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**ECRI CONCLUSIONS
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS
IN RESPECT OF SWEDEN
SUBJECT TO INTERIM FOLLOW-UP**

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¹ Except where specifically indicated, any developments which occurred after 4 March 2020, the date on which the response of the authorities of Sweden to ECRI's request for information on measures taken to implement the recommendations chosen for interim follow-up was received, have not been taken into account in this analysis.

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FOREWORD

As part of its fifth round of monitoring work, ECRI has renewed its process of interim follow-up with respect to two specific recommendations made in each of its country reports.

In line with the Information Document on ECRI's fifth monitoring cycle brought to the attention of the Ministers' Deputies on 14 November 2012¹, not later than two years following the publication of each report, ECRI addresses a communication to the Government concerned asking what has been done in respect of the specific recommendations for which priority follow-up was requested.

At the same time, ECRI gathers relevant information itself. On the basis of this information and the response from the Government, ECRI draws up its conclusions on the way in which its recommendations have been followed up.

It should be noted that these conclusions concern only the specific interim follow-up recommendations and do not aim at providing a comprehensive analysis of all developments in the fight against racism and intolerance in the State concerned.

¹ CM/Del/Dec(2012)1154/4.2.

1) *In its report on Sweden (fifth monitoring cycle) published on 27 February 2018, ECRI recommended that adequate powers and expertise to investigate discrimination by all public authorities, including law enforcement agencies, be vested in the Ombuds institutions. Furthermore, ECRI encouraged the Parliamentary Ombudsman to work in consultation with the Equality Ombudsman in these cases.*

ECRI notes that there have been no changes made to the mandates and powers of the Ombuds institutions since the publication of ECRI's report.

As ECRI pointed out in its last report, this situation creates a particular problem, inter alia, in the area of law enforcement, which was highlighted by the controversy surrounding the creation of a Roma-database by a regional police force.¹

As concerns the cooperation between the Equality Ombudsman and the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the authorities emphasise that the terms of reference of the four existing Parliamentary Ombudsmen, appointed by the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament) to review and monitor the application of laws and regulations in the public sector, are drawn up by the Riksdag. The Parliamentary Ombudsmen are subordinate only to the Riksdag and consequently cannot be given instructions by the government. However, the authorities explained that they forwarded the recommendation of ECRI to the Riksdag and to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen for their further consideration.

ECRI considers that the recommendation has not been implemented.

2.) *In its report on Sweden (fifth monitoring cycle), ECRI recommended that the authorities review the Introduction Programme for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection with the aim of strengthening it and achieving higher success rates in labour market participation, paying particular attention to addressing the specific needs of women.*

ECRI notes positively that the share of participants employed within three months after completion of the Introduction Programme grew from 27% in 2016² to 39% in September 2018.³ However, according to the Swedish authorities the figure subsequently decreased to 33% in 2019. ECRI acknowledges that such fluctuations can also be the result of different skill levels among the diverse programme participants, which is of particular relevance in the context of a knowledge-intensive and high-skills labour market, such as the Swedish one. Subsequently, the government has taken steps to strengthen the programme, including through a new intensive introduction year consisting of additional language and vocational training components within the overall programme.

According to the authorities, the gender gap in the area of integration and labour market participation for newly arrived migrants persists. Evaluations of the Introduction Programme show that women are less likely than men to have access to, and benefit from, integration measures. In order to address this, the government's new measures also contain a gender equality perspective to mainstream the intensive introduction year in a way that ensures that both women and men can benefit equally from it. In 2020, the government instructed the Swedish public employment service to create specific activities to promote gender equality throughout the Introduction Programme.

¹ ECRI 2018: §§ 15 and 72.

² See ECRI 2018: § 61.

³ Swedish Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen): <http://mb.cision.com/Public/1326/2659366/8457838c391e92d0.pdf> – not counted are persons enrolled in further training or studies.

ECRI welcomes the very positive steps taken by the Swedish authorities and encourages them to continue evaluating and improving the Introduction Programme for newly arrived migrants on an ongoing basis. At the same time, it notes that the results achieved so far are not yet fully satisfactory, especially with regard to closing the gender gap.

Therefore, ECRI considers that the recommendation has been partially implemented.

