

Annex to decision II 3 at Government meeting on 29 August 2019, I2019/02308/DF.

## **Sweden's Open Government Partnership Action Plan 2019– 2021**

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## 1 BACKGROUND

The speed and vigour with which society is changing – economically, technically, socially, politically and in terms of safety and security – is making life increasingly more complex. Governments are tackling the challenges by designing and putting in place reforms that underpin sustainability, inclusion and growth while also generating better access to better-quality public services. This is fundamental to building the trust that is needed, not only to ensure that citizens have faith in the digital services of government administration but to ensure that they trust the State as a whole.

Openness and transparency are fundamental principles of Swedish public administration. The principle of public access to official documents, expressed in one of Sweden’s fundamental laws that make up the constitution, states that the documents of government agencies must be accessible to the general public. The Swedish Freedom of the Press Act, which incorporates the principles of public access and freedom of speech for public officials is thus a cornerstone of Swedish democracy. This is a tradition of openness that Sweden can be proud of.

Taking as their starting point working to improve access to open data, particularly data that promotes civil society engagement, a team was appointed to draw up this action plan and call for proposed commitments. This involved using methods including dialogue and workshops to gather recommendations from civil society for measures to encourage publication, matching and leveraging open data in Sweden, as well as recommendations and desires from civil society on the form ongoing dialogues should take in 2019–2020 in order to foster engagement resulting in broad-based collaboration with civil society on open data. This mandate was fulfilled in autumn 2018 by Darja Isaksson, digitisation strategist and now Director General of Sweden’s innovation agency Vinnova, and Anette Novak, the former CEO of the state research institute RISE Interactive and now director of the Swedish Media Council.

The results show that encouraging civil society’s use of open data via citizen-friendly interfaces will enable Sweden to take the next leap towards the overall objective of Swedish digitisation policy: for Sweden to become the world leader in harnessing the opportunities of digital transformation. Putting in place a public administration that succeeds in building attractive, citizen-centred solutions in partnership with citizens and civil society through long-term and deliberate investments in open data is therefore an important step towards continued collaboration and trust between the public sector and civil society.<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1 Sweden and Open Government Partnership

Transparency, openness and participation are important to safeguard public trust in the public sector. Since 2012, the aim of the government administration’s digitisation process has been to make life easier for citizens, with a more open administration which supports

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<sup>1</sup> Isaksson, Novak, *Open Gov & civilsamhället – så bygger vi framgång med öppna data* (Open Gov & civil society – building success with open data), 2018.

innovation and participation, improves quality and makes operations more efficient. On top of this can be added other factors such as more efficient use of tax funding and a stronger employer brand with the capacity to compete for talent in the labour market.

As part of the overarching work on digitisation of public administration, the Government wishes to continue working to develop its participation in the Open Government Partnership, OGP. OGP is an international platform for exchanging knowledge and experience between national bodies driving reforms towards greater openness and more citizen-centred progress in the public sector in their respective countries.<sup>2</sup>

The initiative was launched in 2011 by the then President of the USA, Barack Obama. The founder members comprised eight countries and today OGP has grown to encompass 79 participating countries. The founder members were the USA, Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia, the UK, the Philippines, Norway and South Africa, and as part of a UN meeting with leaders from civil society they endorsed the Open Government Declaration, whereby countries commit to increase the availability of information about governmental activities, support civic participation, implement the highest standards of professional integrity throughout their administrations, and increase access to new technologies for openness and accountability. Sweden joined later in 2011.

On joining OGP, countries also commit to drawing up national action plans. The action plans span three years and are to show the initiatives the countries' governments are taking to meet the aim of the declaration. This action plan sees Sweden once more fulfilling its responsibility to OGP.

Sweden has a long tradition of working on questions such as transparency and citizen influence. In its previous OGP Action Plan for 2016–2018<sup>3</sup> Sweden made the following commitments to:

- putting citizens at the centre (implementation: the Digital First programme),
- re-using public administrative documents and open data
- improving opportunities for dialogue and transparency in aid management and implementation, and
- developing new formats for dialogue with CSOs.

In the new action plan for 2019 onwards, Sweden is now looking forward to developing work on open data, meeting new challenges and seizing new opportunities that contribute towards more open and collaborative government administration.

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<sup>2</sup> Isaksson, Novak, *Open Gov & civilsamhället – så bygger vi framgång med öppna data* (Open Gov & civil society – building success with open data), 2018.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Sweden\\_National-Action-Plan-3\\_2016-18.pdf](https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Sweden_National-Action-Plan-3_2016-18.pdf).

## 2 SWEDEN AND OPEN DATA

As early as the mid-2000s, definitions surrounding open data and open administration began to take shape; among other things a number of governments jointly decided on the following eight principles on the provision of open data in public administration. Open data must be:

- complete (everything that must not be given limited access for reasonable safety and/or security reasons),
- primary (not aggregated or modified),
- instant (made available as soon as possible, ideally in real time where possible),
- available (to as large a circle of users as possible and for as many different purposes as possible),
- machine readable,
- non-discriminatory (accessible to everyone with no registration or other requirements),
- non-proprietary (no actor may have exclusive control of this data), and
- free of charge (open licences must be used and no form of payment may be demanded for access).

Since this point, development has been extensive and rapid in terms of technical opportunities and automation, but also regarding users, their experience of the systems and their desire and capacity to interact.<sup>4</sup>

Swedish society is decentralised with a large proportion of public operations run by municipalities and county councils. Changes in society bring major challenges for local government, not least in terms of demographics, competence and capacity. It is important to take this into account in the process of change taking place, especially in the digital arena. The Swedish National Financial Management Authority's report *Digitaliseringen av det offentliga Sverige*<sup>5</sup> (Digitisation of public Sweden) states that 52 percent of government agencies, municipalities and county councils publish open data. At the same time, it is clear that there are major differences between the central and local government sectors and within each respective sector. More municipalities than government agencies state that a lack of access to the necessary skills and common standards, and the management and governance of digitisation in their own organisation pose obstacles to digital development.

As one of the world's leading nations in digital development, and with a long history of both data collection and of making data accessible to the general public, Sweden has an opportunity to take a leading role internationally on open data. Much of the information that could be made available as open data is already digitised, and virtually everyone in the potential target groups is digitally competent and connected. The point that Sweden's

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<sup>4</sup> Isaksson, Novak, *Open Gov & civilsamhället – så bygger vi framgång med öppna data* (Open Gov & civil society – building success with open data), 2018.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.esv.se/contentassets/2f2cf52e9f66478787bb76a4524f9848/2018-31-digitaliseringen-av-det-offentliga-sverige-en-uppfoljning.pdf>.

position is a favourable one was also made in the OECD's Digital Government Review (2018). Sweden is ranked overall second in the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2019, published by the European Commission, which factors in digital competence of citizens, internet use, integration of digital technology and digital public administration.<sup>6</sup>

The current situation nevertheless offers major opportunities for improvement. In the international non-governmental organisation Open Knowledge Network's Global Open Data Index, Sweden was ranked in 21st place in 2017 (data from 2016).<sup>7</sup> In the OECD's ranking OURdata index 2017 Sweden is ranked in 28th place,<sup>8</sup> and in the European Data Portal's Open Data Maturity in Europe ranking 2018, Sweden is in 22nd place.<sup>9</sup> Despite Sweden's relatively high position in other categories of digital administration, Sweden thus ranks low in the category of open data. According to Isaksson and Novak, a leading position demands concrete measures with a high level of ambition and lessons learned from previous experiences and analyses.<sup>10</sup>

## 2.1 OGP and open data

Open data is an important concept for open and collaborative administrations. According to OGP, public actors produce a large amount of valuable data in their operations. Keeping this within the public sector, however, has a limiting effect on interaction with citizens and civil society. This restriction also has a negative impact on the opportunity to meet citizens' needs and for the development potential of public administration itself.<sup>11</sup>

Making data from the public administration accessible as open data thus requires changes both at technical level and at policy level. Cited from OGP, open data can help to increase social benefit such as:

- **Transparency:** *In a well-functioning, democratic society citizens need to know what their government is doing. To do that, they must be able freely to access government data and information and to analyse and share that information with other citizens.*
- **Efficiency:** *Enabling better coordination and efficiency within government, by making data easier to find, analyse and combine across different departments and agencies.*
- **Innovation:** *In a digital age, data is a key resource for social and commercial activities. Everything from catching a bus to finding a doctor depends on access to information, much of which is created or held by government. By opening up data, government can help drive the creation of innovative business and services that deliver social and commercial value.*

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<sup>6</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/desi>.

<sup>7</sup> <https://index.okfn.org/place/>.

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/government-at-a-glance-2017/open-useful-reusable-government-data-index-ourdata-2017\\_gov\\_glance-2017-graph139-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/government-at-a-glance-2017/open-useful-reusable-government-data-index-ourdata-2017_gov_glance-2017-graph139-en).

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.europeandataportal.eu/sites/default/files/country-factsheet\\_sweden\\_2018.pdf](https://www.europeandataportal.eu/sites/default/files/country-factsheet_sweden_2018.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> Isaksson, Novak, *Open Gov & civilsamhället – så bygger vi framgång med öppna data* (Open Gov & civil society – building success with open data), 2018.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/policy-area/open-data/>.

It is also worth noting that Sweden has a strong and far-reaching principle of public access, which is naturally something to be proud of. However, one important aspect to take into account is that such a principle is *reactive*, i.e. the information must be requested before it is provided. The aim of open data is *proactive*, which means that states must observe an “open by default” principle – such data that can be provided without it conflicting with any statute or security risk should be made available without anyone necessarily having requested it. A collaborative government administration must be proactive in its own right and a trailblazer in making accessible the components that contribute towards greater co-creation with civil society, business and citizens. As open data in general terms is one of the areas in which Sweden internationally fails to reach a ranking that can be judged to be satisfactory, despite the fact that open data is a highly relevant area for attaining the overarching goals of OGP, the Government sees it as essential to commit to OGP to work to improve access to open data.

### 3 THE ACTION PLAN PROCESS

The basis for the action plan was produced via a multi-stakeholder process with active engagement from citizens and civil society. The documentation was also circulated digitally for consultation to a broad number of civil society representatives who have thus gained an opportunity to contribute towards analysis and assessments.

#### 3.1 Dialogue meetings

Participants from the public sector (i.e. the state, municipalities and county councils), private citizens and civil society actors were invited to four consultations designed in a format that allowed themes to be explored in depth. Participants were invited both by open publication, e.g. on [opendata.se](http://opendata.se) and by inviting key people in both organisational segments to circulate invitations to their members.<sup>12</sup> The first of these dialogue meetings was held on 1 June 2018 in partnership with the strategic innovation programme Viable Cities and RISE (Research Institutes of Sweden). The theme was the connected cities of the future. A series of three dialogue meetings was held in July 2018 as part of Almedalen Week, Sweden’s politics forum:

- On 1 July in partnership with public transport service development company Samtrafikfen. Theme: mobility and open data.
- On 3 July in partnership with Region Västra Götaland. Theme: care and health, sustainable development and lifelong learning.
- On 4 July, in partnership with Hack4Sweden and OneTeamGov. Theme: connected cities, food, lifelong learning, mental health and engagement.

#### 3.2 Qualitative survey

To supplement the results of the consultations, a number of in-depth interviews were held in the period July – August 2018. Interviewees included representatives from Sweden’s study

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<sup>12</sup> Isaksson, Novak, *Open Gov & civilsamhället – så bygger vi framgång med öppna data* (Open Gov & civil society – building success with open data), 2018.

associations, digital civil society actors and some of the biggest civil society actors such as the Church of Sweden, the Red Cross and the Swedish Sports Confederation.

### 3.4 Conclusions and recommendations

The information gathered shows that data is currently an under-used resource with huge potential if it is used in the right way and if the right conditions are in place for its use. Civil society actors mainly point to a need for investments that provide greater understanding and skills regarding what open data and data-driven innovation have to offer, enabling people to work on these issues. Civil society both can and is keen to resolve challenges in society such as public health, sustainable cities and lifelong learning that fosters opportunities for everyone to develop. To achieve the potential that lies in this unexploited resource, and the potential in expanded co-creation with civil society, three particular recommendations are thus laid down:

**Strategic investment to boost co-creation with civil society** – e.g. by making civil society actors more clearly visible, developing new, citizen-friendly processes for digitisation in society and ensuring that the public sector develops more citizen-friendly interfaces for open data that make it possible for target groups in civil society and among the general public to use open data even if they themselves are not advanced users.

**Clear prioritisation of a focus on open data** – e.g. by making clearer the governance required for central, government bodies to set a good example, and by exploring opportunities to clearly set out the duties of government agencies regarding open data, e.g. by ensuring that government agencies systematically seek to fulfil the principle of “open as the norm, closed and secure where necessary”. For example, when engaging in procurement and other purchasing, requests can be made that anything funded by public funds must be made available as open data to the greatest possible extent. Measurable targets can also be set for the maturity of administrations and the use of open data with progress towards these targets monitored regularly.

**Implementing thematic investments in open data** – e.g. promoting a number of areas with particularly strong potential, operational coordination of input from broader civil society, shared building of experience in areas such as accessibility, matching and use, further using the citizen-driven innovation platforms such as Sweden’s biggest government agency hackathon Hack for Sweden<sup>13</sup> and following up investments in continuous learning.

One final recommendation is that the most important element in the assessments above is the need to draw up a national action plan, with a vision, mission and clear goals on open data. An open data action plan would reduce uncertainty about what the state’s aims are in this arena.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> <https://hackforsweden.se/>.

<sup>14</sup> Isaksson, Novak, *Open Gov & civilsamhället – så bygger vi framgång med öppna data* (Open Gov & civil society – building success with open data), 2018.



#### 4. SWEDEN'S COMMITMENTS IN THE OGP ACTION PLAN 2019–2021

The commitments in this action plan are based on focusing on developing Sweden's work on open data to a greater extent, particularly data that can help to foster greater co-creation and policy development in partnership with civil society. By focusing on working together on open data, Sweden will be able to contribute towards several of the OGP's principles, while simultaneously increasing opportunities for collaboration with civil society. Focusing in this action plan on one particular area will enable Sweden to better target its actions and follow up the results of efforts in this action plan.

Working further to promote open data is an important element of Swedish administrative and digitisation policy. Among other things the Riksdag has asserted in an announcement to the Government that the public administration's capacity to make the most of the opportunities of digitisation needs to increase to meet the needs of private individuals and companies (report 2017/18:FiU25, Riksdag Comm. 2017/18:180). In this context, a free flow of data within the remit of the Government's own operations would in all likelihood lead to greater efficiency and a better service to citizens. The Government should seek to ensure that government agencies work strategically to increase provision of and the accessibility of open data and ensure that government agencies make public documents accessible in machine-readable format.<sup>15</sup>

The Government's digitisation strategy states<sup>16</sup> that digitally skilled and digitally secure people are able to drive innovation, where determined leadership and infrastructure are important prerequisites. All people, women and men, girls and boys, irrespective of social background, disability or age, must be offered opportunities to share in digital information and services from the public sector and participate in society on equal terms. Digital development has changed the way people receive information, communicate and relate to each other, which in the long run affects the circumstances in which people engage in society.

Furthermore, it is stated that innovation is essential if the public sector is to find new and effective solutions to several of the major challenges facing society today. Digital technology and data open up new opportunities for innovation and enterprise.

The information produced or gathered by the public sector is an asset that is shared by central and local government agencies and society as a whole. Processing, compiling and otherwise using information enables different actors to create new commercial and non-profit services, so enabling society to derive benefit from the value that information can have when used for purposes other than the agencies' own operations. One important factor in this work is placing particular emphasis on security, including good information security, confidentiality and privacy. Cost-effectiveness should similarly be taken into account.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://data.riksdagen.se/fil/3122E740-3D22-4506-B30F-D6BAE60DB15B>.

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.regeringen.se/49adea/contentassets/5429e024be6847fc907b786ab954228f/digitaliseringsstrategin\\_slutlig\\_170518-2.pdf](https://www.regeringen.se/49adea/contentassets/5429e024be6847fc907b786ab954228f/digitaliseringsstrategin_slutlig_170518-2.pdf).

A number of steps have already been taken in this direction. Among other things, in September 2018 the Government set up the Agency for Digital Government (DIGG), which has responsibility for coordinating and supporting digitisation across government administration with the aim of making the public sector more effective and fit-for-purpose. The agency's remit includes taking responsibility for digital infrastructure across administrations, assisting the Government in expanding digitisation of public services and monitoring and analysing digital development.

In line with its instructions, DIGG is also tasked with promoting open and data-driven innovation, making open data accessible and encouraging the wider use of public sector documents. DIGG also works to improve access by ensuring that information and services provided digitally by the public sector are accessible to all irrespective of disability.

To foster collaboration with society on data-driven innovation, open platforms are used such as [opendata.se](https://opendata.se), [challengesgov.se](https://challengesgov.se) and [dreamforsweden.com](https://dreamforsweden.com), which enable collaboration and dialogue between public and private actors on data-driven co-creation of public benefit. Initiatives such as Hack for Sweden are examples of events that enable and coordinate innovation processes in the public sector and incorporate elements of co-creation. About 35 government agencies have joined forces to work together on the event, and this year Hack for Sweden brought together almost a thousand participants, 420 of whom were developers, with others drawn from other occupations and backgrounds.

Another example of success with open data is Trafiklab<sup>17</sup>, in which several popular applications have been created based on open data. Sweden's innovation agency Vinnova has also funded a number of data-driven labs in which work on data-driven innovation has taken off. Interest is increasing year on year and several initiatives are emerging at local and regional level.

However, much remains to be done if open data is to achieve its potential as a strategic resource in a digitised Sweden, not least to encourage civil society efforts on this issue. To encourage work on open data and improve opportunities for co-creation with civil society, Sweden makes four specific commitments below as part of the OGP Action Plan. The views obtained in Isaksson and Novak's survey have thus been taken into account and incorporated in Sweden's commitments to the greatest possible extent. Due to the practical structure of the dialogue meetings, however, direct feedback on the views obtained has not been able to be provided to the civil society actors involved.

### **Commitment 1: A national open data action plan**

One common issue raised in all the studies carried out is that there is no national coordinated approach to open data and how Sweden should be working to develop it. As part of a wider whole of strategic data management, an open data action plan is therefore fundamental to

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.trafiklab.se/>.

working on this issue. This is also one of the most important recommendations regarding commitments in the OGP Action Plan submitted in Isaksson and Novak's report.

As stated by OGP, open data is the cornerstone of open, collaborative administration. To demonstrate the Government's ambitions with open data, Sweden must therefore draw up a national open data action plan. This task has been given to DIGG, which is to produce a proposed action plan for making open data more accessible and using it more widely on the basis of the OECD's OURdata index.

In addition to strategically developing the issue, an action plan will also aid transparency in that it will clearly set out how the Government is prioritising and working with open data.

- Responsible actor: Agency for Digital Government (DIGG). Report to be submitted by: March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.
- Other actors: Government Offices of Sweden (Ministry of Infrastructure).
- Contributes towards OGP principles: Transparency, Technology and Innovation.

## **Commitment 2: Make open data that can best benefit society accessible**

As a first step and as a way for the public sector to lead the way, government bodies should be appointed to make such data that is considered to have high potential in terms of development, innovation, collaboration and commercial exploitation as accessible as possible. Collaboration with civil society forms part of this commitment, including representatives from civil society joining DIGG's reference group to conduct a needs analysis and to survey impacts at opendata.se. This work will be launched with three workshops in late summer 2019.

The Government has tasked DIGG with particularly promoting data domains with major potential (I2019/01416/DF, I2019/01020/DF). Within this remit, the agency is initially to prioritise data in the following areas: traffic, labour market, health, geodata and open research data. The work is to be carried out in dialogue and consultation with a range of agencies and other actors affected, including sectoral agencies responsible for these areas and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR). DIGG must also take into account the Swedish Research Council's work on open research data and Vinnova's work on open innovation. As well as increasing the capacity of the public sector to make open data accessible, DIGG is also to develop support and guidelines particularly geared towards the needs of those making further use of the data.

- Responsible actor: Agency for Digital Government (DIGG).
- Report to be submitted by: January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.
- Contributes towards OGP principles: Transparency, Technology and Innovation.

### **Commitment 3: Promote capacity for open and data-driven innovation in collaboration between research, business and civil society**

It is especially important that the data that is made available also contributes practically towards public benefit. Civil society, which has very deep and broad expertise in its specialist areas, may thus need additional initiatives to fully be able to leverage the resource that open data represents. Appropriate forms of collaboration are an important aspect in this respect, for example. It is also important to consider the role this plays in developing government policy. Enabling civil society to leverage open data to create a greater platform for analysis and expertise in its specialist areas opens greater opportunities for civil society to come up with proposed policies and initiatives.

It is also important that this type of innovation is not promoted for only one sector. DIGG has therefore been commissioned to increase the capacity of the public sector to conduct open and data-driven innovation in collaboration between research, industry and civil society. DIGG is to trial the platform for open and data-driven innovation developed by the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth: [challengesgov.se](https://challengesgov.se), and to carry out communication and promotion initiatives that seek to increase participation from start-ups, small and medium-sized companies, civil society and other actors, e.g. international actors, on the platform for open and data-driven innovation.

- Responsible actor: Agency for Digital Government (DIGG).
- Report to be submitted by: January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.
- Contributes towards OGP principles: Transparency, Technology and Innovation.

### **Commitment 4: Dialogue with civil society on the opportunities of digitisation, open data and collaboration**

One particular aspect of OGP is precisely the promotion of open and transparent dialogue with civil society and citizens. In a specific communication, the Government has asserted that Swedish civil society is fundamentally stable and that Swedish policy has helped to improve the conditions in which civil society organisations operate, but that Sweden also has challenges that must be taken seriously, including a lack of public sector awareness of civil society and its conditions.<sup>18</sup> Conducting an open dialogue between the Government Offices of Sweden and civil society representatives thus strengthens our OGP commitments and demonstrates the Government's desire for collaboration on this issue. It is also necessary to conduct a dialogue with civil society in order to incorporate a citizen and user-centred perspective in work going forwards. It is naturally important that input and opinions have been received ahead of drawing up the OGP Action Plan, but it is at least as urgent, if not more so, to engage in an ongoing dialogue with civil society in order to pick up on its needs in practical work in the future.

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<sup>18</sup> *En politik för engagemang – långsiktighet och oberoende för civilsamhället* (A policy for engagement – a long-term approach and independence for civil society), Government Communication 2017/18:246.

The Government has developed and implemented a specific method for different forms of dialogue with civil society known as *sakeråd*, i.e. a focussed discussion seeking to improve the Government's underlying decision-making data and improve coordination between ministries in dialogue with civil society. The Government has also worked with civil society organisations to reach agreement on dialogue and consultation between the Government and civil society organisations at national level. The agreement operates under the name *Nationellt organ för dialog och samråd mellan regeringen och det civila samhället* (National body for dialogue and consultation between the Government and civil society) (NOD). NOD aims to solve problems together and supplement existing dialogue structures, including a formalised dialogue format with civil society called *Partsgemensamt forum* (Joint-party forum) (PGF). In PGF the dialogue itself is key. The intention is for the discussions to help to develop political work to improve conditions for civil society organisations so that they can give people a voice, provide services to their members and provide welfare services.<sup>19</sup>

Twice per calendar year, the State is to invite participants to a relevant dialogue in such formalised focussed discussions to obtain civil society input on the opportunities and challenges of digitisation, especially linked to open data, innovation and collaboration. The dialogue meetings must be documented. A final report with results, a summary and lessons learned from the dialogues must be drawn up by the Ministry of Infrastructure.

- Responsible actor: Government Offices of Sweden (Ministry of Infrastructure).
- Other actors: Ministry of Culture, DIGG and other government agencies and organisations affected.
- Report to be submitted by: December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- Contributes towards OGP principles: Transparency, Technology and Innovation, Participation.

## Summary

These initiatives see the Government creating further transparency and predictability in work on open data, increasing access to data that can best be leveraged to benefit society, promoting the work of civil society and other actors to make further use of data, and holding dialogues with civil society on opportunities for collaboration and policy development with the help of open data. Several steps have already been taken and the Government is now continuing its work to jointly create greater benefit and more added value for Swedish society.

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<sup>19</sup> *En politik för engagemang – långsiktighet och oberoende för civilsamhället* (A policy for engagement – a long-term approach and independence for civil society), Government Communication 2017/18:246.

## 5. OTHER INITIATIVES CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS OGP

In this Action Plan, Sweden has chosen the theme of open data. At the same time, however, initiatives and efforts are in progress in other areas that fall well within the bounds of a sustainable, open, innovative and inclusive society. These efforts were not initiated due to OGP membership *per se* but nevertheless contribute towards the objectives and principles of OGP. This section reports on examples of other initiatives taken by the Government. It should be pointed out that this is only a selection and not a comprehensive picture of all the work being carried out in Sweden to create a long-term sustainable society in these areas.

### 5.1 Digital development, innovation and participation

#### Artificial intelligence

The Government has tasked DIGG with improving the capacity of the public administration to use artificial intelligence (AI). Particular focus is to be placed on security, including good information security, confidentiality and privacy. DIGG is to survey the public development initiatives that apply relevant AI solutions, analyse the capacities that the public administration currently has at its disposal which are necessary for developing fit-for-purpose AI solutions and those that are lacking, and set up a reference group for data-driven innovation and AI in the public sector. The Government has also commissioned Statistics Sweden to survey the use of AI and to survey the analysis of large amounts of data in companies and public administration, including the university and higher education sector in Sweden. The survey is to incorporate shedding light on variation in the use of AI and include an analysis of large amounts of data in and between sectors and industries as well as the factors affecting usage. Statistics Sweden is to perform this task in close dialogue with Vinnova, DIGG, the Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis and SALAR. AI is a rapidly growing area of technology with great potential for developing a sustainable welfare sector, among other things. In 2018 the Government tasked Chalmers University of Technology to work with the University of Gothenburg, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Linköping University, Lund University, Umeå University and Örebro University to establish a knowledge platform for AI. These education institutions are additionally to develop education initiatives and related activities in education and research that are significant to developing AI.

#### The capacity of small and medium-sized companies to use data as a strategic resource

The Government has tasked the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth with surveying conditions for increasing the capacity of SMEs to use data strategically, including which sectors have the greatest potential to develop work with data and exploit its potential. The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth is also to boost capacity to use data as a strategic resource through knowledge-building initiatives. This also supplements previous assignments to carry out a digitisation boost geared towards small and medium-sized industrial companies and industry-related service companies as well as a robotics boost

geared towards small and medium-sized industrial companies. The work includes exploiting synergies with the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth's work on developing and running a programme to increase the knowledge of management teams and directors of small companies on how their companies can draw on the opportunities of digitisation.

### **Basic data and secure exchange of electronic information**

The Government has decided on two Government mandates to increase standardisation of what is termed basic data and make exchanging information in the public sector more secure and more efficient. In the long term, these efforts are to lead to data on the population register, companies and properties, for example, only having to be submitted once, making it easier for public and private actors to exchange information. DIGG has been given responsibility for both of these issues, which involve collaboration between several government agencies.

### **User council to increase digital participation for people with disabilities**

The Government has tasked the Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (PTS) with setting up user councils. The purpose of the user councils is to increase knowledge of current needs of and obstacles encountered by people with different kinds of disabilities, to ensure that people with disabilities gain access to IT, electronic communications and electronic services on equal terms as others and to identify relevant measures to increase digital participation. The size of the user councils and their composition may vary depending on the context and purpose. PTS is to appoint representatives on the user councils and decide what purpose a particular user council is to fulfil within the overarching purpose of the councils as a whole.

### **Additional grants for greater digital participation and grants to pass on successful digital participation concepts**

The Government has granted the Digidel network funding for a central campaign organisation working to improve digital participation. The majority of participants at events run by the Digidel network are older people and the majority of these are women; groups that participate less digitally than others. The Government has also provided financial grants to the Swedish Internet Foundation. The intention is for the foundation to encourage and assist municipalities in setting up easily accessible, physical, staffed Digidel Centers. These are aimed at improving the opportunities of people living in the municipalities to increase their digital skills and to gain help with digital services and technologies so that they are actively able to choose digital alternatives. Digidel Centers are established in partnership with the municipalities.

### **Digitisation coordinators – investment in strengthening strategic digitisation work in regional growth**

The Government has made a three-year investment (2018–2020) to enable regional digitisation coordinators to be set up at actors with responsibility for regional development. The coordinators must contribute towards overarching and strategic coordination and collaboration between relevant actors to promote and make the most of digitisation in regional growth efforts. The Government has also tasked the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth with setting up a support function for the regional digitisation coordinators. The support function is to act as a national contact point for the coordinators and take responsibility for setting up a network of coordinators, skills development, advice and reporting.

### **Innovation competitions and development projects**

The Government is allocating funding to PTS to run innovation competitions. The aim is to produce solutions that encourage more people to derive benefit from the opportunities of digitisation irrespective of disability. The winning projects will be allocated up to SEK three million each in funding. An important criterion set by PTS is that people from the target groups are included in user-testing during the course of the project. The innovation competition has been run at least once a year since 2010 and is open to companies and other organisations who apply with service and product development projects or studies in electronic communication. The Government also allocates funding to PTS to provide support to services of general economic interest to organisations running training courses to teach people with special needs to use IT and electronic services so as to integrate vulnerable groups in society. The aim is to produce solutions that encourage more people to derive benefit from the opportunities of digitisation irrespective of disability or circumstances.

## **5.2 Health and medical care**

### **The Government's Patient Council**

In April 2018 the Government decided to set up a Patient Council to serve as a dialogue forum on relevant health and medical care issues. The purpose of the Patient Council is to deepen and broaden the Government's knowledge and perspective on various issues concerning patients' interests. The dialogue is to make it easier and more efficient to obtain information and for the Government and the organisations to communicate and help to better coordinate contact between the ministry and these organisations. The council is headed by the Minister for Social Affairs and will meet two to four times a year.

### **Patient and user council at the Swedish Agency for Health and Care Services Analysis**

In line with its instructions, the Swedish Agency for Health and Care Services Analysis has a Patient Council. The council helps the agency to identify relevant areas for analysis and examination. The council is appointed by the agency's board and comprises about 20 people from patient and user organisations and patient boards.



## **The Medical Products Agency's patient and consumer council**

The Medical Products Agency's patient and consumer council is how the agency works in dialogue with patients and consumers to expand the Medical Products Agency's expertise on patients' and consumers' experiences of and view of illness in relation to their use of medical products and medical devices and to facilitate better targeted and more effective communication to patients and consumers from the Medical Products Agency. This increases the Agency's openness and accessibility for patients and consumers and increases patients' and consumers' understanding of the Medical Products Agency's entire remit and operations. The Medical Products Agency joins eight other agencies in the Committee for Knowledge-Based Guidance regarding health care and social services. This committee addresses strategically important questions that contribute towards government governance with knowledge being coordinated and the right knowledge reaching providers and professionals on their own terms. This knowledge contributes towards good quality in care to benefit patients and users.

## **Open data from the National Board of Health and Welfare**

The National Board of Health and Welfare works with data that is to be made available for further use. The purpose of publishing data as open structured data is to improve opportunities for users to use the National Board of Health and Welfare's different products. Users are, for example, decision makers and care staff in municipalities and county councils. Other bodies, for example, such as suppliers of patient data systems or app developers are potential users.

## **5.3 The environment and sustainability**

### **IUCN Committee**

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is a member organisation comprising organisations from the public sector and civil society with the aim of providing information and tools that make it possible to work together to develop civil society, the economy and nature conservation. As a member of the organisation, Sweden has set up a national IUCN committee and further developed cooperation with civil society partly by introducing a deposit system for the participating organisations engaged with the environment and sustainable development. Furthermore, democracy and political questions can be developed further through the committee due to the involvement of all social sectors, including civil society, academia, government agencies and involved individuals.

## **5.4 Openness, democracy and good administration**

### **Strategy for a strong democracy**

In the Government's strategy for a strong democracy decided in 2018, the Government sheds light on the challenges that democracy faces today and sets out priorities for democracy

policy. The strategy begins by reviewing Sweden's current situation in terms of democracy. Swedish democracy is strong and is well placed to continue developing. The strategy then describes changes in the wider world that are affecting Swedish democracy, such as a more globalised economy, growing international migration and ever more rapid digitisation. In the light of the surrounding changes, the Government judges that it is particularly important to address three challenges to democracy: democratic exclusion, threatened democratic conversation and anti-democratic actors challenging Swedish democracy. The Government takes a holistic approach to ongoing and future interventions to protect and strengthen democracy: promote – more people must engage with democracy; establish – more people must understand and practise democracy; and defend – more people must stand up for democracy.

### **The Government's action plan Defending free speech – measures to protect journalists, elected representatives and artists from exposure to threats and hatred**

In 2017, the Government decided on the action plan Defending free speech – measures to protect journalists, elected representatives and artists from exposure to threats and hatred, focusing on three key areas: deeper knowledge, support to all those exposed to threats and hatred and a stronger judicial system. In producing the action plan, the Government invited in key actors to a number of round-table conversations. The purpose was to gather in experiences and knowledge on vulnerability to threats and hate from agencies, industry and stakeholder organisations and media companies and to share their needs analysis regarding these measures. The dialogue with key actors continued even after the action plan was decided.

### **No Hate Speech Movement**

The Swedish Media Council works to empower children and young people as informed media users and protect them from harmful media influences. As charged by the Government, the Swedish Media Council is running the No Hate Speech Movement campaign, with the aim of raising awareness of racism and similar forms of hostility on the internet up to 2020. The campaign aims to increase awareness of racism and similar forms of hostility on the internet among children and young people. It also seeks to strengthen children and young people's capacity to use their freedom of speech and respect human rights and gender equality and stimulate critical thinking in the use of the media. The agency is to ensure that the campaign reaches children and young people with cognitive and intellectual disabilities.

### **Inquiry on a national effort for media and information literacy and the democratic conversation**

In 2018 the Government decided on the terms of reference National effort for media and information literacy (MIL) and the democratic conversation (ToR 2018:88). The mandate involves an Inquiry Chair working with other actors on outward-facing initiatives to increase

people's resistance to disinformation, propaganda and online hate. The mandate includes supplementing, reinforcing and spreading awareness of ongoing MIL initiatives, spreading good examples of methods that prevent and counteract disinformation, propaganda and online hate, compiling and spreading knowledge of the importance of digital environments for participation and involvement in democracy, identifying knowledge gaps and analysing the need to continue initiatives in dialogue with actors affected.

### **Agreement between the Government and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) on a knowledge boost for greater digital expertise in the leadership of municipalities and county councils in the period 2018–2020.**

The aim of the knowledge boost is to increase the digital skills of the leadership of municipalities and county councils. Leadership refers to politicians, leading civil servants and other key individuals in municipalities and county councils. The purpose is to increase their capacity to make the most of the opportunities of digitisation, tackle its challenges and increase the pace of modernisation of welfare and the public sector. The knowledge boost is to contribute to greater efficiency and quality in the operations of municipalities and county councils themselves, and in their services to citizens and companies.

### **Good administrative culture**

According to the objective of administrative policy, the state administration is to have well-developed quality, service and accessibility. This demands that agencies have a way of working that, as far as possible in the light of different data protection requirements, is characterised by openness. This in turn contributes to reduced risks of behaviours that harm trust and of corruption. For many years Sweden has had a good international reputation when it comes to the lack of corruption in public administration and a number of initiatives have been taken to promote a good administrative culture. These include setting up a special anti-corruption network and tasking the Delegation for Trust-Based Public Management with submitting proposals on how and when compulsory introductory training for State employees can be introduced (ToR 2019:06).

### **Skills supply**

The Swedish Agency for Government Employers has been tasked with publishing all government administration vacancies on their website as part of the state being an open and gender-equal employer. This is a way to market the state as an employer and to promote skills supply in the public sector.

### **Public statistics**

Striving for greater openness and transparency may look different depending on the nature and character of the public activity concerned. Statistics Sweden has special responsibility for official statistics with the aim of producing good quality statistics that are accessible to users.

The costs of submitting information must fall and the production of statistics must be effective. Access to statistics is measured partly by measuring the number of visits to the statistics database on the agency's website.

## **5.5 Involvement of non-profit organisations and consumer issues**

### **Committee on a clear definition of non-profit actors in the welfare system**

Since 2010, the goal of civil society policy has been to make it easier for civil society to contribute to social development and welfare. Civil society includes non-profit organisations that operate as actors in welfare. There has been a trend towards a reduction in the proportion of non-profit actors among providers of welfare services, due to the fact that the number of commercial actors has grown considerably while the number of non-profit actors has not increased at the same rate. In some sectors the number of non-profit actors has fallen. The Government has appointed a committee to produce a clear definition of non-profit actors which will be used to identify and distinguish these from other actors in the welfare system and other associated publicly funded or subsidised operations (dir. 2018:46). The purpose of defining non-profit actors is to facilitate and encourage greater involvement of non-profit organisations in the welfare system, e.g. by providing grants, purchasing operations, legislation and cooperation. The committee is therefore also to produce examples of where the definition can be used and propose criteria, guidelines or other instruments for entering into non-profit-private partnerships (IOP in Swedish).

### **Forum on eco-smart consumption**

Many of the major environmental problems tie in with unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. The Government has therefore commissioned the Swedish Consumer Agency to set up a forum for actors in society working on environmentally sustainable consumption. Many actors from civil society organisations participate in the forum in various ways. The purpose of the forum is to stimulate partnerships to increase and exchange knowledge in the area, spread information, encourage the development of methods, and implement measures that lead to innovation and foster environmentally sustainable consumption. Actions include providing a digital meeting place and arranging occasions for actors to come together. An advisory body which includes civil society representatives is attached to the forum.

### **Greater coordination on debt**

The Swedish Consumer Agency has a mandate to work to enhance coordination to tackle debt. The idea is for actors concerned to conduct preventive and outreach work and coordinate their efforts to a greater extent to help to alleviate debt problems. Municipal advisors on budgeting and debt have an important role to play in supporting people in debt. However, more actors – not least the large number of civil society organisations that come into contact with people with financial problems – can help with preventive work and reach

more groups through targeted interventions and support at an early stage. Methodological support for local cooperation has been produced as part of the scheme. A collaborative council is attached to this scheme, incorporating several civil society representatives.

## **5.6 Gender equality**

### **Gender-equal incomes**

The Government has decided on an action plan for gender-equal incomes which presents the steps the Government has taken, or will take, to reduce income differentials between women and men. As part of the action plan, the Government has appointed an inquiry to analyse and review the need for more effective sanctions for non-compliance with the provisions on active measures in the Discrimination Act, including pay surveys (ToR. 2018:99). The Government has tasked the Swedish National Mediation Office (MI) with reporting on the relative changes in pay seen in different occupations in the Swedish labour market in 2014–2017. The results were set out in the report *Yrke, lön och kön* (Occupation, pay and gender). Using this report as a base, MI is to launch a discussion to encourage the labour market partners' efforts to reduce pay differentials between women and men.

### **Gender-equal pensions**

As part of the ongoing review of pensions, a project, Gender-equal pensions, has been carried out to tackle the challenge of the major differences between men's and women's pensions. The project has investigated nine different sub-areas and the effect they have on the pensions of women and men. The Working Group on Pensions then drew up an action plan for continued work based on the analyses carried out and the opinions submitted. The action plan comprises measures including an overview of basic pension provision, simplified applications for transferring premium-based pension rights between spouses and registered partners, investigating opportunities for cohabitantes to transfer premium-based pension rights, continued analysis of women's early exit from working life and continued analysis of the proposal that pension rights be accrued while studying and caring for children.

### **Ten-year national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women**

In November 2016, the Government adopted a ten-year national strategy to tackle men's violence against women, including honour-related violence and oppression as well as prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes (Government Communication 2016/17:10). To improve the likelihood of attaining the sub-goal of gender equality policy "Men's violence against women must stop", the Government is particularly focusing on preventive measures. Within the strategy, the Government has decided on an extensive programme of measures, including tasking the National Board of Health and Welfare with improving knowledge regarding men's violence against women, including honour-related violence and oppression, within the health sector at municipal and regional level. This mandate includes increasing the knowledge available to support medical and care staff and

developing assessment and treatment methods in the work of social services and the health service with perpetrators of violence and women and child victims. The mandate of the county administrative boards has been expanded in this area to cover measures to prevent violence and to encourage collaboration between municipalities, county councils, regional agencies and civil society on these issues.

The county administrative boards are also to support the development of resource centres for victims of violence. The Government has also introduced knowledge requirements regarding men's violence against women and violence in close relationships in training courses for occupations that involve encountering women and children who have suffered violence.

Drawing on the national strategy, the Government has also produced a special action plan against female genital mutilation (FGM) which seeks to prevent and combat FGM and improve support to existing victims. The Government has additionally decided on an action plan to combat prostitution and trafficking in human beings which seeks to prevent and combat prostitution and human trafficking for all purposes and improve protection and support for victims of human trafficking. A large number of people around the world, mainly women and children, are victims of human trafficking every year and the majority of these suffer sexual exploitation. As well as prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, many of the victims of human trafficking are victims of forced labour, slavery, trade in human organs or other forms of exploitation. The action plan contains measures in a number of key areas, including enhanced coordination between agencies and other stakeholders, strengthened prevention and greater knowledge and methodological development.

### **Special information initiatives to improve skills and form active measures**

The Government has charged the Equality Ombudsman and the Swedish Work Environment Authority with carrying out information initiatives to raise awareness of active measures and abusive behaviour, including work on sexual harassment. The Me Too protests made it clear that there was a lack of awareness of the rules that exist to prevent sexual harassment. This concerns both the Discrimination Act (2008:567) and the Work Environment Act (1977:1160) and how these relate to each other. To support employers' promotion and prevention efforts further, both the responsible agencies have been tasked with developing and providing information on the digital platform that they have produced. The platform features information on the responsibility of employers, what employers can do to prevent sexual harassment and what to do if harassment takes place despite this.