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## **EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER**

Addendum to the 14<sup>th</sup> National Report on the  
implementation of the European Social  
Charter

submitted by

**THE GOVERNMENT OF SWEDEN**

Additional information on Article 19§1

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Report registered by the Secretariat on  
24 June 2015

**CYCLE 2015**



*The European Committee of Social rights has asked for additional information regarding article 19§1 and in particular, steps against misleading propaganda relating to emigration and immigration. See below information in this regard. The information should be read together with information in previous reports.*

### ***Introduction – the general attitude towards immigration***

In this context, it is important to raise the Swedish population's general attitude towards immigration and migration. Looking back over many years, in several surveys from the SOM-institute (Society, Opinion and Media Institute) and the Eurobarometer, the numbers show that Swedes are in general positive towards immigration. The Eurobarometer shows that 72 % of the asked Swedes are positive towards immigration from countries outside the European Union. This should be compared with the fact that 57 % of the asked EU-citizens are having a negative attitude towards immigration from outside the European Union. According to a SOM-survey from 2014 Swedes are in general more concerned about increased racism and xenophobia rather than increased immigration. It is with regard to this background that steps against misleading propaganda relating to emigration and immigration are being decided.

### ***The Equality Ombudsman – preventing discrimination and raising awareness***

The Equality Ombudsman (Diskrimineringsombudsmannen, hereinafter Ombudsman) is a governmental agency that focuses on combating discrimination and promoting equal rights and opportunities for everyone. To this end, the Ombudsman is concerned with ensuring compliance with the Discrimination Act. This law prohibits discrimination related to a person's sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. In addition, the Ombudsman exercises supervision by monitoring how employers, higher education institutions and schools live up to the provisions of the Discrimination Act requiring active measures against discrimination.

The Office of the Ombudsman was formed on 1 January 2009 when the four previous anti-discrimination ombudsmen were merged into a single body (The Equal Opportunities Ombudsman dealt with gender based discrimination, the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination focused on discrimination related to ethnicity, religion or other belief, the Disability Ombudsman was responsible for combating discrimination relating to disability, and the Ombudsman against Discrimination because of Sexual Orientation monitored compliance with the rules prohibiting discrimination due to a person's sexual orientation). The Ombudsman of today has continued to cover this broad range of issues and its' activities are all aimed at preventing and combatting any kind of discrimination as well as promoting equal rights and opportunities for all. Therefore the Ombudsman's responsibility also includes raising awareness and disseminating knowledge and information about discrimination and about the prohibitions against discrimination, both among those who might discriminate against others and those who risk being subjected to discrimination. This means that the Ombudsman offers guidance to employers, higher education institutions, schools and others, and helps develop useful methods on their behalf. A further task is to ensure, through awareness raising initiatives, that everyone knows their rights.

The Ombudsman is also required to draw attention to and create debate around human rights issues. It also has a special responsibility for reporting on new research and international developments in the human rights and discrimination field.

Finally, the Ombudsman has been commissioned to develop and intensify work to address xenophobia and similar forms of intolerance by taking action in the period 2014–2017. The Government has also commissioned the Ombudsman to take action to raise awareness about afrophobia in 2015 and 2016.

### ***Other agencies and actors concerned***

Furthermore, the Swedish Committee Against Antisemitism (Svenska kommittén mot anti-Semitism, SKMA) was granted support in 2012–2014 for special training programmes on issues including antisemitism and islamophobia. The Official Council of Swedish Jewish Communities (Judiska centralrådet i Sverige) was granted support in 2011 and 2014 to finance measures intended to increase security and reduce vulnerability for the Jewish minority. The Swedish Christian Council (Sveriges kristna råd) was awarded a grant in 2014 to carry out the project We don't hate [Vi som inte hatar] in close cooperation with Swedish Inter-Faith Council. The Living History Forum (Forum för levande historia) has been commissioned to carry out a major educational programme about various forms of racism and intolerance in history and today in the period 2015–2017. This commission is to be carried out in cooperation with the National Agency for Education (Skolverket).

In 2013 and 2014 the Swedish Media Council (Statens Medieråd) was commissioned by the Government to coordinate national activities in Sweden within the Council of Europe campaign No Hate Speech Movement. These activities were carried out in order to raise awareness of online xenophobia, sexism and similar forms of intolerance and focused particularly on children and young people.

### ***The Migration Agency – information to migrant workers***

The Government has in its letter of appropriation to the Swedish Migration Agency (Migrationsverket) from 26 June, 2014, instructed the agency to provide information to migrant workers regarding their rights and obligations when working in Sweden. Amongst other things, the fact sheet contains information regarding basic requirements in order to obtain a work permit, the length of the work permit, salary and other conditions, as well as information related to accompanying family members.

The Swedish Migration Agency has issued the requested information and will provide it to the Swedish foreign missions for distribution to migrant workers who are in the process of applying for a work permit. The information sheet is one of the Governments many measures aimed at curbing misuse of the labour immigration system as well as exploitation of migrant workers.

### ***Conclusion***

The Government believes that the above mentioned measures in an efficient and systematic way leads to preventing misleading propaganda related to emigration and immigration.