



Ministry of Employment

European Commission

Contribution to the Questionnaire in the Consultation of Member States on the 2024 Report on the Application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

Sweden appreciates the opportunity to provide a contribution to the work of the Commission in preparing the 2024 Report on the Application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The below information has been compiled by the different Ministries within the Government Offices of Sweden. We look forward to our continued cooperation on this report and the subsequent work in the Council. We remain at your disposal.

Does your Member State issue funding for projects aimed at promoting and protecting fundamental rights? If yes, what kind of funding is available? Please provide further information and, where available, project examples.

Funding for projects aimed at promoting and protecting fundamental rights are available in different forms in Sweden. Within the area of human rights and discrimination issues there are various ordinances mandating specific funding for projects aimed at promoting and safeguarding fundamental rights. These are ordinance (2021:227) which provides grants for initiatives that promote safe spaces for young LGBTIQ persons, ordinance (2014:1542) which offers government grants to municipalities and regions to enhance the well-being of LGBTQI persons, ordinance (2008:349) that allocates grants to organisations supporting homosexual, bisexual, transgender, or individuals with gender non-conforming identities or expression, and ordinance (2008:62) that provides grants for initiatives combating racism and similar forms of intolerance. Ordinance (2002:989) provides public funding for activities aimed at preventing and combating

discrimination based on sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. In 2023, the Government allocated a SEK 500,000 grant to the association Ordfront for the Swedish Forum for Human Rights (MR-dagarna) 2023, an annual forum held across Sweden aimed at enhancing awareness of human rights and contribute to the development of human rights on local, national and global levels.

Within the area of crime prevention, the Government in 2023 decided on a new ordinance (2023:442) on government grants to municipalities for crime prevention measures. Crime prevention work is central to combating crime, and on local level the municipalities have a particularly important role. The grant will strengthen the work at the local level and promote the development of knowledge-based measures in the area. The municipalities can apply for the government grant for crime prevention measures that they would otherwise find difficult to implement due to limited resources. The efforts can also refer to new and innovative measures or evaluations that can stimulate the development of knowledge-based and effective work. The government grant is distributed by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention.

The ordinance (2000:7) on government grants to disability organisations regulates grants to disability organisations and entered into force on July 1, 2000. The aim of the grant is to support the work of disability organisations for full participation and equality in society for persons with disabilities. The total sum of the state grant is SEK 188 742 000 and approximately 65 organisations are granted yearly. The ordinance (2003:752) on grants to pensioners' organisations was issued in November 2003. The purpose of the grant is to support organisations that represent the interests of pensioners' groups in several societal areas. The government grant is paid out by the National Board of Health and Welfare, and SEK 13 000 000 is allocated for this purpose in 2024.

The Stockholm County Administrative Board is tasked to distribute government grants to organisations representing national minorities in accordance with the ordinance (2005:765). The purpose of the grant is to support and facilitate activities carried out by organisations representing national minorities.

The Institute for Language and Folklore is tasked to distribute government grants for revitalisation of national minority languages in accordance with the ordinance (2010:21). The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society is tasked to distribute government grants for health promotion activities that target Roma in accordance with the ordinance (2022:118). The purpose of the grant is to promote the health of Roma. The grant is also intended to improve the conditions for civil society, and in particular, Roma organisations to work with health promoting initiatives targeting Roma. On 14 March 2024, the Government adopted an ordinance (2024:147) on government grants for Sami organisations. The regulation contains provisions on government grants to organisations representing the Sami people. The purpose of the government grant is to support the activities of organisations carrying out activities aimed at strengthening the influence of the Sami people, promoting Sami identity, culture and language, combating discrimination or spreading knowledge about the Sami people. A corresponding ordinance (2005:765) already exists for organisations representing the Jewish, Roma, Sweden Finns and Tornedalian national minorities in Sweden.

The Government also allocates funds annually to the Sami Parliament to distribute to Sami cultural activities carried out within civil society. The aim is to contribute to the development of a rich and varied Sami art and cultural life and to make a living Sami culture visible. In 2024, the Government allocated SEK 22.9 million to the Sami Parliament for this purpose.

When it comes to the provision of health care, the main responsibility for organising, financing and providing health care services, and thereby ensuring the right of access to preventive health care and the right to benefit from medical treatment under the conditions established by national laws and practices, lies with the Swedish regions and municipalities. The national government however provides supplementary funds, commonly directed to areas where the Government perceives that specific, or additional, action needs to be taken in order to ensure the goal of good health and care on equal terms, as stipulated in the Swedish Health and Medical Services Act. This funding is normally directed to regions and municipalities, as the responsible authorities for health care. One example of this is that the Government since 2015 has carried out a major initiative to improve maternity care and to strengthen women's health in general. Within the framework of this, the Government has entered into agreements with the

Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR). The agreement for 2024 focuses on creating a more equal and accessible health care for women, both when it comes to maternity care and diseases which mainly affect women and girls. Through the agreement, regions are allocated funds for enhanced efforts for women's health and maternity care.

In 2023 the Government decided on a new ordinance on government grants for women's and girls' organisation, ordinance (2023:168). The purpose of the state grant is to support women and girls in their own associations, promote their participation in democratic processes and in community life, and enable women and girls to protect their rights and pursue their demands. The new ordinance provides improved conditions for women and girls' organisation in areas with socio-economic challenges. The budget for the new ordinance is 48 million SEK per year which is an increase with 20 million SEK. Government grants to women's organisations have existed in various forms since the early 1980s. The results show that many of the associations assess that the government grant to a high extent has been crucial for their opportunities to participate in the democratic process and in community life and to support women's organisation in their own associations.

Sweden supports fundamental human rights both through our multilateral, regional and bilateral development cooperation. Part of this support is channelled through the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs with core support to several multilateral organisations. For example, Sweden supports the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (105 million SEK for 2024), UNDP (516 million SEK for 2024), Unicef (775 million SEK for 2024), UNFPA (487,5 million SEK for 2024) and UN Women (67,5 million SEK for 2024).

A large part of the support for fundamental human rights is also channelled through the Swedish Development Cooperation Agency, Sida. In 2023, approximately 5.4 billion SEK (approximately 22 percent of Sida's total support) was allocated to initiatives promoting human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. Efforts were focused on strengthening civil society, democratic governance, and promoting respect for everyone's equal rights.

Sweden has recently taken a decision on a new global development strategy for human rights, democracy and the rule of law which amounts to approximately 900 million SEK for initiatives and programmes in this area. Another 159 million SEK are channelled yearly through the newly adopted strategy for democracy support through Swedish party-affiliated organisations. For example, Sweden supports the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) to improve countries' electoral systems to become more transparent and include people living in exclusion. Sweden supports the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) with technical support to facilitate electoral processes and observe elections in Africa.

Sweden has, through the Folke Bernadotte Academy, deployed numerous long- and short-term observer missions to both the EU's and OSCE's election observation missions. Swedish election observers have contributed to reducing the risk of violence during the election processes. The Swedish support through UNDP to civil society, election commissions and other key stakeholders has increased the opportunity for civil society to demand accountability. Another example is Afghanistan, where Sweden supports projects aimed at integrating human rights into essential services like education and healthcare. For instance, through funding to the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, initiatives are implemented to empower local development councils, teacher unions, and organisations supporting people with disabilities, fostering community engagement and accountability. This exemplifies Sweden's commitment to protecting fundamental rights in its development efforts.

If funding for projects aimed at promoting and protecting fundamental rights is provided, is this funding available to projects from regional and local levels? If yes, what kind of funding is available? Please provide further information and, where available, project examples.

Funding for projects aimed at promoting and protecting fundamental rights is available to projects both on a regional and local level. For example, ordinance (2014:1542) contains provisions on government grants to municipalities and regions for efforts to promote equal right and opportunities regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. This funding is available for civil society organisations to apply

for and applications for grants are examined and paid out by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society. In 2023, multiple organisations were assigned the grant, including Save the Children Sweden for a project aimed at producing an educational material against racism. Another project that was funded was carried out by the National Council of Swedish Children and Youth Organisations and focused on strengthening youth movements in their anti-racism efforts through public education.

The ordinance (2002:989), mentioned in question 1, states that when distributing the grant, a geographic spread across the country should be prioritized. The organisations that get this grant are called anti-discrimination agencies and works at a local level. There are currently 18 anti-discrimination agencies. The ordinance (2000:7) on government grant to disability organisations, requires that the organisation is a nationwide organisation with local or regional rooted associations in at least ten counties.

Government grants according to the ordinance (2003:752) on grants to pensioners' organisations are primarily given to pensioners' organisations with at least 30,000 members. To be eligible for the grant, the organisation must be nationwide, open to all pensioners, and politically independent. If there are specific reasons, government grants may also be given to pensioners' organisations that are not nationwide or do not have at least 30,000 members.

Speakers of Finnish, Sami and Meänkieli have enhanced rights in special administrative areas. These rights include individuals having the right to use their minority language in contacts with administrative authorities whose geographical sphere of activity coincides completely or partly with the administrative area of the minority language; and the individual's right to preschool and to receive the whole or a significant part of elderly care in their minority language. The Stockholm County Administrative Board and the Sami Parliament is tasked to distribute government grants to municipalities and regions that are administrative areas (Ordinance 2009:1299) The Stockholm County Administrative Board is tasked to distribute government grants to municipalities to promote Roma inclusion in accordance with the Roma Inclusion Ordinance (2022:259).

The Government has allocated SEK 68 million in 2024 to the County Administrative Boards for early measures for asylum seekers. Municipalities

and organisations within the civil society can apply for funding related to projects with the aim to increase the knowledge of the Swedish language, society, labour market and health care system.

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) are involved in international development cooperation in different ways. SALAR works with these issues via SALAR International and the International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD). Through international development cooperation, municipalities and regions can contribute to democratic development at the local and regional level in other countries. Municipalities and regions also have an important role for the global development agenda. They are often responsible for providing their citizens with basic community services that are closely linked to poverty, such as primary schooling, healthcare, and clean water. To eradicate poverty, the capacity of these actors must be strengthened.

Exchange between Swedish municipalities and companies and their counterparts in partner countries contributes to sustainable local solutions for green conversion in areas where municipalities and companies have expertise. Sida has a multi-year support through SALAR to Ukraine's local self-government. It has played a significant role in the development of resilience and recovery in municipalities affected by Russia's full-scale invasion.

In 2022, a new ordinance (2022:722) on government grants for certain types of violence prevention measures was decided, administered by the Swedish Gender Equality Agency and available to civil society organisations, municipalities, and regions. The aim of the ordinance is to strengthen, develop and evaluate violence prevention measures concerning men's violence against women, violence in intimate partner relationships, sexual violence, honour-based violence and oppression as well as prostitution and trafficking for sexual purposes. It also aims to further the development of evidence-based measures. While the ordinance is permanent, the allocated budget from the budget on special gender equality measures is determined on a bi-annual basis. So far it has been close to 43 million SEK for 2023–2024.

Do your funding efforts related to promoting and protecting fundamental rights explicitly involve civil society organisations or human rights defenders? Please provide further information and, where available, project examples.

On an overall level, the goal of Swedish civil society policy is to work to improve the conditions for civil society as a central part of democracy. This will be done in dialogue with civil society organisations. Dialogue with CSOs is an institutionalized part of Swedish democracy. Efforts to develop the capacity of CSOs to involve people, by strengthening the conditions for civil society to contribute to societal development and welfare as well as by deepening and spreading knowledge of civil society, should be settled in dialogue with civil society organisations.

An example of how this is done is the referral process. When a government inquiry is complete, containing the examination of conditions for what the government wants to implement, the investigator or committee writes a proposal for a law or amendment to the law, which is submitted to the government, a so-called report. The report is sent for consultation to the relevant authorities, organisations, municipalities, and other stakeholders who may submit comments, so-called consultation responses. Also, those who have not received the referral have the right to submit responses. One prerequisite to receive support from the Swedish Inheritance Fund is dialogue with civil society and the people the project and premisses are directed to. The Swedish Inheritance Fund finances two types of projects mainly run by civil society organisations. Project support is given for the development of activities and methods. Premises support is given for new, remodelling and extension of premises.

If a deceased person has no spouse or close relatives and has not left a will, his or her property goes to the Swedish Inheritance Fund. The Fund supports non-profit organisations and other voluntary associations wishing to test new ideas for developing activities for children, young people and the disabled.

The ordinance (2021:227) provides grants explicitly aimed at providing support to the civil society. The grant is distributed by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society. In 2023 grants within this ordinance were assigned to the organisations HELA ideella, Studieförbundet Vuxenskolan

Gothenburg and RFSL Ungdom (The Swedish Youth Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Rights). In 2023 the grant was used by RFSL Ungdom for a third part of a project that has included the building of a knowledge bank of material that, among other things, includes a handbook of LGBTIQ knowledge and practical tips.

Both the ordinance (2000:7) on state grant to disability organisations and the ordinance (2003:752) on grants to pensioners' organisations only targets civil society organisation. Since 2016 the Swedish government has funded a project run by a civil society organisation with the aim of educating and informing about sexual and reproductive rights in 16 different languages, such as Somali, Ukrainian, Arabic and Persian. Everyone needs knowledge about their body and their health, no matter what language they speak. The project has produced films that are available online in these different languages and on different SRHR themes and conducts discussion groups around the country with people who have a language other than Swedish as their mother tongue.

Through development cooperation, Sweden offers substantial support to human rights defenders and civil society, both through multilateral organisations such as OHCHR and UN Women, but also in different funding provided by Sida. One example is the Swedish support to Front Line Defenders that provides support to human rights defenders at risk. Sweden provides core funding to European Endowment for Democracy and Prague Civil Society Centre, two organisations that provide support to human rights defenders and media actors.

Does your Member State raise awareness on the available funding opportunities in the field of promoting and protecting fundamental rights? Please provide further information and, where available, examples.

The official website for the Government ([government.se](https://www.government.se)) is continuously updated with new ordinances and information on appropriation directions. Information can also be found on the websites of the government agencies responsible for the administration of the governmental grants. On a general level, it can be said that it is the agencies that are responsible for the management of the state grants that are distributed to civil society organisations. It is also the responsibility of the agencies to communicate

and increase awareness of the funding opportunities provided by government grants.

Both Sida and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs regularly provide information on funding opportunities through our development cooperation.

Have you introduced measures to prevent and mitigate the potential misuse of funding to promote and protect fundamental rights? Please provide further information and, where available, examples.

Government grants are often regulated in an ordinance, containing specified criteria for the funding. Grants must not be given to an organisation that violates the individual's fundamental rights and freedoms, discriminates, or violates the principle of equal value for all. The same applies if the organisation justifies, promotes, or calls for violations of individuals' fundamental freedoms and rights or the equal value of all human beings.

Ongoing work is being carried out to increase quality assurance and follow-up of grants to prevent and reduce the misuse of state funds. One example is the work being done to develop a new and uniform democratic conditionality for state aid to civil society. The Government intends to submit a proposal with a new and uniform democracy condition to Parliament in spring 2024. The intention is that, in the next stage, the democracy condition will be included in the regulations governing state grants to civil society.

One of the Government's main priorities is that Sweden's development assistance should be focused, relevant, effective, and transparent. Good governance, transparency, and anticorruption are central priorities for Sweden as a donor. Sweden stands up for zero-tolerance for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, corruption, and other forms of misconduct or irregularities. Financial and risk management, auditing, and evaluation are also vital for operations, to safeguard funding and to ensure effectiveness and delivery. Sweden expects the highest standards of risk and fund management at all levels and pursues these issues through active engagement in different boards and together with other member states.

Does your Member State co-operate with other international or regional donors than the European Union in the provision of to promote and protect fundamental rights? Please provide further information and, where available, examples.

When carrying out our development cooperation, Sweden often works together with other donor countries, through our Embassies, on country-level. Sweden also works together with other donor countries and coordinates in our work in UN funds and programs. Sida is an active partner in the OECD DAC committee discussing these issues. Sweden also works together with other donor countries and coordinates our work in UN funds and Programs.

Which are the main obstacles your Member State faces in carrying out your activities related to EU funding to promote and protect fundamental rights? How should these be addressed?

Upholding and safeguarding the values of the European Union, including promoting and protecting fundamental rights and freedoms, should be reflected in all external policies. Due to the broad nature of these activities, ensuring coherence among various actors carrying out these activities can be an obstacle. Close cooperation between our Embassies and EU delegations at country level are crucial.

Are there any other elements related to funding to promote, protect and enforce fundamental rights that you would like to mention?

On an overall level, it can be said that the Government Offices of Sweden and some 28 government agencies and associations distribute government grants to idea-based organisations, i.e., the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society. The selection of organisations is made by the authorities responsible for the distribution of the grants, among the organisations that have chosen to apply for the grants.

Sida engages in advocacy through Sweden's governance in UN funds and programs and by supporting these funds and programs financially. Support to the UN fund United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) and to the International Disability Alliance (IDA) has increased respect for people with disabilities in UN standards and human rights processes.

The Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) has contributed to electoral reforms in countries such as Zambia and Ivory Coast. Synergies have been developed with the strategy for sustainable economic development 2022–2026 and the strategy for sustainable environment 2022–2026, through co-financed support to environmental defenders and environmental law advocates. Financial support to civil society organisations has slightly increased compared to the previous year. Mainly broader support such as program and core funding are chosen as a flexible and more effective form of collaboration to achieve results and enable adaptation in a changing context than project support. In cases where interventions are smaller and more catalytic, Sida has worked with project support.