

Coronavirus pandemic in the EU – Fundamental Rights Implications

Country: Sweden

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1 Measures taken by government/public authorities

1.1 Emergency laws/states of emergency

Provide information on emergency laws/declarations of states of emergency, including actions taken by police to enforce them and court rulings concerning the legality of such measures. Please include in particular information on developments relating to the protection of the right of association/demonstration; for example, with respect to the public gatherings that took place concerning the death of George Floyd, or other such events.

In **Sweden**, the only constitutionally protected freedom or right that has been restricted for all inhabitants in connection with the spread of the corona virus is the freedom of assembly. According to section 1 of the Ordinance on prohibition on holding public gatherings and public events (*Förordning [2020:114] om förbud mot att hålla allmänna sammankomster och offentliga tillställningar*), general meetings and public events with more than 50 participants may not be held within Sweden until further notice.¹ All other restrictions aimed at the public are posed as recommendations from the government and/or the relevant authorities and cannot be imposed by any actions taken by the police.

In **Sweden**, the Black lives matter movement arranged protests in Sweden, e.g. in Stockholm², Malmö³ and Gothenburg during June 2020.⁴ In addition to the physical protests, large digital demonstrations were also organised with live broadcasts and synchronised digital "check-ins" on various Swedish authorities via social media such as Facebook.⁵ The Police was mainly concerned with the physical demonstrations, since the gatherings by far exceeded the 50 persons limit allowed at present. In Stockholm, the Police dissolved the manifestation with around a thousand participants with reference to the 50 persons limit. In Gothenburg, the Police also wanted to dissolve the manifestation on the same grounds since there were around two thousand participants. The stationary manifestation changed into a walking demonstration, which caused halts in the public transports as the march had not been planned. After the end of the demonstration, incidents of vandalism followed. However, the Police stated that the people engaged in the vandalism had "nothing to do with the demonstration".⁶ In the evening around a hundred persons were still roaming around the city centre vandalising cars and breaking shop windows. The Police ended up apprehending 10 persons. Around 30 persons were put in preventive detention (*omhändertogs*).⁷ In

¹ Sweden, Ordinance on prohibition on holding public gatherings and public events (*Förordning [2020:114] om förbud mot att hålla allmänna sammankomster och offentliga tillställningar*), section 1, 29 March 2020, [available here](#)

² Sweden, Sweden's television (*Sveriges television, SVT*), The Police dissolves manifestation on Sergel square (*Polisen upplöser manifestation på Sergels torg*), 4 June 2020, [available here](#)

³ Sweden, Sweden's television (*Sveriges television, SVT*), Demonstration utan tillstånd samlade hundratals i Malmö, 9 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁴ Sweden, Sweden's television (*Sveriges television, SVT*), Turmoil at Black lives matter demonstration in Gothenburg (*Tumult vid Black lives matter-demonstration i Göteborg*) 8 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁵ Sweden, Sweden's Radio (*Sveriges radio, SR*), Digital protest in support of the Black lives matter movement (*Digital protest till stöd för Black lives matter-rörelsen*), 2 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁶ Sweden, Sweden's television (*Sveriges television, SVT*), Turmoil at Black lives matter demonstration in Gothenburg (*Tumult vid Black lives matter-demonstration i Göteborg*) 8 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁷ Sweden, Sweden's television (*Sveriges television, SVT*), Turmoil at Black lives matter demonstration in Gothenburg (*Tumult vid Black lives matter-demonstration i Göteborg*) 8 June 2020, [available here](#)

Malmö, the Police noted that the demonstration lacked the required permit. Furthermore, it gathered too many participants (around 500). The Police discussed the problems with the organisers that slowly dissolved the manifestation. The Police reported the organisers for suspected violation of the Public Order Act.⁸ Another demonstration was organised outside the American Embassy in Stockholm on 13 June 2020. This demonstration also lacked the required permit and was dissolved by the Police mainly with reference to the number of participants.⁹

1.2 Measures affecting the general population

1.2.1 Social distancing

Focus on:

- *Lifting of stay at home restrictions, and measures/rules for general physical distancing when in public or at home.*
- *Enforcement and penalties.*

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency's regulations and general recommendations about the individual's and the general public's responsibilities to prevent further infectivity¹⁰ are still in effect but the authority has complemented them with recommendations regarding summer activities. The new recommendations entered into force on 13 and 14 June 2020.¹¹ On 4 June 2020, the authority announced that its general recommendations on abstaining from non-necessary travel within Sweden would cease to apply on 13 June 2020.¹² From that date, persons without symptoms are allowed to travel anywhere in Sweden. However, they are recommended to choose the mode of transportation that are least likely to further spread infection. They are also advised to keep up-to-date of the information and routines for the different companies providing public transportation via the official webpage on emergency information from Swedish authorities.¹³

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency decided on a number of new recommendations in order to maintain or improve the necessary physical distancing when some of the regulations and general recommendations are lifted. The authority states that these new recommendations are necessary to avoid an increase of the spreading of covid-19 and an overburdening of regional healthcare and medical services. Furthermore, there will be increased controls to guarantee that the public adheres to the regulations and general recommendations e.g. at camping sites, shopping malls and

⁸ Sweden, Public Order Act (*Ordningslag [1993:1617]*), 16 December 1993, [available here](#)

⁹ Sweden, Svenska Dagbladet (daily newspaper), The Police dissolves Black lives matter protest in Stockholm (*Polis upplöser Black lives matter-protest i Stockholm*), 13 June 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁰ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Regulations and general recommendations on everyone's responsibility to prevent further infectivity of covid-19 inter alia (*Föreskrifter och allmänna råd om allas ansvar att förhindra smitta av covid-19 m.m.*), 1 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Amendments of the regulations and general recommendations on everyone's responsibility to prevent further infectivity of covid-19 inter alia (*Ändring i föreskrifterna och allmänna råden om allas ansvar för att förhindra smitta av covid-19 m.m.*), 9 June 2020, [available here](#)

¹² Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) Measures required for reduced infectivity spreading when travelling increases (*Insatser krävs för dämpad smittspridning vid ökat resande*), 4 June 2020, [available here](#)

¹³ Sweden, National Civil Contingencies Agency (*Myndigheten för samhällsnydd och beredskap*), Domestic travels and public transport (*Inrikesresor och kollektivtrafik*), updated on 11 June 2020, [available here](#)

restaurants. Measures to further reduce the spread of the covid-19 are also required, such as increased testing and national infectivity tracing, especially in the regions that typically receive an influx of tourists and summer guests during the vacation period.¹⁴ To this effect, the Public Health Agency has published specific recommendations for beaches, sports and summer camps:

- Swimming pools, beaches and harbours

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency assesses that it is unlikely that infection will spread between persons swimming at the same beach if they uphold the necessary social distance, since the virus's ability to infect is affected by dilution, transports or purification processes. According to the authority, the ban on public gatherings and public events for more than 50 people does not include indoor or outdoor swimming pools, nor does it include persons spending time on beaches, in parks or similar places.¹⁵

- Sports

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency removed the restrictions on sporting events, matches and tournaments without audiences for all age groups as of 14 June 2020.¹⁶ All such arrangements are allowed for professional athletes at all levels under the condition that they are held outdoors and in accordance with the current restrictions for public gatherings. The authority emphasises that the everyone involved must adhere to the general safety measures before, during and after the activity. Furthermore, the organisers must make a risk assessment using the authority's risk assessment tool before they allow an event for less than 50 persons.¹⁷

- Summer camps

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency states that summer camps for children and youths may be organised if the general restrictions can be upheld. Furthermore, the organisers must make a risk assessment using the authority's risk assessment tool before they allow a camp for less than 50 persons. The organisers must mainly arrange outdoor activities for smaller groups of participants. They must also increase the distances between beds and seated areas, minimise activities which gather larger groups, such as shows for the parents, and guarantee good hand hygiene.¹⁸

In **Sweden**, the Ministry of Finance (*Finansdepartementet*) and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*) have introduced a large-scale investment in order to expand the regions'

¹⁴ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) Measures required for reduced infectivity when travelling increases (*Insatser krävs för dämpad smittspridning vid ökat resande*), 4 June 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁵ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Amendments of the regulations and general advice on everyone's responsibility to prevent further infectivity of covid-19 inter alia (*Ändring i föreskrifterna och allmänna råden om allas ansvar för att förhindra smitta av covid-19 m.m.*), 9 June 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁶ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Information for sports associations and fitness centres regarding covid-19 (*Information till idrottsföreningar och träningsanläggningar om covid-19*), 15 June 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁷ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Information for organisers of events and gatherings with regards to covid-19 (*Information till arrangörer av evenemang och sammankomster med anledning av covid-19*), 29 March 2020 [available here](#)

¹⁸ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Questions and answers regarding covid-19 (*Frågor och svar om covid-19*), 19 June 2020, [available here](#)

testing capacity and infectivity tracing. Several regions are now in a phase where they can focus on more encompassing and active infectivity tracing in order to further reduce the spread of the infectivity.¹⁹ In total, the government invests 5.9 billion SEK (€562,694,000) to guarantee the financing of the expanded testing and infectivity tracing. The main part of the funding will be distributed to the regions. The Government and the Swedish Association for Local Authorities and Regions (*Sveriges Kommuner och Regioner, SKR*) have reached a consensus on the managing of testing and infectivity tracing and the intention and have signed an agreement stipulating the terms.²⁰ According to the agreement the government assumes the costs for the testing and infectivity tracing, while the regions carry out the testing on the basis of the recommendations of the Public Health Agency. The County Administrative Boards shall assist the regions in their work in order to secure a swift expansion of the test capacity in consultation with the Public Health Agency.²¹

1.2.2 Education

Focus on:

- *Steps to reopen educational institutions (schools, third level and kindergartens). Include any specific measures aimed at children from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.*
- *Measures to protect students and staff as they return to educational institutions (e.g. related to physical distancing, shift patterns, health and hygiene, etc.).*

In **Sweden**, the government assigned the National Board of Education (*Skolverket*) and the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan, MYH*) the task to follow up the consequences of the government's and other authorities' decisions and regulations on childrens', pupils' and students' education during the covid-19-pandemic in the spring 2020.²² The National Board of Education will submit an intermittent report to the government on 14 August 2020 and a final report at the latest on 21 May 2021. The National Agency for Higher Vocational Education will deliver its final report at the latest on 1 December 2021.²³

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Authority's general recommendation to conduct the upper secondary education as distance education was removed on 15 June 2020. Consequently, all students on upper

¹⁹ Sweden, Ministry of Finance (*Finansdepartementet*), Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), The Government invests 5,9 billion SEK in increased testing and infectivity tracing (*Regeringen satsar 5,9 miljarder på utökad testning och smittspårning*), press release, 4 June 2020, [available here](#)

²⁰ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), The government and the Swedish Association for Local Authorities and Regions have signed an agreement concerning the implementation of increased testing (*Regeringen och SKR har tecknat en överenskommelse om genomförande för ökad testning*), press release, 11 June 2020, [available here](#)

²¹ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Increased national testing for covid-19, 2020 – Agreement between the state and the Swedish Association for Local Authorities and Regions (*Ökad nationell testning för covid-19, 2020 – Överenskommelse mellan staten och Sveriges Kommuner och Regioner*), registration number S2020/05276, 11 June 2020, [available here](#)

²² Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), The pandemic's consequences for the field of education area will be followed up (*Pandemins konsekvenser inom utbildningsområdet ska följas upp*), 18 June 2020, [available here](#)

²³ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), The pandemic's consequences for the field of education area will be followed up (*Pandemins konsekvenser inom utbildningsområdet ska följas upp*), 18 June 2020, [available here](#)

secondary level may return to the school facilities in the autumn.²⁴ However, the government states that the municipal adult education and the education at vocational colleges and universities, education may still be required to partly be conducted as distance education in order to reduce the spread of infection.²⁵

In **Sweden**, the number of applicants to higher education has increased as a result of the negative development on the labour market due to the corona virus. As a consequence, the government has allocated extra funds to the universities and colleges to offer additional study places on study programmes which train persons to work in sectors of the labour market where there are labour shortages, e.g. studies to become nurses, teachers and technicians. The government pinpoints education of nurses, teachers and technicians.²⁶ The extra funding will permanently cover the costs for an additional 1,300 students. A specific investment will also provide further education and lifelong learning for an additional 1,500 students. Furthermore, the government invests 30 million SEK (€2,861,150) on shorter courses for persons who have been temporarily laid off in order to provide them with the opportunity to further their education.²⁷ The total extra funds will enable an additional 12,000 persons to study during the autumn of 2020.²⁸

1.2.3 Work

Focus on:

- *Steps for specific sectors/the general population to return to work and measures to protect employees in the workplace (physical distancing, health and hygiene, shift patterns, etc.). Please include any specific measures aimed at people in precarious work.*
- *Ending of furlough/short-time work programmes for specific sectors/the general population.*

In **Sweden**, the Minister of Finance stated that there are indications of a positive turn in the Swedish economy although from a very low level.²⁹ The unemployment increased during March and April and the increase is expected to continue. In April, the unemployment reached 8.1 percent, which is the highest unemployment rate since 2014.³⁰

In **Sweden**, the Swedish Public Health Agency has conducted a preliminary study of cases of covid-19 based on occupation. The study has linked data from the authority's database of confirmed cases of

²⁴ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), The requirement for distance education is eased (*Kravet på distansundervisning lättas upp*), 29 May 2020, [available here](#)

²⁵ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), The requirement for distance education is eased (*Kravet på distansundervisning lättas upp*), 29 May 2020, [available here](#)

²⁶ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), Further strengthening of the possibility of studying at universities and colleges this autumn (*Ytterligare förstärkning av möjligheten till studier vid universitet och högskolor i höst*), 29 June 2020, [available here](#)

²⁷ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), Further strengthening of the possibility of studying at universities and colleges this autumn (*Ytterligare förstärkning av möjligheten till studier vid universitet och högskolor i höst*), 29 June 2020, [available here](#)

²⁸ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), Further strengthening of the possibility of studying at universities and colleges this autumn (*Ytterligare förstärkning av möjligheten till studier vid universitet och högskolor i höst*), 29 June 2020, [available here](#)

²⁹ Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*) (2020) XX: The economy about to turn upwards (XX: *Ekonomi på väg att vända uppåt*), 9 June 2020, [available here](#)

³⁰ Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*) (2020) XX: The economy about to turn upwards (XX: *Ekonomi på väg att vända uppåt*), 9 June 2020, [available here](#)

covid-19 and Statistics Sweden's data on occupational groups.³¹ The study included persons who were diagnosed with covid-19 during the period 13 March to 27 May 2020.³² According to the study, some occupational groups have been diagnosed with covid-19 to a greater extent than other groups. Among these occupational groups are taxi drivers, bus and tram drivers. The study also shows that staff working in preschools, primary and secondary schools (which all have been open during the pandemic) do not have a higher prevalence of covid-19 diagnoses than other occupational groups. Morbidity can be affected by factors such as different living conditions and habits as well as underlying diseases but these factors have not been included in the preliminary analysis. Regardless, the study contributes to the knowledge about where infection spreads in society and may provide a basis for targeted measures.³³

In **Sweden**, the Swedish Work Environment Authority (*Arbetsmiljöverket*) stated that the authority will conduct around 300 inspections of the work conditions in healthcare and elderly care in order to ensure that the staff's protective equipment meet the safety requirements and provides the intended protection against infectivity. All personal protective equipment used in healthcare and elderly care must be tested, which means that they must be CE marked or have a temporary permit from the authority.³⁴

In **Sweden**, the Swedish Work Environment Authority (*Arbetsmiljöverket*) declared that the authority will conduct close to 300 inspections focusing on the infectious risks of security personnel, security guards and cleaning staff, as well as of staff in shops and pharmacies.³⁵ The inspections will focus on the preventive work of the employers relating to the workplaces at local level. The inspection will mainly be conducted over phone in order to minimise the risk of spreading the virus. The authority may request documentation showing the preventive work conducted to reduce the risk of infection at the workplace, e.g. risk assessments of the work environment, information requiring staff who have symptoms to stay home, technical and organisational measures, such as clear distance marking and self-scanning, and the use of personal protective equipment when the other measures are not sufficient or possible.³⁶

In **Sweden**, the government decided that persons in risk groups, certain relatives and parents of recently seriously ill children who refrain or partly refrain from gainful employment in order to avoid

³¹ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Authority (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) Presence of covid-19 in various occupational groups (*Förekomst av covid-19 i olika yrkesgrupper*), 25 June 2020, [available here](#)

³² Healthcare and care personnel were sampled to a greater extent than other occupational groups, which is why the prevalence of covid-19 in this group cannot be compared correctly and hence was excluded from the review.

³³ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Authority (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) Presence of covid-19 in various occupational groups (*Förekomst av covid-19 i olika yrkesgrupper*), 25 June 2020, [available here](#)

³⁴ Sweden, Swedish Work Environment Authority (*Arbetsmiljöverket*) (2020), The Swedish Work Environment Authority inspects protective equipment in health care and elderly care (*Arbetsmiljöverket granskar skyddsutrustning i vård och äldreomsorg*), 10 June 2020, [available here](#)

³⁵ Sweden, Swedish Work Environment Authority (*Arbetsmiljöverket*) The Swedish Work Environment Authority inspects infectious risks (*Arbetsmiljöverket inspekterar smittrisker*), 24 June 2020, [available here](#)

³⁶ Sweden, Swedish Work Environment Authority (*Arbetsmiljöverket*) The Swedish Work Environment Authority inspects infectious risks (*Arbetsmiljöverket inspekterar smittrisker*), 24 June 2020, [available here](#)

infection by covid-19 should be entitled to compensation.³⁷ The regulations mean that individuals from these groups have the right to compensation as high as 76 EUR (804 SEK) per day in up to 90 days. The benefits are granted for the time a person ceases work to avoid being infected or avoid infecting a person at risk. In order to receive the benefit, there should be no opportunity to carry out acquisition work in the home. It is also required that the employer has not offered other duties that can be carried out without a risk or has not been able to adapt the work situation so the person in question can keep suitable distance from others in order to avoid the spread of infection.³⁸ In order for relatives of adults in the risk group to be entitled to compensation, the relative in question must work as a personal assistant for the person in the risk group and the person in the risk group must have been granted personal assistance compensation (*assistansersättning*). For parents, the government's decision means that parents under certain conditions may receive compensation if they have to give up work in order to care for a child who has recently been seriously ill and needs to be protected against a possible infection by the virus.³⁹ The new provisions will cease to apply at the end of September 2020.⁴⁰

1.2.4 Access to justice

Focus on:

- *Steps to lift restrictions previously imposed on court proceedings and any strategies to deal with case backlog or increased litigation due to COVID-19 measures (e.g. criteria to prioritise certain types of cases/disputes).*
- *Continued use of remote hearings and videoconferences within court proceedings despite the lifting of restrictions (e.g. for which proceedings).*

In **Sweden**, the courts have not been closed during the corona crisis. Sweden's Courts (*Sveriges domstolar*) has presented statistics related to the corona virus and the operations of the courts on a weekly basis.⁴¹ As reported in previous reports, the proportion of cancelled hearings have increased moderately and the use of video conferences for court hearings has increased. In 2020, 2,400 court hearings were conducted via video conference during week 25 (15–21 June) in comparison with 1,184 court hearings via videoconferences during the same week in 2019.⁴² The Swedish National Courts Administration (*Domstolsverket*) states that there is no aggregated information on the types of court hearings that make use of video conferences, but the technology is in place in the courts in order to

³⁷ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*) Compensation to risk groups and certain relatives and parents (*Ersättning till riskgrupper samt vissa anhöriga och föräldrar*), 25 June 2020, [available here](#)

³⁸ Sweden, Ordinance [2020:582] on certain sickness benefits for preventive purposes and disease carrier allowance following the disease covid-19 (*Förordning [2020:682] om viss sjukpenning i förebyggande syfte och viss smittbärrpenning med anledning av sjukdomen covid-19*), 26 June 2020, [available here](#)

³⁹ Sweden, Ordinance on amendments of the Ordinance on temporary parental benefits following the disease covid-19 (*Förordning [2020:583] om ändring i förordningen [2020:244] om viss tillfällig föräldrapenning med anledning av sjukdomen covid-19*), 26 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁴⁰ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*) Compensation to risk groups and certain relatives and parents (*Ersättning till riskgrupper samt vissa anhöriga och föräldrar*), 25 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁴¹ Sweden, Sweden's Courts (*Sveriges domstolar*), Statistics related to the coronavirus (*Statistik med anledning av coronaviruset*) [available here](#)

⁴² Sweden, Sweden's Courts (*Sveriges domstolar*), Significant increase in courts' video technology (*Kraftig ökning av domstolarnas videoteknik*), 29 June 2020, [available here](#)

enable all types of hearings. However, the authority stresses that it is always the judge of the individual case who decide if and when video conferences should be used.⁴³

In **Sweden**, the Swedish National Courts Administration informs that there are no common principles stipulating how court cases should be prioritised since the courts are independent authorities. Consequently, each court makes its own assessments of the need to suspend or reschedule any hearings.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the courts should always focus on so-called priority cases (*förtursmål*) before less urgent cases. According to the Swedish National Courts Administration, priority cases in general courts are e.g. detention hearings (*häktningförhandlingar*), cases involving persons who are deprived of their liberty (*mål med frihetsberövade personer*), cases involving juveniles (*ungdomsmål*), urgent family cases (*akuta familjemål*) and cases of bankruptcy (*konkurser*). In addition, all cases connected to serious organised crime and gang crimes are important priorities.⁴⁵ The administrative courts (*förvaltningsdomstolarna*) are primarily concerned with decisions on compulsory care (*beslut om tvångsvård*), public procurement (*offentlig upphandling*), detention and payment security.⁴⁶

1.2.5 Freedom of movement

Focus on:

- *Steps to reopen borders/lift restrictions on freedom of movement to and within the EU, including rules or restrictions applying to certain categories of people (e.g. citizens; ‘essential workers’). Please mention what requirements are in place for various categories of people to enter country (e.g. negative COVID-19 test result and/or obligation to self-isolate etc).*
- *Changes to asylum application procedures (e.g. lifting of temporary suspensions or restrictions on procedures) or available statistics on numbers of asylum applications (e.g. being much lower than for same period in previous years due to travel restrictions).*

In **Sweden**, the temporary travel ban was extended until 7 July following the recommendations of the European Commission.⁴⁷ Sweden follows the Commission’s guidelines, including the list of exceptions defined by the Commission. Persons who have temporary or permanent residence permits in Sweden are also excepted from the entry ban if the purpose of the entry is to return home.⁴⁸ After a review, the Government has decided on certain clarifications of certain exceptions from the travel ban. For example seasonal workers in agriculture, forestry and horticulture are added to the list of groups that can be exempted from the entry ban, since they perform necessary functions in Sweden. The clarification is in line with the EU Commission's practical guidance of 30 March 2020 that mentions seasonal agricultural workers. The government has also clarified the regulations in order to reduce the risk of breaking up families and facilitate family reunification. The exception for family members of Swedish citizens has been clarified, which makes it easier for families that live abroad to travel home to Sweden. Clarifications have also been made to make it easier for persons with Swedish residence

⁴³ Sweden, E-mail correspondence with Swedish National Courts Administration (*Domstolsverket*), 30 June 2020

⁴⁴ Sweden, E-mail correspondence with Swedish National Courts Administration (*Domstolsverket*), 30 June 2020

⁴⁵ Sweden, E-mail correspondance with Swedish National Courts Administration (*Domstolsverket*), 30 June 2020

⁴⁶ Sweden, E-mail correspondance with Swedish National Courts Administration (*Domstolsverket*), 30 June 2020

⁴⁷ Sweden, Ministry of Justice (*Justitiedepartementet*), Extension of temporary entry ban to the EU via Sweden until 7 July 2020 (*Förlängning av tillfälligt inreseförbud till EU via Sverige till och med den 7 juli 2020*), 25 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁴⁸ Sweden, Ministry of Justice (*Justitiedepartementet*), Changes in the temporary entry ban to Sweden (*Ändringar i det tillfälliga inreseförbudet till Sverige*), press release 4 June 2020, [available here](#)

permits to join the family in Sweden. The changes and clarifications entered into effect on 4 June 2020.⁴⁹

In **Sweden**, the closed borders around the world and recommendations to avoid travels abroad have resulted in a standstill of on-going adoption processes. This situation has led the government to commission the Family Law and Parental Support Authority (*Myndigheten för familjerätt och föräldraskapsstöd*) to distribute up to 3.5 million SEK (€333,800) to authorised adoption organisations to enable them to prevent that initiated adoption processes are stopped. The purpose is to guarantee that the adoption processes are completed and that children who have already been matched with their adoptive parents may be together with their new families.⁵⁰

In **Sweden**, the summer vacations are coming up and people are expected to travel to and also reside in other parts of the country. The Minister of Social Affairs has stated that it is important to ensure sufficient capacity to transport patients between regions as well as capacity to meet an greater demand for healthcare and medical services in certain tourist-dense parts of the country.⁵¹ Consequently, the government has commissioned the National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) with the task of supporting the coordination of the healthcare resources of the 21 regions during the summer 2020.⁵² The assignment includes strengthening the healthcare capacity in relevant locations, for example through national reinforcement resources. The assignment also includes coordinating and, if necessary, strengthening the regions' capacity to transport patients between them. If the authority finds it necessary, it should review the national healthcare capacity and continuously communicate the reviews to the regions in order to assist them in coordinating the available capacity.⁵³

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency have developed a guide for all actors who offer anti-body tests for the virus causing covid-19.⁵⁴ The guide deals with different aspects of the testing, such as the reliability of the tests and the interpretation of the test results. The new guide includes different calculation examples that show how the test results vary depending on the specificity and accuracy of the tests as well as the existence of anti-bodies among the population.⁵⁵

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency announced that Region Stockholm's helpline, which is available in in different languages becomes accessible nationwide through a cooperation between the regions

⁴⁹ Sweden, Ministry of Justice (*Justitiedepartementet*), Changes in the temporary entry ban to Sweden (*Ändringar i det tillfälliga inreseförbudet till Sverige*), press release 4 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁵⁰ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*) Economic advice for adoption organisations (*Ekonomiskt stöd till adoptionsorganisationer*), 4 June 2020 [available here](#)

⁵¹ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*) Strengthened coordination of healthcare resources during the summer (*Stärkt samordning av hälso- och sjukvårdsresurser under sommaren*), press release, 4 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁵² Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*) Strengthened coordination of healthcare resources during the summer (*Stärkt samordning av hälso- och sjukvårdsresurser under sommaren*), press release, 4 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁵³ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*) Strengthened coordination of healthcare resources during the summer (*Stärkt samordning av hälso- och sjukvårdsresurser under sommaren*), press release, 4 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁵⁴ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) New guidance on anti-body tests (*Ny vägledning om antikroppstester*), 8 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁵⁵ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) Guidance for anti-body detection (*Vägledning för antikroppspåvisning*), 4 June 2020, [available here](#)

and the Public Health Agency.⁵⁶ The helpline is staffed by regional healthcare communicators and health informators who speak Arabic, Somali, Farsi, Tigrinja, Amarinja and Russian. The public can call the helpline to ask questions and get answers about the corona virus.

1.3 Impact of measures on particular groups

Select the three most relevant groups from the following:

- persons with disabilities,
- homeless people,
- older people,
- women,
- Roma and Travellers (Note – for those countries requested to collect additional data on the impact of COVID-19 on Roma – Service request No 33 (Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Hungary, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Sweden), information submitted on Roma for Bulletin 4 should not be exactly duplicated in this additional data collection; however, a summary of main points concerning the Roma can be included in your submission for this Bulletin – to ensure that, where appropriate, any major developments in your Member State concerning this group are reported in Bulletin 4. The same approach applies regarding information supplied on asylum seekers/refugees).
- Detainees (including measures on early release or alternatives to detention)
- or another group not listed that have immigrated in your country as facing particular challenges - before selection, this should be discussed with FRA.

Older people:

The table below presents the official statistics on the total number of cases in residential care homes for the elderly (*äldreboende*) and home care for the elderly (*hemtjänst*) during the pandemic up until 3 July 2020. Data is disaggregated in age groups.⁵⁷

Residential care homes for the elderly (*äldreboende*):⁵⁸

Age group	70–74	75–79	80–84	85+
Infected by COVID-19	Total: 356	Total: 705	Total:1,080	Total: 3,760
Died from COVID-19	Total: 142	Total: 255	Total: 492	Total: 1,536

⁵⁶ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) National helpline on the new corona virus in several languages (*Nationell telefonlinje om det nya coronaviruset på flera språk*), 3 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁵⁷ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), Official Webpage, “Statistics on covid-19 amongst elderly by type of of housing” (*Statistik om covid-19 bland äldre efter boendeform*), updated 3 July 2020, [available here](#)

⁵⁸ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), Official Webpage, “Statistics on covid-19 amongst elderly by residence form” (*Statistik om covid-19 bland äldre efter boendeform*), updated 3 July 2020, [available here](#)

Home care services for the elderly (*Hemtjänst*):⁵⁹

Age group	70-74	75-79	80-84	85+
Infected by COVID-19	Total: 351	Total: 703	Total: 933	Total: 2,325
Died from COVID-19	Total: 89	Total: 174	Total: 268	Total: 746

In **Sweden**, the government has decided to extend the ban on visitors to residential homes for elderly a of 15 June 2020.⁶⁰ The ban extends until 31 August 2020 and was first initiated on 1 April 2020. At the same time, the government assigned the National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) with the task to develop support for both staff and relatives. The supporting guidelines should include information on how to assess any exemptions from the ban. It shall also include examples that can serve as a support for both staff and relatives on how visits can be arranged safely e.g. by facilitating outdoor visits or by installing plexiglass divisions in the accommodations. The assignment shall be reported to the Ministry of Social Affairs at the latest on 15 July 2020.⁶¹ Also, the testing strategy described in previous report is still at place with updates such as including testing persons with accomodation supports as of the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (LSS)⁶² and municipal home care service and health care.⁶³

In **Sweden**, the government allocated 30 million SEK (€2,861,150) to support the municipalities' work to end the isolation of older persons, which is a result of the general recommendations for persons over 70 to avoid social contact during the pandemic.⁶⁴ The funds shall be used to initiate or strengthen digital and other solutions aimed at enabling social contact, e.g. protected visiting rooms that allow relatives to visit the older persons without the risk of spreading the virus or the hiring of extra staff to enable meetings outside. Funding can also be used to purchase the technical equipment needed to enable virtual social contact when no personal visits are possible.⁶⁵

In **Sweden**, the government has assigned the Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), to review the need of additional regulations in certain areas concerning older people and persons with

⁵⁹ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), "Statistics on covid-19 amongst elderly by residence form" (*Statistik om covid-19 bland äldre efter boendeform*), official Webpage, updated 3 July 2020, [available here](#). Please note that the statistics do not include persons with no more support than social alarm devices (*trygghetslarm*).

⁶⁰ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Visit bans in residential housing for elderly extended (*Besöksförbud på äldreboenden förlängs*), 15 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁶¹ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Visit bans in residential housing for elderly prolonged (*Besöksförbud på äldreboenden förlängs*), 15 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁶² Sweden, Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (*Lag [1993:387] om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade*), 27 May 1993, [available here](#)

⁶³ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Testing for covid-19 in municipal care for elderly (*Provtagning för covid-19 inom kommunal vård och omsorg för äldre*), updated 17 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁶⁴ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), 30 million to counter the consequences of isolation (*30 miljoner för att motverka konsekvenser av isolering*), 18 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁶⁵ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), 30 million to counter the consequences of isolation (*30 miljoner för att motverka konsekvenser av isolering*), 18 June 2020, [available here](#)

disabilities in order to reduce the spread of covid-19.⁶⁶ The review shall be made in collaboration with the National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (*Sveriges kommuner och regioner, SKR*). If the Public Health Agency concludes that there is such a need, the authority shall describe what these regulations should entail. Furthermore, the Public Health Agency shall describe how the new regulations should be able to contribute to the fighting of infectivity in comparison with already published support materials and other measures. The review's focus areas are: elderly care in the ordinary housing (*hemtjänst i ordinärt boende*),⁶⁷ residential housing or the equivalent (*särskilt boende eller motsvarande boendeform*)⁶⁸ and residential housing with special care for adults or any other residential housing for adult or equivalent housing run by private individuals (*bostad med särskild service för vuxna eller någon annan särskilt anpassad bostad för vuxna eller motsvarande boendeform som en enskild person bedriver*).⁶⁹ The assignment shall be reported to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs at the latest on 30 September 2020.⁷⁰

- **Women:**

In **Sweden**, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency (*Jämställdhetsmyndigheten*) has compiled and published information focusing on how regions and municipalities shall prevent domestic violence during the pandemic.⁷¹ The authority points out that the efforts to prevent and reduce the spread of covid-19 through various restrictions have resulted in increased isolation. For already vulnerable groups, especially children and women, the isolation means an increased risk of being subjected to violence. Isolation can also lead to reduced opportunities to take part of different support measures. On 30 April 2020, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency was commissioned by the government to identify and develop effective methods for municipalities to disseminate information about domestic violence and honour-related violence and oppression and how contact can be established with victims of violence.⁷² The on-going execution of the assignment is based on the special circumstances and conditions following the outbreak of covid-19. The authority notes that most municipalities, authorities and organisations carry out active work aimed at persons with increased vulnerability

⁶⁶ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Assignment concerning measures in some social services activities during the spread of the covid-19 infection (*Uppdrag om åtgärder inom vissa av socialtjänstens verksamheter vid smittspridning av covid-19*), government assignment, 26 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁶⁷ Sweden, Social Services Act (*Socialtjänstlag [2001:453]*), 7 June 2001, [available here](#)

⁶⁸ Sweden, Social Services Act (*Socialtjänstlag [2001:453]*), ch. 5 section 5 or 7, ch. 7 section 1, 7 June 2001, [available here](#)

⁶⁹ Sweden, Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (*Lag [1993:387] om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade*), section 9 paragraph 9, 1 January 2011, [available here](#)

⁷⁰ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Assignment on measures in some social services activities during the spread of covid-19 infection (*Uppdrag om åtgärder inom vissa av socialtjänstens verksamheter vid smittspridning av covid-19*), government assignment, 26 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁷¹ Sweden, Swedish Gender Equality Agency (*Jämställdhetsmyndigheten*), Violence in connection with covid-19 (*Våldsutsatthet i samband med covid-19*), 26 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁷² Sweden, Ministry of Employment (*Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet*), Assignment to the Gender Equality Authority to identify and develop methods for the municipalities to disseminate information about violence in close relationships and honour-related violence and oppression following the breakout of covid-19 (*Uppdrag till Jämställdhetsmyndigheten att identifiera och utveckla arbetssätt för att kommuner ska kunna sprida information om våld i nära relationer och hedersrelaterat våld och förtryck med anledning av utbrottet av covid-19*), government assignment, 30 April 2020, [available here](#)

following the pandemic. Regardless, the authority stresses the importance of being prepared for potential increases of the number of cases. As a part of its government assignment, the Gender Equality Agency has published some important aspects for municipalities to consider when working to reduce the risk of increased violence due to the corona crisis. The list is as follows:

- Municipalities need to plan for and review the need for new information pathways and working methods to reach people who are isolated as a result of the pandemic.
- Municipalities need to inform and disseminate the municipality's own support efforts, especially support/emergency helplines and other activities aimed at victims of violence and perpetrators of violence. Municipalities also need to disseminate information on the so-called Kvinnofridlinjen, which is a national helpline that is open 24 hours a day. It is also important to refer to national support phones for children.
- Personnel in the municipalities' various activities, such as social services, school, leisure, and elderly care must develop their methods and routinely ask questions about violence.
- Municipalities need to become active in order to break the isolation which makes persons more vulnerable to violence. Everyone who is exposed to violence should be able to find support during and after the pandemic, regardless of where in Sweden they reside.
- Municipalities need to review and, if necessary, strengthen collaboration between the municipality's various activities, as well as with other authorities and organizations. Collaboration between different actors is important both to make the vulnerability visible and to be provide support and assistance to vulnerable persons.
- Experience from previous crises and pandemics shows that more persons seek support and assistance after a crisis or pandemic. Consequently, it is important that the municipalities realise this and plan accordingly, so they are prepared for this continuous need of support.
- The municipalities are ultimately responsible for ensuring that all victims of violence receive the support and assistance they have the right to and need. Politicians and civil servants are responsible for creating the necessary conditions and resources for meeting the possible increase of persons who are subjected to violence and as a consequence in need of support, both during the on-going pandemic and after the end of the pandemic.

In **Sweden**, the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women (*Nationellt Centrum för Kvinnofrid*) has not noticed an increase in number of phonecalls to the helpline for women (*Kvinnofridslinjen*) during the pandemic, but emphasizes that it is very difficult to reach out and seek help when isolated together with the person you are most afraid of.⁷³

In **Sweden**, the National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) states that several regions have difficulties carrying out the cervical screenings of HPV as usual. Invitations to gynecological cell samplings have been temporarily stopped in 13 of the 21 regions and reduced in an additional 5

⁷³ Sweden, *Dagens juridik* (legal journal) (2020), Severe pressure on the country's helpline during corona (*Hårt tryck på landets stödtelefoner under corona*), 3 April 2020, [available here](#)

regions.⁷⁴ The main reasons for this situation are that the regions have wanted to reduce the risk of further spreading the infection and that they have needed the staff in other parts of the healthcare system. Consequently, National Board of Health and Welfare has decided to allow the regions to screen for cervical cancer using self-sampling methods from mid-July if regular screening cannot be conducted to the covid-19 pandemic.⁷⁵ The authority assesses that the health benefits of self-sampling are greater than any disadvantages even though the self-sampling tests are not as reliable as tests made by healthcare professionals, since the alternative is that many persons will not be screened at all.⁷⁶

- **Country of birth:**

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency has published a preliminary study focusing on the links between cases of illness and deaths related to covid-19 and the country of birth of the patients in question. The study has linked data from the authority's database of confirmed cases of covid-19 and Statistics Sweden's data on country of birth.⁷⁷ The study includes persons who were diagnosed with covid-19 during the period 13 March to 7 May 2020. The study shows that persons born in other countries than Sweden have been affected by covid-19 to various degrees. Overall, the prevalence of covid-19 was highest among persons born in Turkey. The prevalence of covid-19 among persons born in Somalia was highest in the beginning of the pandemic, but declined in April. The prevalence among persons born in Iraq was highest towards the end of focus period.

Incidence per country of birth (number of cases per 100,000 persons) for the five countries with the highest incidence and Sweden, during the period 13 March – 7 May 2020:⁷⁸

Country of birth	Incidence (number of cases per 100,000 persons)
Turkey	753
Ethiopia	742
Somalia	660
Chile	624
Iraq	600
Sweden	189

⁷⁴ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), New rules allow cervical screening with self-sampling during the pandemic (*Nya regler möjliggör livmoderhalscreening med självprovtagning under pandemin*), 30 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁷⁵ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), New rules allow cervical screening with self-sampling during the pandemic (*Nya regler möjliggör livmoderhalscreening med självprovtagning under pandemin*), 30 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁷⁶ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), New rules allow cervical screening with self-sampling during the pandemic (*Nya regler möjliggör livmoderhalscreening med självprovtagning under pandemin*), 30 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁷⁷ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Demographic description of confirmed covid-19 cases in Sweden 13 March – 7 May 2020 (*Demografisk beskrivning av bekräfade covid-19 fall i Sverige 13 mars – 7 maj 2020*), 18 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁷⁸ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Demographic description of confirmed covid-19 cases in Sweden 13 March – 7 May 2020 (*Demografisk beskrivning av bekräfade covid-19 fall i Sverige 13 mars – 7 maj 2020*), 18 May 2020, [available here](#)

The Public Health Agency stresses that morbidity and mortality may be affected by factors such as different living conditions and habits as well as underlying illnesses but such information has not been included in the analysis. Nevertheless, the results will be used in the authority's continuing work since it they can be the basis for targeted efforts such as translation of information and collaborative projects with regional infection protection units in order to improve the authority's ability to reach out to different groups.⁷⁹

In **Sweden**, a study published in a Swedish medical journal (*Läkartidningen*) compare the mortality data in Sweden during 2020 with the period 2016–2019 by country of origin.⁸⁰ The study shows that in the age group 40–64 years 122 deaths occurred in immigrant groups that are likely to be weakly established⁸¹ in Sweden. The average number of deaths in the same group during the same period in 2016–2019 was 38.5. Consequently, the death rate has increased with 220 percent. At the same time, 1 percent lower mortality was noted among persons in the age group 40–64 years born in Sweden, the EU, the Nordic countries or North America, in 2020 compared to mortality in 2016-2019. Among persons over the age of 65, there was the same high mortality rate in the immigrant group with probable weak establishment (220 percent), but also some excess mortality (19 percent) among those born in Sweden, the EU, the Nordic countries or North America. The researchers stress that the study's results illustrate the need for a dedicated and more diverse strategy for dealing with the pandemic and its effects. There is a need to consider facts such as the overcrowded and multi-generational living conditions of several immigrant groups and their possibilities to follow recommendations on social distancing.⁸² The study concludes by stating that well-thought-out strategies are needed, not only for testing and infection detection at individual level, but also test strategies at population level. It is important to be able to continuously use register data combined with statistical methods for automated detection of clusters with increased rate of infection spread. It is as important to test geographically defined areas as it is to test specific occupational groups.⁸³

⁷⁹ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Country of birth and the risk of suffering from covid-19 (*Födelseland och risken att drabbas av covid-19*), 18 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁸⁰ Sweden, *Läkartidningen* (weekly medical journal), Big differences in mortality during the spring of 2020 based on country of birth (*Stora skillnader i överdödlighet våren 2020 utifrån födelseland*), 29 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁸¹ Weak establishment in reference to the labour market, housing market and level of language skills.

⁸² Sweden, *Läkartidningen* (weekly medical journal), Big differences in mortality during the spring of 2020 based on country of birth (*Stora skillnader i överdödlighet våren 2020 utifrån födelseland*), 29 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁸³ Sweden, *Läkartidningen* (weekly medical journal), Big differences in mortality during the spring of 2020 based on country of birth (*Stora skillnader i överdödlighet våren 2020 utifrån födelseland*), 29 June 2020, [available here](#)

2 Selected issues emerging during the COVID-19 crisis

2.1 Xenophobic speech, acts of harassment and violent attacks

- *In reference to Bulletin #1 where these issues were addressed, please report incidents of xenophobic speech, acts of harassment and violent attacks against specific minority groups on the grounds of race or ethnic origin during the reporting period and on any key developments since you last reported on this issue.*

In **Sweden**, the main concerns about xenophobia in relation to Covid-19 were lifted in the beginning of the crisis in Sweden, i.e. in March 2020. Discussions on different topics, from covid-19 to individual crimes or the Black lives matter movement can always be infused with xenophobia on xenophobic social media platforms like Flashback.⁸⁴ However, arguments of this nature or problems with xenophobia in relation to Covid-19 is not part of the mainstream political and societal discourses. According to the main Swedish organisation monitoring racism and xenophobia in Sweden, Expo Foundation, right-wing extremist groups and radical nationalist parties, including the Swedish Democrats, have had difficulties making themselves relevant during the crisis. They are divided in their views on how to manage and counteract the impact of the virus and have lost support as the voters largely have gathered around the government and its support parties.⁸⁵ However, the CEO of Expo Foundation stresses that after the urgent crisis management of the impact of the corona virus, there is a great risk of an increase of distrust and insecurity, especially given the social and economic effects of the crisis. If anti-democratic and racist groups succeed in exploiting this distrust and insecurity, the risk is that racism and xenophobia will increase in the wake of the corona crisis.⁸⁶

2.2 Infringement of privacy and/or data protection rights

- *In reference to Bulletin # 1 and Bulletin #2 where these issues were addressed, please describe instances of infringement of privacy and/or data protection rights related to the pandemic during the reporting period and on any key developments since you last reported on this issue.*

In **Sweden**, the Data Protection Authority states that all who are processing personal data during this pandemic should know the following: a) Data about persons infected by the corona virus is considered as a personal health data; b) Information about the fact that a person has returned from a so-called risk area is not considered personal health data; c) Information about the fact that a person for reasons of precaution are working from home) is not considered personal health data, unless it contains more detailed information about the individual cause, i.e. that the person in question is infected by the corona virus; d) Information that someone has been quarantined with reference to the Communicable

⁸⁴ Sweden, Flashback – Freedom of expression for real (*Flashback – yttrandefrihet på riktigt*), social media platform, [available here](#)

⁸⁵ Sweden, Expo, Increased racism in the wake of the corona crisis (*Ökad racism I coronakrisens spår*), 23 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁸⁶ Sweden, Expo, Increased racism in the wake of the corona crisis (*Ökad racism I coronakrisens spår*), 23 June 2020, [available here](#)

Disease Act (*Smittskyddslag [2004:168]*)⁸⁷ is probably personal health data; e) Personal health data is considered to be sensitive personal data.⁸⁸

In **Sweden**, the Swedish Data Protection Authority informs the public about the use of services that track the spread of infection through location data from mobile networks or apps on its website, as the Authority has received many questions from the general public regarding the use of contact tracing and tracking applications used in other countries.⁸⁹ According to the authority, there are special rules for location data from apps and from mobile networks, which are supervised by the Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (*Post- och telestyrelsen, PTS*).⁹⁰ The Data Protection Authority is the responsible supervisory authority for the processing of personal data. Consequently, the use of services of location data from apps and mobile network to track the spread of infection is thus a shared supervisory responsibility between the two authorities.⁹¹

In **Sweden**, the Data Protection Authority reiterates that any request for prior consultations from actors working with digital infection tracking including the processing of personal data will be prioritised.⁹² However, the authority has not received any such requests as of 30 June 2020.⁹³

In **Sweden**, the Data Protection Authority states that if authorities need to use personal data to protect Sweden against the corona virus, it is important that adequate measures are taken to minimise the privacy breaches. For example, the personal data must not be used for any other purposes. Furthermore, only a limited number of persons shall be allowed to access the data and it must be erased immediately after the crisis. The Swedish Parliament may need to ensure that there is sufficient legislation supporting such measures. Infection tracking apps developed by private actors, which involve the gathering of location data from networks or phones require individual consent. In this case too, it is important to minimise the privacy breaches. Still, the Authority has not yet received any request from any actor to develop such device.⁹⁴

In **Sweden**, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (*Sveriges kommuner och regioner, SKR*) has published guidelines and advice for its members concerning the use of online communication services such as Facebook, Skype and Zoom in the meetings of the social services, healthcare services and schools. According to the guidelines, digital meetings may reduce the risk of infection and facilitate the different service's contacts with residents, users, pupils and collaboration partners. At the same time, the services in question need to ensure that the digital meetings are safe and protect personal integrity of participants and clients. The association (SKR) underlines that the same rules apply for digital meetings, as for physical ones. That is, sensitive data needs to be protected

⁸⁷ Sweden, Communicable Disease Act (*Smittskyddslag [2004:168]*), 7 April 2004, [available here](#)

⁸⁸ Sweden, Swedish Data Protection Authority (*Datinspektionen*), The Corona virus and personal data (*Coronaviruset och personuppgifter*) [available here](#)

⁸⁹ Sweden, Swedish Data Protection Authority (*Datinspektionen*), The Corona virus and digital infection tracking (*Coronaviruset och digital smittspårning*), [available here](#)

⁹⁰ Sweden, Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (*Post- och telestyrelsen, PTS*), [available here](#)

⁹¹ Sweden, Swedish Data Protection Authority (*Datinspektionen*), The Corona virus and digital infection tracking (*Coronaviruset och digital smittspårning*), [available here](#)

⁹² Sweden, Swedish Data Protection Authority (*Datinspektionen*), The Corona virus and digital infection tracking (*Coronaviruset och digital smittspårning*), [available here](#)

⁹³ Sweden, Swedish Data Protection Authority (*Datinspektionen*), e-mail conversation, 30 June 2020.

⁹⁴ Sweden, Swedish Data Protection Authority (*Datinspektionen*), The Corona virus and digital infection tracking (*Coronaviruset och digital smittspårning*), [available here](#)

so it cannot be accessed by unauthorized persons. This means that the different services must make risk assessments before any digital service can be used.⁹⁵

In **Sweden**, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions published a special support material on legal aspects and information security regarding digital services for municipalities.⁹⁶ When assessing whether a service can be used, the municipality needs to take into account the type of meeting, what information is handled and the security requirements for the service. Analysis and decisions should be documented. If the municipality chooses a service with a lower security level, that decision should be made at the municipal management (*kommunledningen*) or administrative level (*förvaltningsnivå*). According to SKR, before using digital meetings, the social services need to: 1) identify the type of information processed in different types of meetings; 2) investigate what services are available and how they meet security requirements; 3) decide which services to use for different types of meetings; and 4) assess the suitability based on the individual meeting and the individual's needs/situation: The association states that several commercial services such as Skype, Teams, Zoom and Facetime may have encrypted transmissions, but often lack strong authentication. For meetings that do not handle sensitive information this kind of services can still be used these services, but only after an assessment of the type of information that will be handled in the meeting in question. When the social services do use commercial services that do not have strong authentication, they should consider the following checklist of dos and don'ts: a) do not make the meetings public, please use passwords for the meetings or allow the users to wait "outside" to be admitted; b) never share documents with sensitive information via apps or chat functions, neither with the individual in question nor other actors; c) ensure that employees who work from home join the municipality's VPN, and that they ensure that the environment where they sit can guarantee integrity and privacy; d) think about how individual clients will identify themselves (for example, by showing their ID-card on screen during a new visit).⁹⁷

In Sweden, researchers at Lund University declared that they were launching an app on 30 April 2020, developed in the UK in order to map the spread of covid-19.⁹⁸ The app launched by the researchers, *Covid symptom study*, is free of charge and can be downloaded to many different types of telephones. The COVID Symptom Study app is based on the collection of the self-reported data from individual concerning their health status. The app was first called the COVID Symptom Tracker but changed name to emphasise that the app is not tracking persons with the use of Bluetooth technology or GPS. The COVID Symptom Study app was developed by doctors and researchers at King's College London and Guys and St Thomas' Hospital in London in collaboration with a so-called health science company, ZOE

⁹⁵ Sweden, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (*Sveriges kommuner och regioner, SKR*), Digital meetings in the social services (*Digitala möten i socialtjänsten*), webpage, 24 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁹⁶ Sweden, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (*Sveriges kommuner och regioner, SKR*), Digital meetings in the social services due to covid-19 (*Digitala möten i socialtjänsten med anledning av covid-19*), 23 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁹⁷ Sweden, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (*Sveriges kommuner och regioner, SKR*), Digital meetings in the social services due to covid-19 (*Digitala möten i socialtjänsten med anledning av covid-19*), 23 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁹⁸ Sweden, *Läkartidning* (weekly journal for medical doctors), Lund University invests in British app for infectivity tracing (*Lunds Universitet satsar på brittisk app för smittspridning*), editorial, 30 April 2020, [available here](#)

Global Ltd.⁹⁹ It is relatively difficult to find more information about the company. On the website for the UK part of the COVID Symptom Study, there is a link named “About ZOE”.¹⁰⁰ This link takes you to the website of ZOE Global Ltd.¹⁰¹ which presents the company’s scientific advisory board but lacks information on the organisation and management of the company. The main information relates to a previous app focusing on obesity, diabetes and heart health.¹⁰² According to the Swedish website related to the COVID Symptom Study, ZOE Global Ltd. collects data from users in the UK, USA and Sweden.¹⁰³ The company shares data from users in Sweden with Lund University for research on Covid-19 in Sweden. The data collection will continue as long as the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes covid-19, spreads in Sweden. Zoe Global Ltd is responsible for the data collection from users in Sweden and for the data collection in the UK. Lund University leads the Swedish research and is responsible for the data sent from Zoe Global Ltd in London to Lund University. The data will be retained at Lund University for at least ten years after it has been collected in accordance with applicable data protection legislation. According to Lund University, all data storage and transmission in Sweden and in the UK meets the requirements of the EU Data Protection Regulation 2016/679, also called the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and other relevant legislation¹⁰⁴. The Swedish Data Protection Authority has neither been consulted about the app’s potential alignment with GDPR, nor has it confirmed that the app meets the requirement of GDPR.¹⁰⁵ However, the research project has been approved by the Ethical Review Authority (*Etikprövningsmyndigheten*).¹⁰⁶ ZOE Global Ltd. will be able to share information from Swedish participants with others than Lund University, for example with other universities, hospitals or charities to enable research on Covid-19. According to the Lund University’s website, ZOE Global Ltd cannot set a specific time limit for how long the company will store sensitive personal data given that the research is carried out in real-time during an ongoing pandemic, but the aim is to ensure that data is not stored longer than necessary.¹⁰⁷ The data will not be used for commercial purposes or sold, or used for any purpose other than for research on Covid-19. When the company shares information for research purposes, the participants’ email addresses (which are used to register an account in the app) or IP addresses will not be included. Other information, e.g. the postcodes of the participants can be shared with the exception of the last three digits.¹⁰⁸ ZOE Global Ltd. uses so-called third parties to process and store data. According to the company’s contract with these third parties, data may only be handled on behalf of ZOE Global Ltd.

⁹⁹ Sweden, Lund University (*Lunds universitet*), Covid Symptom Study, Data Integrity (*Dataintegritet*), webpage, [available here](#)

¹⁰⁰ United Kingdom, Covid Symptom Study, Frequently Asked Questions, [available here](#)

¹⁰¹ Zoe Global Limited, website, [available here](#)

¹⁰² Zoe Global Limited, website, [available here](#)

¹⁰³ Sweden, Lund University (*Lunds universitet*), Covid Symptom Study, Data Integrity (*Dataintegritet*), webpage, [available here](#)

¹⁰⁴ Sweden, Lund University (*Lunds universitet*), New calculations: 1.5–3.5 percent of Sweden’s population have symptoms that are consistent with an ongoing symptomatic covid-19 infection (*Nya beräkningar: 1,5 – 3,5 procent av Sveriges befolkning har just nu symptom som överensstämmer med en pågående symptomatiskt covid-19-infektion*), 7 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁰⁵ Sweden, Swedish Data Protection Authority (*Datainspektionen*), e-mail conversation, 30 June 2020.

¹⁰⁶ Sweden, Ethical Review Authority (*Etikprövningsmyndigheten*), webpage, [available here](#) The registration number is 2020-01803.

¹⁰⁷ Sweden, Lund University (*Lunds universitet*), Covid Symptom Study, Data Integrity (*Dataintegritet*), webpage, [available here](#)

¹⁰⁸ Sweden, Lund University (*Lunds universitet*), Covid Symptom Study, Data Integrity (*Dataintegritet*), webpage, [available here](#)

They may never use the data themselves for other purposes or sell on the information. The third parties are not entitled to retain any data after the termination of their contracts with ZOE Global.¹⁰⁹ Before persons in Sweden who are 18 years or older register for participation in the study, they should read “Information to study participants” in the app before giving their informed consent and start using the app. This text contains more detailed information about the research project.¹¹⁰ On 25 June 2020, 183,497 persons have registered as participants in the study.¹¹¹

In **Sweden**, the Corona Symptom Study app and the conditions around the app have been criticised by several organisations, among them Civil Rights Defenders,¹¹² the Pirate Party (*Piratpartiet*)¹¹³ and the Association for digital freedoms and rights (*Föreningen för Digitala Fri- och Rättigheter, DFR*).¹¹⁴

The civil society organisation Civil Rights Defenders criticised the app in a news programme in Sweden’s Television (*Sveriges television, SVT*).¹¹⁵ According to the organisation, the main problem with the app is that it has not been made clear exactly how the information gathered by the app will be used. The fact that it is not a university but a British company that collects the information and also retains it makes it impossible to know where the information may end up. The collected data is sensitive personal data about the health and well-being of private persons and the app can be said to be a breach of privacy, even if it is for a good cause.¹¹⁶ Civil Rights Defenders is also one of the human rights organisations in nine EU countries that are simultaneously filing information requests to their national authorities regarding new apps introduced to control the spread of COVID-19. Civil Rights Defenders has requested information from the authorities in Sweden on how the GDPR law has been considered when developing COVID-19 tracing apps. The organisation’s legal director states that the work to reduce and prevent the spread of COVID-19 is important, but that all such work need to be carried out in a way that respects people’s integrity and does not lead to the divulgence of sensitive personal data.¹¹⁷ The Association for digital freedoms and rights (*Föreningen för Digitala Fri- och Rättigheter, DFR*) criticised the app in a news programme in Sweden’s Radio (*Sveriges radio, SR*).¹¹⁸ The organisation is concerned about the protection of the users’ personal data. Another concern relates to the fact that several countries and third parties also have access to the data, which is too many

¹⁰⁹ Sweden, Lund University (*Lunds universitet*), Covid Symptom Study, webpage, [available here](#) The information presented in the text and ZOE’s full privacy notice for Sweden can be read in the app and on the university website, [available here](#)

¹¹⁰ Sweden, Lund University (*Lunds universitet*), Covid Symptom Study, webpage, [available here](#) The same text is also available at the university website, [available here](#)

¹¹¹ Sweden, Lund University (*Lunds universitet*), Covid Symptom Study, webpage, [available here](#)

¹¹² Sweden, Civil Rights Defenders, website in English, [available here](#)

¹¹³ Sweden, Pirate Party (*Piratpartiet*), <https://piratpartiet.se/nyheter/ny-svensk-corona-app/>

¹¹⁴ Sweden, Association for digital freedoms and rights (*Föreningen för Digitala Fri- och Rättigheter, DFR*), webpage in English, [available here](#)

¹¹⁵ Sweden, Sweden’s Television (*Sveriges television, SVT*), Harsh criticism of the Corona app: “We don’t know where the data ends up” (*Hård kritik mot corona-appen: “Vet inte var uppgifterna hamnar”*), 8 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹⁶ Sweden, Sweden’s Television (*Sveriges television, SVT*), Harsh criticism of the Corona app: “We don’t know where the data ends up” (*Hård kritik mot corona-appen: “Vet inte var uppgifterna hamnar”*), 8 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹⁷ Sweden, Civil Rights Defenders, Human rights organisations request information about covid-19 tracing apps, 22 June 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹⁸ Sweden, Sweden’s Radio (*Sveriges radio, SR*), Corona app in Sweden raises questions about data protection (*Corona-app i Sverige väcker frågor om datasäkerhet*), 18 May 2020, [available here](#)

actors. According to the organisation, its assessment is that the app is not very secure when it comes to the protection of the users' personal data. The Pirate party (*Piratpartiet*), a small political party standing for elections at municipal, regional and national level criticised the app on the party's website.¹¹⁹ According to the party, the app has a number of actual and potential flaws. 1) According to the app's privacy policy, personal data can be disclosed to US actors that do not have the same high data protection requirements as their European counterparts; 2) ZOE Global Ltd. is not explicit about what kind of information about the app users that are gathered, but uses very vague language in its privacy policy; 3) The company does not specify an end date for storing the health data, although Lund University states that it will store its data for at least ten years. However, the contact information collected is stored for six years after the user has stopped using the app, for marketing purposes; 4) The personal data is shared with a large number of third-party actors, including Amazon, Google, SwiftyBeaver, SurveyMonkey and Segment; and 5) There is no link to the app's source code anywhere on its official site. The Pirate Party states that it has found something which they believe is the source code at <https://github.com/zoe/covid-tracker-react-native>. If it is the source code it is a free and open source, even if it is difficult to find. The Pirate Party adds that Zoe Global Ltd. is a company with a business model that is based on data collection in collaboration with research institutions, enabling the company to use the collected data to develop predictive models for commercial purposes. According to the party, this makes it unclear for what purpose ZOE Global Ltd. developed the app in question.¹²⁰

2.3 Spread of disinformation online

- *In reference to Bulletin #1 where these issues were addressed, please describe measures taken to counter the spread of disinformation online, during the reporting period and on any key developments since you last reported on this issue.*

In Sweden, a number of measures has been taken by several authorities and other actors in order to counter the spread of disinformation. The most well-known measures are presented below.

- Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (*Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap, MSB*) gathers information on the main measures aimed at managing covid-19 as well as links to similar information on the websites of relevant authorities and organisations and tips to individuals on its website.¹²¹
- Krisinformation.se is a website that disseminates information from authorities and other responsible parties in connection to a crisis or any other serious event. The website presents all confirmed information about the virus outbreak and links to other reliable sources.¹²²
- Digiteket is a learning platform for digital education designed for library staff. The platform offers a course called the Corona infodemic – a litmus test of your resilience against false

¹¹⁹ Sweden, Pirate Party (*Piratpartiet*), <https://piratpartiet.se/nyheter/ny-svensk-corona-app/>

¹²⁰¹²⁰ Sweden, Pirate Party (*Piratpartiet*), New Swedish Corona app (*Ny svensk corona-app*), website, May 2020, [available here](#)

¹²¹ Sweden, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (*Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap, MSB*), MSB's work arising from the corona virus (*MSB:s arbete med anledning av coronaviruset*), [available here](#)

¹²² Sweden, Krisinformation.se, Confirmed information about the corona virus (*Bekräftad information om coronaviruset*), [available here](#)

information (*Coronainfodemin – en lackmustest på din motståndskraft mot falsk information*), which aims at providing the users with an increased understanding of different types of disinformation, as well as methods for dealing with and orienting themselves among huge amounts of information.¹²³

- The Swedish Internet Foundation (*Internetstiftelsen*) is an independent, private foundation promoting a positive development of the internet. The foundation has published a webpage on what private individuals should do in order to avoid false information and fraud linked to the corona virus¹²⁴.
- Sweden's Educational Radio, (*Utbildningsradion, UR*), has produced a new series Source Control Corona (Källkoll Corona) aimed at children between 13 and 16 years old. The series follows two journalists who address the importance of source criticism in an era with an overflow of information and disinformation. The series consists of 14 episodes of 7–10 minutes each and is accessible online at ur.play¹²⁵ The Educational Radio has also gathered programmes that provide knowledge about media and information on a thematic page called Media and Information Capabilities (Media- och informationskunnighet).¹²⁶
- The Swedish Media Council (*Statens mediaråd*) produces a podcast called the Media Citizen (*Medieborgaren*) that raises questions about source criticism and disinformation and how to learn to see through rumours.¹²⁷
- The Workers' Education Association (*Arbetarnas bildningsförbund, ABF*) that is Sweden's leading study association has released a study material and a study guide about media and information capabilities and source criticism. The study material consists of three films which may form the basis for workshops on the topic. The study guide is aimed at potential workshop leaders and includes the links to the three films and the passwords to them.¹²⁸
- 8sidor.se, published by the Swedish Agency for Accessible Media (*Myndigheten för tillgängliga medier*), presents easy-to-read questions and answers about the corona virus.¹²⁹

¹²³ Sweden, Digoteket, Corona infodemic – a litmus test of your resilience against false information (*Coronainfodemin – en lackmustest på din motståndskraft mot falsk information*), [available here](#)

¹²⁴ Sweden, Swedish Internet Foundation (*Internetstiftelsen*), Corona – this is how you protect yourself against fraudsters (Corona – så skyddar du dig från bedragare), [available here](#)

¹²⁵ Sweden, Sweden's educational radio (*Utbildningsradion, UR*), Source Control Corona (*Källkoll Corona*), [available here](#)

¹²⁶ Sweden, Sweden's educational radio (*Utbildningsradion, UR*), MIC - Media and Information Capabilities (MIK – Media- och informationskunnighet), [available here](#)

¹²⁷ Sweden, Swedish Media Council (*Statens mediaråd*), The Media Citizen (*Medieborgaren*), podcast, [available here](#)

¹²⁸ Sweden, Workers' Education Association (*Arbetarnas bildningsförbund, ABF*), Like – Comment – Share: study guide on media and information capabilities (*Gilla – Kommentera – Dela: studiehandledning i media- och informationskunnighet*), [available here](#) The three films can be found at vimeo.com/261803153, vimeo.com/261803912 and vimeo.com/261802676. The password is the same for all three films – ABFMK2020.

¹²⁹ Sweden, Swedish Agency for Accessible Media (*Myndigheten för tillgängliga medier*), 8sidor.se, Questions and answers about the Corona virus (*Frågor och svar om viruset corona*), [available here](#)

- The information and guidance service Hello Consumer (*Hallå konsument*) run by the Swedish Consumer Agency (*Konsumentverket*) has published correct and relevant information about consumer rights during the corona crisis on its website.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Sweden, Swedish Consumer Agency (*Konsumentverket*), Hello Consumer (*Hallå konsument*), The Corona virus – your rights as a consumer (*Coronaviruset – dina rättigheter som konsument*), [available here](#)