

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.

In **Sweden**, the following constitutionally protected freedoms and rights may be restricted only with the caveats mentioned below: 1) freedom of speech, freedom of information, freedom of assembly, freedom of demonstration and freedom of association; 2) protection against bodily interference, against body searches, house searches and similar infringements, against interference in confidential mail and messages, and otherwise against interference involving surveillance; 3) freedom of movement; and 4) the right to public court hearings.¹ The restriction of the rights mentioned above may only be made to meet purposes that are acceptable in a democratic society. The restriction must never go beyond what is necessary in view of its purpose, nor extend so far as to constitute a threat to the free formation of opinion as one of the foundations of a representative government. The restriction must not be made solely because of political, religious, cultural or other such opinions.² Freedom of speech and freedom of information may be restricted: a) in the interests of national security; b) public welfare; c) public order; d) the reputation of individuals; e) the sanctity of privacy; or f) the prevention and prosecution of crimes. When assessing any restrictions that are proposed, particular attention should be paid to the importance of the widest possible freedom of expression and freedom of information in political, religious, trade union, scientific and cultural matters.³ Freedom of assembly and demonstration freedom may be limited: 1) to guarantee public order and the security of the assembly or demonstration, or in view of the traffic. Otherwise, these freedoms may only be limited by the security of the state or by countering the prosecution. Freedom of association may be restricted only for associations which activities are of a military or similar nature

¹ Sweden, Instrument of government (*Regeringsform [1974:152]*), chapter 2, section 20, 1 January 2011, [available here](#)

² Sweden, Instrument of government (*Regeringsform [1974:152]*), chapter 2, section 21, 1 January 2011, [available here](#)

³ Sweden, Instrument of government (*Regeringsform [1974:152]*), chapter 2, section 23, 1 January 2011, [available here](#)

or involve the persecution of a group on the grounds of ethnic origin, skin colour or other similar circumstances.⁴

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.⁵ 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. Other regulations may indirectly impose restrictions on the individuals, for example the Public health regulations and general advice on preventing infection of covid-19 in restaurants and cafes, etc. (*Folkhälsomyndighetens föreskrifter och allmänna råd om att förhindra smitta av covid-19 på restauranger och caféer m.m.*).⁶ The regulation stipulates that the owners of restaurants and cafes must guarantee that customers are able to keep distance from each other and that they only eat and drink while seated at a table. Consequently, the regulation affects the general public but is directed to the establishments serving food and drink.⁷ So far, there have been no court cases concerning the legality of the restriction of freedom of assembly or any other restriction.

1.2 Measures affecting the general population

1.2.1 Social distancing

Focus on:

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

⁴ Sweden, Instrument of government (*Regeringsform [1974:152]*), chapter 2, section 24, 1 January 2011, [available here](#)

⁵ 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](#)

⁶ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Public health regulations and general advice on preventing infection of covid-19 in restaurants and cafes, etc. (*Folkhälsomyndighetens föreskrifter och allmänna råd om att förhindra smitta av covid-19 på restauranger och caféer m.m.*), HSFL-FS 2020:9, 24 March 2020, [available here](#)

⁷ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Public health regulations and general advice on preventing infection of covid-19 in restaurants and cafes, etc. (*Folkhälsomyndighetens föreskrifter och allmänna råd om att förhindra smitta av covid-19 på restauranger och caféer m.m.*), HSFL-FS 2020:9, 24 March 2020, [available here](#)

- *Enforcement and penalties*

In Sweden, the Public Health Agency's recommendations about the individual's and the general public's responsibilities to prevent further infectivity are still in effect. The recommendations declare that each and every one in Sweden has a responsibility to prevent the infectivity by:

- 1) carefully maintaining their hand hygiene and frequently wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- 2) keep physical distance to others both indoors and outdoors in places where people gather, such as in shops, malls, museums, libraries and waiting rooms;
- 3) keep distance from others in public transport;
- 4) abstain to participate in bigger social events like parties, funerals, baptisms and weddings;
- 5) keep distance in sports fields, swimming pools, gyms and other training facilities, and avoid changing in public dressing rooms;
- 6) abstain travelling during rush hours; and
- 7) abstain from unnecessary travels.

Mouth-nose-masks are not part of the recommendations. The recommendations entered into effect on 1 April and will be valid until 31 December 2020.⁸

In **Sweden**, the government sent a draft bill for referral to the Council of Legislation (*Lagrådet*) on 15 May 2020.⁹ The bill's proposals concern a new act on temporary infectivity measures in restaurants and similar places. The proposal follows the Public Health Agency's regulation for restaurants and cafes as of 24 March 2020.¹⁰ The government has assessed that the crowding in restaurants and similar

⁸ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Regulations and general advice 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](#)

⁹ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Draft bill for referral to the Council of Legislation: New act on temporary infectivity measures in restaurants and similar establishments (*Utkast till lagrådsremiss: En ny lag om tillfälliga smittskyddsåtgärder på serveringsställen*), press release, 15 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁰ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Public health regulations and general advice on preventing infection of covid-19 in restaurants and cafes, etc. (*Folkhälsomyndighetens föreskrifter och allmänna råd om att förhindra smitta av covid-19 på restauranger och caféer m.m.*), HSFL-FS 2020:9, 24 March 2020, [available here](#)

establishments remains a problem despite the authority's regulations. According to the government, the future spread of covid-19 largely depends on whether the rules on physical distance in restaurants and other similar establishments are adhered to or not. During the inspections that have been carried out to see if the Public Health Agency's regulation is followed, it has been found that the situation in restaurants and bars largely depends on the customers' own actions due to their intoxication rate, which causes many to disregard the rules on physical distance. This means that a restaurant that has been assessed to follow the rules early one evening may be found to be unable to uphold the rules later the same evening when the situation has changed significantly due to the customers' increased intoxication rate. The government concludes that there is a need for: 1) a regulation that clarifies which infection control measures should be taken; and b) a sustainable long-term supervisory organisation that has access to effective supervision tools.¹¹ The draft bill proposes that the municipalities shall be allowed to notify the restaurant and cafe owners of the injunctions needed to enforce compliance with the new act and its associated regulations. The municipalities shall, if necessary, consult with the communicable diseases officer (*smittskyddsläkaren*). Decisions on injunctions may be combined with fines. The municipalities shall have the right, upon request, to obtain the information and documents necessary for the supervision of the proprietors and the right to gain access to the premises, entrances, and associated areas of the establishments. The Police shall, upon request, provide the municipalities with the necessary assistance if it is likely that the supervision or the injunctions cannot be carried out without the assistance of the special powers of a police officer as of section 10 of the Police Act (*Polislag [1984:387]*)¹², or there are special reasons. The County Administrative Boards (*Länsstyrelserna*) shall monitor the municipalities' activities and assist them with information and advice.¹³ The act is proposed to enter into force 1 July and will be valid until the end of 2020.¹⁴ In connection with the draft bill the government also allocated 82 million SEK (€7.9

¹¹ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Draft bill for referral to the Council of Legislation: New act on temporary infectivity measures in restaurants and similar establishments (*Utkast till lagrådsremiss: En ny lag om tillfälliga smittskyddsåtgärder på serveringsställen*), press release, 15 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹² Sweden, Police Act (*Polislag [1984:387]*), section 10, 1 May 2003, [available here](#)

¹³ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Draft bill for referral to the Council of Legislation: New act on temporary infectivity measures in restaurants and similar establishments (*Utkast till lagrådsremiss: En ny lag om tillfälliga smittskyddsåtgärder på serveringsställen*), press release, 15 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁴ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Draft bill for referral to the Council of Legislation: New act on temporary infectivity measures in restaurants and similar establishments (*Utkast till lagrådsremiss: En ny lag om tillfälliga smittskyddsåtgärder på serveringsställen*), press release, 15 May 2020, [available here](#)

million) to strengthen the supervision of the restrictions. 75 million SEK (€7.2 million) are allocated to the municipalities, 5.5 million SEK (€526,000) to the regions and 1.5 million SEK (€144,000) to the County Administrative Boards.¹⁵

1.2.2 Education

Focus on:

- *Steps to reopen educational institutions (schools, third level educational facilities and kindergartens/day care). Please 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.)*

Please note that in **Sweden** most compulsory schools have never been closed due to the pandemic. However, the teaching may have been affected and some schools have been forced to temporarily close partly or wholly e.g. as a result of the absence of teachers, either because they are infected by the corona virus or because they must stay at home as a precaution whenever they have cold symptoms. Some schools then have offered distance learning as a measure to provide pupils with the education they are entitled to. Upper secondary schools switched to distance learning from mid-March. The regulation however allows for a smaller proportion of students in the school's facilities, given that this is possible with regard to the contagion. This makes it for instance possible for students with special needs to get the support they need at their schools, individually or in smaller groups. Upper secondary schools have reopened from June 15.

In **Sweden**, the pandemic may have affected many pupils' possibilities to reach the knowledge requirements for their school year, due to partly or wholly closed schools, or distance education. The challenges may have been especially great for newly arrived pupils and pupils, who are living in socio-economically vulnerable situations. Therefore, the Ministry of Education proposed that 120 million SEK shall be earmarked for the running of so-called holidays schools (*lovskola*). The aim is to increase the possibilities of the pupils who have problems reaching the knowledge requirement better possibilities to succeed.¹⁶ The government assesses that the need for holidays schools has increased

¹⁵ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), The municipalities assume full responsibility for the supervisory process (*Kommunerna får fullt ansvar för tillsynsprocessen*), press release, 29 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁶ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*) 120 million SEK shall give more the opportunity to take part in holiday school (*120 miljoner kronor ska ge fler möjlighet att delta i lovskola*), press release, 16 May 2020, [available here](#)

as a result of the current situation. The purpose of the investment is to increase the state funding that head principals can apply for finance holiday schooling for pupils who have not met or are at risk of not meeting the requirements for the grade E (passed). There are two kinds of holiday schools: 1) one that all individual head principals must organise for the pupils in the 8th and 9th (and final) year of the compulsory school who have not reached the necessary grades at the end of the school year; and 2) another that the individual head principals may choose to organise. The obligatory version is regulated in the Education Act¹⁷ is funded by the school's ordinary budgets and must consist of a minimum of 50 hours of teaching each year. The other kind of holiday schools go beyond the requirements of the Education Act, either by being of longer duration or by including other groups of pupils. The head principals that arrange the latter kind of holiday schools can apply for state funding.¹⁸ The pupils must have the opportunity to take an assessing test when the holiday school has been completed. The government has also commissioned the National Agency for Education (Skolverket) with the task to support head principals, principals, teachers, pre-school teachers and other personnel within education and other pedagogical activities in general, with the purpose to ease their workload and their working conditions.¹⁹ The task includes developing and spreading learning examples, with support of the new decisions, recommendations and guidelines that the government and the Public Health Agency have developed due to covid-19. It also includes support for the work with newly arrived pupils, pupils studying at the introductory programmes or pupils in need of special support measures. The material will be updated continuously according to demand. The support can be found on the authority's website under the headings: 1) The school principal may design guidelines (for the distance teaching and learning); 2) The school principal may prioritise and redistribute (the teaching staff and resources); 3) The student healthcare (*Elevhälsan*) may collaborate and provide support (to the teachers); 4) Teachers may facilitate (the studies for) students in need of support; 5) About the pandemic; and 6) Further reading. Each section contains advice to the teachers and principals in a number of bullet points.²⁰

¹⁷ Sweden, Education Act (Skollag [2010:800]), chapter 10, sections 3, 23 a–f, 1 August 2017, [available here](#)

¹⁸ Sweden, ordinance on state grants for teaching under school holidays (*Förordning [2014:47] om statsbidrag för undervisning under skollov*), 30 January 2014, [available here](#)

¹⁹ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), Assignment to conduct supporting measures with reference to covid-19 (*Uppdrag att genomföra stödjande insatser med anledning av covid-19*), 30 April 2020, [available here](#)

²⁰ Sweden, National Board of Education (Skolverket), Extra adaptations and special support in distance education (*Extra anpassningar och särskilt stöd vid distansundervisning*), 9 June 2020, [available here](#)

In **Sweden**, the government sent a public inquiry report for referral in May 2020. The report was presented to the government already on 1 February 2019²¹ but its proposals concerning the universities' role in the process of lifelong learning is a question that has become increasingly important at a time when the unemployment rises.²² The public inquiry proposes changes of the Higher Education Act²³ with the aim of clarifying the universities' roles in the process of lifelong learning, both in relation to the students and the labour market. The government assesses that the demand for further education and retraining to adapt to the changing labour market will increase as the labour market changes and more people must continue to work later in life.²⁴ In the press release presenting the referral, the government concluded that the freedom to seek and disseminate knowledge is fundamental for scientific research and education. Consequently, the proposed changes to the act encourage academic freedom.

In **Sweden**, the government proposed that the investment in courses and short programmes in Higher Vocational Education (*yrkeshögskola*) shall be strengthened to satisfy the need for adaptation to the changing labour market.²⁵ The proposal was part of the spring amending budget for 2020,²⁶ in which the government proposed that 80 million SEK (€ 7.7 million) including study allowances shall be added to be used for short programmes. The proposal was based on the assessment that at least 3,500 additional persons will be able to study already this year. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan, MYH*) opened an extra call for proposals for funding of short programmes in May 2020. The applications should be submitted between 11 and 25

²¹ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), A long-term, coordinated and dialogue-based governance of the universities and colleges (*En långsiktig, samordnad och dialogbaserad styrning av högskolan*), Public inquiry (SOU 2019:6), 1 February 2019, [available here](#)

²² Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), The universities' role in the lifelong learning shall be elucidated and the academic freedom encouraged (*Lärosätenas roll för det livslånga lärandet ska tydliggöras och den akademiska friheten främjas*), press release, 7 May 2020, [available here](#)

²³ Sweden, Higher Education Act (*Högskolelag [1992:1434]*), 17 December 1992, [available here](#)

²⁴ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), The universities' role in the lifelong learning shall be elucidated and the academic freedom encouraged (*Lärosätenas roll för det livslånga lärandet ska tydliggöras och den akademiska friheten främjas*), press release, 7 May 2020, [available here](#)

²⁵ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), Extra application period for courses and short trainings within vocational universities enables a quick adaption for more persons (*Extra ansökningsomgång för kurser och kurspaket inom yrkeshögskolan möjliggör snabb omställning för fler*), press release, 8 May 2020, [available here](#)

²⁶ Sweden, Ministry of Finance (*Finansdepartementet*), Spring amending budget (*Vårbudget, prop. 2019/20:99*), 9 April 2020, [available here](#)

May 2020. For an application to be prioritised the proposed short programme must be completed by 31 December 2020.²⁷

In **Sweden**, the Ministry of Education reports that the pandemic has made more people interested in working in the healthcare sector. The number of applications to healthcare study programmes at university level have increased substantially and the numbers of applicants to all courses and study programmes at university level have hit new records.²⁸ The government wants to enable more persons to study programmes leading to professions where there is a shortage, for example data and IT, but also study programmes leading to professions within the healthcare, education, and social service sectors. The funding will increase with around 2,600 so-called full year students (*helårsstudenter*) at the universities.²⁹

In **Sweden**, all university level teaching and learning have been conducted online after the Public Health Agency's recommendation on 17 March 2020.³⁰ This type of teaching and learning has increased the need of support, both for the teaching staff and the students, for example in the form of increased IT-support. Therefore, the government allocated 60 million SEK of the spring amending budget³¹ to be invested in measures strengthening the possibilities of online education during 2020.³²

In **Sweden**, the Ministry of Education informed that the Public Health Agency's recommendation on online/distance teaching and learning will be removed as of 15 June 2020. The authority estimates that the recommendation can be removed based on epidemiology and the current state of

²⁷ Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (*Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan, MYH*), Extra application for short study programmes at the higher vocational education, (*Extra ansökan för korta utbildningar i yrkeshögskolan*), 11 May 2020, [available here](#)

²⁸ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), Major investment in the universities and colleges – this is how the students are distributed (*Storsatsning på universitet och högskola – så här fördelas platserna*), press release, 8 May 2020, [available here](#)

²⁹ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), Major investment in the universities and colleges – this is how the students are distributed (*Storsatsning på universitet och högskola – så här fördelas platserna*), press release, 8 May 2020, [available here](#)

³⁰ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Recommendation on distance/online teaching for universities, colleges and upper secondary schools (*Rekommendation om distansundervisning för lärosäten och gymnasieskolor*), 17 March 2020, [available here](#)

³¹ Sweden, Ministry of Finance (*Finansdepartementet*), Spring amending budget (*Vårbudget, prop. 2019/20:99*), 9 April 2020, [available here](#)

³² Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), Major investment in online education and open online-based education (*Stor satsning på distansundervisning och öppen nätbaserad utbildning*), press release, 15 May 2020, [available here](#)

knowledge.³³ Thus, the pupils in upper secondary schools may return to the school facilities during the summer and in the autumn. When it comes to education for adults in adult trainings, vocational universities and universities and colleges, parts of the teaching and learning may have to continuously be given online to prevent further infectivity.³⁴ The Ministry stressed that this was an important decision for the higher education, which will enable both the students and the universities to prepare a gradual transition to more education at the campuses. However, the universities will have the responsibility to adapt the education in order to decrease further infectivity. The students will also have to take personal responsibility in this regard. The decision to ease on the recommendations is valid until further notice. The government states that it is ready to take measures if the situation changes for the worse. Consequently, it is not possible to rule out the return to online/distance education.³⁵

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.)*
- *People in precarious work*

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), still recommends people to work from home to the extent possible, after consultation with their employers. The authority issued its recommendation for the first time on 19 March 2020.³⁶ The Public Health Agency has issued a number of general recommendations to all employers aimed at avoiding the spread of covid-19. They shall ensure that their personnel, if possible can: 1) keep a distance from one another; 2) wash their hands with soap and water or otherwise use hand alcohol regularly; 3) work from home; 5) avoid unnecessary work-related travels; and 6) adjust their working hours to avoid commuting during rush

³³ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Recommendation on distance/on-line teaching and learning for universities, colleges and upper secondary schools (*Rekommendation om distansundervisning för lärosäten och gymnasieskolor*), 29 May 2020, [available here](#)

³⁴ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), The requirement for online-education is relaxed (*Kravet på distansundervisning lättas upp*), press release, 29 May 2020, [available here](#)

³⁵ Sweden, Ministry of Education (*Utbildningsdepartementet*), The requirement for online-education is relaxed (*Kravet på distansundervisning lättas upp*), press release, 29 May 2020, [available here](#)

³⁶ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Questions and answers (*Frågor och svar*), 19 March 2020, [available here](#)

hours.³⁷ In **Sweden**, the Ministry of Employment reported on a series of temporary measures aiming to ensure unemployment benefits to a larger group of persons. Among the measures are changed membership condition. The temporarily changed membership condition in an unemployment fund (*a-kassa*) means that a one month-long membership is now counted as four months. The ordinary rules require that a person must have been a member of an unemployment fund for 12 months in order to have the right to income-based compensation from the unemployment insurance. As of the temporary change, every month as a member in an unemployment fund during March–December 2020 shall be counted as four months. Consequently, the 12 months membership required may be reached after only three months.³⁸ Another measure is a temporarily milder work condition. The ordinary rules require that a person must have had gainful work for a certain time and have performed this work for certain hours per calendar month to fulfil the work condition. The requirement for working hours has been temporarily lowered during 13 April–December 2020.

In **Sweden**, the Ministry of Finance announced that several measures to ease the economic consequences of the virus have been strengthened or extended, such as the compensation for the qualifying days (*karensdagar*) of sick leaves.³⁹ Initially, the compensation was supposed to be valid until 31 May 2020, but it has been extended by four months, until 30 September 2020. Furthermore, the exemption from the requirement of medical certificates after a week's sick leave is extended until 30 September 2020, in order to ease the burden this requirement puts on the healthcare sector. The temporary rules state that persons do not need a doctor's certificate to prove that they are ill during the first 14 days of their sick leave in order to get sick allowance, compared to the ordinary rules where a doctor's certificate must be handed in by the eighth day of sick leave.

In **Sweden**, the Ministry of Finance stated that the virus outbreak has affected the already strained staffing within the healthcare and care sectors. The staffing is especially problematic within the elderly care (*äldreomsorgen*). At the same time, employment opportunities have decreased in many other sectors, due to layoffs and dismissals. To improve the staffing and attract more persons to seek jobs within the elderly care, a major investment shall be made allowing employees working within the elderly

³⁷ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), The Public Health Authority's regulations and general advice on everyone's responsibility to prevent the covid-19 infection (*Folkhälsomyndighetens föreskrifter och allmänna råd om allas ansvar att förhindra smitta av covid-19 m.m.*, [HSLFFS 2020:12]), 1 April 2020, [available here](#)

³⁸ Sweden, Ministry of Employment (*Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet*), Temporary changes in the unemployment fund (*A-kassan förändras tillfälligt*), accessed 7 May 2020, [available here](#)

³⁹ Sweden, Ministry of Finance (*Finansdepartementet*), Strengthened measures for employees and businesses (*Förstärkta åtgärder för arbetstagare och företag*) press release, 7 May 2020, [available here](#)

care sector to follow paid trainings during working hours. Persons in need of further training, shall be able to combine their jobs with studies to become registered nurses or nurse's assistants during paid working hours. The state will fund the employers' costs for the time that the employee is absent due to studies. The measure is called the elderly care boost (*äldreomsorgslyftet*).⁴⁰

In **Sweden**, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs reported that the above mentioned state investment in the elderly care sector was complemented by the labour market parties, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (*Sveriges Kommuner och Regioner, SKR*) and the trade union Kommunal. The parties agreed to offer persons who take part in the elderly care boost, fulltime contracts of indefinite durations. The joint measures of the government's and the labour market parties form a new model for increasing the competence while at the same time creating more safe jobs for both new and already existing staff within the elderly care sector.⁴¹

In **Sweden**, the situation in the elderly care sector (both for persons who receive care in their homes, and for persons who live in residential care homes) has been the subject of controversies. The municipal elderly care has been criticised for the lack of protective equipment and the staff within the elderly care sector have reported that they have worked without any protective equipment or with substandard protective equipment.⁴² Furthermore, there have been reports of staff who have worked despite having infection symptoms. The state epidemiologist has stated that the elderly care sector has been struck hard by the virus. He further mentioned that the discussion about the elderly care in Sweden has been going on for years. Deficits in the quality of the care have been identified before the corona outbreak but the state epidemiologist points out that "... nobody would have guessed how terribly obvious it [*the lacking quality*] would become."⁴³ The Minister of Internal Affairs has also mentioned the elderly care as Sweden's 'Achilles heel'.⁴⁴ According to the Stockholm's commissioner for finance and the city director, the statement by the state epidemiologist taken together with a

⁴⁰ Sweden, Ministry of Finance (*Finansdepartementet*), New measures to strengthen the elderly care and the healthcare during the corona crisis (*Nya åtgärder för att stärka äldreomsorgen och vården under coronakrisen*) press release, 12 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁴¹ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), 10,000 new permanent workers within the elderly care (*10 000 nya tillsvidareanställda inom äldreomsorgen*), press release, 13 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁴² Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*) Healthcare staff is instructed to work in short sleeves – despite corona (*Vårdpersonal uppmanas jobba i kortärmat – trots corona*), 23 March 2020, [available here](#)

⁴³ Sweden, Swedish Radio (*Sveriges Radio*) (2020) XX- the symbol for Sweden's battle against Corona (XX – *symbolen för Sveriges Coronakamp*), radio interview, 24 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁴⁴ Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*), 2020, XX on Sweden's high death rates: The numbers are rough (XX om Sveriges höga dödstal: Det är jobbiga siffror), 13 May 2020, [available here](#)

debate about the deaths within the elderly care televised by the national television has caused the staff working in the elderly care sector to feel that they are named and shamed.⁴⁵ The state epidemiologist later stated that it was extremely unfortunate that the statements has been interpreted as criticism against individual employees within the sector.⁴⁶

In **Sweden**, the national television (*Sveriges Television*) revealed how the Swedish Work Environment Authority (*Arbetsmiljöverket*) allayed the importance of protective masks at an elderly care home in Stockholm.⁴⁷ The trade Union Kommunal calls the incident scandalous and has reported the authority to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen (*Justitieombudsmannen, JO*).⁴⁸ On 7 April 2020, the Work Environment Authority made another decision regarding an elderly care home in Stockholm, which had sought guidance from the authority. This decision prohibited staff to work without visor and protective masks in all patient-oriented work with covid-19 patients. While this decision only concerned one particular care home, it quickly echoed throughout the country.

The decision to prohibit staff from working without visor and protective masks in all patient-oriented work with covid-19 patients led to a tightening of the procedures that were applied in large parts of the Swedish elderly care. Their local risk assessments of individual work activities had stated that protective masks should only be used in activities where there is a risk of "sprays of droplets" (*stänk*). However, the Swedish Work Environment's expert concluded that it is not possible to foresee the risk of infection if one only wears a visor in front of the face. The work is performed in different positions, and the patient may instantly start to cough or sneeze in a situation where particles may come in under the visor. The Swedish Work Environment's statement was welcomed by the union, but the municipal sector and its interest organisation the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions engaged in lobbying aimed at making the authority de-emphasise the meaning of the decision, and instead state its support for the Public Health Agency's recommendations. These recommendations have previously included formulations stating that visors must be combined with protective masks,

⁴⁵ Sweden, 'Stockholm top politician XX:" Employees in the care sector feels accused"' (*Stockholmstoppen XX: "Medarbetare i omsorgen känner sig anklagade"*) in *Dagens Nyheter*, newspaper editorial, 24 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁴⁶Sweden, 'XX: Extremely unfortunate if employees in the elderly care sector feels named and shamed' (XX: *Extremt olyckligt om anställda i äldrevården känner sig utpekade*), in *Dagens Nyheter*, newspaper editorial, 25 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁴⁷ Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*) (2020) Swedish Television's scrutiny The fight for the protective masks (*SVT:s granskning Striden om munskydden*), 22 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁴⁸ Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*) (2020) After Swedish Television's scrutiny: Kommunal reports the Swedish Work Environment Authority (*Efter SVT:s granskning: Kommunal JO-anmäler Arbetsmiljöverket*), 4 May 2020, [available here](#)

but those formulations were removed at a review in the end of March/beginning of April. The decision by the Work Environment Authority regarding the specific elderly care home was appealed by the City of Stockholm, and an internal conflict emerged at the Work Environment Authority, since the management reportedly wanted to change the authority's argumentation so it would be in line with other authorities – and with the municipalities' practice.⁴⁹ In the end the authority erased its strongly phrased statements from the authority's expert physician from the register. Several experts reacted strongly to this action and maintained the fundamental importance of independent and objective authorities.⁵⁰ On 30 April 2020, the Administrative Court of Stockholm (*Förvaltningsrätten*) abolished the prohibition.⁵¹ In its ruling the court stated that the Work Environment Authority's decision was too vague and unspecified, since the Work Environment Authority had not clarified what was to be considered to be patient-oriented work, what kind of work activities that was included in the prohibition, or whether the prohibition applied to all kind of work within a certain distance from the patient. On 6 May 2020, the Swedish Work Environment Authority decided to appeal the court's ruling, but the appeal was rejected by the Administrative Court of Appeal (*Kammarrätten*).⁵²

1.2.4 Access to justice

- *Strategies /steps to lift measures or restrictions previously imposed on court proceedings (e.g. resuming physical hearings)*
- *Measures to address the backlog in cases/proceedings prompted by lockdown restrictions*

In Sweden, the courts have never been closed during the Covid-19 period. However, the number of cancelled hearings has increased somewhat as a result of the corona virus. In **Sweden**, Sweden's Courts (*Sveriges domstolar*) have presented a comparison of the number of filed cases and determined cases during the weeks 10–21, approximately 2 March to 24 May, in 2018, 2019 and 2020.⁵³ The comparisons are presented in the two diagrams below. As is shown by the comparisons there are no clear differences between 2020 and the two previous years.

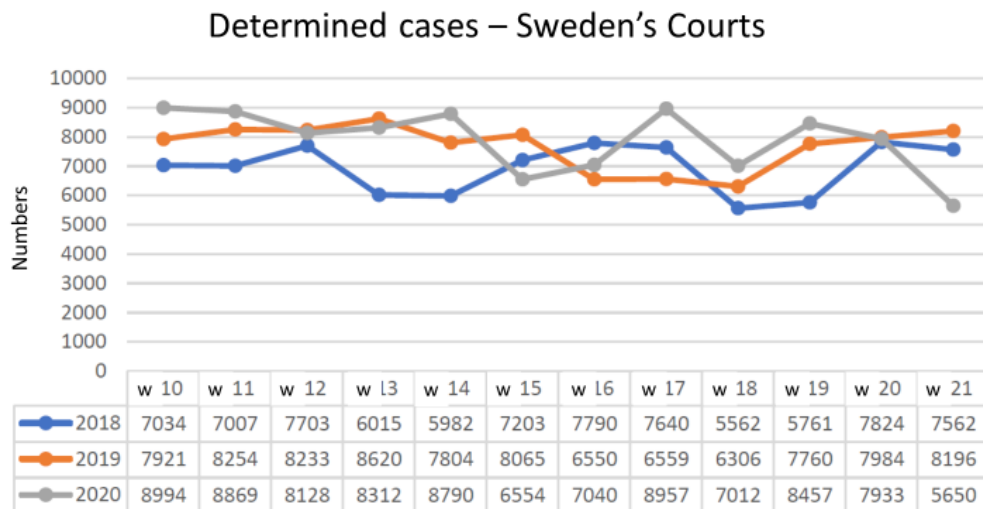
⁴⁹ Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*), 2020, Internal conflict on demands of protective masks – sharp expert statement erased (*Intern strid om krav på munskydd – skarpt expertutlåtande raderades*), 28 April 2020, [available here](#)

⁵⁰ Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*) Experts on the authority's acting around protective masks "Hopelessly stupid" (*Experter om myndighetens agerande kring munskydden: "Urbota korkat"*), 30 April 2020, [available here](#)

⁵¹ Sweden, Swedish Courts (*Sveriges Domstolar*) The Administrative Court abolish the Work Environment's ban concerning Serafen care home (*Förvaltningsrätten upphäver Arbetsmiljöverkets förbud gällande Serafens vård- och omsorgsboende*), press release, 30 April 2020, [available here](#)

⁵² Sweden, Swedish Courts (*Sveriges Domstolar*) The Administrative Court of Appeal will not grant leave to appeal in case on protective masks (*Kammarrätten meddelar inte prövningstillstånd i mål om munskydd*), 26 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁵³ Sweden, Sweden's Courts (*Sveriges domstolar*), Case development, week 21, [available here](#)



However, the comparison only shows the number of cases and not the percentage of cases. Another comparison of both the number of planned hearings, the number of cancelled hearings and the percentage of hearings that has been cancelled during the spring of 2020 is presented below.⁵⁴ This comparison shows the situation for the weeks 10, 14 and 20. This comparison shows that a smaller percentage of the hearings was cancelled in the Courts of Appeal, while a larger percentage was cancelled in the Administrative Courts of Appeals. The majority of the hearings concerns hearings in the district courts. As shown in the table below the number of planned hearings are relatively constant while the percentage of cancelled hearings has decreased. According to Sweden's Courts, a cancelled hearing means that it is postponed to a later date.⁵⁵

Week no.	Planned hearings/ meetings			Cancelled hearings/ meetings			Percentage of cancelled hearings		
	10	14	20	10	14	20	10	14	20
Administrative Court	525	492	448	91	91	49	17.3 %	18.5 %	23.9 %
Administrative Court of Appeal	40	70	31	7	8	10	17.5 %	11.4 %	32.3 %

⁵⁴ Sweden, Sweden's Courts (*Sveriges domstolar*), Cancelled hearings until week 21, 2020 (*Inställda förhandlingar t.o.m. v. 21, 2020*), [available here](#)

⁵⁵ Sweden, Sweden's Courts (*Sveriges domstolar*), Statistics following the corona virus (*Statistik med anledning av coronaviruset*), [available here](#)

District Court	3046	3195	2952	679	1113	760	22.3 %	34.8 %	25.7 %
Court of Appeal	211	224	180	34	45	43	19.4 %	20,1%	1,9%

Even though the cancellations have only experienced a moderate increase, Emerga Institute asked Sweden's Courts which steps the courts will take to lift measures or restrictions previously imposed on court proceedings and which measures they will take to address the backlog in cases/proceedings. We await an answer from the authority.

1.2.5 Freedom of movement

Focus on:

- *Steps to reopen borders/lift restrictions on freedom of movement to (external borders) and within the EU (internal borders), including rules or restrictions applying to certain categories of people (citizens; 'essential workers'; cross border commuters etc). 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 quarantine; work certificate etc).*
- *Any changes to asylum application procedures (e.g. lifting of temporary suspensions or restrictions on procedures, or mentioning whether such restrictions are rather still in place)*

In **Sweden**, the Ministry of Justice informed on 14 May that the temporary travel ban to Sweden via EU has been extended until 15 June 2020. The decision was made based on recommendations by the European Commission. No details of the travel ban have been changed.⁵⁶ Consequently, the ban on non-essential travels follows the Commission's guidelines concerning the entry ban as well as the list of exceptions defined by the Commission. Persons who have temporary or permanent residence

⁵⁶ Sweden, Ministry of Justice (*Justitiedepartementet*), Extension of temporary travel ban to EU via Sweden due to covid-19 (*Förlängning av tillfälligt inreseförbud till EU via Sverige med anledning av covid-19*) press release, 14 May 2020, [available here](#)

permits in Sweden are also exempted from the entry ban if the purpose of their entry is to return home. Exceptions are also made for people with an essential function or need.⁵⁷

In **Sweden**, persons who seek international protection status are considered to be people with an essential need and the right to asylum shall not be affected by the travel ban. However, the cancelling or decrease of public transports and the strengthened border controls between states affects the asylum applicants' possibilities to arrive in Sweden to seek asylum. The table below shows the number of asylum applications registered in the first five months of 2017–2020.⁵⁸ The number has decreased substantially during April and May of 2020 in comparison with the years 2017–2019.

Year	January	February	March	April	May
2017	1991	1771	1957	1582	1784
2018	2162	1685	1658	1578	1660
2019	1894	1662	1778	1710	1636
2020	1802	1496	1489	776	724

1.3 Impact of measures on particular groups

Select the three most relevant groups from the following:

- *persons with disabilities,*
- *homeless people,*
- *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 3 should not be duplicated in this additional data collection)*
- *Detainees (including measures on early release or alternatives to detention)*
- *or another group not listed that have emerged in your country as facing particular challenges - before selection, this should be discussed with FRA.*

⁵⁷ Sweden, Ministry of Justice (Justitiedepartementet), Q and A – temporary entry ban to the EU via Sweden (Frågor och svar – tillfälligt inreseförbud till EU via Sverige), 16 April 2020, [available here](#)

⁵⁸ Sweden, Migration Agency (Migrationsverket), Asylum, table Weekly statistics Asylum (Asyl, tabell Veckostatistik asyl), [available here](#)

In **Sweden**, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs commissioned the Public Health Agency⁵⁹ to develop and spread an information material to the healthcare sector and the student and pupil healthcare (*Student- och elevhälsan*) concerning measures directed to children and youths that are especially susceptible to infection. The Ministry includes children and youths who already have an illness, or who are receiving medical treatment that affects the immune system in the target group. The Public Health Agency may define the target group further in its material.⁶⁰ The purpose of the information material is to function as a support for the professionals in assessments and guidance on individually adapted preventative measures to decrease the infectivity risk for these children. The National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) shall contribute with their knowledge and experience and spread the material to the professionals in working in the schools and healthcare sector.

Persons with disabilities:

In **Sweden**, many persons with disabilities have the right to support and measures as defined by the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments.⁶¹ The Act regulates special support and special services for persons: 1) with developmental disorders, autism or autism-like conditions; 2) with significant and persistent mental disabilities after brain injuries in adulthood caused by external violence or physical illness; or 3) with other lasting physical or mental disabilities that are obviously not caused by normal aging, if these disabilities cause significant difficulties in daily life.⁶² One such measure is called daily activities (*daglig verksamhet*), which are different kinds of measures directed to persons of working age, who are not gainfully employed or studying. The measures offer the individuals stimuli, development, a sense of meaning and community according to their needs. The outbreak of covid-19 has led to a situation where persons who usually participate in daily activities cannot participate anymore either due to illness or because the municipality cannot offer them such activities under the current circumstances. Measures carried out

⁵⁹ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Assignment to develop and spread an information material concerning measures for children and youths especially susceptible to infection (*Uppdrag att ta fram och sprida ett informationsmaterial gällande insatser till infektionskänsliga barn och unga*), Government assignment, 18 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁶⁰ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Information material for children and youths especially susceptible to infection (*Informationsmaterial för särskilt infektionskänsliga barn och unga*), press release, 14 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁶¹ 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](#)

⁶² Sweden, Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (*Lag [1993:387] om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade*), section 1, 27 May 1993, [available here](#)

according to the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments are often the responsibility of the municipalities, which are recommended to give a certain compensation to the participants in the daily activities, a so-called habilitation compensation. To encourage the municipalities in their work to stimulate participants in daily activities, state funding is made available through the National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*). As mentioned above, the outbreak of covid-19 has meant that persons participating in daily activities may be hindered to do so, for various reasons. However, these circumstances shall not stop the state funding for the habilitation compensation paid to the participants by the municipalities.⁶³ Against this background, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs commissioned the National Board of Health and Welfare to clarify the conditions for receiving state funding for the habilitation compensation.⁶⁴ The authority states that the conditions for the grants now are changed, which means that the grants may be used to pay daily allowance to persons participating in daily activities even if no activities can be offered or if the participants cannot attend due to the risk of infection.⁶⁵

In **Sweden**, the National Board of Health and Welfare has together with other national authorities and intellectual disability organisations developed a supporting material for professionals on how to talk to persons with intellectual disabilities and autism about covid-19. The material encourages the use of pictures in communication and includes tips on explanatory videos and websites.⁶⁶ Two examples of the tips included in the material are 1) FUB, the Swedish National Association for People with Intellectual Disability has developed a youtube film aimed at their target group. The film shows a young woman following the advice of the speaker voice, e.g. drink a lot of fluid, don't forget to move around, do breathing exercises,⁶⁷ and 2) Dart, a communication and computer resource centre for persons with disabilities has developed a one-page picture/image support for discussions on covid-19

⁶³ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Conditions for state funding of habilitation compensation shall be clarified (*Villkor för statsbidrag för habiliteringsersättning ska förtydligas*), press release, 7 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁶⁴ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Conditions for state funding of habilitation compensation shall be clarified (*Villkor för statsbidrag för habiliteringsersättning ska förtydligas*), press release, 7 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁶⁵ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), State grants for habilitation compensation (*Statsbidrag för habiliteringsersättning*), [available here](#)

⁶⁶ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), Speaking about coronavirus and covid-19 with persons with intellectual disabilities or autism (*Att prata om coronaviruset och covid-19 med personer med intellektuell funktionsnedsättning eller autism*), 26 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁶⁷ Sweden, Swedish National Association for People with Intellectual Disability, FUB, The new corona virus: advice for prevent serious illness (*Det nya coronaviruset: Råd för att förebygga svår sjukdom*), youtube film, [available here](#)

with persons with certain disabilities. The picture support shows images and easy-to-read texts about the symptoms of covid-19, what to do when you are sick or when you are really sick, how you avoid getting sick and how you avoid spreading the infection.⁶⁸

In **Sweden**, the National Board of Health and Welfare presented statistics on the number of confirmed cases of infected and deaths in relation to covid-19 among persons with accommodation supports according to the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments⁶⁹ (hereafter LSS) in 2019.⁷⁰ There are four different types of accommodation forms given within the frames of LSS;

- Family homes for children and youths
- Residential homes with special service for children and youths
- Residential homes with special service for adults
- Other especially adapted residence forms for adults

On 1 October 2019, 75,000 persons received some kind of support and service in accordance with LSS. Of them 29,600 persons received accommodation support. On 8 May 2020, 336 persons were confirmed infected with covid-19, which is approximately 1.1 % of the persons receiving accommodation support according to LSS. The average age of the persons confirmed infected with covid-19 in this group was 50.8 years. On 11 May 2020, 26 persons (or 0.08%) that have received accommodation support according to LSS had been reported as deceased from covid-19, according to death certificates submitted to the National Board of Health and Welfare. Among the deceased 20 were men and 6 were women. The average age of the persons who had died from covid-19 in this group was 64.2 years.

⁶⁸ Sweden, Dart, communication and computer resource centre for persons with disabilities (*Dart, kommunikations- och dataresurscenter för personer med funktionsnedsättning*), About the corona virus and covid-19 (*Om coronaviruset och covid-19*), [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*), chap 9, section 8,9, 3 June 2010, [available here](#)

⁷⁰ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), Statistics on confirmed infected and deceased with covid-19 as cause of death among persons with accommodation support according to the Act concerning support and service for persons with certain functional impairments 2019 (*Statistik om bekräftat smittade och avlidna med dödsorsak covid-19 bland personer med boendeinsats enligt lagen om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade 2019*), 13 May 2020, [available here](#)

In **Sweden**, the National Board of Health and Welfare presented statistics⁷¹ on the number of confirmed cases of infected and deceased persons in relation to covid-19 among persons receiving personal assistance according to LSS.⁷² On 1 October 2019, 19,027 persons received personal assistance according to LSS. On 14 May 2020, 143 persons (or 0.7 %) were confirmed infected with covid-19. 53 of these were living in the region Stockholm, which is 37 % of all confirmed cases of infection in this group. On 14 May 2020, 21 persons who received personal assistance according to LSS had been reported as deceased from covid-19, according to the death certificates submitted to the National Board of Health and Welfare. 14 of the deceased were men and 7 were women.

In **Sweden**, the Health and Social Care Inspectorate (*Inspektionen för Vård och Omsorg, IVO*) has stated that the authority has received reports of general visit bans and other limiting measures that have been imposed in accommodation forms of the LSS. The visit bans etc. have been imposed with reference to the pandemic.⁷³ Among other things, residents have reportedly been denied support from the staff. For example, persons who have decided keep attending their work experience placements (*praktikplatser*) are denied staff that accompany and assist them to get to their placements and carry out their tasks once there. Consequently, the persons in focus have not been able to continue their work experience placements. Furthermore, the residents have not been included in the decisions introducing visit bans. The authority stresses that it is particularly important to maintain a daily structure that the individual recognises for persons with certain disabilities, for example autism. The absence of such familiar structures may lead to anxiety and stress. The Health and Social Care Inspectorate concludes that this type of care is voluntary. No operations run according to LSS, the Social Services Act, and the Healthcare and Medical Services Act may include measures that are introduced against the individual's will.⁷⁴ All activities must be performed with respect for the individual's integrity and self-determination. According to the Health and Social Care Inspectorate none of the above-mentioned bans or restrictions have any legal support.⁷⁵ At the same time, the residential care homes must provide a secure situation for the residents both when it comes to health

⁷¹Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), Statistics on covid-19 among persons with disabilities (*Statistik om covid-19 bland personer med funktionsnedsättning*), 14 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁷² Sweden, Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (*Lag [1993:387] om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade*), chap 9, section 2, 3 June 2010, [available here](#)

⁷³ Sweden, Health and Social Care Inspectorate (*Inspektionen för Vård och Omsorg, IVO*) (2020) Q and A on the Coronavirus, covid-19 (*Frågor och svar om Coronaviruset, covid-19*), [available here](#)

⁷⁴ Sweden, Health and Social Care Inspectorate (*Inspektionen för Vård och Omsorg, IVO*) (2020) Q and A on the Coronavirus, covid-19 (*Frågor och svar om Coronaviruset, covid-19*), [available here](#)

⁷⁵ Sweden, Health and Social Care Inspectorate (*Inspektionen för Vård och Omsorg, IVO*) (2020) Q and A on the Coronavirus, covid-19 (*Frågor och svar om Coronaviruset, covid-19*), [available here](#)

and general safety. This may mean that the head principals must decide whether they shall dissuade from visits or not in order to avoid infectivity. However, such dissuasions shall not be likened to a ban. Consequently, such visit bans are unlawful, which has been pointed out by disability organisations.⁷⁶ The National Board of Health and Welfare has also commented on these types of bans and states that the residential care homes cannot forbid the residents from receiving visits. However, the staff may suggest other ways of keeping contact, and inform the resident and their relatives about potential risks for spread of the infection upon a visit.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Sweden, hejaolika.se (2020) Battle against unlawful visit bans in LSS-accommodations (*Strid om olagliga besöksförbud på LSS-boenden*), 31 March 2020, [available here](#)

⁷⁷ Sweden, National Board on Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), Can the LSS residential care homes prohibit the residents to receive visitors? (*Kan LSS-boenden förbjuda boende att ta emot besökare?*) [available here](#)

2 Impact on fundamental rights of older people

Please provide information under each title / sub-title; and indicate n/a when no information available.

2.1 Data/statistics

Where available, data should be disaggregated by age groups and sex.

In **Sweden**, official statistics regarding COVID-19 are made available both by the Public Health Agency of Sweden (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) and the National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*). Please note that the official data present statistics covering all cases in total and not per month. Emerga Institute has contacted statisticians at the Public Health Agency, but they have only referred us to official statistics available at the authority's official webpage.

2.1.1 Share of persons 60+ in the total number of persons in the community infected, recovered and died in relation to COVID-19.

The table below presents the official statistics on the total number of cases and deaths during the pandemic up until 31 May 2020 in total and per age group 60+. ⁷⁸ Data disaggregated by sex per age group is not available. Please note that the figures include persons in institutions. The percentages in brackets show the numbers' relationship to the total number of infections and deaths within the population on 31 May 2020.

Age group	0–90+	60–69	70–79	80–89	90+
Infected by COVID-19	37,542 (100%)	4,552 (12%)	4,104 (10.9%)	5,087 (13.5%)	2,802 (7.5%)
Recovered from COVID-19 ⁷⁹	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Died from COVID-19	4,395 (100%)	311 (7%)	963 (21.9%)	1,813 (41.3%)	1,113 (25.3%)

⁷⁸ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency, Official webpage, "Confirmed cases in Sweden – daily update" (*Bekräftade fall i Sverige – daglig uppdatering*), updated 31 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁷⁹ Sweden, Information about statistics on recovered persons from COVID-19 is not registered in Sweden, e-mail correspondence with a representative of the Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), 26 May 2020

2.1.2 Share of persons 60+ in the total number of persons in institutional settings infected, recovered and died in relation to COVID-19.

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 27 May 2020. Data is disaggregated in age groups and sex.⁸⁰

Residential care homes for the elderly (*äldreboende*):⁸¹

Age group	70–74	75–79	80–84	85+
Infected by COVID-19	Total: 296 • Men: 150 • Women: 146	Total: 566 • Men: 279 • Women: 287	Total: 857 • Men: 356 • Women: 501	Total: 2,926 • Men: 841 • Women: 2,085
Recovered from COVID-19 ⁸²	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Died from COVID-19	Total: 117 • Men: 65 • Women: 52	Total: 216 • Men: 121 • Women: 95	Total: 394 • Men: 198 • Women: 196	Total: 1,219 • Men: 469 • Women: 750

⁸⁰ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), Official Webpage, “Statistics on covid-19 amongst elderly by type of housing” (*Statistik om covid-19 bland äldre efter boendeform*), updated 27 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁸¹ 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 27 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁸² Sweden, Information about statistics on recovered persons from COVID-19 is not registered in Sweden, e-mail correspondence with a representative of the Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), 26 May 2020

Home care services⁸³ for the elderly (*Hemtjänst*).⁸⁴

Age group	70-74	75-79	80-84	85+
Infected by COVID-19	Total: 248 • Men: 140 • Women: 108	Total: 510 • Men: 249 • Women: 261	Total: 674 • Men: 296 • Women: 378	Total: 1,883 • Men: 722 • Women: 1,161
Recovered from COVID-19⁸⁵	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a
Died from COVID-19	Total: 74 • Men: 41 • Women: 33	Total: 147 • Men: 83 • Women: 64	Total: 207 • Men: 106 • Women: 101	Total: 583 • Men: 296 • Women: 287

In **Sweden**, the National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) published a more extensive analysis over the number of elderly persons infected and deceased from COVID-19 at residential homes and the number of persons receiving home care services, in which the authority compares the these numbers to the total number of infected and deceased persons in the age group 70+. The analysis was presented on 6 May 2020. However, the numbers in the report were updated on 28 April 2020, when the total number of deceased in Sweden were 2,075 persons and the total number of

⁸³ In Sweden, the home care services are regulated by several laws, mainly the Social Services Act (*Socialtjänstlag [2001:453]*), the Act on Support and Service to Certain Disabled People (*Lag [1993:387] om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade, LSS*), and the Healthcare and Medical Services (*Hälso- och sjukvårdslag [2017:30]*). The home care services are primarily organized by the municipalities. It is incumbent on each municipality's social services to decide the individual's need of support and grant them assistance in accordance with this decision. Since the overarching aim of the assistance is to enable persons to remain in their own homes as long as possible the assistance include medical services like catheterisation and care of catheters; administration of medication; tube-feeding; and help to regulate blood flow in the legs e.g. compression stockings/socks. Other healthcare services include personal hygiene measures and change of incontinence protection Furthermore, the home care services commonly include assistance like accompanying the persons in question to different appointments, e.g. to the physician or the dentist, house cleaning, purchasing of food and other necessities, meal assistance and accompanied walks.

⁸⁴ 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 27 May 2020, [available here](#) Please note that the statistics do not include persons with no more support than social alarm devices (*trygghetslarm*).

⁸⁵ Sweden, Information about statistics on recovered persons from COVID-19 is not registered in Sweden, e-mail correspondence with a representative of the Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), 26 May 2020

confirmed infections were 19,430 persons.⁸⁶ The respective numbers for 2 June 2020 were 4468 deaths and 38 589 confirmed infections.⁸⁷ The tables below shows the numbers as of 28 April 2020, which was presented in the analysis mentioned above.

Deceased due to covid-19 amongst elderly according to residence form:⁸⁸

Age group	70+	70–84	85+
Died from COVID-19 in total	Total: 1,877 • Men: 981 • Women: 896	Total: 877 • Men: 519 • Women: 358	Total: 1,000 • Men: 462 • Women: 538
Died from COVID-19 in residential homes for elderly (<i>äldreboende</i>)	Total: 948 (50%) • Men: 422 • Women: 526	Total: 377 (43%) • Men: 190 • Women: 187	Total: 571 • Men: 198 • Women: 196
Died from COVID-19 among persons with home care for the elderly (<i>hemtjänst</i>)⁸⁹	Total: 493 (26%) • Men: 255 • Women: 238	Total: 202 (23%) • Men: 110 • Women: 92	Total: 291 (29%) • Men: 145 • Women: 146

Infected by Covid-19 amongst the elderly according to residence form:⁹⁰

Age group	70+	70–84	85+
Infected by COVID-19 in total	Total: 7,315 • Men: 3,406 • Women: 3,909	Total: 3,887 • Men: 2,140 • Women: 1,747	Total: 3,428 • Men: 1,266 • Women: 2,162

⁸⁶ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) “Statistics on infected and deceased with covid-19 amongst the elderly according to residence form” (*Statistik om smittade och avlidna med covid-19 bland äldre efter boendeform*), published 6 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁸⁷ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Confirmed cases in Sweden (*Bekräftade fall i Sverige*), 2 June 2020, [available here](#)

⁸⁸ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) “Statistics on infected and deceased from covid-19 amongst the elderly according to residence form” (*Statistik om smittade och avlidna med covid-19 bland äldre efter boendeform*), published 6 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁸⁹ Statistics does not include persons with no more than social alarm devices (*trygghetslarm*).

⁹⁰ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) “Statistics on infected and deceased from covid-19 amongst the elderly according to residence form” (*Statistik om smittade och avlidna med covid-19 bland äldre efter boendeform*), published 6 May 2020, [available here](#)

Infected by COVID-19 at residential homes for the elderly (<i>äldreboende</i>)	Total: 2,866 (39%) • Men: 1,035 • Women: 1,831	Total: 1,076 (28%) • Men: 502 • Women: 574	Total: 1,790 (52%) • Men: 533 • Women: 1,257
Infected by COVID-19 among persons with home care for the elderly (<i>hemtjänst</i>)⁹¹	Total: 1,972 (27%) • Men: 850 • Women: 1,122	Total: 838 (22%) • Men: 396 • Women: 442	Total: 1,134 (33%) • Men: 454 • Women: 680

In **Sweden**, both politicians and experts have debated and criticised the numbers of covid-19 related deaths in the residential care homes for elderly persons. These deaths have been interpreted as evidence of the fact that Sweden has failed to protect the oldest and vulnerable persons. However, a manager for the Department of knowledge management (*kunskapsstyrning*) at the National Board of Health and Welfare points out that the death numbers in special accommodations for the elderly are not strikingly higher this year than during a normal flu season.⁹²

2.1.3 Number and type of institutions affected

In **Sweden**, there is no official data available from relevant authorities on the number and type of institutions affected by COVID-19. However, the Swedish newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* published the results of a survey on 2 May 2020 in which they had asked all 21 regions in Sweden how many of their residential homes for the elderly (*äldreboende*) that had at least one case of COVID-19.⁹³ The table below presents the survey's data per region among the 15 regions who answered the questions.

Region	Number of residential homes for the elderly in total	Number of residential homes for the elderly with at least one case of COVID-19	Number of individual cases infected at some point at a residential home for the elderly
Region Stockholm	383	205	1,686
Region Västra Götaland	400	90	–
Region Sörmland	–	31	–
Region Uppsala	75	30	110
Region Västmanland	68	28	167
Region Jönköping	118	24	79

⁹¹ Statistics does not include persons with no more than social alarm devices (*trygghetslarm*).

⁹² Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*) The National Board of Health and Welfare: Death numbers in residential care homes for the elderly are not much higher than during a flu season (*Socialstyrelsen: Dödstal på äldreboenden inte mycket högre än en influensasäsong*), 23 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁹³ Sweden, 'Corona infection in over 500 of the country's residential care homes for the elderly' (*Coronasmitta på över 500 av landets äldreboenden*) in *Dagens Nyheter*, Newspaper editorial, 2 May 2020, [available here](#)

Region Skåne	312	24	81
Region Örebro län	65	19	90
Region Gävleborg	78	18	52
Region Dalarna	92	18	59
Region Norrbotten	90	15	53
Region Västernorrland	78	12	55
Region Västerbotten	95	8	15
Region Halland	66	6	31
Region Jämtland/ Härjedalen	67	6	22
Region Värmland	90	4	13
Region Blekinge	44	3	3

2.1.4 Do official statistics on mortality rates from COVID-19 include deaths of older persons in care homes? Has there been any critique of data collection with respect to care homes?

In **Sweden**, statistics include deaths of older people in care homes as presented above. A representative from Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) emphasised that persons who have died from what is suspected to be COVID-19 but who have not been tested are not included in the statistics.⁹⁴

No critique of data collection with respect to care homes have been found.

2.1.5 Independent studies published on the situation of older persons with respect to the impact of and responses to COVID-19

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency conducted a survey among managers at the residential homes for the elderly in April 2020. The survey was made in the regions Stockholm and Sörmland and the aim was to map the regions' responses to covid-19. As a follow-up of the survey, the Public Health Agency carries out interviews with nurses and operation managers in residential homes for the elderly in

⁹⁴ Sweden, Information about statistics on recovered persons from COVID-19 is not registered in Sweden, e-mail correspondence with a representative of the Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), 26 May 2020

region Sörmland. Interviews are also conducted with the medically responsible nurses at the homes. The interview study will be presented in early June 2020.⁹⁵

In **Sweden**, persons who are 70 years or older, and persons with other medical risk factors are recommended to limit their close contacts and stay at home as much as possible – a recommendation that go far beyond the general advice to the public on everyone’s responsibility to prevent further infectivity of covid-19.⁹⁶ Since this recommendation strongly limits the daily lives of persons in this age range, the Public Health Agency has conducted a study reviewing the relationship between age and serious outcomes of covid-19 infections.⁹⁷ The study analysed the risk for a serious outcome (serious illness or death) from covid-19 in relation to different age groups in order to identify the differences between the age groups. The study was based on information about 9, 617 persons aged 50–79 who have a laboratory verified diagnosis of covid-19. Besides age, gender, residence form (resident homes for the elderly or at home) and underlying diseases have been included in the analysis as corrective factors. The study showed that the risk of a serious outcome when infected with covid-19 increases with age. However, the increase is relatively small in the ages around 70. When compared to persons aged 65–69, the risk is higher for persons aged 70–74, but not for persons between 70 and 72 years of age. In conclusion, the results support the present recommendations for persons who are 70 years or older.⁹⁸

In **Sweden**, Uppsala University has performed the study “Evaluation of a COVID-19 IgM and IgG rapid test; an efficient tool for assessment of past exposure to SARS-CoV-2”.⁹⁹ The study reviews fast testing of antibodies against covid-19, a test that a professor describes as “comparably very accurate.” However, the Public Health Agency does not recommend using such tests. While the authority states that the available tests may be accurate, no guiding assessment has been made on how to interpret

⁹⁵ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), For staff within elderly care (*För personal inom äldreomsorg*), 29 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁹⁶ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Curb the infectivity – this is what you can do as a private citizen (*Bromsa smitten – det här kan du som privatperson göra*), 15 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁹⁷ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Review of age restrictions for special advice to persons aged 70 or older (*Utvärdering av åldersgräns för särskilda råd till personer 70 år eller äldre*), 27 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁹⁸ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Review of age restrictions for special advice to persons aged 70 or older (*Utvärdering av åldersgräns för särskilda råd till personer 70 år eller äldre*), 27 May 2020, [available here](#)

⁹⁹ Sweden, Hoffman et.al (2020) “Evaluation of a COVID-19 IgM and IgG rapid test; an efficient tool for assessment of past exposure to SARS-CoV-2” in *Infection Ecology and Epidemiology* 10:1, [available here](#)

the outcome of such tests. Consequently, Public Health Agency recommends that one waits until such an assessment is available.¹⁰⁰ The Uppsala University researchers have assessed one of the many rapid antibody tests sold online by analysing blood samples from 100 donors from 2018, i.e. before the virus was found in humans in order to rule out any false reactions. The team has published a scientific article on the rapid test as the first research group in Sweden.¹⁰¹ The researchers used volunteer physicians who tested over 6,000 individuals working in residential care homes for the elderly. The test results from the first 1,000 tests are now compiled and show that as many as 23 % of the 1,000 care workers were or had been infected.¹⁰² The responsible professor stated that the results show that the elderly who have died at the residential care homes for the elderly may have been infected by staff, since the recommendations specified that the staff were only to have respiratory protection when they were working with sick patients. According to the professor, almost half of the approximately 230 persons who had antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 had not had any symptoms at all.¹⁰³

2.2 COVID-19 measures targeting older people

Please indicate the age group/s concerned; e.g. 60+, 65+, 70+ etc.

Please consult and refer in particular to measures related to existing or planned national exit strategies (policies/measures).

Please report on developments for the reference period 1 May – 31 May (inclusive) and on any changes/revisions of measures reported in the 1st and 2nd bulletin regarding older people.

In **Sweden**, as of March 2020, the Public Health Agency recommends persons who are 70 years or older to avoid social contact and stay at home as much as possible.¹⁰⁴ See more information 2.2.4.

¹⁰⁰ Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*), Here the healthcare staff is tested for immunity to covid-19 (*Här testar man om vårdpersonalen är immun mot covid-19*), 19 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁰¹ Sweden, Hoffman et.al (2020) "Evaluation of a COVID-19 IgM and IgG rapid test; an efficient tool for assessment of past exposure to SARS-CoV-2" in *Infection Ecology and Epidemiology* 10:1, [available here](#)

¹⁰² Sweden, Hoffman et.al (2020) "Evaluation of a COVID-19 IgM and IgG rapid test; an efficient tool for assessment of past exposure to SARS-CoV-2" in *Infection Ecology and Epidemiology* 10:1, [available here](#)

¹⁰³ Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*), Here the healthcare staff is tested for immunity to covid-19 (*Här testar man om vårdpersonalen är immun mot covid-19*), 19 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁰⁴ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), You who are 70 years or older – limit your social contact (*Du som är 70 år eller äldre – begränsa dina nära kontakter*), 25 March 2020, [available here](#)

However, since it is only a recommendation ignoring the advice is not punishable in the meaning of the law. Voices have been raising asking for a time-limit for the isolation of the elderly. The oldest member of the Swedish parliament publicly expressed her concern for the group of older persons and demanded that the government should present a strategy for the older population in relation to covid-19.¹⁰⁵ However, the statement was met by the Public Health Agency, who re-emphasised that older persons is the group that are mostly at risk and consequently, they will have to accept the restrictions for the longest period of time.¹⁰⁶

In **Sweden**, the Ministry of Culture presented an investment of 100 million SEK (€9.6 million) to support the civil society organisations that assist the most vulnerable during the corona crisis.¹⁰⁷ The investment is twofold. 50 million SEK (€4.8 million) is proposed to go to organisations that assist vulnerable persons with special needs. This may for example be measures for homeless persons, undocumented persons, and others in socially vulnerable situations. The other 50 million SEK (€9.6 million) is proposed to go to organisations counteracting the loneliness and isolation of older persons during the virus outbreak. This may for example be outreach activities over the telephone, assistance to set up digital meetings or practical help like buying food. The investment complements the previously decided investment of 100 million SEK to organisations who work with children in vulnerable situations and organisations who work with women, children and LGBTQ-persons who are exposed to violence, violence in close relationship and honour related violence and oppression.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Sweden, 'Barbro Westerholm, 86: Nobody wants to feel neglected (*Barbro Westerholm, 86: Ingen vill känna sig undanskuffad*) in *Dagens Nyheter*, newspaper editorial, 25 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁰⁶ Sweden, 'The Public Health Agency's word: Older persons must accept the restrictions the longest (*Folkhälsomyndighetens besked: Äldre måste acceptera restriktioner längst*) in *Dagens Nyheter*, newspaper editorial, 28 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁰⁷ Sweden, Ministry of Culture (*Kulturdepartementet*), 100 million to measures for people in special social vulnerability and against older person's lonlieness during the corona pandemy (*100 miljoner till insatser för människor i särskild social utsatthet och mot äldres ensamhet under coronapandemin*), press release, 12 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁰⁸ Sweden, Ministry of Employment (*Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet*), The National Board of Health and Welfare distributes 100 million SEK to civil society organisation to meet increased vulnerability as a result of the corona virus (*Socialstyrelsen fördelar 100 miljoner kronor till ideella organisationer för att möta ökad utsatthet med anledning av coronaviruset*), press release, 30 April 2020, [available here](#)

National guidelines/protocols in response to COVID-19 addressing older people

- in residential care homes (including protective equipment, visits etc.)

In **Sweden**, the National Board of Health and Welfare has published some advice on the implementation of the visit ban in elderly homes, including guidelines for when to make exceptions from the ban.¹⁰⁹ The general advice issued by the National Board of Health and Welfare focuses on when exceptions from the visit ban may be considered. According to the authority, exceptions can be made: 1) If there is a need for visits in connection with care in the final stages of life; 2) if there is a need for visits by visitors who have incurable, non-communicable illnesses and who themselves are in the final stages of life; and 3) if a resident has severe anxiety that is considered to be impossible to relieve by any other means than by a visit. If an exception from the ban is granted, the Public Health Agency has published recommendations for how such a visit can be realised in a way that prevents the spread of covid-19.¹¹⁰

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency has presented a report aimed at supporting the development and implementation of regional guidelines to decrease the risks of older patients and residents at residential care homes for the elderly are infected by the staff.¹¹¹ The report focuses on the risks in the elderly care sector in relation to care in the person's own home, or care for persons who live in residential care homes for the elderly. The report is directed to healthcare hygiene units, infection units, medically responsible nurses, and persons with overall responsibility for the municipal healthcare.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) The National Board of Health and Welfare's general advice on the implementation of the Ordinance on temporary bans of visits in special forms of accommodation for older persons to avoid spreading of the disease covid-19 (*Socialstyrelsens allmänna råd om tillämpningen av förordningen (2020:163) om tillfälligt förbud mot besök i särskilda boendeformer för äldre för att förhindra spridningen av sjukdomen covid-19*), 8 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹⁰ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Recommendations for visits in special forms of accommodations during the covid-19 pandemic (*Rekommendationer vid besök i särskilda boendeformer för äldre under covid-19- pandemin*), 9 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹¹ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Measures to decrease the infectivity of covid-19 from staff to older residents and patients (*Åtgärder för att minska smittspridning av covid-19 från personal till äldre brukare och patienter*), 8 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹² Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) Measures to decrease the infectivity of covid-19 from staff to older residents and patients (*Åtgärder för att minska smittspridning av covid-19 från personal till äldre brukare och patienter*), 8 May 2020, [available here](#)

In **Sweden**, the National Board of Health and Welfare has presented national guidelines for work procedures for covid-19 among persons with dementia in residential care homes for older persons.¹¹³ The material aims to guide and support professionals caring for such persons on how to adjust their care when persons with dementia are infected with the corona virus.¹¹⁴ The guide is based in the general procedures for preventing negative behavioural and mental symptoms of dementia. These procedures are then adapted to the current situation with the covid-19 pandemic. The specific advice on change in working methods due to covid-19 concern such things as preparing persons with dementia before initiating certain care or treatment e.g. when the staff wear protective equipment take samples, supporting them in washing hands, cleaning nails and other hygiene measures, Other advice focus on creating opportunities for activity to reduce anxiety and enabling contact with relatives via telephone or digital devices, something which can be especially important in order to be able to help people who (no longer) speak Swedish.¹¹⁵

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency presented new national criteria on how to define when a person is no longer infective (*smittfrihet*). The criteria are developed by the authority and groups of external experts. Older persons in residential care homes are mentioned in this context. The criteria refer to the precautionary principle, i.e. persons are no longer infective after at least two days without a fever, a steady improvement, and after at least 14 days from the start of the infection.¹¹⁶

In **Sweden**, the Health and Social Care Inspectorate (*Inspektionen för vård och omsorg, IVO*) has received indications on risks in the elderly care sector related to covid-19.¹¹⁷ Consequently, the authority has inspected 1,045 elderly care operations (*verksamheter*). The inspections confirmed that the pandemic poses a great challenge for the residential care homes for the elderly, care in the

¹¹³ Sweden, Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), Work procedures for covid-19 with persons with dementia in residential care homes for elderly (*Arbetssätt vid covid-19 hos personer med demenssjukdom i särskilda boendeformer för äldre*), 24 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹⁴ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), Support material for staff at nursing homes for elderly persons with dementia (*Stöd för personal på boende för äldre med demenssjukdom*), 28 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹⁵ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), Support material for staff at nursing homes for elderly persons with dementia (*Stöd för personal på boende för äldre med demenssjukdom*), 28 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹⁶ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), New guidelines on non-infectivity after covid-19 (*Ny vägledning om smittfrihet efter covid-19*), 19 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹⁷ Sweden, Swedish Health and Social Care Inspectorate (*Inspektionen för vård och omsorg, IVO*) IVO's inspections of the elderly care sector during the covid-pandemic (*IVO:s tillsyn av äldreomsorgen under covid-pandemin*), 27 May 2020, [available here](#)

person's home (*hemtjänst*) and residential homes for adults in accordance with LSS when it comes to restrict further infectivity. The authority has found cases where the staff have been ordered to work even though they have been confirmed as infected with covid-19 as well as cases where the staff have tended both infected and healthy persons without any protective equipment. The inspections further showed that many of the operations have developed measures that have had positive effects, such as measures re-assuring that the basic hygiene rules are followed, hands-on and clear leadership, active planning of the staffing and the establishment of covid-19 teams. Many of the inspected operations described similar challenges, such as handling the staff's concerns and worries, managing the flow of information, and formulating well-functioning procedures around protective equipment and hygiene.¹¹⁸

In **Sweden**, the Health and Social Care Inspectorate initiated a more in-depth inspection of the care and treatments for persons who have been infected with covid-19 in residential care homes for the elderly. The inspection is carried out on the basis of the Health and Social Care Inspectorate's own observations and reports stating that older persons in special accommodations for example are denied access to intubation.¹¹⁹

- in the community in general

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency recommends persons who are 70 years or older to avoid social contact and stay at home as much as possible, as mentioned above.¹²⁰

2.2.1 National guidelines/protocols on patient triage that apply age as the main and decisive criterion

In **Sweden**, there are no national guidelines/protocols on patient triage that apply age as the main and decisive criterion. The National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) has issued national guidelines principles for prioritisation within intensive care during extraordinary conditions.¹²¹ The guidelines stipulates the following: Following the principle of human dignity, prioritisation must not be based on the patient's chronological age per se. However, it is permissible to take into account the patient's biological age, that is, which patient that will benefit most from intensive care given the

¹¹⁸ Sweden, Swedish Health and Social Care Inspectorate (*Inspektionen för vård och omsorg, IVO*) IVO's inspections of the elderly care sector during the covid-pandemic (*IVO:s tillsyn av äldreomsorgen under covid-pandemin*), 27 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹¹⁹ Sweden, Swedish Health and Social Care Inspectorate (*Inspektionen för vård och omsorg, IVO*) IVO's inspections of the elderly care sector during the covid-pandemic (*IVO:s tillsyn av äldreomsorgen under covid-pandemin*), 27 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹²⁰ Sweden, Swedish Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), You who are 70 years or older – limit your social contact (*Du som är 70 år eller äldre – begränsa dina nära kontakter*), 25 March 2020, [available here](#)

¹²¹ Sweden, National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*), National principles for prioritisation within intensive care during extraordinary conditions (*Nationella principer för prioritering inom intensivvård under extraordinära förhållanden*), 25 March 2020, [available here](#)

patient's biological condition. This means that a person with a low chronological age, but high fragility may be given lower priority than a person with a higher chronological age but better ability to cope with and survive intensive care. The assessment of biological age requires a consideration of various factors and can be done with the support of established assessment scales. The following factors leads to high biological age which in turn decreases the likelihood of continued survival during and after intensive care: 1) the number of vital functions /organ systems failing and the degree of the failure of each function/system; 2) the degree of co-morbidity – how many other chronic or acute illnesses the patient simultaneously suffers from as well as the severity and prognosis for these illnesses; and 3) high chronological age with a related poor ability to cope with and survive intensive care.

2.2.2 Targeted testing of residents and staff in residential care homes

- Is this laid down in a targeted policy/measure or done on an ad-hoc basis when a case has been detected?

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency was instructed by the government to promptly increase the number of tests for covid-19. The assignment includes the development of a national strategy for increased testing and laboratory analyses of covid-19 in Sweden. In the national strategy, four different priority groups are defined.¹²² As of 8 May 2020, the two primary priority groups for testing includes residents in residential care homes for the elderly and the staff of such homes.¹²³ According to the Public Health Agency, older persons who receive care are the first priority group and should thus be tested generously.¹²⁴

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency published a supporting material which clarifies how the testing can be organised and performed in residential care homes for the elderly.¹²⁵ The material describes

¹²² Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), National strategy for increased testing and laboratory analysis of covid-19 (*Nationell strategi för utökad provtagning och laboratorieanalys av covid-19*), 5 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹²³ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Testing indication for covid-19 (*Provtagningsindikation för covid-19*), 8 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹²⁴ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) (2020) Testing for covid-19 among residents in residential care homes for the elderly (*Provtagning för covid-19 hos boende inom äldreomsorg*), 22 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹²⁵ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Testing for covid-19 in residential care homes for the elderly (*Provtagning för covid-19 inom särskilt boende för äldre*), 29 May 2020, [available here](#)

the practical aspects of how to organise and perform increased testing for covid-19 in residential care homes for the elderly, such as;

- checking which types of instruments and procedures that needs to be in place in the testing process
- conducting generous testing in order to prove ongoing infection with covid-19 among care-receivers, also with unspecific symptoms;
- tracing infectivity around newly detected cases including persons without symptoms, both care-receivers and staff:
- screening of care-receivers who move in or return from hospital care;
- carrying out measures based on test results.

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency also published a fact sheet on how to test the staff in order to detect an ongoing infection,¹²⁶ as well as a fact sheet on self-testing.¹²⁷

- Data/statistics on testing & frequency of testing – institutions, residents, staff

In **Sweden**, the testing of residents in residential care homes for the elderly shall be handled by the regional healthcare sectors as part of each region's responsibilities. In the event of a capacity shortage, subcontractors may be hired for the analysis stage.¹²⁸ At the moment, the different regions are at different stages of the testing. The ways the testing are conducted may also vary. The Public Health Agency points out that local adaptations must be made on the basis of, for example, access and

¹²⁶ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) (2020) Increased testing for covid-19 among staff within healthcare and care (*Utökad testning för covid-19 av personal inom hälso- och sjukvård samt omsorg*), 29 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹²⁷ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) (2020) Self-testing of covid-19 for staff within healthcare and care (*Egenprovtagning covid-19 för personal inom hälso- och sjukvård samt omsorg*), 29 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹²⁸ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), National strategy for extended testing and laboratory analysis of covid-19 (*Nationell strategi för utökad provtagning och laboratorieanalys av covid-19*) 5 May 2020, [available here](#)

distance to regional healthcare and medical services, laboratories and the prevalence of contagion in the area.¹²⁹

In **Sweden**, a coordinator for the region's testing of covid-19 was nominated by the government.¹³⁰ The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions criticised the action and claimed that it was too late since the groundwork had already been carried out by the regions.¹³¹ During a press conference on 19 May 2020, the Minister of Social Affairs stated that the government wants to increase the testing for covid-19 among patients, residents and staff in residential care homes for the elderly, and among the staff with jobs of socially importance. At the same press conference, the new national test coordinator stated that the testing within the elderly care sector must increase, both among the staff and the elderly.¹³² According to the Minister of Social Affairs, the Public Health Agency is developing guidelines on how a more encompassing testing in the elderly care sector will be conducted.¹³³ The test coordinator's assignment was terminated after three weeks. According to a text message to a daily newspaper by the Minister of Social Affairs, the government will take the coordinator's recommendations onboard and include them in the ongoing work to develop a test strategy.¹³⁴

¹²⁹ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Testing for covid-19 in residential care homes for the elderly (*Provtagning för covid-19 inom särskilt boende för äldre*), 29 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹³⁰ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*) XX new test coordinator for corona tests (*XX ny testkoordinator för coronatester*), press release, 8 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹³¹ Sweden, 'XX shall coordinate corona tests' (*XX ska koordinera coronatester*) in *Dagens Medicin*, newspaper editorial, 8 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹³² Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Press conference with the Minister of Social Affairs concerning tests for covid-19 (*Pressträff med socialministern om tester av covid-19*), 19 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹³³ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), Press conference with the Minister of Social Affairs concerning tests for covid-19 (*Pressträff med socialministern om tester av covid-19*), 19 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹³⁴ Sweden, *Dagens Nyheter* (daily newspaper), Sweden's test coordinator has finished her assignment after three weeks (*Sveriges testkoordinator har slutat efter tre veckor*), 2 June 2020, [available here](#)

2.2.3 Restrictions/bans on visits to residential care settings, and any (conditional) lifting of these restrictions

In **Sweden**, as reported above and in previous reports, there is a general nation-wide visit ban at residential care homes settings as of March 2020. No liftings of this restriction has been mentioned during the reporting period.¹³⁵

2.2.4 Restrictive measures for older people living in the community

Please report on any restrictions for older people after gradual lifting of confinement measures (e.g. use of public services, work, and participation in voluntary and social activities).

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency's recommendations about the responsibilities of the individuals as well as the general public in preventing further infectivity remain in effect. Older persons are specifically mentioned in the recommendations as 'persons over 70 years'. For this group, as well as for other risk groups, the authority recommends them to:

- 1) limit social contacts;
- 2) avoid public transportation or any other public means of conveyance;
- 3) avoid shopping in for example pharmacies and grocery stores or visits in other places where people gather.¹³⁶

In **Sweden**, the Public Health Agency reviewed its current recommendations for persons 70 years or older. Many in the age group had hoped that the special recommendations for older persons would be lifted or eased.¹³⁷ However, at the daily press conference on 26 May 2020, the Public Health Agency stated that the recommendations for persons 70 years or older will remain valid.¹³⁸ Some clarifications were made. For example, the authority indicated that persons belonging to the group in question may

¹³⁵ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), National visit ban at residential care homes for the elderly (*Nationellt besöksförbud på äldreboenden*), press release, 31 March 2020, [available here](#)

¹³⁶ Sweden, Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*), Regulations and general advice 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](#)

¹³⁷ Sweden, Dagens Industri (journal), New information on healthy older persons expected during Tuesday (*Nya besked om friska äldre väntas under tisdagen*), 26 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹³⁸ Sweden, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*), The Public Health Agency's age restriction for risk groups remains (*Folkhälsomyndighetens åldersgräns för riskgrupper kvarstår*), 27 May 2020, [available here](#)

meet with other persons, but they are recommended to do so outside, and at least at an arm's length. In an interview, the state epidemiologist mentioned that the Public Health Agency had considered to introduce different guidelines for women than for men over 70, since covid-19 appears to hit men harder.¹³⁹

2.2.5 Access to healthcare for older people for conditions unrelated to COVID-19

Please report on measures targeted at older people living in the community and in institutional care settings (e.g. home-based visits, mobile health care, other hospital treatment).

In Sweden, the 290 municipalities are in charge of the municipal healthcare services which include home healthcare (hemsjukvård), rehabilitation and assistive devices to persons in residential care homes and home care services for the elderly in their homes. Medical interventions by physicians and emergency medical services are the responsibility of the regions. Each of the 21 regions decides how to organise its work in order to fulfil its legal responsibilities. However, most regions encourage their local healthcare centres (vårdcentraler) to increase home-based visits and/or digital healthcare visits when attending to persons from a risk group of as a result of covid-19.¹⁴⁰ Many regions have drastically reduced or cancelled their planned non-covid-19 related healthcare and medical services. In March 2020, Region Stockholm, which is the region that has been most affected by the virus, reported that the region would cancel all planned healthcare and medical services as long as this can be done without any serious medical consequences.¹⁴¹ This decision was made to free the healthcare personnel from other tasks so they could work with covid-19 patients instead. The cancellation of all planned healthcare and medical services has been covered by the media and is reported to have caused suffering among sick and/or older persons.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Sweden, Swedish Television (*Sveriges Television*), 2020, XX: "Considered special restrictions for men" (XX: *Övervägde särskilda restriktioner för män*), 27 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁴⁰ See for example: Sweden, Region Skåne, Covid-19: the primary healthcare works with outreach activities and advice to the public (*Covid-19: primärvården arbetar uppsökande och råd till allmänheten*), 23 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁴¹ Sweden, Region Stockholm, 2020, Planned healthcare and medical services suspended and healthcare personnel made available (*Planerad vård skjuts upp och sjukvårdspersonal görs tillgänglig*), 22 March 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁴² Sweden, Dagens Nyheter (daily newspaper), 'Aino's operation cancelled: we were powerless in the face of her suffering' (*Ainos operation ställdes in – Maktlös inför hennes lidande*), news paper editorial, 23 May 2020, [available here](#)

2.2.6 Support measures and promising practices targeting older people, including access to goods and services online and offline, social/psychological support, and use of digital tools and technology

Please also report on any targeted measures for people with dementia.

In **Sweden**, the municipalities have coordinated their activities with the activities of civil society organisations and other voluntary initiatives aimed at offering support to older persons in the municipalities. An agreement is in place between the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, the National Civil Contingencies Agency (*Myndigheten för samhällsskydd och beredskap*) and many voluntary groups and civil society organisation focusing on the cooperation between them in order to provide extra support where it is needed.¹⁴³ For example, the Swedish Red Cross reports that the organisation coordinates volunteers that can help older persons and other persons in the risk groups to buy food and medicine.¹⁴⁴

In **Sweden**, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (*Sveriges kommuner och regioner, SKR*) has gathered information and advice on mental health issues in times of crisis, adapted to different target groups and needs. One of the target groups included are older persons. This information bank also gathers examples of promising practices.¹⁴⁵

In **Sweden**, the municipality of Örebro has adapted its activities in the care sector to enable the municipality to extend the support to older persons. The support consists of outreach measures as well as dispatches of information. Resources from temporarily closed activities are used in this context. In order to prevent or counteract involuntary loneliness and strengthen mental health, different types of conversational support, e.g. “walk and talks”, support with purchase of goods and medicines are offered by volunteers in collaboration with Swedish Red Cross and other civil society organisations. Other activities include digital support in the form of IT-guides via telephone, and digital access to culture as well as outdoor shows with dance and music outside the residential care homes.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ Sweden, Swedish National Television (*Sveriges Television*), 2020, Voluntary groups shall assist the municipalities with support to older persons (*Frivilliggrupper ska stötta kommunerna med stöd till äldre*), [available here](#)

¹⁴⁴ Sweden, Swedish Red Cross (*Röda Korset*), How we help during the corona crisis (*Så hjälper vi i coronakrisen*), 17 March 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁴⁵ Sweden, Assignment Mental Health (*Uppdrag Psykisk Hälsa*), Examples from municipalities (*Exempel som rör kommuner*), 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁴⁶ Sweden, Assignment Mental Health (*Uppdrag Psykisk Hälsa*), Examples from municipalities (*Exempel som rör kommuner*), 2020, [available here](#)

In **Sweden**, the municipality of Gävle has initiated a hotline for older persons and others who belong to a risk group as well as their relatives. The hotline offers supporting talks and refers the callers to businesses and actors that can help them access goods and to civil society organisations that can give different kinds of support and coordinate other measures if the need occurs. The purpose of the hotline is to enable older persons in the municipality to feel safe and secure, and to coordinate the civil society organisation, the volunteers, and the local businesses.¹⁴⁷

In **Sweden**, *Hjärnkoll*, a civil society organisation working for increased openness about mental health problems, holds group talks for worried and lonely older persons over the phone or online. Each group consists of three to five persons. The groups meet at a given day and time, one hour per week for four weeks.¹⁴⁸

2.2.7 Consultation of older people's organisations and/or other civil society organisations in the design, implementation and review of COVID-19-related measures

In **Sweden**, 30 researchers with focus on elderly issues published an opinion piece arguing for the need to use and include the clinical and scientific expertise on the age group that exists in Sweden.¹⁴⁹ In the article, the researchers declared that they were able and willing to assist the concerned authorities. Furthermore, they stated that older persons and covid-19 have been the topic of important discussions lately, for example about how the infection could reach and get into elderly care homes. According to the researchers, experts on older persons and aging are missing in the discussion and have not been consulted by the responsible authorities.¹⁵⁰

In **Sweden**, the national organisation for senior citizens (*Pensionärernas riksorganisation, PRO*) invited the Public Health Agency (*Folkhälsomyndigheten*) to a telephone meeting with the organisation's board and the chairs of the different districts. The meeting took place the second week in May 2020

¹⁴⁷ Sweden, Assignment Mental Health (*Uppdrag Psykisk Hälsa*), Examples from municipalities (*Exempel som rör kommuner*), 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁴⁸ Sweden, Assignment Mental Health (*Uppdrag Psykisk Hälsa*), Examples from municipalities (*Exempel som rör kommuner*), 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁴⁹ Sweden, *Läkartidningen* (medical journal), 'Involve experts on aging in protecting the elderly against covid-19' (*Involvera experter på åldrande för att skydda äldre mot covid-19*), opinion piece, 16 April 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁵⁰ Sweden, *Läkartidningen* (medical journal), 'Involve experts on aging in protecting the elderly against covid-19' (*Involvera experter på åldrande för att skydda äldre mot covid-19*), opinion piece, 16 April 2020, [available here](#)

and gave the participants the opportunity to ask questions related to the corona pandemic. After the meeting, the questions and answers were presented in an online text on the organisation's website.¹⁵¹

In **Sweden**, representatives from the national organisation for senior citizens (*Pensionärernas riksorganisation, PRO*) participated in an online seminar with the Minister of Social Security (*Socialförsäkringsminister*) concerning the corona virus' effects on the pensions.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Sweden, National organisation of senior citizens (*Pensionärernas riksförbund, PRO*), The Public Health Agency answered questions about the corona virus (*Folkhälsomyndigheten svarade på frågor om coronaviruset*), 20 May 2020, [available here](#)

¹⁵² Sweden, National organisation of senior citizens (*Pensionärernas riksförbund, PRO*), How does the corona virus affect our pensions (*Hur påverkar coronaviruset våra pensioner*), [available here](#)