, it does not mean the freedom to always say or express anything at all. For example, slander is not permitted, nor is committing an act that involves unlawful threats or agitation against a population group. The purpose of the offence of *agitation against a population group* is to protect vulnerable groups from hatred and threats. To be held responsible for the offence, a balance must always be struck between, on the one hand, the vulnerable group's need for protection against derogatory judgements and opinions and, on the other hand, scope for objective debate.
167. To be convicted of the offence of *agitation against a population group*, a person must, in a statement or other communication that is disseminated, incite violence against, threaten or express contempt for a population group, another such group of persons, or an individual in any of these groups by allusion to, for example, their religious belief.
168. The destruction of holy scripture alone does not constitute *agitation against a population group*, since the destruction itself is not deemed to express contempt for the religious group in question. However, if holy scripture is destroyed in a certain context, perhaps in a place of religious significance, or if something derogatory is said in connection with the destruction of the scripture, the action as a whole could be deemed to express contempt for the religious group in question and could thus be judged to be *agitation against a population group* under the Criminal Code. In November 2025, Svea Court of Appeal upheld a judgment against a man convicted of *agitation against a population group* on account of his handling of the Qur'an in combination with verbal blasphemy and insults. In 2024, the Göta Court of Appeal also upheld a judgment against a man convicted of *agitation against a population group* by his spreading of a film to which sound had been added in which the Qur'an was burned and left outside a mosque. The

destruction of holy scripture can therefore be deemed *agitation against a population group* depending on the circumstances in the individual case.

169. Concerning the legislation in the area of criminal law, see also reply to paragraph 5.

Measures to counter anti-Muslim racism and antisemitism

170. A large number of measures have been implemented to prevent and combat anti-Muslim racism and antisemitism, including within the framework of the action programmes against Islamophobia and antisemitism in 2022–2024. The measures have led in part to deeper knowledge about Islamophobic and antisemitic hate crime, and about the existence of discrimination linked to religion or other belief and how it interacts with and relates to discrimination linked to ethnicity.

171. Work to counter antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism continues within the framework of the new Action plan to combat racism and hate crime. See paragraph 5 on the Action plan, measures taken, and the Government's Strategy to strengthen Jewish life and counter antisemitism.

On the democracy condition in the Act on central government grants to faith communities

172. Sweden's Act on central government grants to faith communities (2024:487) entered into force in 2025. The Act includes a new democracy condition for central government grants to faith communities. The new Act was proposed by the Government in the bill *Statens stöd till trossamfund och civilsamhället* (Central government support to faith communities and civil society, Govt Bill 2023/24:119). The bill makes the assessment that the new framework is designed in accordance with Article 9(2) of the ECHR; that it is prescribed by law and necessary in a democratic society for reasons of public safety, for the protection of public order, health, morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. The principle of proportionality must be taken into account in each case in the application of the Act, taking into account the freedom of religion and autonomy of the faith communities.

Reply to paragraph 20

173. In Sweden, the freedoms of expression, assembly and to demonstrate are extensive. These rights and freedoms are protected by the Constitution and may only be restricted by law. Restrictions may be introduced only to fulfil purposes that are acceptable in a democratic society. The restriction may never exceed what is necessary in view of the purpose which has given rise to it, nor extend so far that it constitutes a threat to the free formation of opinion as one of the foundations of democracy. The restriction may not be introduced solely on the basis of political, religious, cultural or other such views.

174. Some restrictions on the freedom to demonstrate are contained in the Public Order Act (1993:1617). Under the Act, a permit is required to organise a public gathering such as a demonstration in a public place. The Swedish Police Authority is responsible for examining matters relating to permits, and the Swedish Police Authority also plays a central role in ensuring that public gatherings can be held safely and securely and that fundamental rights and freedoms, such as the freedom to demonstrate, can be exercised. Under Chapter 2, Section 10, of the Public Order Act, the Swedish Police Authority may only refuse to issue a permit for a public gathering if it is necessary to do so with respect to public order or safety at the gathering or, as a direct consequence of the gathering, in its immediate surroundings or with regard to traffic or to counteract an epidemic. The fact that an organisation or person conveys a message

that may be perceived as threatening to other groups does not mean that a demonstration permit may be denied on grounds of public order and safety at the gathering.

175. In 2023, an Inquiry was appointed to examine, inter alia, if circumstances relating to national security could be taken into account when examining permit applications and setting conditions for public gatherings in accordance with the Public Order Act. The inquiry was appointed due to a significantly deteriorated security situation in Sweden and an increased terrorist threat. The situation has now changed, and the inquiry's proposals regarding national security therefore constitute only legislative preparedness. The Government does not intend to proceed with the proposals at this time.

176. There may be a risk of public disturbances, unrest and violence when people demonstrate. The Swedish Police Authority has therefore developed *Dialogpolisen*, a special unit that works to maintain public order and safety for everyone who participates in demonstrations and to convey information and knowledge between the police and groups who arrange manifestations of public opinion. There are trained dialogue police officers in all police regions, and they are part of *särskild polistaktik*, a police strategy designed to prevent public disturbances at public gatherings.

177. The Swedish Police Authority has been tasked by the Government with reporting on the measures it takes to ensure it has the capacity to deal effectively with public gatherings. This will give the Government a better basis for assessing whether further measures are needed. Increased transparency about the work of the police with public gatherings may also help to increase understanding and trust between the Swedish Police Authority and citizens.

Reply to paragraph 21

Offences against children

178. In 2024, 45 952 suspicions of offences against children were submitted to the Swedish Prosecution Authority. Of these, around 24% led to prosecution (Swedish Prosecution Authority annual report 2024).

179. When a child is the victim of crime, certain special rules apply to the preliminary investigation and the trial to safeguard the child's interests. Among other things, the investigation should, if possible, take place within the context of Barnahus, where the police, prosecutors, Social Services and healthcare professionals work together, and the preliminary investigation must be carried out rapidly if the offence targeted the injured party's life, health, liberty or peace and if the offence is punishable by imprisonment for more than 6 months. A custodian must also be given the opportunity to attend the interview with the child, unless the custodian is suspected of the offence, or there is a risk of a conflict of interest, in which case a special representative must be appointed for the child instead.

180. There have also been a large number of amendments strengthening the legislation on violence against children, including:

the criminal provision on grooming (contact with a child for sexual purposes) has become stricter and the maximum penalty has been increased;

the minimum penalties for gross rape of a child and gross sexual assault of a child have been increased;

the criminal law protection regarding sexual offences against children has been strengthened regarding negligence of the perpetrator with regard to the age of the victim;

the statutory limitation period has been abolished for rape, gross rape and the corresponding offences against children, and for female genital mutilation if the offence was committed against a person under the age of 18;

the statutory limitation period for a large number of sexual offences and gross violation of integrity and honour-based oppression has been changed to be counted from when the child turns 18 or would have turned 18 if the offence was committed against a person who had not yet turned 18;

the legislation on statutory limitations has been amended so that imposed prison sentences are not subject to statutory limitation;

the minimum and maximum penalties for the exploitation of a child through the purchase of a sexual act have been increased;

the offence of violation of a child's integrity has been introduced;

the provision on the exploitation of a child for sexual posing has been expanded;

new penalty provisions have been introduced on sexual molestation of a child and gross sexual molestation of a child;

criminal responsibility for rape of a child and sexual assault of a child has been expanded to include more situations in which a person performs sexual intercourse or some other sexual act with a child under the age of 18;

it has become possible to issue concurrent convictions for the exploitation of a child through the purchase of a sexual act and, among other things, rape of a child or sexual assault of a child;

the penalty for gross violation of a child's integrity has been increased.

181. See also reply to paragraph 8, which also partly cover corresponding offences against children.

Recruitment of children to organised crime

182. In view of the growing problem of young people being drawn into and exploited in activities carried out by criminal networks, the Government has introduced a number of measures. In 2023, the offence of involving a minor in criminal activities was introduced (Chapter 16, Section 5a, of the Criminal Code). Under this offence, any person who engages, pays, instructs or hands over property to someone under the age of 18, and thereby, or in some other similar way, involves him or her in an offence or in criminal activities, is guilty of involving a minor in criminal activities. This also applies if the person who commits such an act did not have intent but was negligent regarding the circumstance that the other person had not attained eighteen years of age. However, if, in view of the slight difference in age and development between the person who committed the act and the other person or otherwise, the act less serious, the person is not held responsible.

183. The Riksdag has also adopted the Government's proposal for expanding criminal responsibility for attempt, preparation or conspiracy to commit a crime. The legislative amendments mean, among other things, that the police are given greater opportunities to take preventive measures to stop children and young people from undertaking tasks to commit serious violent offences and to identify those ultimately responsible, without excluding criminal liability for preparation or conspiracy to commit offences for those commissioning the offence. The legislative amendments also mean that it may be punishable as preparation to commit an offence, that an adult offender sets up an account on a social network forum for young people, uses the account under a false identity and with a false age, and seeks contact with children for the purpose of committing a sexual offence. The increased responsibility for attempting to commit an offence entered into force in April 2026. The other amendments come into force in July 2026.
184. Concerning the legislation in the area of criminal law, see also reply to paragraph 8.
185. In a Government Bill in April 2026, the Government proposed that the maximum sentence for the offence of involving a minor in criminal activities be increased to 6 years.
186. In 2024, the Government presented the government communication *Barriers to crime – a social prevention strategy against criminal networks and other crime* (Govt Comm. 2023/24:68). The focus of the strategy is social preventive initiatives to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in criminal networks and other crime, and to get individuals who commit crimes to leave crime behind. The strategy emphasises the importance of initiatives at all levels of prevention – broad preventive measures as well as targeted initiatives for individuals and groups in the risk zone for crime and for those who already commit offences.
187. In 2025, the Government tasked the National Council for Crime Prevention with increasing knowledge about how criminal networks recruit children and young people on social media and in other digital environments to commit offences, and to propose measures to combat and prevent this.
188. In 2025, the Government also decided to task the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) with increasing knowledge about how a criminal lifestyle is marketed in digital media, how this may affect children's and young people's attitudes to violence and crime, and to propose measures. Reports on both tasks will be presented in October 2026.
189. In 2025, the Government tasked the Swedish Agency for Participation (MFD) with producing and disseminating support material about the recruitment of children with disabilities by criminals to relevant actors, such as Social Services, the police and schools. MFD is also to produce support material aimed directly at children and young people with disabilities who are in, or at risk of ending up in, criminal environments. In April 2026, the Agency is to submit a consolidated report on the task to the Government Offices.
190. In 2025, the Government tasked the National Board of Health and Welfare and the Family Law and Parental Support Authority with analysing the reasons why Social Services do not make more use of knowledge-based methods, programmes and working methods to counteract norm-breaking behaviour and recidivism in children and young people. The task will be reported on in 2027.
191. On behalf of the Government, in 2023 a cooperation structure was established at the national, regional and local levels in relation to children and young people in, or at risk of being drawn into, organised

crime. In April 2025, the Government tasked the Swedish Police Authority, the National Council for Crime Prevention, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, the County Administrative Boards, the National Board of Health and Welfare, the Swedish National Board of Institutional Care, the National Agency for Education and the Swedish Prosecution Authority with continuing to develop their support for the work with children and young people who are at risk of committing, or are committing, gross offences related to organised crime. The aim is to support local, operational work with children and young people in a coherent manner, so that it results in effective and appropriate interventions. A report will be presented in 2026.

192. In 2026, a memorandum was circulated for consultation proposing a new Act allowing a competent authority to issue an order for online content aimed at recruiting persons for the purpose of committing offences (recruitment content) to be removed or made inaccessible. Recruitment content refers to content that may reasonably be assumed to constitute part of punishable preparation or conspiracy to commit an offence for which a sentence of two years of imprisonment or more is prescribed or the involvement of a minor in crime. A removal order must be addressed to the provider of the platform (hosting service) on which the content is located. The aim of the proposals is to counteract the online recruitment of children and young people in particular to crime, and to combat the phenomenon 'crime as a service'. It is proposed that these proposals enter into force in September 2026.

193. In its 2026 Budget Bill, the Government announced a concerted effort to combat violence against children and prevent children from being drawn into crime. Many children who are exploited in criminal networks have themselves been victims of violence earlier in life. The initiative means that a strategy to prevent and combat violence against children and an action plan are being developed.

Reply to paragraph 22

Deprivation of liberty of children

194. The Act with special provisions on young offenders (1964:167) states that a person under the age of 18 may be arrested or detained only if there are exceptional grounds and it is clear that adequate supervision cannot be arranged. The question of whether there are exceptional grounds for pre-trial detention is assessed primarily based on the age of the suspect and the seriousness of the crime. Young people under the age of 18 are detained almost exclusively on account of suspicions of very serious crime such as murder, kidnapping, gross violent and sexual offences, gross robbery and gross firearms offences. Throughout the period of detention, an ongoing dialogue must take place with Social Services to investigate whether the suspect can instead be offered adequate supervision by being taken care of by Social Services. A suspect who is under the age of 18 when a detention order is enforced may, as a general rule, be detained for a maximum of three months. The time may be exceeded only if there are exceptional circumstances. In addition to supervision, there are alternatives to remand in custody in the form of a travel ban and obligation to report, which should be used if possible.

195. Institutional youth care is enforced by the Swedish National Board of Institutional Care (SiS) through placement in special residential homes for young people, which also provide care for children for social reasons. The activity must be based on the individual's needs and always take into account the best interests of the child. The care corresponds to that provided in youth care in general, but with a special focus on efforts to prevent recidivism.

196. Over the past two years, the number of young people sentenced to institutional youth care has increased significantly. In 2023, around 50 young people served sentences under the care of SiS, while in early 2025 there were 215. SiS forecasts show that up to 280 places may be needed in 2025. The increase is because more young people are committing serious offences, and are receiving longer sentences than before. The average time spent in institutional youth care rose from 14.6 months in 2022 to 17.8 months in 2024.
197. In a Government Bill in February 2026, the Government proposed that a person who has committed an offence before they have turned 18 should be sentenced to imprisonment instead of institutional youth care. However, for offences committed before the accused has turned 18 the court may only impose a sentence of imprisonment if there are exceptional grounds to do so. The Government Bill proposes a rule in the Prisons Act under which an inmate who is under the age of 18 may not spend time with inmates who are over 18 and must be placed in a special unit that is adapted to the needs and rights of children (special unit for children and young offenders). Exceptions may only be made if it is in the best interests of the child. An inmate who has turned 18 but not 21 may be placed in special unit if there are special grounds and it is in the best interests of other children in the unit. It is proposed that the legislative amendments in the bill enter into force in July 2026.
198. In April 2026, the Government submitted a bill to the Riksdag with proposals on stricter rules for young offenders. The bill proposes that the age of criminal responsibility should be lowered to 13 years for serious offences for a period of five years. According to the proposal a person who is convicted under the special regulation can be sentenced to the same penalties as other offenders under the age of 18. If a child is sentenced to imprisonment he or she will be placed in a special unit that is specifically adapted to the needs and rights of children. For offences committed by a person before attaining 18 years of age, the court may only impose a sentence of imprisonment if there are exceptional grounds to do so (Chapter 30, Section 5, of the Criminal Code). Imprisonment must therefore be used only as a last resort. The age of the offender must be taken into account both in determining the penalty and in the choice of sanction. The main reason for proposing to lower the age of criminal responsibility is the challenging situation in Sweden characterised by a significant increase of young children committing very serious offences. On 11 June 2026 the Government decided to withdraw the bill while announcing that the Government intends to submit a new bill with a proposal of lowering the age of criminal responsibility to 14 years instead.
199. In a proposal referred to the Council on Legislation for consideration in April 2026, the Government proposed that a system of conditional imprisonment be introduced and that the requirements for sentencing an offender under the age of 18 to prison be adapted to that system. The new requirements are intended to meet the requirement for exceptional grounds in Chapter 30, Section 5 of the Swedish Criminal Code and mean that imprisonment will continue to be used as a last resort.
200. Judges are offered training through courses provided by the Judicial Training Academy, including courses relating to children in criminal proceedings.

Reply to paragraph 23

Roma inclusion

201. The Swedish Public Employment Service has been tasked with further developing its work with Roma inclusion in 2026 – 2028, on the basis of previous tasks. In 2024, the agency had a task in relation to

Roma inclusion that resulted in information campaigns internally and the marketing of two training programmes, one on the situation of Roma on the labour market, and the other being the basic course on minorities legislation, which was made available to others who encounter the Swedish Public Employment Service's clients. To reach out to Roma about the support that can be offered, four webinars have been recorded in Romani Chib. The webinars have been published on the Service's website and are about how to sign up at the Swedish Public Employment Service, how to write a CV and cover letter, and about success factors in job interviews. In addition, the needs and situation of Roma women have been identified in a qualitative study. In consultation with Roma organisations, the agency has also developed a monitoring system that can help monitor the work on Roma inclusion. See also Sweden's previous report from 2015 (CCPR/C/SWE/7) (points 74–76) regarding the strategy for Roma inclusion.

202. Sweden has a general housing policy which does not distinguish between different categories of household. The Government has taken several measures to help the housing market function well in the long term in recent years. For example, the Government has recently initiated reforms to lower the thresholds to the housing market and create better conditions for owning housing, such as abolishing the stricter amortisation requirement and introducing a new Act on rent-to-buy of housing. The Government also tasked the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning with preventing discrimination against Roma in the housing market within the framework of the Roma inclusion strategy during the period 2016–2019.

203. In Sweden, Roma children and young people have the right to education on the same basis as others. Under the Education Act, children and young people who are registered in Sweden have compulsory schooling, and all children and young people who are resident in Sweden have the right to education in preschool class and compulsory school, or equivalent types of schools. Residents in the country also include those who, for example, are living here without the support of a decision by a government agency or legislation. Recently arrived children and young people have the right to be admitted to school as soon as it is appropriate, taking into account their personal circumstances.

204. During the period 2012–2024, the Swedish National Agency for Education was commissioned to develop and make available training for bridge-builders with Roma language and cultural skills working in schools. The latter training also included preschools. The courses have aimed to contribute to Roma inclusion in accordance with the Government's strategy (Govt Comm. 2011/12:56).

Work to combat antigypsyism

205. Many measures have been implemented to prevent and counter antigypsyism, including within the framework of an action programme to combat antigypsyism in 2022–2024. The work has resulted in increased knowledge about the prevalence of antigypsyism, especially that targeting young people, and to achieve better conditions for the work to combat antigypsyism in schools. The new Action plan includes measures to prevent and combat racism, including antigypsyism. For more information, see reply to paragraph 5.

Minority languages

206. In 2019, the Act on National Minorities and Minority Languages (2009:724) was strengthened. The amendments to the Act include that all municipalities and regions are obliged to adopt objectives and guidelines for their minorities policy initiatives. The right to preschool and care for the elderly in minority

languages in administrative areas was also strengthened by the municipality being required to offer that all or a substantial part of the activities be provided in Finnish, Meänkieli or Sami to anyone who requests it. Municipalities must also work to ensure that staff with knowledge of Finnish, Yiddish, Meänkieli, Romani Chib or Sami are available where this is needed in elderly care.

207. Within the framework of the action programme for the preservation and promotion of the national minority languages, several tasks intended to strengthen and develop the work to promote and preserve the national minority languages have been implemented by a number of government agencies. During 2022–2024, the Government also allocated funds to support Sámi Giellagáldu, a cooperation body set up by the Sami Parliaments in Sweden, Norway and Finland. The aim of its activities is to harmonise the development of the Sami languages across national borders. In 2022, the Institute for Language and Folklore (ISOF) was also tasked with being responsible for the Finnish, Yiddish, Meänkieli and Romani Chib language centres. Since 2026, ISOF has been responsible for the Finnish, Yiddish, Meänkieli and Romani Chib language centres as a task in its instructions. The aim of the language centres is to promote increased use of the languages, enhance individuals' opportunities for resuming the languages and to spread knowledge about revitalisation. The Sami Parliament is responsible for the activities of the Sami language centre.
208. The Swedish Council for Higher Education has the task of promoting the national minority languages in higher education and is responsible for monitoring and analysing matters in its sphere of activity (Ordinance with instructions for the Swedish Council for Higher Education [2012:811]). Four higher education institutions in Sweden have specific obligations to conduct teaching in the minority languages Sami, Meänkieli, Finnish, Romani Chib and Yiddish. In 2025 and 2026, the Government has allocated funding to Lund University to enhance its work to promote and preserve the national minority language Yiddish.
209. Södertörn University has a specific obligation in its appropriation directions to conduct evidence-based development work and education, including in relation to teacher education programmes. This work is to promote teaching in preschool, compulsory school, secondary school and higher education in and of the national minority language Romani Chib. Södertörn University has also started a preschool teacher education programme with an intercultural profile, focusing on national minorities and Romani Chib.
210. Pupils belonging to a national minority have a stronger right to mother tongue education than other pupils. According to the Education Act, a pupil who belongs to one of the national minorities must be offered mother tongue tuition in the pupil's national minority language. No prior knowledge nor a minimum number of pupils studying the language is required. As part of Sweden's efforts to safeguard the rights under Article 27 of the Convention (ICCPR), the legislation on mother tongue tuition in national minority languages has been enhanced in upper secondary school and upper secondary school for pupils with intellectual disabilities. The aim of the reform is to improve opportunities to preserve and develop national minority languages, and it entered into force in 2024.
211. As of 2026, the task of the national coordination of teaching in the national minority languages is included in the Ordinance with instructions for the National Agency for Education (2015:1047). It includes supporting good quality teaching in the national minority languages and promoting access to teaching and learning materials.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Tornedalians, Kvens and Lantalaiset

212. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Tornedalians, Kvens and Lantalaiset submitted its final report (SOU 2023:68) in 2023. The Government has prioritised dialogue with the minority on the reconciliation process and has implemented various initiatives to spread knowledge about the minority and the assimilation policy, as well as to promote and revitalise the Meänkieli language. In 2025, the Minister for Culture participated in the Askel sovinthoon – steps for reconciliation meeting, organised by the Church of Sweden and the National Association of Swedish Tornedalians in Karungi. At the meeting, the Minister stated that the Government acknowledged responsibility for the fact that the wrongs caused by the Swedish State's assimilation policy to individual Tornedalians, Kvens and Lantalaiset had negative consequences for the minority, and that these consequences live on to this day.

The Truth Commission for the Sami people

213. In 2021, the Government decided on terms of reference for a Commission to map and review the policies that were implemented in relation to the Sami people from a historical perspective, and their consequences for the Sami people. The final report of the Commission was to be submitted in December 2025. In September 2025, the Government decided that the Truth Commission for the Sami people would have an extended inquiry period and would now submit its final report no later than 1 October 2026. The Truth Commission for the Sami people is also to highlight and disseminate knowledge about the experiences of the Sami people and the Commission's conclusions, and to propose measures that contribute to redress and promote reconciliation.

Reply to paragraph 24

214. Regarding the Nordic Sami Convention, it can be said that in 2022 and 2023 the Government played an active role in trying to overcome the differences of opinion that arose about the text of the Convention after it had been initialled by all parties in 2017. However, the attempts failed and since 2023 the process has been at a standstill.

215. The Government maintains a continuous dialogue with the Sami Parliament on issues that are important to the Sami people, for example on the conditions for the Sami Parliament's work. In 2024, the funding for the Sami Parliament amounted to approximately SEK 270 million. Some of these funds can be used as determined by the Parliament itself within the framework of its overall task.

216. The Government is working actively to improve the dialogue with representatives of the Sami people. An important step was taken in 2022 when the Act on consultation on matters concerning the Sami people entered into force. The Act means that the Government, government agencies, municipalities and regions are obliged to consult the Sami Parliament and, in some cases, reindeer herding communities and Sami organisations on issues of particular concern to the Sami people. The Act also includes a right of initiative for Sami representatives, which means that they have the right to request consultation on matters that they deem to be of concern to the Sami people. The Government considers that the implementation of consultations under the Consultation Act constitutes a specific form of consultation based on the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC).

217. The number of requests to the Sami Parliament for consultation is increasing year by year. In 2022, the Sami Parliament received 110 requests, compared to 324 requests in 2025. Since 2025, the Sami Parliament has received permanent annual Government funding of SEK 5 million to be able to participate effectively in consultations. The Government considers that this additional funding has given the Sami

Parliament a good basis for participating in consultations. There are no specific earmarked funds for Sami organisations and reindeer herding communities to fund their participation in consultations. However, the Sami Parliament has been commissioned by the Government to distribute support to Sami organisations to contribute to a thriving Sami society. In 2024, 51 Sami organisations received grants to fund their activities, and 29 Sami organisations received project grants to promote a rich, varied art and cultural scene. In addition, the Sami Parliament allocated grants to 24 Sami organisations to support their activities in representing the Sami as an Indigenous People and a national minority.

218. In addition to consultations under the Consultation Act, there are, within the framework of Swedish legislation, a number of other opportunities for Sami representatives to be heard in matters that will result in decisions. Under the Environmental Code, the Minerals Act, the Forestry Act and the Planning and Building Act, those affected must be consulted before a decision is made. In addition, for activities likely to have a significant environmental impact, environmental assessments are required in line with the requirements of the European Union in the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC and 2011/92/EU). Such assessments include consultation with affected citizens and stakeholders, such as reindeer herding communities.

219. Legal aid may be granted to natural persons under Section 6 of the Legal Aid Act (1996:1619). If there are exceptional grounds, legal aid may also be granted to the estate of a deceased person. Consequently, a reindeer herding community cannot be granted legal aid.

220. There are no provisions governing who has the burden of proof in a civil case. The Supreme Court found in the Girjas judgment (NJA 2020, p. 3) that a reindeer herding community has the burden of proof for the circumstances that establish prescription from time immemorial for Sami people in an area. The State, for its part, has the burden of proof for circumstances which could lead to the termination of a right which has been established on the basis of prescription from time immemorial.