

Government communication

2011/12:56

A coordinated long-term strategy for Roma
inclusion 2012–2032

Skr.
2011/12:56

The Government hereby submits this communication to the Riksdag.

Stockholm, 16 February 2012

Fredrik Reinfeldt

Erik Ullenhag
(Ministry of Employment)

Key contents of the communication

This communication presents a coordinated and long-term strategy for Roma inclusion for the period 2012–2032. The strategy includes investment in development work from 2012–2015, particularly in the areas of education and employment, for which the Government has earmarked funding (Govt. Bill. 2011/12:1, Report 2011/12:KU1, Riksdag Communication 2011/12:62).

The twenty-year strategy forms part of the minority policy strategy (prop. 2008/09:158) and is to be regarded as a strengthening of this minority policy (Govt. Bill 1998/99:143). The target group is above all those Roma who are living in social and economic exclusion and are subjected to discrimination. The whole implementation of the strategy should be characterised by Roma participation and Roma influence, focusing on enhancing and continuously monitoring Roma access to human rights at the local, regional and national level. The overall goal of the twenty-year strategy is for a Roma who turns 20 years old in 2032 to have the same opportunities in life as a non-Roma. The rights of Roma who are then twenty should be safeguarded within regular structures and areas of activity to the same extent as are the rights for twenty-year-olds in the rest of the population.

This communication broadly follows proposals from the Delegation for Roma Issues in its report ‘Roma rights — a strategy for Roma in Sweden’ (SOU 2010:55), and is therefore also based on various rights laid down in international agreements on human rights, i.e. the right to education, employment, housing, the best possible health, social care and security, language, culture and freedom of association.

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1 The matter and its preparation

Pursuant to the Government's authorisation of 14 September 2006, the Director-General of the Ministry of Integration and Equal Opportunities commissioned a committee to take a proactive role, based on Sweden's international undertakings to safeguard and promote human rights, in measures to improve the situation of Roma in Sweden (terms of reference dir. 2006:101). The committee adopted the name 'Delegation for Roma Issues' (Ju 2006:10).

The Delegation gave an account of these activities in its report 'Roma rights — a strategy for Roma in Sweden' (SOU 2010:55), submitted to the Government in July 2010. This report was circulated for commentbodies consulted to *inter alia* a large number of municipalities and Roma organisations. Spontaneous statements were also received from Roma organisations and stakeholders. A list of bodies consulted is appended as *Annex 1*. A summary of comments from the bodies consulted can be obtained from the Ministry of Employment (A2011/196/DISK).

The Government Offices also arranged several meetings with Roma representatives to discuss key proposals from the 'Roma rights' report, to inform them of the progress of these proposals and the funding earmarked by the Government for Roma inclusion in the period 2012–2015 and to gather their views on revised proposals. Notes from these meetings can be obtained from the Ministry of Employment (A2011/196/DISK).

2 Background

2.1 Minority policy

In December 1999, the Riksdag resolved, by way of the Bill 'National minorities in Sweden' (Govt. Bill 1998/99:143, Report 1999/2000:KU6, Riksdag Communication 1999/2000:69) that Sweden should accede to the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (SÖ 2000:2) and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (SÖ 2000:3), also known as the Convention on Minority Languages. In doing so, the Riksdag also ruled that Jews, Roma, Sami, Sweden Finns and Tornedalers should be recognised as national minorities in Sweden. The Sami also have a special position as indigenous people. The languages of these groups were recognised as national minority languages, and a minority policy was introduced as a new policy area within the State budget.

What these national minorities have in common is that they have lived in Sweden for a long time. The minority groups have a pronounced cohesion, with their own religious, linguistic and cultural affinities and a desire to maintain their identity. The national minorities have also actively safeguarded their own groups' culture and language, so they form a living part of Swedish society and our shared Swedish cultural heritage.

The number of people belonging to the groups that have been recognised as national minorities is around half a million. Individuals decide for themselves whether they consider themselves to belong to a national minority and wish to avail themselves of the protection and support offered by society to that minority. Minority status is thus based on individual self-identification and ethnic affinity with the group. There is no compulsion on anyone to belong to a minority.

In its proposal on the national minority policy, the Government stated that Sweden has a long tradition of respect for human rights and action to combat discrimination, and that this also made it natural to enhance support for the national minorities. International experience also suggested that it was important for central government to take minority rights seriously.

The goal of Swedish minority policy is to provide protection for the national

minorities and enhance their opportunities for influence, and to support the historical minority languages to keep them alive (Govt. Bill 2000/01:1, Report. 2000/01:SfU2, Riksdag Communication 2000/01:72).

In June 2009, the Government approved a minority policy strategy in its proposal 'From recognition to autonomy' (Govt. Bill 2008/09:158, Report. 2008/09:KU23, Riksdag Communication 2008/09:272). The minority policy strategy has helped to create a better basis for realising the minority policy goal of assuring compliance with the Framework Convention and the Convention on Minority Languages. The responsibilities of the municipalities, county councils and government authorities for implementing the minority policy have been clarified. Conditions have been established to give increased influence to the national minorities and strengthen the minority languages. A system for follow-up has also been introduced.

2.2 Promoting full and effective equality

In accordance with Sweden's international undertakings to safeguard and promote human rights, Sweden has committed itself to taking measures within all areas of economic, social, political and cultural life to promote full and effective equality between persons belonging to a national minority and persons belonging to the general population. This means that the national minorities should be able to realise their full potential and enjoy the same conditions in society as the majority population. The Government therefore believes that society should work to combat unfair treatment and vulnerability among the national minorities.

The terms of reference for the Delegation for Roma Issues (dir. 2006:101) stated that the lives of Roma people in Sweden through the centuries had been marked by discrimination and exclusion. Abuses of Roma people occurred in the form of expulsion, forced migration, bans on immigration and business activity, compulsory sterilisation and forced assimilation. This caused many Roma to lose faith in the authorities.

A series of central and local government measures have been carried out since the 1960s to rectify these injustices and to improve the situation of Roma people in Sweden. These initiatives have improved the situation in some ways, but discrimination and exclusion remain a reality for many Roma.

In its 2011 Budget Bill (Govt. Bill 2010/11:1), the Government states that it is unacceptable that the Swedish welfare state should fail to give Roma men, women, girls and boys the same chances in life as other citizens.

In its 2012 Budget Bill (Govt. Bill 2011/12:1), the Government observes that there are still cases where individual members of a national minority are subjected to discrimination and negative attitudes. Some are also more economically and socially disadvantaged in society than the majority population. This is especially apparent among Roma. The Government believes that a number of measures will be needed to improve the situation of Roma people and to reduce the welfare gap compared to the majority population. The Government is also setting aside funds in the 2012–2015 period, to finance this investment.

The Roma population in Sweden is diverse, consisting of different groups with cultural and linguistic variations between them, such as the Kelderash, Lovara, Tjurara, Kalé, Travellers, Sinti, Arli and Gurbeti. Among the Travellers, there are some who identify themselves as Roma and some who do not. The number of Roma people is estimated at approx. 50 000. There are Roma who conceal or tone down their Roma identity for various reasons, one of which is to avoid discrimination and prejudice.

2.3 EU efforts for Roma inclusion

On 5 April 2011, the European Commission presented a Communication on 'An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020' (COM(2011) 173 final). The Commission states that the EU's Europe 2020 strategy for a new growth path — smart, sustainable and inclusive growth — leaves no room for the persistent economic and social marginalisation of what

constitutes Europe's largest minority. Around 10–12 million of Europe's citizens are Roma. Many of them face prejudice, intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion in their daily lives. They are marginalised and live in very poor socio-economic conditions. The Commission Communication goes on to say, for example, that in some Member States, only a limited number of Roma children complete primary school. According to the World Bank, Roma employment rates (especially for women) fall well behind those of the non-Roma majority in a number of countries surveyed. In a number of Member States, average life expectancy in the Roma population is estimated to be ten years less. According to a report from the United Nations Development Programme, Roma child mortality rates are two to six times higher than those for the general population, depending on the country. In many countries, Roma housing conditions are also poor, including inadequate access to public utilities such as water, electricity or gas, and non-sedentary Roma often have difficulty finding sites with access to water.

In the light of all this, the Commission considers that determined action, in active dialogue with the Roma, is needed at both national and EU level. Non-discrimination alone is not sufficient, says the Commission; there is also a need for an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, to complement and reinforce the EU's equality legislation and policies. However, this EU Framework does not replace Member States' primary responsibility for Roma integration.

The Commission Communication proposes four goals designed to strengthen Roma integration in the areas of education, employment, healthcare and housing. The goals are linked to the EU's Europe 2020 strategy and its overall targets relating to work, social inclusion and education. The Commission urges Member States, in proportion to the size of the Roma population living in their territories and taking into account their different starting points, to adopt or to develop further existing national strategies for Roma integration by 2012 with goals that at least reflect those set out in the Communication, and to link them to the EU's Europe 2020 strategy and the national reform programmes that Member States have to draw up every year. The Commission intends to follow up the work of the Member States on Roma integration in relation to these goals.

As the Commission Communication states, Roma people have significant difficulties in the Member States. However, the nature and extent of these problems vary.

On 19 May 2011, the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) adopted conclusions on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 (10658/11) based on the Commission Communication. This document invites the Member States to prepare, update or develop their national Roma inclusion strategies, or integrated sets of policy measures within their broader social inclusion policies for improving the situation of Roma, by the end of 2011. Member States are also invited to draw up goals in the fields of education, employment, healthcare and housing. On 23 and 24 June 2011, the European Council called for the rapid implementation by the Member States of the Council's conclusions (EUCO 23/11).

2.4 White paper on abuses and rights violations

In its report on 'Roma rights' (SOU 2010:55), the Delegation for Roma Issues proposed that a truth and reconciliation commission should be established to analyse and document the abuses, neglect and discriminatory measures inflicted on the Roma minority in the 20th century. Among the reasons given by the Delegation for its proposal are that the public should be aware of the broad outline of Roma history, particularly the Holocaust and abuses of Roma people in Sweden. In order to attain these goals, the Delegation says, the abuses, neglect and acts of discrimination committed against the Roma minority from 1900 to 2000 should be analysed and documented. The Delegation believes that a process of reconciliation initiated by a truth and reconciliation commission could be a possible tool to bridge the gap in trust

between Roma and mainstream society in Sweden. The majority of the bodies consulted welcome the Delegation's proposals. Many of them feel that a review of the past is essential to understanding the situation and conditions of the Roma today. However, some bodies consulted have their doubts about the proposal or reject it entirely, e.g. the *Office of the Chancellor of Justice* and the *National Police Board*. *Riksförbundet Romer i Europa* (the National Association for Roma in Europe) considers that what is needed is for the truth about abuses and discrimination to be brought into the open, so the blame for Roma exclusion is not laid at their own door.

The majority of the participants in the meetings arranged by the Government Offices in the consultation period in December 2010 were in favour of documenting the abuses, neglect and acts of discrimination perpetrated against the Roma minority to raise the level of knowledge about how the Roma have been treated. According to many who attended the meetings, an apology from the State would constitute a significant acknowledgement and redress for the Roma. Some attendees however objected to the term 'reconciliation', which they felt was unrealistic and could be interpreted to mean that the Roma themselves were to blame for the treatment they had suffered. Many were sceptical or critical of the proposal for a commission, and a number of concerns were raised.

As a possible alternative to a truth and reconciliation commission, a desire was expressed for a permanent knowledge and documentation centre. Constant efforts to present Roma culture and history in schools, academic institutions and authorities were also called for. In this connection, the Government finds that increased knowledge of and research into minority culture, history and language in the wider sense are very important.

Work has begun in the Government Offices to draw up a white paper on abuses, violations and other acts of discrimination against Roma people in the 20th century. The fact that the Government is drawing attention to and distancing itself from these historical abuses is described by many of those exposed to them as a significant acknowledgement. The Government therefore agrees with large parts of the Delegation's argument.

The Government also agrees with the Delegation's view that ignorance of Roma people and the abuses and violations they have suffered help to place the bulk of the blame for exclusion at the door of the Roma themselves, as this ignorance often includes the idea that Roma exclusion is more or less self-imposed or even chosen. This lack of knowledge perpetuates a gap in trust which is commonly found between the Roma and mainstream society. Increased knowledge is therefore necessary if successful long-term efforts to realise Roma rights are to be pursued in the future. The Delegation stresses that work to document abuses often leads to an apology from politicians. A truth and reconciliation commission is usually also tasked with suggesting how the victims can be compensated, as a basis for the Government's position in the matter. The Delegation believes that some form of collective (but not individual) compensation should be considered.

One reason for establishing a truth and reconciliation commission advanced by the Delegation is that such a commission could initiate a process of reconciliation to bridge the gap in trust between Roma and mainstream society in Sweden. Among the arguments and objections to a truth and reconciliation commission put forward in replies and at consultative meetings is the concern that the efforts could focus too much on events in the past rather than looking forward. The Office of the Chancellor of Justice raises concerns about how a truth and reconciliation commission would help to achieve these objectives in the way the Delegation intends. The *National Police Board* feels that the proposal for a truth and reconciliation commission has too one-sided a focus on injustices that have happened and so looks back rather than pushing forward.

The *Roma Delegation* believes that a truth and reconciliation commission is not relevant as this history is a separate chapter that people want to put behind them. Some bodies consulted (*Stockholm county administrative board, Södermanland county administrative board*

and the *Church of Sweden*) reject any ideas of guilt and shame and object to terms in the report suggesting shame thresholds and shaming people as a means of changing negative attitudes to Roma people, and feel that it is unacceptable for Swedish inhabitants to be loaded with guilt and feel shame. The Church of Sweden supports the report's proposal for a truth and reconciliation commission as one step in a process of bridging the chasm between Roma and mainstream society, but stresses that shame is not a good basis for changing ways of thinking and negative attitudes. According to the Church of Sweden, a truth commission should be open about the injustices that have been committed without building up shame as some sort of punishment for those who have contributed to antiziganism. Reconciliation means the parties together coming to terms with the past and then moving forward to something new, says the Church of Sweden.

The Delegation describes how similar processes have worked in other countries. These processes generally tend to contain three elements: bringing the truth about history into the open; seeing that justice is done or demanding redress through legal proceedings, truth commissions and the like; and preventing any repetition. This document sets out approaches to the first and third of these elements, but not the second. The Government does not share the Delegation's views on compensation and the process of reconciliation. The Government takes the view that there is neither any reason to await a more detailed account of the injustices that have been committed in history nor any need for historical justification for the Government to launch the initiatives required to close the welfare gap that exists between Roma and the rest of the population, as described in this document. Moreover, many of the Roma and other inhabitants living in Sweden now have no personal experience of the historical abuses perpetrated in Sweden, because the majority both of the victims and of those responsible have died, and many Roma came to Sweden in the second half of the 20th century. The work on the white paper therefore does not include any process of reconciliation, nor any assessment of the criteria for compensation, whether individual or collective. The Government's efforts are instead focused on improving Roma living conditions and countering the discrimination and xenophobia that affect Roma people today. The committee terms of reference for the study 'More effective work against xenophobia and similar forms of intolerance' (dir. 2011:39) state among other things that the analysts should suggest measures directly aimed at xenophobia and similar forms of intolerance. The remit covers antiziganism as a phenomenon.

Purpose of the white paper and the work on it

The purpose of the white paper is to give some acknowledgement to the victims and their families and to create understanding of the situation of the Roma minority today by describing the abuses and explaining the historical context and how stereotypes and prejudices about Roma people have grown up and been passed on from one generation to the next, and how these have formed the basis for State policy.

The white paper will be based on archive material, documentation and accounts of abuses and violations against the Roma. Personal interviews will be included by way of elaboration and example. It will also explain the role and responsibility of various official bodies at an overall level for the abuses and violations. The living conditions of the Roma minority will be related to the legislation and the various conventions on human rights that Sweden was bound by in this period. If it is to provide an accurate picture of historical injustices while also being implementable in a relatively short time, the white paper will not be able to include all the material that could possibly exist, but it should still give a good overall picture of the story. For the same reason, the white paper also needs to be given a time frame. The Government believes that the accounts in the white paper should start from the beginning of the last century. To prevent the white paper from referring to questions and matters that could cover criminal acts that are not yet statute-barred and need to be dealt with by the justice system, the white paper will be restricted to the 20th

century.

3 Strategy for Roma inclusion 2012–2032

Government assessment: Roma living conditions today are often much worse than those of the population as a whole.

To enable all Roma men and women, girls and boys to participate in all areas of Swedish society on equal terms, we need a coordinated long-term strategy for Roma inclusion 2012–2032 as part of the overall minority policy strategy.

The overall goal should be for a Roma who turns 20 years old in 2032 to have the same opportunities in life as a non-Roma. The rights of Roma who are then twenty should be safeguarded within regular structures and areas of activity to the same extent as are the rights for twenty-year-olds in the rest of the population.

The whole implementation of the strategy should be characterised by Roma participation and Roma influence, focusing on enhancing and continuously monitoring Roma access to human rights at the local, regional and national level.

Delegation proposal: A 20-year strategy to safeguard the human rights of Roma in Sweden.

Bodies consulted: The majority of the bodies consulted support the Delegation's proposal, or have no objections.

Consultative meetings: Roma representatives who attended the consultative meetings in December 2010 also generally welcomed the proposal for a strategy.

Reasons for the Government's assessment:

Roma living conditions

In its report on 'Roma rights' (SOU 2010:55), the Delegation for Roma Issues found that Sweden falls short when it comes to safeguarding Roma rights. They state that Roma rights have been violated throughout history and that access for the Roma to human rights, including those that arise from their minority status, is still not assured. Sweden is also the object of repeated criticism from the Council of Europe, the United Nations and others for its treatment of Roma people today.

The Delegation states that Roma living conditions are often much worse than those of the population as a whole. Many Roma do not complete compulsory schooling and have no foothold in the labour market. The Delegation finds that average life expectancy is lower, living standards are worse and discrimination against Roma people in the labour market, the housing market, education and public life is greater than for any other group in society. Roma are also victims of hate crimes. In 2010, some 150 reports were identified where the main offence was judged to have an anti-Roma motive ('Hate crimes 2010', National Council for Crime Prevention).

In 2010, the Living History Forum published a report called 'The many faces of intolerance — a study of the attitudes of high school students in the 2009/2010 school year', which showed that many young people have negative attitudes to the Roma. It showed that such negative attitudes are not just a historical phenomenon but very much a reality for many Roma today. The report also reveals that high-school students express more negative and less positive attitudes to Roma people than other groups in the study, i.e. Muslims, Jews, non-European refugees and homosexuals.

There is a lack of knowledge of the background to Roma living conditions in Swedish society. In the Delegation's view, Roma have been systematically marginalised and subjected to direct or indirect discrimination throughout

history, and this still affects them today. The Delegation believes that this marginalisation is a consequence of antiziganism. According to the Delegation, various exclusion mechanisms directed against Roma can be captured by the term antiziganism, which can be summarised as a persistent latent structure of hostile attitudes towards Roma as a group. The Delegation says that there is now a gap in trust both between Roma and non-Roma people and between the Roma and public administration.

The Delegation also gives a general account of how people adjust their expectations and ambitions to the environment in which they live. People who lack education or any tradition of education often have lower expectations and risk perceiving themselves as incapable of acquiring any form of higher education, or even primary or secondary schooling. When family members and other relations are excluded from the labour market and find themselves in an environment where unemployment has become the norm, expectations of finding a job will be low.

In the Delegation's view, Roma people must feel secure within mainstream society and must see that their interests are taken account of and their security guaranteed by government before they can fully commit themselves to social and economic integration.

An overall strategy for Roma inclusion 2012–2032

The Delegation for Roma Issues has proposed a strategy to safeguard the human rights of Roma people. It is proposed that this strategy should have three overarching goals:

- to close the welfare gap between Roma and other groups,
- to eliminate Roma powerlessness, and
- to repair Roma faith in mainstream society and close the gap in trust.

The Delegation has submitted around 70 suggestions for measures within the areas the Delegation judges to be strategic for changes to the situation of the Roma in society, i.e. Roma rights to participation and influence, education, employment, housing, healthcare and social welfare, language and culture, to counter discrimination and promote reconciliation.

The Delegation has concluded that specific efforts are needed within one generation, i.e. 20 years, to attain the three goals. The aim of these efforts is that Roma children born today should have the same chance of a good adult life as their non-Roma contemporaries at the age of 20. In this way, Roma exclusion based on structural factors and antiziganism will also be eliminated.

The need for such an overall strategy is endorsed by the majority of the bodies consulted and by the Evaluator of the 'National action plan for human rights' (dir. 2009:118). At the EU level too, there are increasing calls for Member States to draw up a coordinated strategy or integrated measures for Roma inclusion (see section 2.3).

The problems that the Delegation describes are extensive. Roma living conditions today are often much worse than those of the population as a whole. It is unacceptable that many Roma should have lived for centuries in a state of exclusion in their own country and continue to do so today although they now have the same rights as everybody else in our society. The measures taken so far to assure Roma people of their rights have been inadequate, in the Government's view. The minority policy therefore needs to be reinforced in this regard, in the form of more intensive work on the human rights of Roma people.

The Government is well aware that the idea of specific efforts directed at a defined ethnic group provokes differing reactions. There is always a risk of problem descriptions bordering on generalised accounts. Taking a collective view of the situation of a group may seem contradictory when every individual is unique and has his or her own individual needs and circumstances, as well as individual responsibility. The Delegation's theoretical assumptions have been questioned by some bodies consulted. *Stockholm University* asserts that there are other dimensions than ethnicity that have a bearing on a person's identity, such as class, occupation, gender, interests, opinions and values. *The Swedish ESF Council* and *Lund*

municipality, among others, would like to see an intersectional perspective to reveal power structures within groups of Roma origin in relation to mainstream society. Some bodies consulted, such as *Köping municipality*, have criticised the report for not adequately depicting complexity within the Roma group, and feel that the Roma have been portrayed as a homogeneous collective.

The Government believes, however, that when a group has been excluded for such a long time, there is also a need to analyse whether there are common explanations for this exclusion that call for common actions. One explanation adduced by the Delegation is widespread lack of mutual trust between Roma and non-Roma people. Another is the discrimination and antiziganism suffered by many Roma. A third is long-term exclusion in itself. A fourth, which is noted by the Evaluator of the 'National action plan for human rights', lies in the sometimes deep-seated ideas of tradition, status and individual rights and opportunities in relation to the importance of the collective, which can affect the realisation of equal and independent Roma participation in society.

The measures that need to be taken are mainly about providing the Roma with access to human rights. These must be long-term measures that can help to change established expectations, attitudes and structures. The measures must be implemented in the first instance within existing structures and fields of activity that will guarantee human rights to all. The Government therefore believes that the starting point for any new initiative should be the way in which these structures and fields of activity can ensure that Roma people, too, gain access to human rights, particularly the right to education and employment.

If we are to effect any changes, we need Roma participation and influence. Roma capacity, experience, knowledge, initiative and desire to be involved and take responsibility must be utilised. It is also essential to discuss and act on the basis of what is mainly the responsibility of public bodies, but also on the basis of what can be expected of individual people, both as individuals and as a group. The European Commission takes a similar view. It writes, among other things, that determined action, in active dialogue with the Roma, is needed both at national and EU level. While primary responsibility for that action rests with public authorities, it remains a challenge given that the social and economic integration of Roma is a two-way process which requires a change of mindsets of the majority of the people as well as of members of the Roma communities.

The Government believes that there is a need for a coordinated long-term strategy for Roma inclusion 2012–2032 as part of the minority policy strategy adopted in 2009 (Govt. Bill 2008/09:158), to enable Roma men and women, girls and boys to participate in all areas of Swedish society on the same terms as everyone else. The twenty-year strategy is to be regarded as a strengthening of this minority policy (Govt. Bill 1998/99:143). The overall goal should be for a Roma who turns 20 years old in 2032 to have the same opportunities in life as a non-Roma. The rights of Roma who are then twenty should be safeguarded within regular structures and areas of activity to the same extent as are the rights for twenty-year-olds in the rest of the population.

The whole implementation of the strategy should be characterised by Roma participation and Roma influence, focusing on enhancing and continuously monitoring Roma access to human rights at local, regional and national level.

4 Management, monitoring and development of knowledge

4.1 Framework for long-term work

Despite the extensive work done by the Delegation for Roma Issues, knowledge of the situation of the Roma remains limited, which means that the measures being taken now may need to be adjusted or supplemented as

knowledge increases and the effects of the measures taken can be assessed. The document therefore sets out the framework for the long-term work up to 2032, which necessarily allows scope for flexibility. Below, the document presents a model for the control and implementation of the twenty-year strategy, and the assumptions and guidelines, priority areas and target groups of the strategy. Assumptions, guidelines and priority areas are linked both to the assumptions made by the Delegation for Roma Issues and to the ten principles for Roma integration defined within the EU-level cooperation (Annex to Council conclusions 10394/09), which the Delegation also referred to. We also present an overview of the development work to be undertaken in 2012–2015 in a number of municipalities, with a particular focus on central government investment in education and employment. The majority of the government-funded measures in this period are concentrated on these municipalities.

4.2 Model for management

Government assessment: To enable fundamental change to be made to Roma living conditions, authorities and municipalities need to be involved and take clear and active responsibility. A model for managing and implementing the strategy for Roma inclusion in the period 2012–2032 should therefore build on existing structures and the prevailing division of responsibilities between the Government, public authorities and municipalities. Management should be characterised throughout by Roma participation and influence.

Delegation proposal: The implementation of the national strategy for Roma inclusion should be entrusted to a secretariat for Roma affairs. This secretariat should be based on a consultative model and have four regional secretariats tied to its activities. The regional secretariats should be linked to the county administrative boards.

Bodies consulted: The majority of the bodies consulted support the Delegation's proposal, or have no objections. The *Office of the Chancellor of Justice* believes, however, that it is difficult to judge from the evidence presented in the report whether a secretariat with the suggested structure and responsibilities is the most effective way to work to achieve the goals. The *National Board of Health and Welfare* rejects the proposal for a secretariat in line with the Delegation's proposal, but agrees with the Delegation's view that there is a great need for some kind of consultative model. The authority considers that the mandate and responsibilities of the secretariat need to be examined further. The replies from Roma organisations indicate that there are diverging opinions, with some supporting and some rejecting the Delegation's proposal.

Consultative meetings: At the consultative meetings held with Roma representatives, it emerged that many Roma are sceptical towards or opposed to the creation of a national secretariat.

Reasons for the Government's assessment:

An alternative model for management

According to the Delegation for Roma Issues, implementation of the national strategy for Roma inclusion should be entrusted to a secretariat for Roma affairs. The tasks of the secretariat would include giving advice and support to the Government and public authorities and helping to monitor and evaluate the efforts of the authorities, and it would assist in the allocation of certain grants and have the right of veto in matters relating to these. Regional secretariats would coordinate matters crossing municipal borders and between county councils and central government authorities in their respective regions, such as mother-tongue education or the training of teachers and teaching

assistants, and would support municipalities and local Roma organisations in matters involving consultation, for example.

Authorities and municipalities already have a responsibility for safeguarding Roma rights. In the Government's view, there is a risk that the national secretariat for Roma affairs would ultimately entail a transfer of responsibility to the secretariat rather than more responsibility being taken by authorities and municipalities. Giving a national secretariat responsibility for implementation could result in authorities and municipalities taking longer, within their regular structures, to become better at addressing Roma needs and taking measures. If a secretariat is to be able to influence other authorities, it also needs to be given certain powers. In its reply, the *National Board of Health and Welfare* observes that the secretariat as proposed by the Delegation risks becoming a mere advice bureau with no way of working strategically towards long-term objectives. The Government feels that giving the secretariat the right to veto other authorities' assessments of grants, as proposed by the Delegation risks making the division of responsibilities unclear. *Stockholm County Administrative Board*, which generally welcomes the Delegation's proposal, does however reject the part suggesting that the national secretariat should be directly involved in the minority policy activities of the Board, and that the secretariat should have the right of veto over grants from other authorities; this is precisely to avoid conflicts of roles and responsibilities.

With regard to the proposal for regional secretariats, most of the county administrative boards also call for some clarification of their mandate, authority and tasks, and of how their coordinating function should be quality-assured and maintained, although they favour the proposal.

In consultation with the Roma and from the replies from some Roma organisations, it emerges that many Roma are sceptical towards or opposed to the creation of a national secretariat.

In the Government's view, the effort for Roma inclusion must be based on the principle that all have equal rights. The Government therefore shares the view of the *Office of the Chancellor of Justice* that there is some value in ensuring, wherever possible, that responsibility for guaranteeing the Roma their rights is not laid on separate bodies or exercised within special projects, but rather placed on the authorities and other institutions that bear responsibility within different sectors of society for assuring all citizens of their various rights. Otherwise, the focus on rights for the Roma could help to preserve the image of 'the other', i.e. someone who does not have, but has to be granted, such rights.

The Government believes that, to enable drastic changes to be made to Roma living conditions, authorities and municipalities need to be involved and take clear and active responsibility. Management of the twenty-year strategy must therefore involve the Government Offices and the authorities that have real powers within the relevant areas, as well as the municipalities. A long-term strategy running over several years also demands an organisation that is stable and is not perceived as a one-off solution. In the light of the above, the Government believes that the twenty-year strategy should be implemented and managed according to a different model than that proposed by the Delegation. Management should instead be based on existing structures and the prevailing division of responsibilities between the Government, authorities and municipalities. With a management model based on an existing division of roles and responsibilities, work on Roma rights can be carried out within rather than alongside regular activities. The management should also be characterised throughout by Roma participation and influence. In discussions with Roma representatives, the Delegation's proposal on management was generally welcomed. The model is discussed in more detail below.

4.3 Responsibilities of the Government Offices and competent authorities

Government assessment: Competent authorities must take active responsibility for highlighting and safeguarding the access of Roma to their rights in their regular activities. However, the Government Offices should bear the overall responsibility for the management and implementation of the strategy for Roma inclusion in the period 2012–2032. Among other things, this calls for greater internal cooperation to monitor and coordinate the work within the Government Offices. The forms of consultation between the Government Offices and the Roma also need to be developed.

An initial evaluation of the management of the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion should be carried out after five years by the Swedish Agency for Public Management, as a basis for possible adjustments to the management approach.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: Authorities within different sectors of society are already responsible for assuring all citizens of their rights. This means that these competent authorities must each take active responsibility for highlighting and safeguarding Roma access to their rights in their regular activities. However, the Government Offices should bear the overall responsibility for the management and implementation of the strategy for Roma inclusion in the period 2012–2032. By giving this responsibility to the Government Offices, constant adjustments can be made to the control of authorities' implementation of Roma human rights and the possible need for fresh actions can be picked up more quickly. The Government Offices also need to take more effective responsibility because knowledge of the situation of the Roma remains limited, which means that the measures presented in this document may need to be adjusted or supplemented as knowledge increases and the effects of the measures taken can be assessed.

Effective management of the twenty-year strategy to improve the situation of the Roma demands certain changes. First, there is a need for clearer internal cooperation to monitor and coordinate work within the Government Offices. Secondly, there is a need for increased monitoring and evaluation (see section 4.4). Thirdly, a procedure needs to be developed for consultation with the Roma, e.g. to discuss the need for changes and possible new actions (see section 4.7).

The prerequisites for active work intended to go on for 20 years will of course change. If we are to maintain effective management, it is necessary to subject this management to repeated review. The Government therefore believes that an initial evaluation of the management of the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion should be carried out after five years by the Swedish Agency for Public Management, which can then form the basis for possible adjustments to the management approach.

4.4 Goals and continuous monitoring of and reporting on development

Government assessment: The overall goal of the strategy for Roma inclusion in the period 2012–2032 should be defined in detail and broken down into activity-specific targets in a number of areas that are crucial to the attainment of the overall goal. These should be followed up on a regular basis. The Government should report in its annual budget proposal to the Riksdag on developments relating to Roma inclusion.

Delegation proposal: The Delegation for Roma Issues has put forward 57 goals for what should be achieved in 20 years in the areas of participation and influence, education, employment, housing, healthcare and social welfare, language, culture, discrimination and reconciliation.

Bodies consulted: Only the *National Police Board* commented on the goals, but solely with regard to their scope and the fact that the implications are hard to assess overall.

Reasons for the Government's assessment:

Long-term goals and continuous monitoring

Goals should be drawn up as part of the management of the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion. The Delegation for Roma Issues supports the idea of stating goals. At the EU level too, there are calls for goals for Member States' strategies for Roma inclusion (see section 2.3). One overall goal of the strategy has already been presented in section 3, i.e. that a Roma who turns 20 years old in 2032 should have the same opportunities in life as a non-Roma. However, this overall goal should be defined in detail and broken down into activity-specific targets in a number of areas that are crucial to the attainment of the overall goal. The Delegation has proposed 57 goals. However, the Government's ambition has been to use existing goals for various areas of activity defined by the Riksdag wherever possible, in order to integrate the strategy into regular structures. The activity-specific targets are set out in sections 5–10. These targets are part of the overall framework for the twenty-year strategy.

To achieve a controlling effect, developments in relation to the goals should be regularly monitored and analysed. Recurring descriptions of access of Roma to their rights in various areas of activity can give an indication as to whether adequate and appropriate efforts are being made. Such continuous follow-up that highlights both deficiencies and improvements can also help to drive development forward.

Following up developments at the national level in terms of Roma inclusion will be an important tool for assuring better provision of Roma human rights. In the Council conclusions on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 (10658/11), Member States are invited to take appropriate steps to monitor and evaluate the effect of the strategies for Roma integration or the integrated measures.

With regard to regular monitoring at the national level, the Government intends to instruct relevant authorities to draw up proposals for how this might be done. The authorities will also be tasked with describing the situation of Roma people today within the various areas of activity in a number of municipalities, starting with those included in a development project in the period 2012–2015 (see section 4.12 below).

Method development and cooperation to monitor development

For privacy reasons and because there is no scientifically reliable method of determining ethnic affiliation, no statistics based on ethnicity are collected. The Government therefore considers it impossible to provide a complete picture of the whole Roma population within different areas of activity, but the aim is to provide a better picture than exists today.

In order to produce a description of the current situation and constantly monitor and analyse developments in relation to the goals, authorities need to find reliable methods that are acceptable from a privacy standpoint. Close cooperation between the authorities tasked with suggesting how regular monitoring of the Roma situation at the national level might be done is therefore crucial. To ensure that the methods respect the individual's right to personal privacy, these tasks will be defined in consultation with the Data Inspection Board.

Before these tasks are assigned, Stockholm county administrative board will initiate a dialogue with the authorities concerned, as part of its monitoring remit (see section 4.6), to discuss approaches to coordination, methods, possible ways of using indicators, etc. This dialogue will be partly based on the preliminary study commissioned from the Discrimination Ombudsman, which is to be reported to the Government on 1 September 2012. According to

the terms of reference, the Discrimination Ombudsman should work together with Statistics Sweden, the National Institute of Public Health and the Data Inspection Board to produce a preliminary study on methods to be used to gather information on living conditions in the population, both to determine the approximate number of people who identify themselves as belonging to Sweden's national minorities and to enable a separate survey of the reasons for discrimination given in the Discrimination Act (2008:567) which are not currently included in the official statistics. His remit includes listing the methods that it may be possible to use to collect information of this kind, while also guaranteeing the anonymity and privacy of those involved. International experience should also be taken into account. In the follow-up work by the European Commission, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, for example, will play a central role in efforts to collect information on developments in the Member States.

Periodic reporting to the Riksdag and the EU

The Government intends to report on developments relating to Roma inclusion in its annual budget proposal to the Riksdag, to enable the Riksdag to monitor developments.

The Government also intends to report periodically to the European Commission on work in relation to the national goals. The Commission plans to introduce a system of monitoring to measure progress in Roma integration in the Member States and to report on this to the European Parliament and to the Council each year (COM(2011) 173 final). The Commission will also take into account ongoing work within the Open Method of Coordination in the field of social policies, the national reform programmes and the monitoring and peer review process of the Europe 2020 strategy. Sweden will therefore also examine whether the monitoring of the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion can be partially incorporated into the monitoring of the Europe 2020 strategy.

4.5 Supervision

The work of various supervisory authorities should regularly draw attention to the situation of the Roma. Supervision will enable any deficiencies to be identified, which could help to ensure that Roma are treated in the same way as other citizens. In his report on 'Roma rights' (2011), the Discrimination Ombudsman identified the National Board of Health and the Swedish Schools Inspectorate as key players in the efforts to promote Roma rights, as they are tasked with supervising social services and schools. In the Government's view, relevant supervisory authorities should repeatedly draw attention in their supervisory activities to the situation of the Roma in the period 2012–2032, particularly from the standpoint of children's rights.

4.6 A coordinating authority for follow-up

Government assessment: Stockholm county administrative board should be tasked with coordinating the monitoring of the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion. This should include the regular production of a report to the Government on developments at the local, regional and national level.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: Within the minority policy strategy, Stockholm county administrative board and the Sami Parliament were tasked with monitoring the implementation of the minority policy in municipalities and county councils. The aim set out in the proposal (Govt. Bill 2008/09:158) is that this monitoring should drive the implementation of the rights and obligations laid down in the Act (2009:724) on national minorities

and minority languages at the municipal level. The aim is also to provide the Government with a basis for assessing compliance with this Act. Stockholm county administrative board and the Sami Parliament summarise the information collected in an annual report which is submitted to the Government. They also summarise the reports that eleven authorities were asked to produce by the Government, in order to monitor, analyse and report on how their efforts have contributed to achieving the minority policy goal and the effects of these efforts in the period 2010–2012.

The twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion presented in this document forms part of the minority policy strategy. In view of the responsibility of Stockholm county administrative board for monitoring the minority policy, it is appropriate to ask the authority also to take responsibility for coordinating the monitoring of the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion. Stockholm county administrative board has also already established a network of contacts with municipalities and authorities involved in the national minority policy. Continued cooperation with them on matters of Roma inclusion is therefore seen as natural and can provide many synergy effects.

Stockholm county administrative board should therefore be tasked with coordinating the monitoring of the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion. This should include the regular production of a follow-up report to the Government based on documentation received from the authorities concerned on developments at the local, regional and national level. The government can use periodic reports on developments to make adjustments and decide upon fresh measures. The remit should also include drawing the attention of other relevant players and stakeholders to developments, e.g. in the form of a follow-up conference.

Before this national follow-up starts, however, several authorities will be asked to submit proposals as to how this should be done. As mentioned in section 4.4 above, the county administrative board will initiate a dialogue with the authorities concerned to discuss and identify means of coordination, methods, etc.

4.7 Roma participation and influence

Government assessment: Roma participation and influence should be an established element of the strategy for Roma inclusion in the period 2012–2032.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: One aim of the Government's minority policy is to enhance the potential influence of the national minorities in matters concerning them within important areas of society, and hence to increase the autonomy of these groups. Since 1 January 2010, the Act on national minorities and minority languages has also contained requirements for administrative authorities to allow the national minorities to exercise influence in matters that concern them, and where possible to consult with representatives of the minorities in such matters.

A working dialogue and genuine influence, not least at the local level, can make the situation and needs of the Roma visible. By identifying good forms of consultation, we can also overcome opposition and counter prejudice against Roma people. Making use of Roma knowledge, skills and experience can render this work more effective and increase Roma autonomy. The Delegation for Roma Issues also stresses the principle of participation. The criticisms raised at the consultative meetings held by the Government Offices via the Delegation and the Evaluator of the national action plan for human rights, and international criticism, must be taken seriously. One issue is that Roma people who take part in meetings with public bodies often feel that they lack any real influence. It is therefore essential to find ways of increasing the real and effective influence and participation of the Roma, and to gain more detailed knowledge of Roma initiatives in order to use, develop and enhance these.

Being given explicit opportunities to be listened to, and sometimes to influence the activities of administrative authorities at all stages from initiating decisions to implementation, means that individuals or the groups they represent are given power. Influence and participation are then accompanied by an active sense of responsibility for what one wishes to change and improve. In this connection it is also important to emphasise, however, that participation does not always mean getting one's own way. Different needs must be prioritised and different interests weighed against each other on the basis of an overall assessment by those responsible for the decision.

The Government intends to ensure in various ways that Roma participation and influence are an established element of the strategy for Roma inclusion in the period 2012–2032.

A first step towards achieving participation and influence is to develop the process of consultation. This is also in line with what is stated in the Act on national minorities and minority languages concerning influence and consultation. It is a major challenge to create influence for Roma people of all ages and from different backgrounds. The *Swedish Red Cross* also stresses in its reply that all ages must be given the opportunity to take part. At the consultative meetings held by the Government Offices with Roma representatives in December 2010, authorities were also urged to call in Roma experts and not only to consult with official representatives.

At the national level, the ongoing forms of consultation with the Government Offices will be discussed further and defined together with the Roma groups in order to start working in the course of 2012. The Government will stipulate that all the authorities given specific tasks within the twenty-year strategy should consult with Roma people to fulfil their assignments. Consultation implies dialogue with e.g. Roma representatives of the organisations of civil society or Roma experts. It is a matter of exchanging experience and consolidating, and gathering views in a systematic manner and taking account of them wherever possible (Govt. Bill 2008/09:158). At the municipal level, the Government intends to take measures to expedite these efforts. One way of handling consultation between municipalities and county councils and the Roma is to make the consultation procedure part of the pilot project to be run in a number of municipalities in 2012–2015 (see section 4.12). In other municipalities, Stockholm county administrative board and the Sami Parliament have key roles to play as they have previously been tasked with assisting municipalities and county councils, particularly in the administrative areas, with their consultation.

Another way to include Roma people in the strategy is to base it on Roma people's own work in civil society. At the local level, this should be included as a major objective in the municipalities that are to run a pilot project. The utilisation of Roma engagement should gradually increase because it is a way of making use of important skills and initiative, and this will increase Roma autonomy. Within the social field, the Government aims to foster a greater diversity of service providers, both to make use of people's commitment and skills and to meet the need for freedom of choice and quality within the welfare system.

A third approach put forward by the Delegation is to employ more people with Roma language skills and cultural knowledge in government bodies. The Delegation argues that a key to success in efforts to include Roma people, break down exclusion and increase trust is to employ Roma to help implement the twenty-year strategy. The Government believes that it is important to make use of Roma language skills and cultural knowledge, combined with specialised expertise in education, employment, etc. Men and women who have relevant experience and knowledge can help to drive development forward in an active and purposeful way. The importance of these people as role models for other Roma should not be underestimated either. At many meetings with Roma representatives, the question was raised as to how Roma expertise should be defined and by whom. There is no single definition of the terms 'cultural knowledge' or 'Roma expertise', but a major element is the ability to operate in an intercultural setting. The Government believes that an

ongoing discussion on the definition of the terms ‘cultural knowledge’ and ‘Roma expertise’ must be conducted with Roma people, and assessments made on a case-by-case basis at the local, regional and national level.

4.8 The local level and organisations of civil society

Government assessment: The municipalities have a central role to play in efforts to improve the situation of Roma people because they are responsible for activities that are crucial to Roma opportunities for inclusion. It is therefore necessary to involve the local level in the twenty-year strategy and for the municipalities to take active responsibility for highlighting and safeguarding access for the Roma to their rights in their regular activities in line with the responsibilities they already have. It is also important for the organisations of civil society to be involved.

Reasons for the Government’s assessment:

The local level has a central role to play

One of the main tasks of the Delegation for Roma Issues was to promote and support municipal projects and activities aimed at improving the situation of Roma people. With the support of the Delegation, eleven municipalities also ran various development projects. Four municipalities received direct financial aid and six took part in development work in collaboration with three county administrative boards. The Delegation also had close contacts with another 40 or so municipalities.

Since 1 January 2010, Stockholm county administrative board has had a temporary remit to continue supporting the municipalities that have started development work relating to the Roma minority as part of the Delegation’s work. Among other things, the county administrative board has worked with a number of regional networks (Skåne, Mälardalen and the East Coast). This cooperation included consultation on matters concerning the Roma situation and support to municipalities, officials and Roma organisations. Common educational initiatives were also launched during the year with municipalities, authorities and other players.

The municipalities have a central role to play in efforts to improve the situation of Roma people because they are responsible for activities that are crucial to Roma opportunities for inclusion. The municipalities are also responsible for taking measures to address many of the problems relating to Roma inclusion. It is therefore necessary to involve the local level in the twenty-year strategy and for the municipalities to take active responsibility for highlighting and safeguarding Roma access to their rights in their regular activities in line with the responsibilities they already have. To speed up the development work, the Government is making a special investment in a number of municipalities, a pilot project which will also involve the county councils (see section 4.12).

The organisations of civil society can add value

The organisations of civil society possess knowledge, skills and experience that are relevant to the work on Roma inclusion. They can supplement the efforts of the public bodies. They can also help to increase Roma autonomy, e.g. by working with Roma organisations, and they can help to bridge the gap in trust that often exists between Roma people and government bodies. Here in particular, the Roma people’s own organisations have an important role to play. It is therefore important that the organisations of civil society should be involved in the twenty-year strategy.

4.9 Basis in human rights

Government assessment: The twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion should be based on human rights, with a particular emphasis on the principle of non-discrimination.

Efforts to counter discrimination against Roma and to promote equal rights and opportunities are a long-term task for the Discrimination Ombudsman.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: Like the Delegation for Roma Issues, the Government has opted to base the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion on human rights.

The Government considers it self-evident that the Roma are entitled like anybody else to enjoy the human rights expressed in the Swedish constitution and Sweden's convention commitments in this area, which are also clear from the Government's goals for democratic policy (Govt. Bill 2008/09:1 bet. 2008/09:KUI, rskr. 2008/09:83).

In this context, the Government has opted to place especial stress on the principle of non-discrimination because a lot of the problems that afflict many Roma are associated with discrimination. Through the new Discrimination Act (2008:567), which covers more grounds for discrimination and more areas of society, and through the establishment of a new authority (the Discrimination Ombudsman), the Government has also clearly shown and created the conditions to ensure that discrimination in society is combated more effectively.

In 2012, the Discrimination Ombudsman will raise the role of discrimination in relation to access by national minorities to language rights and the right to influence and participation. In this way, the Discrimination Ombudsman intends to promote systematic efforts aimed at highlighting how discrimination affects Roma rights. Roma experience of discrimination is an important source of knowledge for the activities of various players in the sense that Roma people have important information and knowledge of the ways in which the procedures, organisation and activities of individual players and authorities may contribute to denying Roma access to these rights. The Discrimination Ombudsman intends to continue developing ways of working that provide the conditions for a dialogue between Roma and players who are responsible for safeguarding rights. The Government believes that efforts to counter discrimination against Roma and to promote equal rights and opportunities are a long-term task for the authority.

By basing these on human rights, they focus on the individual, which can help to ensure that various bodies within society coordinate their activities in matters where the rights of the individual touch on several areas of public administration. The Government considers this to be especially important in relation to the situation of many Roma.

4.10 Priority target groups and action areas

Government assessment: Women and children should be priority target groups in the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion. State measures in the areas of education and employment should also be prioritised.

Reasons for the Government's assessment:

Target groups

It should be stressed that the Roma national minority in Sweden is a heterogeneous group. The situation of Roma people may vary between groups and individuals and between different municipalities. The target group for the present twenty-year strategy is above all those who are living in social and economic exclusion and are subjected to discrimination.

Among these, it is particularly important to prioritise living conditions for children and young people to ensure that the new generation of Roma enjoy better conditions and opportunities. This prioritisation also tallies with the overall objective of providing significantly better opportunities for young Roma within 20 years. The situation of women should also be especially highlighted, as they risk double discrimination — both because they belong to a national minority and because they are women.

In many Roma families, the women bear the major responsibility for home and children. Efforts to facilitate access by Roma women to education and a position in the labour market can reinforce their trust in and expectations of society, particularly with regard to their children's upbringing and schooling. The idea of prioritising children, young people and women is supported by several bodies consulted. As children who belong to a minority group are especially exposed to marginalisation and discrimination compared to adults, children's rights and interests must be taken as a basis in all the matters that concern them, say e.g. the *Children's Ombudsman*, the *National Board for Youth Affairs* and *Save the Children*.

Prioritising these groups does not mean that there should not be measures directed at all Roma.

EU citizens staying in Sweden for less than three months, and asylum seekers, are not covered by the Government's measures within the twenty-year strategy.

Action areas and measures

The Government believes that measures are needed in a number of areas, such as participation and influence, education, employment, housing, healthcare and social security, organisation, culture and language and discrimination. Of these, the Government has opted to prioritise education and employment. The Delegation has submitted proposals for some 70 measures. Measures to facilitate Roma access to schools and the labour market are considered by the Government to be the most effective way of improving Roma living conditions in the longer term. The Delegation has also stressed the importance of these areas for Roma inclusion. The funds that the Government has set aside in the period 2012–2015 (Govt. Bill 2011/12:1) will also be mainly used for measures to support improved conditions for education and employment. This order of priorities is in line with the desires that many Roma have themselves expressed to the Government, e.g. in connection with the consultative meetings in December 2010. However, the need for more actions will be constantly reviewed. Measures should be taken on the basis of human rights, with a particular emphasis on the principle of non-discrimination and equality. The Government also considers that the situation of Roma children should be given particular attention, based on the UN Convention on Children's Rights, in all matters that concern children.

A more detailed description of the various areas and priorities within them is given in sections 5–10.

4.11 Regular activities, but sometimes defined target groups

Government assessment: The twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion should be managed wherever possible within regular areas of activity and structures. Efforts may sometimes be needed, however, with a clear but not exclusive focus on Roma.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: Both the Delegation and the bodies consulted pick up and discuss the issue of when initiatives aimed at the Roma alone are justified and in what circumstances they should be more general and also cover other citizens with similar needs. The Delegation believes that specific solutions may sometimes be justified, and therefore makes proposals of this kind too.

The Delegation feels that the critics reject specific solutions in general on the grounds that “we treat everyone the same here”, even though the Council of Europe advocates specific solutions as a way of guaranteeing equal terms for disadvantaged groups.

During the preparation process, it also became clear that there are differing views between those who advocate specific solutions and those who feel that this deviates from the principle of equal treatment. Several bodies consulted have questioned the application of specific solutions and think that these risk stigmatising and hence hurting the Roma; e.g. *Norrbottnen county council* and *Huddinge, Luleå, Lund, Solna, Umeå* and *Västerås municipalities*. At the consultative meetings in December 2010, opinions on positive discrimination in education and the labour market were divided. Some people felt that it might be a necessary evil in the longer term to level existing differences and give individuals belonging to a socially excluded group equal opportunities. Others thought that the Roma would be disadvantaged because this would foster the idea that Roma people cannot manage to succeed on their own merits.

The Government shares the Delegation’s view that antiziganism is an obstacle that still prevents many Roma from participating in society on equal terms. The fact the Roma belong to a group that is marginalised means that efforts to include Roma are both justified and urgent. The Government’s strategy for intensified implementation and monitoring of Roma human rights in the period 2012–2032, as presented in this document, rests on the basic assumption that there are shortcomings in society that need to be addressed in order for Roma people to gain full access to their human rights. In the Government’s view, the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion should be managed where possible within regular areas of activity and structures if it is to bring permanent changes. Safeguarding Roma rights should not be a project that goes on alongside regular work. However, there may sometimes be a need for actions clearly, but not exclusively, directed at Roma. This means that the Roma may sometimes be a distinct target group, without others who live under similar socio-economic conditions being excluded. Separate measures in the form of special schools or labour markets should be avoided. This will also make it possible to deal more effectively with discriminatory structures.

4.12 Knowledge development – four-year pilot project

Government assessment: A number of municipalities should be included in a pilot project and receive financial aid to establish a structure or similar long-term solution in the municipal administration to improve Roma inclusion in the areas of education, employment, healthcare and social security in particular, on the basis of Sweden’s international commitments on human rights and with a special focus on the principle of non-discrimination and equal opportunities, and children’s rights.

The National Agency for Education and the Swedish Public Employment Service should be tasked with working together with the municipalities and in consultation with the Discrimination Ombudsman and the Roma to help to improve the situation of Roma people, especially in education and employment. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions should also be invited to take part.

The pilot project should run for four years and developments should be monitored on a regular basis. The pilot project should also be evaluated.

Stockholm county administrative board should be tasked with coordinating and monitoring the pilot project.

Experience from the pilot project should be constantly disseminated to other municipalities.

Reasons for the Government’s assessment: Even today, the municipalities are supposed to take measures in accordance with e.g. the Schools Act

(2010:800) and the Social Services Act (2001:453) to safeguard Roma rights. As noted earlier, however, there are problems with the application of these rules.

The Government considers that the initiatives taken within the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion should initially be concentrated on a number of pilot municipalities to speed up progress. In the Government's view, it is better to concentrate resources on a few municipalities that can take an overall approach to the situation of the Roma than to broaden measures to cover the whole country. Concentrating resources will allow synergies and experience gained to be better utilised and the work to be intensified and expanded.

The pilot project will thus form the hub of the strategy for the first four years. The municipalities included in the pilot project will receive financial aid to establish a structure or similar long-term solution, in terms of organisation or working methods, in the municipal administration to improve Roma inclusion in the areas of education, employment, healthcare and social security in particular. The work should be based on Sweden's international commitments on human rights, with a special focus on the principle of non-discrimination and equal opportunities, and children's rights. Among other things, the municipalities should work together with relevant authorities to identify the problems and needs of the Roma by means of situation analyses, manage the development of methods in key areas such as education, employment, healthcare, social services, housing and the organisation of civil society, and assure Roma influence and participation in the development work. The aim of the work in the municipalities is to achieve the long-term goal that a Roma who turns 20 years old in 2032 should have the same opportunities in life as a non-Roma. The rights of Roma who are then twenty should be safeguarded within regular structures and areas of activity to the same extent as are the rights for twenty-year-olds in the rest of the population.

In the pilot project, State funding will be concentrated on measures to improve Roma access to education and employment. Relevant authorities, such as the National Agency for Education and the Swedish Public Employment Service, should be tasked with working together with the municipalities and in consultation with the Discrimination Ombudsman and the Roma to help to improve the situation of Roma people, especially in education and employment. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions should also be invited to take part, e.g. to assist the pilot municipalities in identifying forms of consultation with Roma people.

The pilot project should run for four years and developments should be monitored on a regular basis. Here, several authorities will be instructed to cooperate with each other and the municipalities involved to define and produce a description of the situation of Roma people today in a number of different areas of activity. This description will provide a basis for periodic monitoring of developments in the municipalities (see also section 4.4).

It is important that the pilot project should also be evaluated in order to increase understanding of what is working well or less well in terms of methods and ways of working. One of the aims of the pilot project is precisely to speed up the growth of such knowledge. Both the participants in the pilot project and other municipalities and authorities should be able to benefit from the experience gained in the pilot project in their own work on Roma inclusion and with other individuals and groups with similar needs. The pilot project should also provide a basis for the way in which the ongoing work up to 2032 should be managed. When defining the measures, the conduct of this evaluation should therefore also be included in the planning. This should include steps to ensure that the measures are continuously and systematically documented and followed up by the municipalities themselves. In the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion, the evaluation of measures will play a crucial role in increasing understanding of which methods etc. work well. The importance of this evaluation is also endorsed by the Delegation for Roma Issues.

Stockholm county administrative board should be tasked with coordinating and monitoring the pilot project. However, the forms of cooperation within the pilot project should be defined in more detail together with the

municipalities, authorities and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, which will be included in the development work.

Apart from the specific pilot project, it is important to maintain support for those municipalities that are already doing development work on Roma inclusion or are interested in starting. Ways of disseminating experience from the pilot project should therefore be developed. In 2010 and 2011, Stockholm county administrative board was temporarily tasked with providing such support. This will be superseded from July 2012 by a municipal network for the exchange of experience and growth of knowledge. Participants in the pilot project will be invited to identify ways of sharing their experience with other interested municipalities. In the Council conclusions on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 (10658/11), Member States are also invited to promote an exchange of good practice and discussions on evidence-based methods with respect to the policy for Roma integration.

5 Education

5.1 Practical goals

Government assessment: Education is one of the most important factors in achieving improved living conditions for the Roma population in the longer term. A number of different measures should therefore be implemented.

The goal set by the Riksdag for Swedish primary and secondary education is that it should be of high and consistent quality. All children and school pupils should be given the chance to attain the national targets and develop their knowledge, skills and abilities as far as possible. This applies to the population as a whole, and thus also includes the Roma.

The Swedish National Agency for Education and the Swedish Schools Inspectorate have key roles to play in providing and monitoring Roma access to human rights.

Delegation proposal: The Delegation proposed the following goals: all Roma children should complete compulsory schooling, the same proportion of young Roma people as the national average should complete upper secondary school, the same proportion of young Roma people as the national average should study at tertiary level and pass university exams, all adult Roma who have not completed compulsory schooling should be able to do this without any financial or other obstacles, and all Roma should be able to read and write.

Bodies consulted: Have made no specific comments on these goals.

Reasons for the Government's assessment:

High level of truancy and incomplete qualifications

There is currently no overall picture of educational attainment for young Roma compared to other groups of the same age. All in all, however, reports from both municipalities and Roma representatives give clear indications that both the school situation and the results for many Roma children and young people are not satisfactory. A study including Malmö commissioned by the Delegation shows that levels of truancy in the early years of compulsory schooling are generally worse for Roma children than other pupils, and attendance falls off dramatically in the later years, particularly among girls. Many Roma girls drop out of compulsory schooling entirely during this time and few end up with a full school-leaving certificate. The study also shows that only a very small number of pupils go on to upper secondary school. However, results probably vary both between different Roma pupils and between different municipalities.

There are several factors behind the difficulties many Roma pupils experience at school. The Delegation for Roma Issues, the Evaluator of the national action plan for human rights, and Roma representatives believe that one explanation is the lack of any tradition of education and the fact that many

Roma adults themselves have little or no education. Many Roma adults are also afraid of losing their children to mainstream society and feel that it is futile to go to school if this will not lead to employment in any case, because of direct or indirect discrimination. The existence of discrimination and persecution of the Roma in the education system has been raised on several occasions, including by the former Ombudsman for Ethnic Discrimination and the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. According to the Roma themselves, the discrimination that they have suffered as adults has also affected their children's self-perception and caused them to feel insecure at school.

According to the Delegation, other reasons for truancy may be certain customs and practices such as child marriage and early pregnancy which can affect girls' schooling more than anything else. Ignorance of Roma culture and history in school and a lack of mother-tongue teaching, along with the absence of Roma role models, are also cited as contributory factors behind the poor results of many Roma children. The Delegation also states that there are indications that children are not always summoned to school if they miss lessons, even though attendance is compulsory.

Education gives greater autonomy

According to the Social and Economic Committee, i.e. the committee that reviews compliance by the convention States with the European Social Charter (Council of Europe Social Charter, revised 1996), the right to education is both a right in itself and a necessary condition for other rights to be realised. The Committee believes that education is the main driving force taking adults and children out of an economically and socially marginalised position. Education is a way out of poverty which enables people to take an increasingly active part in society.

The Delegation has submitted a number of proposed goals for efforts to safeguard the right of Roma people to education. The Council conclusions on 'An EU Framework for National Strategies for Roma Integration up to 2020' (see section 2.3) state, however, that education should be a priority area for national efforts and that national goals should be set. The European Commission communication on an EU Framework for National Strategies states that the goal for education should be to ensure that all Roma children complete at least primary school.

In the Government's view, education is one of the most important factors in achieving improved living conditions for the Roma population in the longer term, and this is also endorsed by the Delegation and the majority of the bodies consulted, and by the Evaluator of the national action plan for human rights. The importance of education was also confirmed at the consultative meetings held by the Government Offices with Roma representatives.

In order for Sweden to comply with its commitments under the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and a number of other international conventions and documents pertaining to the right to education, which is also set out in Chapter 2 Article 18 of the Instrument of Government and Chapter 7 Sections 2 and 3 of the Schools Act (2010:800), measures need to be taken to improve the chances of Roma children completing compulsory schooling. Roma children have the same obligation to attend school and the same right to education as others. A proper education also improves individual knowledge and chances in life. Education, especially in the early years, reduces the risk of exclusion and social maladjustment later in life. It also promotes fairness, because education increases the chances of a job and a good standard of living. Education is fundamental to every individual's chances of participating in political, social and economic life. The Government has therefore opted not to set specific educational goals for Roma people (see section 4.4).

A key element of the EU's Europe 2020 strategy consists of quantitative targets in five areas: employment, social participation, education, research and development, and climate and energy. These goals should be attained no later than 2020. The EU Member States are required to set national goals within the same areas on the basis of each country's relative starting position and national conditions and in line with its national decision-making processes.

The Government set national goals in its spring budget for 2011 (Govt. Bill 2010/11:100). The national educational goals are that the proportion of 18 to 24-year-olds not completing upper secondary school and not going on to university should be less than ten per cent in 2020 and that the proportion of 30 to 34-year-olds with at least two years of tertiary education should run to 40–45 per cent in 2020.

The goal set by the Riksdag for Swedish primary and secondary education is that it should be of high and consistent quality (Govt. Bill 2011:12:1, bet. 2011/12:UbU1, rskr. 2011/12:98). All children and school pupils should be given the chance to attain the national targets and develop their knowledge, skills and abilities as far as possible. This applies to the population as a whole, and thus also includes the Roma.

The Swedish National Agency for Education and the Swedish Schools Inspectorate have key roles to play in providing and monitoring Roma access to human rights. The Swedish National Agency for Education should help to better describe the situation of Roma today in relation to the goal for Swedish primary and secondary education. This description should also be used as a basis for defining how regular monitoring of developments at the national level should be handled (see also section 4.4). The description should be produced in consultation with the Roma. The Government intends to return to this matter in a Government resolution (see section 4.4).

5.2 Measures

In order to bring about real changes in Roma pupils' performance at school, competent authorities and municipalities and Roma parents must all take active responsibility.

The Delegation has presented a series of proposals to improve the chances of Roma children finishing compulsory schooling and going on to upper secondary school and higher education and of Roma adults completing compulsory schooling. At this stage, the Government has opted to concentrate State initiatives on a number of municipalities that will carry out development work in a pilot project from 2012–2015. The idea is particularly to increase knowledge of the situation of Roma pupils in schools and develop efforts to provide them with good support and disseminate experience to other parts of the country. The pilot project will also provide a basis for additional measures in the longer term.

The right of Roma children and young people to have access to the same education as others is not a new issue for the municipalities. Bringing about better results is therefore mainly about improving compliance with existing provisions and ensuring that these are applied to Roma people in practice. The municipalities themselves must take responsibility for bringing about real changes. There are many positive examples of ways in which active and targeted efforts have succeeded in creating better conditions and support for Roma children. These efforts have increased trust between Roma people and schools, making it easier for parents who have been able to give the support the pupils need to complete their schooling. There have also been positive experiences of schools reaching out to Roma communities, for example.

The next section presents the measures that the Government currently intends to kick off to improve the educational situation of Roma people. These involve things like knowledge development, but also concrete supporting measures in the form of 'bridge-builders'. As mentioned earlier, efforts to bring about improvements will initially concentrate on the municipalities included in the pilot project. The authorities involved should constantly review how experience from the pilot project can be utilised in their general activities.

5.2.1 Daycare and pre-school classes

Research shows that early pedagogical stimulation increases children's capacity and interest in learning and that it especially encourages children's

linguistic and mathematical development. Daycare should stimulate children's development and offer a secure and caring environment. Pre-school classes should stimulate pupils' development and learning and prepare them for their subsequent education.

Greater knowledge of the position and needs of Roma children in daycare and pre-school classes

Government assessment: The Swedish National Agency for Education should work to better describe the situation of Roma children in daycare and pre-school classes in the municipalities included in the pilot project to be run from 2012–2015. This should be done in consultation with the Roma.

Delegation proposal: Agrees with that of the Government.

Bodies consulted: Those that commented support the proposal. *Save the Children* also considers it a matter of urgency to obtain facts in order to take relevant actions to bring about improvements.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: In the autumn of 2010, 86 per cent of all children aged up to five were enrolled either in daycare or with a registered child minder, and 96 per cent of all six-year-olds went to a pre-school class in the 2010/11 school year.

There is no study examining the extent to which the Roma minority exercises its right to daycare and pre-school classes because there is no ethnic registration. Knowledge of how things work for Roma children in daycare and pre-school classes is also extremely limited. Roma organisations have, however, stated that people are afraid of things like harassment and discrimination. In its reply, the *Swedish National Agency for Education* endorses the need for a study to show how things work for Roma children in daycare and pre-school classes and agrees that such a study should also look at success factors and difficulties.

The municipalities should offer daycare places to children whose parents are working or studying or need it because of the family's situation in general. From the autumn semester in which the child turns three, public daycare should be offered for 525 hours a year. In order to support their children's learning, Roma parents should be encouraged to find out about educational facilities where the children will have the chance to meet other children. This may involve free daycare, registered child minders or public daycare and pre-school classes. It is important, for example, for parents to be reassured that their children will not be discriminated against.

In order to get an up-to-date picture of the situation, the Swedish National Agency for Education should work to better describe the situation of Roma children in daycare and pre-school classes in the municipalities included in the pilot project to be run from 2012–2015 (see section 4.12). This effort should include documenting helpful examples of initiatives and measures to increase the proportion of Roma children in daycare and pre-school classes. The description should be produced in consultation with the Roma.

5.2.2 Primary and lower secondary school

The Government believes that particular attention needs to be given to compulsory schooling at primary and lower secondary level to ensure that more Roma children leave with an approved school leaving certificate after school year nine. The municipalities are responsible for creating the right conditions and providing good support, and for ensuring that the requirement to attend compulsory schooling is taken as seriously with Roma children as with others. Parents must also actively support their children's schooling. The nine years of compulsory schooling are both a right and an obligation. That is why measures to increase the likelihood of parents wanting to support their children's education are very important. According to the Convention on the

Rights of the Child, in order to realise children's right to education, Sweden should take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates. According to the UN's International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Sweden has a responsibility to prevent parents keeping girls home from school. It must not happen that pupils leave school early, e.g. because of marriage.

Greater knowledge of the position and needs of Roma children in primary school

Government assessment: The Swedish National Agency for Education should work to better describe the situation of Roma pupils in the pilot municipalities when it comes to completing compulsory schooling with an approved certificate so they are qualified to apply to continue their studies at upper secondary school.

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate should also be tasked with reviewing how schools in the pilot municipalities for Roma pupils are meeting the requirements of the Schools Act with regard to compulsory attendance, information and the right to special support for those pupils who need it.

In their work, the authorities should consult with the Roma.

Delegation proposal: The Swedish Schools Inspectorate should be tasked, as part of its quality assurance activities, with specifically reviewing attainment of the goal of completing compulsory school for pupils with a Roma linguistic and cultural background and the support given by the municipalities to Roma pupils.

Bodies consulted: Some bodies consulted support the proposal but highlight difficulties because there is no registration based on ethnicity. The *Swedish Schools Inspectorate* believes that, in view of the lower level of education and weaker academic performance of the Roma group, it makes no sense to review goal attainment specifically for pupils with a Roma linguistic and cultural background. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate thinks it is more important for the authority to review what the municipalities are doing to adapt teaching to the needs of the Roma pupils and to meet their possible need for special support.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: As noted earlier, the municipalities often lack an overall picture of the educational level and situation of Roma children and young people. A more systematic and continuous knowledge-gathering process is therefore needed to obtain a better picture of the situation and of the needs of Roma children in order to identify the measures that need to be taken. It is also needed in order to be able to constantly measure developments in relation to the goal for Swedish primary and secondary education.

For privacy reasons and because there is no scientifically reliable method of determining ethnic affiliation, no statistics based on ethnicity are collected. Other methods of monitoring the academic performance of Roma pupils must therefore be used. How this should be done should preferably be defined in the pilot municipalities, but in close consultation with the Data Inspection Board (see section 4.4). As part of the process of describing the situation of Roma people today in relation to the goal for Swedish primary and secondary education (see section 5.1), the Swedish National Agency for Education should work with the pilot municipalities to better describe the situation of Roma pupils in the pilot municipalities when it comes to completing compulsory schooling with an approved certificate so they are qualified to apply to continue their studies at upper secondary school. It should then be possible to follow up this description on a regular basis during the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion. In their work, the Swedish National Agency for Education should consult with the Roma.

With regard to the education situation in primary and lower secondary schools, the Government believes that there is a need to review how the schools are adapting their teaching in line with the goal statements and what

forms of support are being offered to Roma pupils.

The new Schools Act reinforces pupils' right to support and improves monitoring of pupils in need of special support by way of written assessments, earlier formal qualifications and more national tests. In its reform work, the Government has focused on the earlier school years, because these lay the foundations for a subsequent successful education. The Government is also making efforts to develop pupils' skills in reading, writing and arithmetic.

It is important for schools to be flexible and find ways to adapt their teaching as far as possible to the needs of each pupil. It is also crucial for efforts for Roma pupils to be initiated early. There is currently a risk that knowledge acquisition by Roma pupils in years 1–6 will be hampered by a lack of support, and that gaps in knowledge will arise that are hard to bridge. In view of the lack of knowledge of the position of Roma pupils and the importance of individually tailored teaching, the Government considers that the Swedish Schools Inspectorate should be tasked with reviewing the efforts of the pilot municipalities to adapt their teaching to the situation of Roma pupils and meet any possible needs for special support pursuant to the Schools Act. This should also include reviewing how schools in the pilot municipalities for Roma pupils are meeting the requirements of the Schools Act with regard to compulsory attendance. The review should also include highlighting instructive examples. The review should be conducted in consultation with the Roma.

Bridge-builders in daycare, pre-school classes and primary and lower secondary school

Government assessment: The Swedish National Agency for Education should procure courses to train bridge-builders within daycare, pre-school classes and primary and lower secondary schools in the pilot municipalities in order to improve the educational situation of the Roma minority. Bridge-builders may include existing municipal staff with Roma language skills and cultural knowledge.

The Swedish National Agency for Education should also be tasked with providing school principals and rectors with more information on national minorities and their rights.

Delegation proposal: A government grant should be established to enable the municipalities, in consultation and collaboration with the local Roma minority, to carry out various measures and actions within daycare, pre-school classes and primary and lower secondary schools to improve the educational situation of the Roma minority. A government grant should also be established for skills training activities for municipal employees with a Roma linguistic and cultural background.

Bodies consulted: Many bodies consulted welcome the proposal. The *Swedish National Agency for Education* suggests that all principals could be given access to the grant because there are also Roma pupils in independent schools.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that all pupils attain the educational goals. All pupils should receive the guidance and stimulation that they need in their learning and personal development if they are to develop to the best of their abilities in line with the educational goals. This includes the right to support to meet their needs in primary and lower secondary school, which is also reinforced by the new Schools Act.

One form of support may be provided by 'bridge-builders'. These are men and women with Roma language skills and cultural knowledge, e.g. teaching assistants with a knowledge of Roma culture and of Romani Chib (see section 4.7). Experience from Sweden and other countries shows that the use of bridge-builders has a positive effect on school attendance and performance by Roma pupils.

In its report on 'Roma rights', the Delegation describes how teaching

assistants and mother-tongue teachers with Roma language skills and cultural knowledge have helped to improve communication between Roma people and schools. Such staff can use their contacts with the parents to pass on knowledge of the school's methods and values so as to increase understanding between the school and parents. The knowledge that there are staff with Roma linguistic and cultural skills in the school can also help to ensure that parents feel more comfortable having their children in the school. For the school staff, such a bridge-builder can help them to gain a better understanding of the school situation of the Roma children and increase their knowledge of Roma culture and history.

Bridge-builders can also contribute to increased attendance by the pupils and enhance their sense of security and motivation for schoolwork. A general problem for children whose parents have a low level of education is the difficulty of getting help with their homework. Bridge-builders can both improve these pupils' ability to keep up in the lessons and also help them with their homework.

The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights advised Sweden in 2008 to continue taking effective measures to improve school attendance by Roma children, such as by recruiting Roma staff. There is also a very strong desire among the Roma group for there to be more Roma role models in the schools. In the light of the good experience gained with bridge-builders, also known as mediators, the Council of Europe, with the support of the EU, has launched a major effort to train such people within the education system and elsewhere.

The right of Roma children to an equal education is not a new issue for the municipalities. Nor should this education in principle be financed with any special resources. The Government believes, however, that there is an urgent need to expedite development efforts with respect to the educational situation of Roma children. The Government has therefore opted at this point to combine the Delegation's proposals into an overall investment in bridge-builders. The Swedish National Agency for Education should therefore procure courses to train bridge-builders within daycare, pre-school classes and primary and lower secondary schools in the pilot municipalities in order to improve the educational situation of the Roma minority. Bridge-builders may include existing municipal staff with Roma language skills and cultural knowledge.

In the light of the above, the Swedish National Agency for Education should also be tasked with providing school principals and rectors with more information on national minorities and their rights based on material produced earlier, e.g. on the authority's web site and in its newsletter.

Secure school environment

Government assessment: Efforts undertaken in 2011–2014 to strengthen the values of schools and increase awareness of abuses among the school staff should enhance security for all pupils. The ongoing work to combat bullying is aimed at every single pupil and so also covers Roma pupils.

Delegation proposal: The Discrimination Ombudsman should be instructed to work together with the Child and School Student Representative, the Children's Ombudsman and the Swedish Work Environment Authority to lead a coordinated effort to create secure conditions for Roma children in school.

Bodies consulted: The bodies consulted that commented on the proposal mainly support it. The *Children's Ombudsman* welcomes the proposal with the proviso that resources must be earmarked for this work. *Stockholm municipality* misses the perspective of the schools in the proposal and feels that initiatives in school must take account of the knowledge possessed by the schools right from the outset. Stockholm municipality stresses the importance of systematic work with equal treatment plans in schools to ensure that the rights of all children are respected.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: A fundamental precondition

for Roma children to achieve good academic results is a secure school environment. This applies not only to Roma children but to all children. The current legislation emphasises that all pupils should feel secure. The Schools Act contains provisions on measures against abusive treatment in school. Schools have a duty to report, investigate and take measures to combat abusive treatment. To ensure that the Act is complied with, there has been a special representative function within the Swedish Schools Inspectorate since 2006: the Child and School Student Representative. The Representative is empowered to plead the case of pupils in disputes over compensation. Roma children in schools are also covered by the protection against discrimination laid down in the Discrimination Act (2008:567).

In parallel with extensive regulations, the Government has also made efforts to further increase staff awareness of discrimination and abusive treatment in school. In 2007, the Government tasked the Swedish National Agency for Education with conducting a training programme on methods of combating abuse. As part of this exercise, the authority worked with researchers to evaluate methods for use against bullying in schools.

In 2011, the Government gave the Swedish National Agency for Education a fresh assignment to enhance the work of schools on value issues and efforts to combat discrimination and abusive treatment. The Government set aside a total of SEK 40 million for this purpose. This assignment should be reported on no later than 20 January 2015. Efforts undertaken in 2011–2014 to strengthen the values of schools and increase awareness of abuses among the school staff should enhance security for all pupils. The ongoing work to combat bullying is aimed at every single pupil and thus also covers Roma pupils. The Government has therefore chosen not to proceed with the Delegation's proposal.

The Government also commissioned the study 'More effective work against xenophobia and similar forms of intolerance' (dir. 2011:39). Among other things, the Evaluator is required to summarise the existing knowledge that can be used in schools concerning xenophobia and similar forms of intolerance, and concerning ways in which these phenomena can be addressed while maintaining the scientific approach that is demanded of teaching in schools.

Increased knowledge of national minorities among all pupils

Government assessment: Teaching material on the national minorities should be produced for use at the primary and lower secondary level.

Delegation proposal: The Delegation felt that an important activity is to monitor developments with respect to teaching about Roma in accordance with the new curricula. However, the Delegation did not offer any proposals on this.

Bodies consulted: Some bodies consulted feel that teaching measures aimed at increasing knowledge of national minorities in mainstream society are necessary if the gap in trust between Roma and non-Roma is to be repaired.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: An important prerequisite for Roma people to be treated with respect and understanding and to be enabled to preserve their culture and their language is an increased knowledge of the Roma. Knowledge of other minorities also has a bearing on this. Some bodies consulted also believe that this is necessary if we are to repair the gap in trust that exists. The revised curriculum for primary schools, pre-school classes and after-school centres entered into force on 1 July 2011. In the syllabi which form part of the curriculum, the national minorities are covered in Swedish, History and Social Studies; these cover things like the rights of the national minorities, the national minority languages and a historical view of the position of national minorities in Sweden.

A report from the Swedish National Agency for Education (2006) found that a selection of teaching material for History, Social Studies and Religion did not deal with the situation of the Roma, and Roma interest groups and individual teachers often complain that information on Roma history and culture is missing from many teaching materials. The Sami Parliament now

maintains a web site on national minorities on behalf of the Government. The new web site, www.minoritet.se, is intended to be used to disseminate knowledge of the national minorities and their rights to the groups themselves, decision-makers and officials, and the general public. This web site can be used to gather information.

In line with the clearer requirements in the curriculum, there is also a need, however, to provide teachers with more concrete support in their teaching on national minorities. A set of teaching material on the national minorities for use at primary and lower secondary level should therefore be produced, describing and illustrating Roma history, culture, language, etc.

5.2.3 Upper secondary school

The Delegation for Roma Issues did not present any proposals specifically aimed at upper secondary school. However, the Government stated in Sweden's national reform programme 2011 that the individual programme had not succeeded very well in pushing pupils who have not completed compulsory schooling on into upper secondary school. The individual programme has therefore been replaced with five introductory programmes. These introductory programmes, which are meant to be better suited to the individual needs, wishes and abilities of all pupils, are preparatory study, programme-based individual choice, vocational introduction, individual options and introduction to language. The new Schools Act has reinforced pupils' right to support in reaching the educational goals, which should also help to ensure that more of them can be provided with the conditions that they need to do this. In a labour market that demands higher and higher levels of education, it is crucial for Roma pupils to be challenged and encouraged to move on to upper secondary school and increase their chances of a job. Among other things, the Government intends to drive forward developments in this area by following up the goal for primary and lower secondary education and thus highlighting any shortcomings with respect to Roma pupils (see section 4.4). In section 5.2.2, the Government suggests that the Swedish National Agency for Education should work to better describe the situation of Roma pupils in the pilot municipalities when it comes to completing compulsory schooling with an approved certificate so they are qualified to apply to continue their studies at upper secondary school.

5.2.4 Mother tongue teaching

Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states, among other things, that education should develop the child's own cultural identity and language. Romani Chib is a national minority language, and pupils with a basic knowledge of a national minority language have enhanced rights to mother-tongue teaching. This means that Romani Chib does not need to be the language in day-to-day use at home, nor does the principal have to have at least five pupils who wish to learn the language for these pupils to claim their right to be taught in their mother tongue. The responsibility for mother-tongue teaching rests with the principals, who also have a duty to inform pupils and parents of their right to mother-tongue teaching. National minorities, and hence also Roma pupils, exercise the right to mother-tongue teaching less than other groups.

Mother-tongue teaching is significant in many aspects. Reports from e.g. the Swedish National Agency for Education indicate that mother-tongue teaching has positive effects on individual identity and learning. Teaching in the mother tongue helps individuals to improve their own command and provides a stimulus to go on to develop new skills, both by deepening their knowledge and by broadening it to take in other languages. Mother-tongue teaching also helps to promote the survival of a minority language.

Promoting the development and production of teaching materials

Government assessment: The Swedish National Agency for Education

should be tasked with promoting the development and production of books and teaching materials in all varieties of Romani Chib for children, young people and adults. In this exercise, the authority should consult with the Roma.

Delegation proposal: A special government grant for the production of teaching materials for Romani Chib at all levels should be established. The Language Council of Sweden and the Roma Language Committee, in collaboration with the Swedish National Agency for Education, should plan and ensure that teaching materials suited to all levels of education and adequately covering all varieties of the language are produced for different applications.

Bodies consulted: The bodies consulted find that there is a lack of teaching materials in the mother tongue, Romani Chib.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: One of the problems with teaching Roma pupils in their mother tongue is the lack of books and other teaching materials, an issue raised by mother-tongue teachers, teaching assistants, Roma language activists and others active in mother-tongue teaching. The teaching materials that exist today are not sufficient, and those that do exist are often unsuited to the earlier year-groups. Pupils at upper secondary level therefore lack teaching materials, as do pupils who have chosen to study Romani Chib as a language option or elective at lower secondary school. There is not enough teaching material at the pre-school level either.

In 2008, the Swedish National Agency for Education was tasked with examining the need for teaching materials and with supporting the development and production of books and other teaching materials for the national minorities. Altogether SEK 10 million was earmarked for this exercise. It resulted in textbooks for the teaching of Romani Chib for different levels of linguistic ability based on the European framework curriculum that was drawn up in three variants, and methodological material for teaching Roma language and culture in English, Swedish and three Roma varieties. It also produced a grammar book for the teaching of Romani Chib at primary, lower secondary and upper secondary school, translations of the Lexin lexicon of words and images into five varieties, and a children's book in Kalé with word lists.

However, the demand for teaching materials is huge, and the Swedish National Agency for Education judged that there was a need for continued investment in teaching materials for the minority languages. In 2010, the Government therefore gave the Board further instructions to support the development and production of books or other teaching aids in Sami and Romani Chib. In the Government's view, however, there is still a need to continue the efforts to produce teaching materials in Romani Chib. The Swedish National Agency for Education should therefore be tasked with promoting the development and production of books and teaching materials in all varieties of Romani Chib for children, young people and adults. In this exercise, the authority should consult with the Roma, including teachers of Romani Chib.

Enhancing and facilitating mother-tongue teaching in Romani Chib and other national minority languages

The Delegation for Roma Issues emphasises that one of the most urgent issues for the preservation and development of the Roma language is a higher level of training and research. The need to train mother-tongue teachers is huge, as is the need for university teaching in Romani Chib in general.

By ratifying the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, Sweden has undertaken to promote the preservation of the national minority languages in Sweden. Among other things, this means that Sweden has committed itself to provide training for the teachers required

to offer mother-tongue teaching and bilingual teaching in the national minority languages.

The investments in training in national minority languages that the Government has made thus far were not deemed sufficient by the Council of Europe's expert committee in this area. The Council believes that special measures are needed in Sweden to make the teaching in and of minority languages more accessible and to remedy the shortage of teachers and teaching materials. The European Council of Ministers therefore advised Sweden to take immediate steps to actively support access to mother-tongue teaching, to develop bilingual teaching, and to establish effective teacher training in national minority languages.

In the appropriation directions for 2011, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate was instructed to review the way in which principals inform people of their right to mother-tongue teaching in minority languages and meet their obligation to provide it in accordance with the provisions laid down in the Compulsory Schools Ordinance (1994:1194), the Upper Secondary Schools Ordinance (1992:394), the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. This also included reviewing bilingual teaching in minority languages provided in accordance with Chapter 2 Section 7 of the Compulsory Schools Ordinance. The report is to be submitted to the Government Offices (Ministry of Education and Science) no later than 1 March 2012.

Since 2007, the Government has launched various initiatives to expand training in national minority languages. For example, the Government made Linköping University responsible for the teaching of Romani Chib. To further reinforce these efforts, the National Agency for Higher Education was instructed in 2010 to propose measures to enable Sweden to better meet its commitments under the Council of Europe's minority conventions in terms of the availability of teachers able to give lessons in and on the national minority languages. The project was reported to the Government Offices (Ministry of Education) on 31 October 2011. The Government intends to return to this matter in a Government resolution.

5.2.5 Municipal adult education

Tailoring to individual needs

According to the Delegation for Roma Issues and Roma representatives, a recurring problem for many Roma is that they have left school without completing compulsory schooling. Many Roma also lack any kind of school-leaving certificate, and the Delegation notes that courses in reading and writing are sometimes needed.

The Government's basic assumption is that school must work for everyone. Targeted classes may have positive effects, but this does not mean that they are a solution that can be generalised. The needs and demands vary from one municipality to another. Sweden has a number of folk high schools offering classes especially aimed at Roma people, e.g. Agnesberg folk high school in Gothenburg, Sundbyberg folk high school outside Stockholm and the IRIS school in Malmö.

The availability of teaching adapted to individual needs and abilities within the municipal adult education system (Komvux) has been enhanced by the new Schools Act. Vocational and academic guidance will become a right for all pupils, the importance of the individual learning plan has been enhanced, and validation will play a more prominent role as a routine part of education. The Government's hope is that education with the Komvux system will better match the varying needs and abilities of individuals in the future. This, in turn, could lead to better attendance and better academic results in Komvux also.

In order to give unemployed people the opportunity to receive basic vocational training, and also to address the lack of vocational trainers, the Government has invested in vocational teaching at upper secondary level (Yrkes-vux). This is mainly designed to help individuals with a weak position

in the labour market to obtain fresh vocational training. The higher study grant within the student funding system will also be made temporarily available in 2011 and 2012 for courses within Komvux for unemployed young people aged between 20 and 24 who have no lower or upper secondary school leaving certificate.

In the terms of reference for the study ‘Supervision of municipal adult education at the basic level’ (dir. 2011:92), the Government stated that the evaluators, based partly on the report on ‘Roma rights’, should particularly assess the suitability of municipal adult education at the basic level to the needs and abilities of the Roma.

Writing off study loans for courses within municipal adult education at the basic level

The Delegation proposed that the options for writing off study loans for courses within municipal adult education at the basic level for men and women with a Roma linguistic and cultural background should be looked at as a separate exercise. This should include examining the possibilities of full grants to finance courses within municipal adult education at the basic level for persons with a Roma linguistic and cultural background.

Adults studying at the elementary level often have difficulty repaying their study loans. In its terms of reference for the study mentioned above, the Government therefore specified that the evaluator should describe and analyse the financial situation of these students. The Government also stipulated that the evaluator should analyse how the present financing system works for students at the elementary level and propose changes where necessary. The evaluator should report on his assignment to the Government Offices (Ministry of Education and Science) no later than 2 April 2013.

6 Employment

6.1 Practical goals

Government assessment: Employment is a key area of activity to break down Roma exclusion. Opportunities for the Roma to establish themselves in the labour market must therefore be improved, particularly for young Roma people.

The Government’s most important goal is full employment. This applies to the population as a whole, and thus also includes the Roma.

The municipalities have a crucial role to play when it comes to providing opportunities for the Roma to establish themselves in the labour market and monitoring the level of employment among Roma people.

Delegation proposal: The Delegation has proposed the following goals: more Roma should be able to support themselves; discrimination against the Roma in the labour market should cease; more Roma should be employed by the State and municipalities; Roma women should have a stronger position in the labour market; unemployment rates among Roma people should be no different from unemployment in general; and young Roma people should be as well established in the labour market as young people in general.

Bodies consulted: Have made no specific comments on these goals.

Reasons for the Government’s assessment:

High unemployment

Details of the employment rate among the Roma are very uncertain, but the Delegation for Roma Issues has provided figures from some municipalities that indicate that it is often low. The problem of low employment is most

prevalent, according to the Delegation, among the 25 000 or so Roma who do not belong to the 'Travellers' group. Figures also indicate that it is especially difficult for Roma women to get jobs.

There are only a few studies on the labour market situation for Roma in Sweden and abroad. According to the Delegation, the international research that has been done confirms that Roma people have great difficulties across the board. Compared to most European minorities, Roma run the greatest risk of falling outside the labour market. One of the main reasons is said to be prejudice and discrimination. In the Delegation's view, the situation in Sweden is no different from that in the other European countries where research has been carried out. They say that both interview-based surveys and eye-witness accounts indicate that Roma in Sweden are more discriminated against than any other group in the labour market.

At the same time, the Delegation believes that pure discrimination is not the only reason. A lack of education is another major factor. Moreover, there is no longer any demand for traditional services and professional skills provided by the Roma.

In the Government's view, prejudice and discrimination against Roma people are a major factor behind the failure of the Roma to establish themselves in the labour market. Experience also shows that some groups, such as young people and persons with no more than lower secondary education, generally have a relatively weak position in the labour market. Employers may be reluctant to recruit young people because they have limited work experience or few references from previous employers. Less access to informal networks, through which many jobs are filled, is another complicating factor. The problems that persons with a relatively low level of education have in the labour market are also partly due to the fact that people with a higher level of education are often competing for the same jobs and that the relative demand for less educated people tends to diminish over time.

Anyone who can work should have the chance to do so

The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has stated that the right to work is crucial to the enjoyment of other human rights and constitutes an integral and indispensable element of human dignity. Every individual who can work should have the opportunity to do so to the best of his or her abilities. Employment also contributes to the survival of individuals and their families and, in so far as it is freely chosen or accepted, to their development and recognition in society.

Sweden has attracted criticism from both the Council of Europe and the UN in relation to discrimination against Roma people in the labour market; for example, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) expressed concern in its review of Sweden in August 2008 about discrimination against Roma in the labour market, and recommended that the Government should increase the opportunities for Roma people to find jobs (CERD 2008). The second report on Sweden from the advisory committee on the Framework Convention in 2008 (ACFC/OP/II(2007)006) observes that Roma people are still subjected to discrimination in the labour market and calls for more effective measures from the State to combat this.

In Sweden's national reform programme for 2011, which is part of the Europe 2020 strategy (see also section 5.1), the Government stresses that giving more men and women the chance of a job is a matter of basic justice. There is no gap so large, in the Government's view, as that between those who have a job and those outside the labour market. To ensure that all people have the same opportunities to influence their situation and shape their own lives, all men and women must be given the chance to enter the labour market. This is not only crucial from the point of view of fairness, but also essential to the effective use of society's resources. The Government also believes that employment creates the conditions for participation in society because it provides income and access to the social security system and the community in general. In the Government's view, a policy of higher employment and reduced joblessness is therefore the best way to promote social participation

and to counter poverty.

The Delegation for Roma Issues has submitted a number of proposed goals for increasing employment among Roma. The Council conclusions on ‘An EU Framework for National Strategies for Roma Integration up to 2020’ (see section 2.3) state, however, that employment should be a priority area for national efforts and that national goals should be set. The European Commission communication on an EU Framework for National Strategies states that the goal for access to employment should be to cut the employment gap between Roma and the rest of the population.

Full employment is the Government’s main goal. Anyone who can work should be able to get a job. Sweden’s national goal for employment, within the Europe 2020 strategy (Govt. Bill 2010/11:100), is to strive for an increase in the rate of employment to well over 80 per cent for men and women aged 20–64 by 2020. This increase should be seen mainly in groups with a weak position in the labour market, such as young people and people of foreign birth, and should be achieved by preventing long periods without work. The difference in levels of employment between women and men should diminish thanks to an increase in the proportion of women in employment.

In the Government’s view, and that of the Delegation and many of the bodies consulted, employment is a key area of activity to break down Roma exclusion. At the consultative meetings with Roma representatives arranged by the Government Offices, there were also many people who shared this view. Opportunities for the Roma to establish themselves in the labour market must therefore be improved, particularly for young Roma people. The Government has therefore opted not to set specific employment goals for Roma people (see section 4.4).

The Government’s goal of full employment applies to the population as a whole, and thus also includes the Roma. The municipalities have a crucial role to play when it comes to providing opportunities for the Roma to establish themselves in the labour market and monitoring the level of employment among Roma people. The municipalities in the pilot project should help to better describe the situation of Roma today with respect to joblessness and employment. The description should be produced in consultation with the Roma. This description should also be used as a basis for defining how regular monitoring of developments at the national level up to 2032 should be handled. The Government intends to return to this matter in a Government resolution (see section 4.4). Monitoring will be a key tool for identifying deficiencies and driving development forward. The possibility of deriving indicators should be examined. With the aid of indicators, comparisons can be made between different municipalities, to derive lessons and possible improvements.

6.2 Measures

In order to bring about real improvements in Roma employment, both competent authorities and municipalities must make more deliberate efforts to highlight the situation and possible needs of Roma people for special measures, with a clear but not exclusive focus on the Roma. This section describes how the establishment of Roma people in the labour market is to form part of the pilot project in 2012–2015 to help to speed up the trend towards higher employment among the Roma.

6.2.1 Developing support for Roma establishment in the labour market

Government assessment: Systematic efforts to support Roma establishment in the labour market should be launched in the municipalities taking part in the pilot project, in consultation with the Roma themselves. The Swedish Public Employment Service should be instructed to work together with these municipalities.

Delegation proposal: A special government grant should be established to enable the municipalities, in collaboration with the Swedish Public

Employment Service, to draw up and implement long-term action plans for the establishment of young Roma people in the labour market in the form of more or less permanent programmes designed to run for at least 20 years. In defining these action plans, the possibility of establishing special mentors or bridge-builders should be considered, to act as an extra level of support and a bridge between the young Roma people and society's supporting functions. In defining the action plans, it should also be noted that internships are often a way into employment.

Bodies consulted: Many bodies consulted welcome the proposal and feel that long-term efforts to help young people to establish themselves in the labour market are called for. A number of bodies consulted also mention the importance of highlighting the situation of Roma women. The *Confederation of Swedish Enterprise* feels that neither the municipalities nor the Swedish Public Employment Service have previously had much success in arranging jobs for groups that have problems in the labour market, and suggest that private players have achieved better results.

Reasons for the Government's assessment:

Experience from earlier Swedish efforts to create good conditions for Roma people to find employment points to a need for extensive assistance over a long period. For example, the Delegation notes that Sundbyberg folk high school, which offers vocational training for Roma, finds that the support of the family and the group is absolutely crucial for a person to attend training, and that support from the training provider needs to continue for several months after the course ends and even needs to cover the job-seeking phase. A number of municipalities, such as Eskilstuna, Helsingborg and Södertälje, which have run special projects relating to establishment in the labour market, have noted, for example, that it is important for Roma people themselves to help define the content and that the preparations are complex and demanding for individuals and employers. Another observation is that the relationship between employers and Roma employees is often characterised by mutual distrust.

At the international level, Spain is often cited as a successful example when it comes to assisting Roma people to get jobs. A non-governmental organisation, the Fundacion Secretariado Gitanos ACCEDER, has produced good results in arranging jobs for Roma people. The organisation provides each job-seeker with a team of five people with different professional backgrounds, one of whom has intercultural skills. This person acts as a kind of mediator or bridge-builder to facilitate communication. The job-seeker is interviewed about his or her skills and life situation, and any possible needs for vocational or supplementary training are identified. An individual action plan is then drawn up. The training measures that are instigated are often brief. It is a matter of acting quickly to match the jobs that exist. The organisation works with both public and private-sector employers and has signed cooperation agreements with various companies. The aim of these activities is to give Roma people the same chances as other people of competing for the jobs that exist and to provide employers with professional employees who have the skills they are looking for.

In section 4.2, the Government noted that a number of municipalities will be involved in a pilot project to take an overall approach to the situation of the Roma. This should include systematic efforts to support Roma establishment in the labour market, in consultation with the Roma themselves. It may, for example, involve providing support to individuals in the form of 'bridge-builders'. In Sweden, bridge-builders have perhaps been used mainly within education, but in other countries they have also been used to support the establishment of Roma people in the labour market. The experience has been positive, as shown by the Spanish example. The Council of Europe's current training of 'mediators', who are equivalent to bridge-builders, also covers training of mediators to assist job-seekers. Other approaches have also produced positive results, such as devoting time to establishing contacts with potential employers. In September 2011, Stockholm county administrative board published a discussion document on ways into education and employment for Roma people that could be used by teachers in adult

education, officials and players in the labour market. Experience from projects that have received funding from the European Social Fund, for example, should also be taken into account.

The Government believes that young Roma people in particular should be helped to gain a foothold in the labour market. The tricky transitional phase from education to working life should also be especially highlighted. This point is also raised by the Delegation and several bodies consulted. However, a specific government grant as proposed by the Delegation is not being introduced

According to the Ordinance (2007:1030) containing instructions for the Swedish Public Employment Service, the Service should prioritise those who are far removed from the labour market and contribute to a steady rise in employment in the longer term. For 2012, the Swedish Public Employment Service has been allocated extensive resources to prevent and break down long-term unemployment (Govt. Bill 2012/12:1). These resources cover both staff increases and work programmes.

The Government believes that the Swedish Public Employment Service should also be specifically instructed to work with the municipalities taking part in the pilot project. As part of this, the Service should disseminate information and knowledge among Roma people on the service and support that it can offer, and ensure that individual job-seekers approaching the Service are given the help they need. The Swedish Public Employment Service should constantly review how experience from the pilot project can be utilised in the authority's general activities when it comes to Roma and other groups that are especially far removed from the labour market.

6.2.2 The European Social Fund

Government assessment: Within specific financial limits, municipalities can be encouraged to apply for any available funding for Roma inclusion from the European Social Fund.

Delegation proposal: The Government should take the initiative to arrange a high-level meeting with the Commission to discuss how Sweden can make greater use of the structural funds to improve the situation of Roma people, e.g. in the labour market. In connection with its supervision of the Directive covering the funds, the Government should strive to make them more flexible and more accessible to Roma people and organisations working with the Roma and to ensure that programmes can run over a number of years and be renewed, to allow the structural funds to provide real practical support to national government strategies for Roma and to eliminate Roma exclusion.

Bodies consulted: Those that commented on the proposal agree that the structural funds could be made more flexible and used in a more effective way in Sweden to prevent discrimination and to support Roma inclusion.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: Of the EU structural funds, it is mainly the European Social Fund that is relevant to the discussion in this document. It is already being used to improve the situation of the Roma, but it could be used still more.

In the Council conclusions on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, both the Member States and the Commission are urged to take various steps to improve access to the use of EU funding for Roma social and economic participation. The Commission is also urged to assess the role of EU funding in the efforts to promote Roma integration.

In its communication on 'An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020', the Commission made suggestions as to how the use of EU funding for Roma integration could be improved. The present programme period extends to 2013. In its communication, the Commission noted that it will be important to ensure after 2013 that the investment priorities of the various funds that can be used in the area of social inclusion and the fight against poverty underpin the implementation of the national reform programmes and the national Roma integration strategies. In October 2011,

the Commission published a proposed regulation for the European Social Fund for the programme period 2014–2020. According to the proposal, one of the priority investments for the Fund should be in the integration of marginalised groups such as the Roma. The proposals in the regulation are also intended to simplify the process and make it easier for individual beneficiaries to gain access to Social Fund resources. These proposals are being prepared in the usual way.

The Government's position on this matter is that it is good for the Commission to propose ways in which the EU funds can be used more effectively. At the same time, the Government considers it essential not to pre-empt the discussions on the EU's next multi-year budget.

At the national level, the Swedish ESF Council (Council for the European Social Fund in Sweden) is already working to improve the use of resources from the European Social Fund on projects aimed at Roma, and these projects are constantly monitored. Sweden is also a member of EURoma, a network encompassing several of the Member States. This network is intended to exchange experience of the use of Social Fund resources, for example, and to standardise knowledge to bring about a more effective policy directed at the Roma. Within specific financial limits, municipalities can be encouraged to apply for any available funding for Roma inclusion from the European Social Fund. In its reply, the Swedish ESF Council comments that, within many of the areas and the measures proposed by the Delegation, there is scope for creating projects partly financed with Social Fund resources which could address structures and systems to facilitate Roma inclusion in society.

7 Housing

7.1 Practical goals

Government assessment: Housing is a key issue when it comes to Roma inclusion in the sense that it has a significant effect on individual living conditions in general, including opportunities for employment and education and children's chances of a stable school career. Measures need to be taken particularly to counter discrimination against Roma people in the housing market.

The goal should be for Roma people to have the same access to housing as the rest of the population.

The National Board of Housing, Building and Planning has a central role to play in providing a description of the situation of the Roma in relation to this goal.

Delegation proposal: The Delegation proposed the following goals: that Roma people should enjoy a standard of living in line with the national average, that eviction of Roma families should cease and that discrimination against Roma people by public and private housing associations should cease, along with discrimination against Roma people wishing to purchase homes.

Bodies consulted: Have made no specific comments on these goals.

Reasons for the Government's assessment:

Situation of Roma people in the housing market

While Sweden as a whole has a high standard of living, good housing is not something everyone can take for granted, according to the Delegation for Roma Issues. The Discrimination Ombudsman and the former Office of the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination have addressed the issue of discrimination against Roma people in the housing market in three reports (2004, 2008 and 2011). The reports state, among other things, that many

Roma find that they are prevented from buying or renting homes on grounds of their ethnic background and many are subjected to abuse and harassment by neighbours. Moreover, the requirements placed on tenants by landlords, e.g. with regard to annual income, mean that discrimination and other difficulties experienced by some Roma in the labour market also affect their chances in the housing market. The socio-economic situation is therefore a contributory reason why these Roma are often reliant on municipal social services to underwrite the contract or otherwise help them to find a home. This affects security of tenure for the Roma, and their chances of climbing the housing ladder.

The reports focus on issues of discrimination, but also point to other problems associated with discrimination. Many bodies consulted also describe problems of discrimination against the Roma in the housing market and how these problems spill over into things like their employment situation.

According to the Delegation for Roma Issues, Roma living conditions are also adversely affected by low housing standards, temporary solutions, evictions and even homelessness. In its report, the Delegation describes the situation of many Roma in the housing market as one of permanent short-term solutions. The Delegation refers to research which shows that stop-gap solutions risk contributing to a situation in which temporary exclusion from the mainstream housing market becomes more long-lasting and temporary accommodation becomes permanent. According to this research, temporary accommodation such as hostels has become a solution that is often more or less permanent in character. The Delegation also notes that in many municipalities, sometimes as a result of actions by the social services, temporary housing solutions have appeared that have subsequently turned into permanent special accommodation. In many cases, the Delegation says, Roma have been referred to various type of special accommodation on the grounds that they could not afford regular housing.

Combating discrimination

The Delegation for Roma Issues stresses that housing has a crucial bearing on effective citizenship. The Delegation has submitted a number of goals for efforts to increase Roma access to housing. The Council conclusions on 'An EU Framework for National Strategies for Roma Integration up to 2020' (see section 2.3) states, however, that housing should be a priority area for national efforts and that national goals should be set. The European Commission communication on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies states that the goal for housing should be to close the gap between the share of Roma with access to housing and public utilities and that of the rest of the population.

The Government sees housing as a key issue when it comes to Roma inclusion in the sense that it has a significant effect on individual living conditions in general, including opportunities for employment and education and children's chances of a stable school career. However, the situation in Sweden is not a matter of providing a basic standard — as, for example, with water and electricity in the Commission's proposed goals. The objectives should thus address other issues.

The Government thinks it is clear that discrimination against Roma in the housing market is a major problem when it comes to Roma access to housing. Under Swedish law, however, there is no right to housing in the sense that the homeless can apply to the authorities to be provided with a home.

The homes that are rented out in Sweden are normally let by public or private housing associations. If human rights are taken as the guiding principle, then it is the State that bears the ultimate responsibility for protecting the individual against discrimination, e.g. by private players. Sweden's international commitments on human rights, as expressed in the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the European Social Charter (revised 1996), mean that the State has a duty to ensure that individuals are not discriminated against on grounds of ethnic affiliation, for example. The advisory committee that reviews States' compliance with the Council of

Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities stated in 2007 that persons belonging to national minorities in Sweden, particularly Roma, are discriminated against when it comes to access to housing. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination advised convention states in its General Recommendation 27 in 2000 to take effective steps to counter discrimination against Roma in the housing market. The Committee also recommends that states should develop and implement measures to counter any segregation of the Roma population and cooperate with Roma groups and organisations on housing issues. In this light, the Government considers that the issue of discrimination in the housing market should become a long-term priority in the Government's efforts to provide the Roma with access to human rights. Measures need to be taken in particular to counter discrimination against Roma people in the housing market.

However, the Roma also encounter other problems in the housing market which cannot be explained solely in terms of discrimination. These relate, among other things, to the conditions and demands that landlords and housing cooperatives place on tenants and purchasers of cooperative housing units. These conditions and demands, which tend to be more numerous and stricter when the supply of housing is small in relation to demand, may include a requirement for steady employment and solvency. As long as Roma people experience difficulties in the labour market and in society in general, they will also find it hard to establish themselves in the housing market. It is therefore necessary, as we argue in this document, to take a holistic approach to the situation of the Roma, particularly on the part of the municipalities, to ensure that the Roma have access to good housing in the longer term. All in all, the Government considers that the long-term goal should be for Roma people to have the same access to housing as the rest of the population.

The Delegation for Roma Issues has suggested that the Institute for Housing and Urban Research at Uppsala University should be commissioned to carry out a study into the housing situation for Roma in Sweden and to suggest possible measures. Many bodies consulted welcome the proposal. The *National Board of Housing, Building and Planning* shares the view expressed in the study that it is important to obtain an analysis of the housing situation of the Roma. The Board considers that studies in this area would increase understanding of the way the housing market works and of the discrimination and exclusion experienced by various groups, which could then be used as a basis for subsequent measures.

The National Board of Housing, Building and Planning has a central role to play in providing a description of the situation of the Roma in relation to the goal of equal access to housing. The Government therefore considers that the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, in consultation with the National Housing Credit Guarantee Board and the Discrimination Ombudsman, should help to better describe the situation of Roma today in relation to the twenty-year goal. This description should also be used as a basis for defining how regular monitoring of developments at the national level up to 2032 should be handled (see also section 4.4). The description should be produced in consultation with the Roma. The Government intends to return to this matter in a Government resolution.

7.2 Measures

The Government's general activities are mainly concerned with providing effective housing markets with stable long-term rules and fair and transparent conditions for building, owning and managing homes under all forms of letting arrangement. Efforts should be made to provide housing of good quality, and there should be competition within the construction sector and the housing markets. These are also important ways of providing the Roma with access to housing. As mentioned earlier, however, more active steps also need to be taken, particularly to counter discrimination against Roma people in the housing market.

7.2.1 Dialogue on equality of access to housing

Government assessment: The dialogue that the Discrimination Ombudsman has initiated with representatives of public and private landlords and tenants' rights organisations should continue. Other relevant players should also be invited to take part in the dialogue, along with Roma representatives.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: The Discrimination Act (2008:567) forbids discrimination by anyone who provides housing to the public outside the private and family circle. As described above, there are still problems of discrimination against Roma people in the housing market, even though such discrimination is forbidden by law. It is therefore clear that effective measures are needed to address the problems in this area.

In the Government's view, there is sufficient basis, e.g. in the Discrimination Ombudsman's reports 'Roma rights' (2011) and 'Discrimination in the housing market' (2010), for discussion of the measures to be taken. It has already been noted that the problems encountered by the Roma in the housing market are connected with discrimination and a number of other factors, including the position of individuals in the labour market, their general solvency and creditworthiness and their social situation in general. This means that there is a significant risk of individuals becoming caught in a vicious circle, where it is impossible to get a home without a steady job, but the lack of a home seriously impairs their chances of education and employment. This document (section 5) also states that the right of Roma children to education is a high-priority issue for the Government. A stable and successful school career is dependent on children and their families having a permanent and satisfactory home.

In the Government's view, it is essential that efforts to provide the Roma with access to housing should be lasting and based on an overall view of the life situation of the individuals and their families. Many players, both representatives of the public sector and private individuals, need to assist in this work. Apart from their legal obligation to ensure that discrimination does not arise in their activities, both public and private landlords and housing associations have a great responsibility to consider how the conditions and demands that they make can be adapted so that parts of the population are not entirely excluded from the housing market. With regard to the possibility of purchasing a home, the National Housing Credit Guarantee Board was recently tasked with examining how establishment in the home ownership market, including cooperative ownership rights, could be made easier. The municipalities have a duty to provide housing under the Act (2000:1383) on municipalities' duty to provide housing, as well as commitments under the Social Services Act (2001:453) to ensure that individuals receive the support and assistance they need, e.g. concerning housing. In relation to the provision of housing, the municipalities in Stockholm county reported to Stockholm county administrative board in 2011 on their work to provide housing at the municipal level. Effective housing provision is also important for Roma access to housing. By law, the Social Services Committee is also required to promote the rights of the individual to employment, housing and education. The municipalities therefore have a key role to play in addressing the problems encountered by the Roma in the housing market and elsewhere, and have many ways of making life easier for the individual to obtain a tenancy, for example. Municipalities that opt to issue municipal rent guarantees are eligible to receive a government grant for lost rent amounting to SEK 5 000 per guarantee.

The Government believes that there are important experiences and ideas from various players that should be better utilised. In its reply, for example, *Enköping municipality* writes that municipalities with many Roma inhabitants should apply a social planning process to analyse the problems and make it easier for Roma people to stabilise their finances in order to arrive at long-term solutions. The *Swedish Property Federation* points out that the organisation is already working to ensure that the sector lives up to its responsibilities by distancing itself from discrimination, working on effective

procedures and providing openness and transparency for people seeking homes. The *Swedish Union of Tenants* believes that there is a need for other and much more forceful measures than those suggested by the Delegation.

The Discrimination Ombudsman has started a dialogue with representatives of public and private landlords and cooperative housing associations. The Government feels that this dialogue should continue. Other relevant players such as the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions should also be invited to take part in the dialogue, along with Roma representatives. The dialogue should focus on identifying practical models and solutions to counter discrimination in the housing market and ensure that Roma people have better access to permanent homes.

7.2.2 Homelessness

As mentioned above, homelessness is a problem that also affects the Roma. Action to combat homelessness is being taken as part of general housing policy. This is both a social-policy and a housing-policy problem that demands effort and cooperation between different players. The Government's earlier initiatives as part of a homelessness strategy for the period 2007–2009 led to an expansion of the municipalities' work on measures to prevent evictions and aroused increased interest in the issue. The Government has set aside SEK 8 million for 2012–2013 for continued efforts to counter homelessness and exclusion from the housing market (Govt. Bill 2011/12:1). The Government intends to earmark SEK 10 million a year for the same purpose from 2014 onwards. A major task is to formalise experience gained from the homelessness strategy, such as the work of the municipalities to prevent evictions, so it can be utilised across the whole country. The Government therefore intends to appoint a national coordinator to assist the authorities in creating suitable regional structures. The Government will also instruct the county administrative boards to assist the municipalities in their work to combat homelessness by supporting them in their planning for housing provision. In this work, it will be important to ensure that the needs of the Roma are also taken into account.

8 Health, social care and security

8.1 Practical goals

Government assessment: Long-term efforts are needed in many areas to ensure that Roma obtain better healthcare and that social participation increases. In relation to Roma healthcare, particular focus should be placed on health promotion and disease prevention measures.

The goal set by the Riksdag for public health work is to create the social conditions for good healthcare on equal terms for the whole population. This applies to the population as a whole, and thus also includes the Roma.

The goal set by the Riksdag for individual and family care is to enhance the capacity and opportunities for social participation by people in economically and socially vulnerable situations, and to strengthen protection for vulnerable children. This applies to the population as a whole, and thus also includes the Roma.

The Swedish National Institute of Public Health and the National Board of Health and Welfare have central roles to play in describing and monitoring the situation of the Roma in relation to the goals.

Delegation proposal: The Delegation has proposed the following goals: the level of ill-health among the Roma should not be higher than the average; average life expectancy for Roma people should increase to equal the national average; Roma faith in public medical care should increase; and the treatment of Roma in the healthcare system should be irreproachable.

Bodies consulted: Have made no specific comments on these goals.

Reasons for the Government's assessment:

The health situation and access to social care and security

There is limited knowledge of Roma health, customs and living conditions. The Swedish National Institute of Public Health did, however, conduct an interview study which was analysed in the 2010 report 'How are Sweden's national minorities?'. Based on this study, the Institute believes that the Roma risk ill health because of their life situation, which is often marked by high unemployment, a sense of exclusion, powerlessness and discrimination. The study reveals that those interviewed observe high levels of alcohol consumption, particularly among men and young people. They also see gambling and drug abuse as increasing problems. They note that cardiovascular problems, physical inactivity and a high-fat diet are more prevalent than they are in the general population. In the case of Roma women in particular, those interviewed experience a lot of stress which they attribute to a heavy workload at home.

There is a widespread view, both in the social services and among the Roma, that Roma cases often crop up within the social services, although the Delegation for Roma Issues says that there is no up-to-date and comprehensive documentation of the scale of their need for help. Some of the commonest issues reported to the social services in relation to Roma children are problems at and absence from school. Through its contacts with municipalities, the Delegation has also learned that many Roma experience confusion in their dealings with the social services when they apply for assistance and financial support.

Many Roma also report discrimination and prejudice in their contacts with the social services. In his review of the cases reported to the Office of the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination and the Discrimination Ombudsman in the period 2004–2010 (Roma rights, 2011) the latter found that some 20 per cent of the 230 reports concern the social services. None of them has so far been brought before the courts. The Discrimination Ombudsman states that there is a lack of knowledge of discrimination within the social services, but that the review of the cases reported revealed structures that may contribute to restricting access to social services by the Roma on the same terms as the rest of the population.

Stockholm county administrative board confirms in its reply that individual Roma find it hard to have their rights respected within the social services. Both the Delegation for Roma Issues and Stockholm county administrative board have found that there is a great need for information and advice among municipalities and Roma people both on health and medical care and on the social services.

In meetings between the social services and Roma families, the Delegation sees a clear polarisation of different values and different worlds, as society's rules collide with the different views of the Roma groups on life, the family and the values associated with these. Ignorance of the Roma groups' systems, customs and practices is widespread. These are frequently seen as incompatible with correct processing of cases, the Delegation says.

Within the health and medical care system, the Delegation also finds that there are problems with a lack of knowledge of the rights, culture and situation of national minorities, and shortcomings in the way they are treated.

Good healthcare and equal care and treatment

In his report on Sweden in 2007, the UN's special rapporteur on the right to the highest attainable standard of health emphasised the duty of the Government to guarantee this right in accordance with the UN Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other conventions. The rapporteur was concerned about problems experienced by many marginalised groups when it comes to access to healthcare, often as a result of discrimination, high costs or the fact that the services provided do not take sufficient account of cultural factors. The rapporteur also referred to General Comment 14 on the right to the highest attainable standard of health, which the UN Committee on

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights published in 2000. In this comment, the Committee stresses that the State's commitment concerning the right to the highest attainable state of health includes the obligation to facilitate and assist both individuals and groups within the population in the exercise of their rights. Among other things, this means that healthcare staff must be trained in order to recognise and meet the specific needs that marginalised groups may have.

In its general comment on the right to social security (General Comment 19, 2008), the UN Committee said that States parties should give special attention to those individuals and groups who traditionally face difficulties in exercising this right, such as unemployed people, persons working within the informal economy, and minorities. A problem that the Committee felt could exist for ethnic minorities is a lack of adequate access to information on things like the social security system. The obligations of the State concerning the right to social security include taking steps to ensure that linguistic and cultural minorities are aware of how the social security system works. As with human rights in general, it is crucial that both the right to the highest attainable standard of health and the right to social security should be realised without any form of discrimination, says the Committee.

The Delegation for Roma Issues has submitted a number of proposed goals for efforts to safeguard the right of Roma people to the best possible healthcare and social services. The Council conclusions on 'An EU Framework for National Strategies for Roma Integration up to 2020' (see section 2.3) state, however, that healthcare should be a priority area for national efforts and that national goals should be set. The European Commission communication on an EU Framework for National Strategies states that the national goal for healthcare should be to reduce the gap in health status between the Roma and the rest of the population.

In Sweden's national reform programme for 2011, which is part of the Europe 2020 strategy, the Government has also stressed the importance of this work for participation in society because it provides income and access to the social security system and the community in general. In the Government's view, therefore, a policy of higher employment and reduced joblessness is therefore the best way to promote social participation and counter poverty. Participation and a secure socio-economic position are also important for people's health. However, long-term efforts are needed in many areas to ensure that Roma obtain better healthcare and that social participation increases. In terms of Roma healthcare, particular focus should be placed on health promotion and disease prevention measures. The Government has therefore opted not to set specific public health goals for Roma people (see section 4.4).

The goal set by the Riksdag for public health work is to create the social conditions for good healthcare on equal terms for the whole population (Govt. Bill 2002/03:35, bet. 2002/03:35:SoU7, rskr. 2002/03:145). This applies to the population as a whole, and thus also includes the Roma. The Swedish National Institute of Public Health has a central role to play in describing and monitoring the situation of the Roma in relation to this goal. The Government therefore considers that the Swedish National Institute of Public Health should help to better describe the situation of Roma today in relation to the national goal (see section 4.4). This should be based on the determining factors for health, i.e. those aspects of people's living conditions, environment and customs that have the greatest effect on public health. This description should also be used as a basis for defining how regular monitoring of developments at the national level up to 2032 should be handled. This should also be based on the determining factors for health. The description should be produced in collaboration with other relevant authorities such as the National Board of Health and Welfare. The description should also be produced in consultation with the Roma. The Government intends to return to this matter in a Government resolution.

The Government has therefore opted not to set specific goals for Roma people with regard to individual and family care (see section 4.4). The goal set by the Riksdag for individual and family care is to enhance the capacity

and opportunities for social participation by people in economically and socially vulnerable situations, and to strengthen protection for vulnerable children (Govt. Bill 2008/09:1, bet. 2008/09:SoU1, rskr. 2008/09:127 and 128). This applies to the population as a whole, and thus also includes the Roma.

The National Board of Health and Welfare has a central role to play in describing and monitoring the situation of the Roma in relation to the national goal. The Government therefore believes that the National Board of Health and Welfare should start by helping to better describe the situation of a selection of Roma today in relation to the goal. A more detailed definition of what this description should contain will be produced after discussions with e.g. Stockholm county administrative board. A view needs to be taken on things like methods, coordination and costs before a project can be defined (see also section 4.4 on the coordination of follow-up measures). This description should also be used as a basis for defining how regular monitoring of developments at the national level up to 2032 should be handled. The description should be produced in consultation with the Roma. The Government intends to return to this matter in a Government resolution.

8.2 Measures

In the last few years, the Government has passed a number of reforms within the healthcare sector to improve the quality of the services provided. Among other things, the Government has taken several initiatives to develop a more knowledge-based system of treatment and care. For the social services, the goal of the measures is to be able to guarantee fulfilment at all times of the legal requirements for good quality, as seen from the perspective of users and citizens. There is also continuous improvement work in progress on personal treatment. In 2011 and 2012, the Government is also taking specific steps to ensure equal levels of care. Care should be provided according to need and should be equal for women and men and people born in Sweden or abroad, regardless of age, place of residence, education and financial situation. The care provided should be based as far as possible on the needs and wishes of the individual patient. The Government intends to produce an overall strategy for equal care. The principle of non-discrimination, as expressed in the prohibition laid down in the Discrimination Act (2008:567) against discrimination in healthcare and other medical matters, forms the basis for this work. Within the general effort directed at everyone, the main priority for the future is to ensure that the problems and needs of the Roma are attended to in the same way as anyone else's.

In order to bring about a change in Roma living conditions, both municipalities and county councils must actively discharge the responsibilities they already have. Here, it is crucial that the Roma themselves should be involved and take an active part. To address some of the specific problems affecting many Roma more quickly, the Government believes that there is a need for specific measures, mainly concerning increased knowledge of the situation of the Roma and steps to help increase trust.

8.2.1 Greater knowledge of the life situation and health of Roma women

Government assessment: A detailed study should be carried out to obtain a better picture of the life situation and health of Roma women. The exercise should be carried out in consultation with the Roma. The study should identify what support these women receive today and what knowledge they have of the existing support from society. It should also examine the possibility of telephone consultations with Roma girls and women on sexual and reproductive health.

Delegation proposal: The Swedish National Institute of Public Health should be specifically instructed to examine the health situation of Roma

women in order to propose concrete measures to improve their physical and mental health.

Bodies consulted: Only a few commented specifically on this proposal, and these supported it. *Norrbottnen county administrative board* believes, however, that this exercise could encounter resistance among the Roma themselves.

Consultative meetings: Although health is a very important issue, many of those present felt that few Roma women would be willing to assist with such a study, as sexual and reproductive health are taboo subjects.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: The Roma are documented as a vulnerable group exposed to prejudice and discrimination. There should therefore be a focus on awareness-raising measures to avoid any stigmatising descriptions of the group which could further aggravate their vulnerability. This does not however mean that we should avoid difficult and sensitive questions, a point that is often endorsed by the Roma themselves. In the Government's view, the health of Roma women is an issue that may be perceived as controversial, but which needs to be better understood. Among other things, representatives of Roma women's organisations state that there are very many unrecorded cases of ill health among Roma women and girls, and a great need for support and care.

In its interim report on its study of how women from national minorities who have been the victims of violence are treated and supported by public authorities (2008), the Swedish National Institute of Public Health notes that the traditional Roma family structure is characterised by a hierarchical, collective model in which the woman is subordinate to the man and the youngest women are at the bottom of the hierarchy. *Västmanland county administrative board* also writes in its reply that an interview study with Roma women in Västmanland carried out in 2009 shows that Roma women are in a particularly vulnerable social situation because of the dominant position of the men. The Delegation also mentions that customs such as traditional dress, notions of cleanliness that cover not only rules of hygiene but also ethical guidelines and control of social relations, and the occurrence of child marriage can have an impact on the health of Roma women.

There are already some initiatives aimed at all Swedes which deal with matters of sexual and reproductive health, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, etc. but it is not certain that these are also reaching Roma women and girls. Issues concerning sexuality and sexually transmitted diseases are extremely sensitive subjects for many Roma. At the consultative meetings organised by the Government Offices to discuss the report on 'Roma rights' for example, there were calls for a telephone hotline that women could call anonymously to obtain advice and support on this type of issue, and where they could speak Romani Chib.

According to Stockholm county administrative board, there is a Roma women's refuge and a Roma girls' refuge that provide support to Roma women from all over the country. The Delegation states that Roma women have sometimes been turned away from normal women's refuges because of their ethnic background. *Stockholm county administrative board* notes in its reply that these women's refuges, which also have a preventive role, fill an important function for those women who are unwilling or unable to contact other women's refuges. For 2011–2012, the Swedish National Institute of Public Health has granted financial aid to various organisations for programmes to support the work of the national minorities themselves on equality, women's welfare and cooperation. The Institute has also given financial support to Stockholm county administrative board for a national resource in matters concerning Roma women who have suffered violence within the family.

The Government considers that a detailed study should be carried out to obtain a better picture of the life situation and health of Roma women. The exercise should be carried out in consultation with the Roma. The Government shares the view of *Luleå municipality*, which points out in its reply that any study of the health of Roma women must be carried out with their involvement and cooperation and that it must on no account be conducted with unclear motives. The study should identify what support

Roma women and girls receive today and what knowledge they have of the existing support from society. It should also examine the possibility of telephone consultations with Roma girls and women on sexual and reproductive health within the existing services.

8.2.2 Greater knowledge of equality

Government assessment: An in-depth study should be carried out on issues that are relevant to equality between Roma men and women and boys and girls, such as gender roles, homosexuality, prostitution and human trafficking. The exercise should be carried out in consultation with the Roma.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: The Delegation for Roma Issues has only addressed issues of gender roles etc. in the Roma population to a limited extent. Nevertheless, gender roles in the Roma population obviously affect the life situation of Roma men and women just as they affect non-Roma men and women. They include things like views on male and female occupations, the place of men and women in the public sphere, and male and female sexuality. Gender roles in the Roma population obviously vary between different individuals, families and groups. The Government does however see a need to gain more knowledge of this in order to take the right steps to support Roma men and women, boys and girls.

There is also a need for increased knowledge in other matters concerning the Roma population in order to define possible supporting measures. This means gaining more detailed knowledge of views on child marriage and being married against one's will, and views on homosexuality, prostitution and human trafficking.

Prostitution and human trafficking are problem areas that the Delegation does not touch upon. Both at the EU level and in various Member States, however, this is being picked up as a problem that particularly affects women and children within the Roma population. The recently published report from the European Roma Rights Centre and People in Need ('Breaking the Silence: Trafficking in Romani Communities', 2011) states that research from a number of European countries indicates that Roma women and children are particularly vulnerable to trafficking in these countries in proportion to their share of the population. They are exploited sexually, for forced labour, slavery, organ removal, illegal adoption and begging. One difficulty is said to be that few Roma are identified by the police as victims of human trafficking and many of them are unwilling to turn to the law enforcement authorities. It is important to gain greater knowledge of the incidence of human trafficking in Sweden also.

An in-depth study should be carried out, in consultation with the Roma, on issues that are relevant to equality between Roma men and women and boys and girls, such as gender roles, homosexuality, prostitution and human trafficking. This study should be based on knowledge and experience gained from earlier equality efforts initiated and carried out by Roma organisations and representatives.

8.2.3 Knowledge of Roma people and enhanced methods of working within the social services

Government assessment: It is essential to train people within the social services in matters concerning e.g. the rights, culture, life situation, etc. of the Roma, and to develop ways of working that help to increase trust between the staff within the social services and the Roma. The municipalities included in the pilot project will take a holistic approach to Roma inclusion. This will include developing working methods in the social services in consultation with the Roma.

Delegation proposal: The Delegation has backed the proposal by the Swedish National Institute of Public Health in its report ‘How are Sweden’s national minorities?’ to train authority staff in matters concerning the health, customs, living conditions and culture of the national minorities. In an addendum, the Delegation has stated that this should be done by and in consultation with the national minorities. The Delegation has also endorsed the suggestion from the National Board of Health and Welfare in its report on ‘Intercultural social work’ (2010), which proposes that the Government should create the conditions for a national programme to promote skills in intercultural social work.

Bodies consulted: Only a few commented specifically on the proposals from the Swedish National Institute of Public Health and the National Board of Health and Welfare. *Norrbottnen county council* states that there is a clear need for knowledge within the healthcare sector of Roma traditions, such as the relationship between men and women. They also say that there is a need for a training programme that can easily reach the whole of the staff. *Västmanland county council* emphasises the importance of a holistic approach to matters relating to the dissemination of knowledge to staff within the health and medical care sector, authority officials and individuals within the minorities.

Reasons for the Government’s assessment: The Delegation for Roma Issues, Stockholm county administrative board, the Sami Parliament and the Swedish National Institute of Public Health have noted in various reports that the level of knowledge of the national minorities and their rights is low within municipalities and county councils.

As part of a group of eleven State authorities, the National Board of Health and Welfare and the Swedish National Institute of Public Health have been asked to monitor, analyse and report to Stockholm county administrative board on how their efforts have contributed to achieving the minority policy goal and the effects of these efforts in the period 2010–2012.

The National Board of Health and Welfare has compiled a fact sheet setting out the implications of the new Act on national minorities and minority languages for the health and medical care sector and the social services. In July 2011, the authority also completed a brochure on the subject, which the minorities themselves can provide to staff in the healthcare sector and social services in their contacts with them.

As well as the activities mentioned above, the Swedish National Institute of Public Health was also tasked in 2008–2010 with examining how vulnerable women from national minorities are treated and supported by public authorities. As part of this, the authority produced and distributed information material in 2010 on personal treatment, women’s welfare and national minorities to officials within the police, healthcare and the social services who deal with female victims of violence in their work, and ran training sessions for authority staff in collaboration with the national minorities.

Stockholm county administrative board and the Sami Parliament have been tasked with spreading knowledge of the new Act on national minorities and informing and advising on its application. The Sami Parliament has also been tasked with maintaining a web site, www.minoritet.se, with information on the national minorities. In September 2011, Stockholm county administrative board published a discussion document on ways into education and employment for Roma people that could be used by teachers in adult education, officials and players in the labour market.

It is essential to train people within the healthcare services in matters concerning e.g. the rights, culture, life situation, etc. of the Roma, and to develop ways of working that help to increase trust between the staff within the healthcare services on the one hand and the Roma on the other. Here, an information campaign has been launched, as mentioned above, which the Government will monitor closely and return to if necessary.

The Delegation for Roma Issues and Stockholm county administrative board have, however, pointed out that there are recurring problems particularly in contacts between the social services and the Roma. It is therefore especially important to train staff within the social services in this matter and to develop

different ways of working there. This should include monitoring the work of the social services with Roma people, including work with those who have social problems such as abuse and criminality. The municipalities included in the pilot project will take a holistic approach to Roma inclusion. This will include developing working methods in the social services in consultation with the Roma. As explained in section 4.12, the idea is that the pilot project should result in good examples to be disseminated to other municipalities. It is crucial here to find ways of developing knowledge, working methods, etc. to increase trust.

8.2.4 Health communicators

Government assessment: The use of health communicators with Roma language and cultural skills should be tested in the municipalities within the pilot project in collaboration with a number of county councils.

Delegation proposal: The Delegation has backed the proposal by the Swedish National Institute of Public Health in its report 'How are Sweden's national minorities?' to train health communicators within all the minorities.

Bodies consulted: A number of bodies consulted support all six of the Institute's proposals in its report. *Save the Children* stresses that health communicators should have special knowledge of children's rights.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: It is clear from the report from the Swedish National Institute of Public Health 'How are the national minorities?' that these national minorities are not being reached by the health information that exists today. Many of the national minorities have also pointed to the need for health informants.

Health informants are present in the healthcare system in a preventive and health promotion role, e.g. in Skåne, Blekinge, Östergötland, Stockholm and Uppsala. In Malmö, a number of health informants with a foreign background were trained in the early 2000s. They work actively with Malmö municipality on health promotion activities and also act as bridge-builders between visitors to healthcare facilities and staff, for example.

In its report, the Swedish National Institute of Public Health suggested that health communicators should be trained within all national minorities. The authority proposes that the role of the health communicators should be to provide training and health information in their respective groups and that they should act as bridge-builders between mainstream society and the national minority.

There is some European experience of health communicators, particularly women, which has been positive. They have raised interest in preventive healthcare and facilitated access to normal medical care. The Council of Europe's initiative to train mediators (bridge-builders) also includes training mediators in health matters.

The Government considers that health communicators with Roma language and cultural skills could be very significant, as the Delegation notes that there are a large number of Roma who have difficulty in assimilating written information. These health communicators should also be able to act as bridge-builders between the Roma and the healthcare system and thus help to build increased trust.

The health communicators should also be able to address young Roma people in particular. Patterns of life and habits are established at an early age and often persist and affect the rest of people's lives. It is therefore essential that health promotion and disease prevention efforts should be made early on for both Roma girls and boys. These may involve facilitating access to healthcare and dietary information and ensuring that efforts to prevent alcohol and drug abuse among young people also reach Roma girls and boys. Issues of sexual and reproductive health and measures to improve mental health should also be included. The possibility of the health communicators training men and women who can in turn train others in basic prevention should also

be examined.

The Government believes that the use of health communicators with Roma language and cultural skills should be tested in the municipalities within the pilot project in collaboration with a number of county councils.

8.2.5 Advice and support

Government assessment: The municipalities and county councils bear the responsibility for providing their inhabitants with the medical and social care stipulated by the Healthcare Act and the Social Services Act. It follows from this that municipalities and county councils should try to find local solutions to the misunderstandings and problems that can arise in meetings between the Roma seeking support and the healthcare provider. Where Roma people need to contact individual authorities, Stockholm county administrative board should be instructed, in the first half of 2012, to arrange contacts between the Roma minority and the authorities.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: As noted earlier, there is a great need for advice and support among Roma people when it comes to healthcare, and also with regard to education and housing. This has been observed both by the Delegation for Roma Issues and by Stockholm county administrative board, and is something the study and the authority have wanted to draw the Government's attention to. Stockholm county administrative board has made these observations in the course of its temporary assignment since 1 January 2010 to arrange contacts between the Roma minority and the authorities.

Stockholm county administrative board states in its reply that there is a need all over the country for advice and assistance both in individual cases and in general matters concerning the Roma as a group. The county administrative board believes that experience shows that individual Roma find it hard to assert their rights in their contacts with the social services and other authorities, so they turn to the county administrative board for support. However, this happens on such a scale that it far exceeds the board's remit, the authority says. The board considers that issues relating to Roma families' access to social services, housing, employment, women's welfare, etc. demand specific solutions together with e.g. the social services, the National Board of Health and Welfare and the Swedish National Institute of Public Health.

The municipalities and county councils bear the responsibility for providing their inhabitants with the medical and social care stipulated by the Healthcare Act (1982:763) and the Social Services Act (2001:453). It follows from this that the Government considers that municipalities and county councils should try to find local solutions to the misunderstandings and problems that can arise in meetings between the Roma seeking support and the healthcare provider. Where Roma people need to contact individual authorities, Stockholm county administrative board should be instructed, in the first half of 2012, to arrange contacts between the Roma minority and the authorities. However, the county administrative board should not have any advisory or supporting function; rather, such issues must be resolved by the competent administrative authorities.

In the pilot municipalities that are to focus especially on improving Roma access to their rights, it is intended, as mentioned above, that good examples of working methods with the social services should be drawn up, which may be of benefit to other municipalities and county councils. The Delegation also states that several municipalities are already working to improve understanding between the Roma and the administration. For example, these municipalities have recruited bridge-builders, who have worked mainly in schools but in many cases have also acted as a link between school, family and social services. Trained administrative assistants with Roma language and cultural skills can also provide support and legitimacy in collaboration with the social services and the client. Apart from them, there are individual Roma

activists and religious and cultural leaders who can act as bridge-builders in specific cases.

The Government also believes that it is crucial, in addition to all this, that knowledge of the services that already exist and which are aimed at providing all citizens in Sweden with advice and support in medical and social care should also reach the Roma. This could, for example, involve the online 'surgery' for young people aged between 13 and 25 (UMO) or the medical advice given at 1177.se. It is important to ensure that these services also reach Roma people and that the Roma have sufficient trust in the services to feel they can turn to them. This should be followed up in the evaluations of these services.

8.2.6 Child marriage

Government assessment: We need to await the report from the National Board for Youth Affairs summarising knowledge of traditional and quasi-marriage ceremonies and the special investigator's report on increased protection against forced marriage and child marriage before taking any measures.

Delegation proposal: The Delegation has not put forward any specific proposals concerning child marriage. However, the Delegation has identified a need for increased knowledge when it comes to the implications of child marriage for the health of young girls in particular.

Bodies consulted: Many bodies consulted state that there is a need to prevent child marriage and stop children from being married against their will.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: The Delegation for Roma Issues has identified a need for increased knowledge when it comes to the implications of child marriage for the health of young girls in particular.

Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that States Parties must take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children. Early marriage is regarded as one such harmful practice. In its report 'Married against their will' (2009), the National Board for Youth Affairs describes the problems of child marriage and forced marriage. The report states, among other things, that more knowledge needs to be gained on child marriage and forced marriage and that many of the professions that deal with young people exposed to these or at risk of them need skills training in order to be able to assist the children and young people that they encounter. The Swedish legal system does not allow either child marriage or forced marriage. Nevertheless, it is a fact that young people living in Sweden are forced into marriage. There are also people who marry before the age of 18.

The Government has instructed the National Board for Youth Affairs to produce, in 2011 and 2012, a summary of knowledge of traditional and quasi-marriage ceremonies that do not constitute marriage in the legal sense and which cause children and young people to formalise relationships which may be against their own will. The aim of the exercise is to obtain greater knowledge of the circumstances that lead to children and young people being married against their will.

In May 2010, the Government also commissioned a special investigator to submit proposals for measures to enhance protection against forced marriage and child marriage (dir. 2010:54).

The special investigator is supposed to gather further information on forced marriage and child marriage. Among other things, this should identify the persons affected and the background to such marriages. Attitudes to forced marriage and child marriage should also be investigated. Based on the knowledge gained, the investigator is asked to propose measures to combat forced marriage and child marriage. The investigator is also required to produce a general overview of the relevant criminal, civil and international private law. The investigator is to submit proposals for the legislative changes

required to further strengthen protection against forced marriage and child marriage. The project should be reported on no later than 21 May 2012

The Government considers that we need to await the report from the National Board for Youth Affairs summarising knowledge of traditional and quasi-marriage ceremonies and the special investigator's report on increased protection against forced marriage and child marriage before taking any measures.

9 Culture and language

9.1 Practical goals

Government assessment: Culture and language make up a major part of a person's identity and are an important factor in the development and cohesion of society. It is therefore important that Roma culture and language should be made more visible, preserved and developed in line with the goal for the national minority policy laid down by the Riksdag.

Delegation proposal: The Delegation has proposed the following goals: all Roma children should be offered teaching in their mother tongue; Romani Chib should enjoy the same protection as a minority language as the three regional minority languages; teaching and research in Romani Chib at the university level should be established on a permanent basis, institutionalised and provided with guaranteed funding; Roma people should have control and influence over their own cultural heritage; Roma culture should be conserved, developed and made accessible; there should be Roma cultural institutions and resources with guaranteed State support and secured funding; Roma people and Roma culture and history should be visible in the Swedish landscape and in public places; and there should be more permanent Roma cultural institutions.

Bodies consulted: Have made no specific comments on these goals.

Reasons for the Government's assessment:

Roma culture and Romani Chib

The year 2012 marks 500 years since the arrival of the Roma in Sweden was first noted in the annals of the city of Stockholm. Roma culture is thus very much a part of Sweden's cultural heritage. Roma culture in Sweden can be seen today in music, literature, film, theatre, art, the media, etc. There are also a number of Roma cultural organisations and associations. However, the report on 'Roma rights' notes that the lack of homogeneity among Roma people has made it hard to raise issues in the cultural sphere. For those Roma who consider themselves to be Travellers, for example, it is said that the new generation has lost much of its culture and language, although there are signs that this is changing.

The Delegation for Roma Issues gives examples of a number of difficulties that Roma culture has in establishing itself. Magazines in Romani Chib have difficulties because Roma reading habits are generally limited and the practice of subscribing to newspapers and printed publications is not especially widespread.

Roma literature is largely oral and based on a narrative tradition. Proverbs and stories are an important part of the cultural heritage. Occasional anthologies of stories have been printed, but large parts of the cultural heritage are not documented in writing. The material cultural heritage of the Roma is therefore only documented to a very limited extent.

When it comes to the language, we can say the following. As a result of the long history of Romani Chib as a minority language in contact with various

European majority languages, the language has developed a large number of variants, several of which also exhibit variation within themselves. The degree of conservation within these languages also varies greatly, both between and within the different Roma groups.

What all variants of Romani Chib have in common is that they are above all spoken languages. There is no common standardised Romani written language. According to the Delegation, this is a problem in that, if a language is to hold its own in today's text-based society, it must be easy to write. The history of the different variants of Romani means that their speakers can sometimes have different needs. For some speakers, particularly among newly-arrived Roma, Romani Chib is their first language and mother tongue. Other speakers live in what is called a diglossic situation, i.e. a situation in which one knows two or more languages equally well but uses them in different contexts. For a third group of speakers, the Romani language is under serious threat. Compared to other Swedish minority languages, Romani Chib presents by far the most complex picture, according to the Delegation.

According to a 2007 study from the Institute for Language and Folklore, many Roma are happy that their language has acquired the status of a national minority language in Sweden. Many say, however, that this is not noticeable in daily life. This is true, for example, of knowledge of Romani Chib within Swedish authorities and the efforts made by the State and municipalities on behalf of Romani Chib. In order for the Roma to be able to exercise their right to learn, develop and use their national minority language, the Delegation states that authorities and Roma people need to work on a broad front with a number of actions, some of them urgent.

The Government's strategy for the national minorities

In its proposal for the national minority strategy (Govt. Bill 2008/09:158), the Government points out that the national minority languages and cultures are a valuable part of Sweden's cultural heritage. Language is one of the features that distinguishes these groups from others and is also a bonding factor within the group. For individuals too, language may be an important part of their identity and sense of self. For many individuals, the minority language is also their mother tongue. The mother tongue is not just a tool for communicating and acquiring knowledge; it may also be closely associated with emotional values and something which links us to our families and the cultural community and society to which we belong.

In its proposal, the Government noted that the existence of the minorities is not very conspicuous in public life, in the media or in a cultural-historical context. The Government therefore stressed that the current and historical presence of the national minorities, along with their languages and cultures, need to be actively displayed in Swedish society as part of our shared Swedish cultural heritage. With increased knowledge, the mainstream population's understanding of the groups and their situation will deepen and the minorities' opportunities to safeguard their languages and cultures will be enhanced. This should also strengthen the national minorities' sense of identity, which will favour the survival of the minority languages. A visible presence of the national minorities will strengthen the cultural identity and self-image of children and young people in particular.

The future of minority languages in Sweden is uncertain. The Government therefore stresses in the proposal mentioned above that the ongoing process of language substitution needs to be arrested and reversed if the national minority languages are to survive and develop as living languages in Sweden.

The goal defined by the Riksdag for the national minority policy includes supporting the national minority languages so that they are kept alive. This means that the national minorities need to be given opportunities to assimilate, use and develop their mother tongue and to develop their own cultural identity. The national minorities must be able to pass on their minority language and culture to the next generation. It must be possible for the national minority languages, which are part of Sweden's cultural heritage, to be conserved and developed as living languages in Sweden. The minority

policy goal has been defined in more detail and broken down into a number of areas, one of which is language and cultural identity. The analysis, monitoring and reporting by the Government and the authorities of the work to promote the overarching minority policy goal should particularly highlight the actions and effects of this on things like language and culture.

The Government considers that culture and language are important requirements not only for a person's identity but also for the development and cohesion of society. Work on linguistic and cultural issues can strengthen people's own identity and pride in the Roma cultural heritage. In the Government's view, culture can also fill an important function in closing the gap in trust which is commonly found between Roma and non-Roma people. It is therefore important that Roma culture and language should be made visible, conserved and developed in line with the goal set for the national minority policy. The Government believes that, as there is already a goal covering the language and culture of the national minorities, no new goal needs to be drawn up for the Roma (see section 4.4). The responsibility of the State for the national minority languages and for enabling the national minorities to preserve and develop their culture is also set out in the Act (2009:724) on national minorities and minority languages. This states that children's development of a cultural identity and use of their own language must be especially encouraged.

9.2 Measures

9.2.1 Stronger position for Roma culture and language

Government assessment: The report from the Living History Forum with proposals for how Roma culture and language can gain a stronger position than they have today should be further updated within the Government Offices before any measures are taken.

Delegation proposal: A number of proposals have been submitted with the aim of strengthening Roma culture and language in Sweden. The Delegation has suggested, for example, that a committee for Roma culture should be set up, with at least half of the members being Roma.

Bodies consulted: Some bodies consulted support the proposals that concern culture in general, but are reluctant to set up a special committee for Roma culture, e.g. the *National Heritage Board* and the *National Music Collections*. The *Nordiska museet foundation* rejects the proposal for a special committee for Roma culture. The *National Council for Cultural Affairs* agrees with the Delegation's finding that the ideas for a Roma cultural committee need to be examined further.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: The Delegation made a number of proposals aimed at strengthening Roma culture and language in Sweden. The *National Council for Cultural Affairs* generally agrees with the Delegation's suggestion that effective measures are needed in the area of cultural policy, and says that all efforts concerning the Roma minority are dependent on strong and broad roots and participation by the Roma if they are to be successful.

In January 2011, the Government instructed the Living History Forum, on the basis of the Delegation's proposal, to examine how Roma culture and language can gain a stronger position than today. In this work, the Living History Forum should consult with affected organisations and authorities. The suggestions presented by the authority should fit into the existing activities of the institutions and organisations concerned. The Living History Forum submitted a report, 'Roma cultural and linguistic rights — paths to realisation', to the Government in the autumn of 2011. The Government considers that these proposals should be further elaborated within the Government Offices before any action is taken.

9.2.2 Celebration of 500 years of Roma culture

As mentioned earlier, the year 2012 marks 500 years since the arrival of the Roma in Sweden was first noted in the annals of the city of Stockholm. It is important to mark the longstanding presence of the Roma in Sweden and to celebrate Roma culture, which has enriched and is a part of Sweden's cultural heritage. For this reason, the National Council for Cultural Affairs was instructed to arrange a meeting at the beginning of 2012 on Roma history and culture. This meeting should be aimed at players in the cultural sphere at State, regional and local level, as well as the organisations of civil society.

To create still greater awareness and stimulate increased knowledge of Roma history and culture, teaching materials on the national minorities for use at primary and lower secondary level will be produced (see section 5.2.2).

9.2.3 Safeguarding Romani Chib

Government assessment: It is not appropriate to set up a Roma administrative area. Other approaches are considered to take a higher priority when it comes to including the Roma in society. Within the municipal pilot project directed at Roma inclusion, the issue of how the preservation of Romani Chib can be promoted should, however, be included where it is considered relevant.

Delegation proposal: An amendment should be made to the Act on national minorities and minority languages such that Romani Chib is formally placed on an equal footing with the territorial minority languages Finnish, Sami and Meänkieli.

Bodies consulted: Support the suggestion that the position of Romani Chib should be strengthened. *Stockholm municipality* comments that it may be hard to know which variety of Romani Chib is required and that an administrative area should be tried on a small scale so that experience and good examples can be documented and disseminated. *Stockholm county administrative board* believes that the question of an administrative area should be investigated further.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: Among other things, the Delegation for Roma Issues has suggested that an amendment should be made to the Act (2009:724) on national minorities and minority languages such that Romani Chib is formally placed on an equal footing with the territorial minority languages Finnish, Sami and Meänkieli. The proposal means that Romani Chib would be given a greater degree of protection in accordance with the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The Delegation considered that the right to use Romani Chib in pre-school classes and care of the elderly is especially important. On the other hand, it was felt that the right to use Romani Chib in written contacts with authorities would be difficult to implement and that this right would probably not be exercised by individuals. It would also be difficult to identify a definite geographical territory for an administrative area, so the Delegation believes that a facility should be introduced to allow municipalities to apply for voluntary affiliation to a Roma administrative area in accordance with Section 7 of the Minorities Act.

The Delegation says that the main aim of such an amendment would be to raise the status of the language. At the same time, the Delegation observes that such a tightening of the law on languages will not have much effect if the language is not used more widely in the media and there are no opportunities to teach it. However, the report does not offer any deeper analysis of the need for action and the consequences of the proposal.

The Government finds that the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is framed in such a way that each State can choose which languages it wishes to protect in accordance with the Charter, and the level of this protection. Regional and minority languages protected under the Charter are defined as languages that are traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population. The language must also be spoken by a

minority and must be different from the official language(s) of that State.

All languages that the State chooses to protect must be given fundamental protection in accordance with Article 7 of the Charter. This applies to all national minority languages throughout the country. Languages that are considered to have a stronger historical and geographical base may be given greater protection. This greater protection will be provided within a geographical area in which the said language is the mode of expression of a number of people, justifying the adoption of the various protective and promotional measures provided for in the Charter. In Sweden, this enhanced protection is given within the administrative areas for Finnish, Meänkieli and Sami. Within these administrative areas, individuals now have the right to use the minority language in contacts with authorities and courts. Individuals also have the right to pre-school provision and old-age care wholly or partly in the minority language.

In connection with Sweden's ratification of the Charter, the Minority Language Committee (Jo 1995:03) examined the question of which languages should be recognised and what level of protection they should have. In the subsequent proposal, Yiddish and Romani Chib were regarded as so-called 'non-territorial' languages, i.e. languages that are habitually used within the territory of the State but which cannot be identified with a particular part of the State — i.e. they are not considered to have a historical geographical base in the country. The Government shared this view (Govt. Bill 1998/99:143).

The Government has not changed its earlier opinion. The establishment of an administrative area could be a way of raising the status of Romani Chib in Sweden, but it would be mainly a symbolic act. The establishment of a Roma administrative area will not resolve the issues relating to Roma inclusion. Many Roma have a primary need for actions to enhance their chances of education, employment and improved living conditions. The right to use Romani Chib in contacts with authorities and courts and to receive certain social services in Romani Chib is not felt to have the same priority.

Strengthening the protection for Romani Chib under the Language Charter and establishing a working Roma administrative area are also complicated by the fact that Romani Chib is spoken in a large number of varieties, some of which are not standardised; the number of interpreters and translators is extremely limited; and many individuals, the Delegation believes, probably would not use the minority language in their contacts with authority representatives anyway.

The Government does however welcome local efforts to promote and preserve Romani Chib and efforts to strengthen individuals' command of the language. Within the municipal pilot project directed at Roma inclusion, the issue of how the preservation of Romani Chib can be promoted should therefore be included where it is considered relevant. The assignment that the Government gave to the Living History Forum in January 2011 included proposing ways in which the language could gain a stronger position today (see section 9.2.1).

9.2.4 Language conservation and revitalisation

Government assessment: Language conservation efforts to develop Romani Chib in Sweden need to continue. Roma awareness of this revitalisation needs to increase. The Institute for Language and Folklore was instructed in 2012 to disseminate knowledge and good examples of language conservation and revitalisation efforts for Romani Chib among the Roma.

Delegation proposal: It is proposed that the Language Conservation section of the Institute for Language and Folklore should be expanded to include two more services. Revitalisation efforts for the 'Swedish Traveller Romani' and Kalé varieties should be given particular support.

Bodies consulted: Support the proposal. The *Roma Delegation* organisation points out that it is important to give attention to each variety and that resources are needed to revitalise Kalé Romani and Swedish Traveller

Romani; and that Roma representatives should take a greater hand in deciding which measures should be prioritised and which varieties should receive the most attention.

Reasons for the Government's assessment: One of the tasks of the Institute for Language and Folklore is to manage language conservation and collect, store, analyse and distribute material on Finnish, Meänkieli, Romani Chib and Yiddish. If the national minority languages are to develop as languages, language conservation efforts are needed in the same way as for the majority language. For some of the languages, we also need to work on linguistic harmonisation and standardisation of character sets, dictionary production, etc. This is also true of Romani Chib. The Government believes that the work being done by the Institute for Language and Folklore in this area needs to continue, but that it is not currently appropriate to allocate resources for additional services.

The Institute for Language and Folklore also allocates funding for revitalisation efforts in accordance with the Ordinance (2010:21) on government grants for work to support the national minority languages. The aim of this government grant is to give individuals better chances of assimilating, developing and using their national minority language by enhancing their ability to understand, speak, read or write the minority language. According to the Ordinance, grants may be made for efforts to facilitate revitalisation, such as educational activities in the languages to be taught in, language projects aimed at children and their parents, and reading projects. Grants may also be made for work to increase individuals' knowledge of multilingualism or language as a vehicle for culture and language transfer between generations, where these initiatives have aims in line with Section 3 of the Ordinance. Projects aimed at children should be especially promoted.

In 2010 and 2011, funding for a number of Roma revitalisation efforts was granted by the Institute for Language and Folklore. In the light of this, the Government has instructed the Institute in 2012 to disseminate knowledge and good examples of language conservation and revitalisation efforts for Romani Chib among the Roma.

10 Organisation

10.1 Introduction

Like the Delegation for Roma Issues, the Government believes that Roma participation and influence are necessary to bring about changes in Roma living conditions. The Government has therefore opted to include participation and influence as a central element of the management of the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion — in planning, implementation and monitoring (section 4.7). This section therefore concentrates on Roma organisation and participation in the organisations of civil society. When it comes to political participation in elections and as elected representatives, it is mainly the responsibility of the political parties to reach out to the Roma.

10.2 Practical goals

Government assessment: The organisations of civil society have a central role to play in helping to increase Roma autonomy, giving the Roma a voice in public debate and encouraging participation.

The goal set by the Riksdag for civil society is that the conditions for the organisations of civil society that are a key part of our democracy should be improved. This should be done by way of dialogue with the organisations of civil society to develop ways in which civil society can get people involved, enhancing their chances of contributing to social development and welfare, and disseminating knowledge of civil society. This applies to civil society as a

whole, and thus also includes the Roma.

Developments in relation to the goal should be regularly monitored and analysed.

Delegation proposal: The Delegation has proposed the following goals in relation to the organisations of civil society: a new generation of Roma activists should be able to establish themselves; Roma associations should have more members and better organisational abilities, and should provide more meeting places for Roma and help to enable Roma people to participate more in society.

Bodies consulted: Have made no specific comments on these goals.

Reasons for the Government's assessment:

Roma organisations

There are both national Roma organisations and local Roma associations. According to the Delegation for Roma Issues, however, Roma organisations of civil society are still under development. Associations start up, are wound up or merge, and they have recurrent financial worries. It is obvious, says the Delegation, that finances are an obstacle to the Roma organisations achieving any kind of stability. Nor, however, do the Roma generally have the same degree of experience of working in associations as other minority groups. A hitherto limited Roma association culture is also mentioned by *Södertörn University* in its reply. The reply states that the organisational capital that is generally characteristic of Sweden is an asset that still exists only to a limited extent in the context of the Roma, where the family in the extended sense has in practice been the traditional form of organisation. The *National Board for Youth Affairs* noted however in its reply that there is increased interest from the Roma minority in organising itself.

The importance of participation in civil society

In its proposal 'A policy for civil society' (Govt. Bill 2009/10:55), the Government stressed the importance of a strong civil society for democracy. Civil society is defined as an arena, distinct from the State, the market and the individual household, in which people organise themselves and act together in their common interest. The proposal states that civil society has a central role to play in a democracy in giving people a voice, as an opinion-former and a counter-weight to official authority. The fact that the players in civil society can act freely and independently generates movement and a necessary polemic in the democratic system, in which arguments and opinions can meet and public authority is under constant external examination and review. It is often the players in civil society who raise instances of misconduct and take the initiative to bring about changes and reforms in society. By engaging in civil society, individuals can unite to raise an urgent issue.

In its proposal, the Government also states that a degree of participation in civil society is desirable. Research indicates that both democracy and growth are positively affected by social capital, i.e. trust and contact between people, which are in turn fostered by many people participating in the organisations of civil society. People who have extensive access to social capital are also more healthy and feel happier.

The organisations of civil society, particularly adult education organisations, also fill an important function as a 'school of democracy'. By joining in association work, many people become involved in the organisation's internal procedures for things like decision-making and assigning responsibility, sometimes in matters concerning how opinions and views can be raised and promoted within the democratic society as a whole. There is also a connection between engagement in civil society and participation in political life in general, such as voting in elections.

The opportunity to participate in the organisations of civil society is also a matter of autonomy. By uniting, people can influence situations that may be

hard for a single person to change.

In General Recommendation 27 on discrimination against Roma, published by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in 2000, the committee stated, among other things, that States should develop modalities and structures of consultation with Roma political parties, associations and representatives, both at central and local levels, when considering issues and adopting decisions on matters of concern to Roma communities. The committee also advised States to involve Roma communities and associations and their representatives at the earliest stages in the development and implementation of policies and programmes affecting them. It also advised States to promote more awareness among members of Roma communities of the need for their more active participation in public and social life and in promoting their own interests.

In section 4.7, the Government emphasises the importance of Roma participation and influence. This means participation by individuals as well as representatives of organisations and specialists. Enhancing Roma participation and influence should therefore be made part of the management of the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion. In this section, however, the Government focuses especially on freedom of association. The Government considers that Roma organisations already fill an important function and contribute vital knowledge to society. The Government wants to make use of this engagement and the strength that exists within various Roma organisations — and among Roma who want to participate or are already participating in organisations of civil society — to work together to bring about a change in Roma living conditions.

The Government considers it important to support the means for Roma to highlight the needs of their groups in society in different ways, but also to help to increase contacts between Roma and non-Roma. The Government is aware of the importance of supporting Roma engagement in the organisations of civil society when it comes to creating and participating in their own organisations based on ethnicity and taking part in other types of organisation such as cultural groups or sports clubs. In its reply, the *National Board for Youth Affairs* notes the importance of giving the Roma the chance to plead their own case, where one approach is to organise themselves to work for the culture, language, identity and rights of their group. The Government has therefore opted not to set specific goals for the organisations of civil society and Roma people (see section 4.4).

The goal set by the Riksdag for civil society is that the conditions for the organisations of civil society that are a key part of our democracy should be improved (Govt. Bill 2009/10:55, bet. 2009/10:KrU7, rskr. 2009/10:195). This should be done by way of dialogue with the organisations of civil society to develop ways in which civil society can get people involved, enhance their chances of contributing to social development and welfare, and disseminate knowledge of civil society. This applies to civil society as a whole, and thus also includes the Roma. In the Government's view, the organisations of civil society have a central role to play in helping to increase Roma autonomy, giving the Roma a voice in public debate and encouraging participation. Developments in relation to the goal should be regularly monitored and analysed. The Government intends to return to the question of how this should be done and by whom, partly in the light of the fact that the general process of monitoring the policy for civil society is in the course of development.

10.3 Measures

10.3.1 Developing Roma engagement in the organisations of civil society

Government assessment: Roma and non-Roma organisations should be invited to a joint meeting to discuss ways of developing Roma engagement in the organisations of civil society.

Delegation proposal: The National Board for Youth Affairs should be tasked with establishing engagement guides for young Roma and with setting up a school for Roma youth leaders. The financial support for Roma organisations of civil society should be linked to organisational support to enable association work to be developed further. The Swedish National Council of Adult Education should be tasked with arranging training in running associations and giving advice to Roma associations.

Bodies consulted: The bodies consulted that commented on these proposals generally support them. The *City Mission* stresses the importance of providing organisational and practical support to Roma organisations of civil society to enable them to achieve stability and permanence.

Consultative meetings: At the consultative meetings in December 2010, particular mention was made of the need for earmarked funding for Roma women's associations for work on issues like education, abuse, equality and enterprise.

Reasons for the Government's assessment:

Financial assistance

In terms of financial support, there has been a special government grant in place since 2005 to support the activities of the national minority organisations. Since 1 January 2010, the grant has been allocated by Stockholm county administrative board in accordance with the Ordinance (2005:765) on government grants to national minorities. A total of SEK 4.6 million was paid out for 2011. One national Roma organisation received a grant in 2010, and six in 2011. Roma organisations can also apply for and receive financial support as e.g. women's or youth organisations and for their activities.

At the local level, the local associations of the national organisations also receive municipal grants, e.g. from the culture and leisure department or the department for children and young people.

The proposal 'From recognition to autonomy' (Govt. Bill 2008/09:158) stated that the national minorities had criticised the Government for the level of the organisational grant, because it was felt that the amount received by each association was so low that they could not carry out the type of activities that could give the national minorities real influence in matters that concerned them. The minorities themselves found it problematic that the groups were competing with each other for relatively modest State funding.

The level of support was increased from 2010 onwards to give the national minorities a better chance of taking part in consultation at various levels in matters that concern them. In its proposal on the national minorities, the Government mentioned that it was especially prioritising ways for the national minorities to create working consultative models within the administrative areas, and that the increased support was an important measure to reinforce the autonomy and real influence of the national minorities.

At the consultative meetings held in December 2010, many of those present stressed that there was still a lack of financial resources in Roma organisations. This has also been raised in other contexts.

Other forms of support

Apart from financial assistance, a rich civil society can also be supported by e.g. increasing knowledge of how to start up and run an association. The Delegation has suggested that Roma should be given assistance in running associations. At the consultative meetings held in December 2010, however, the majority of those present felt that this proposal was irrelevant because Roma organisations themselves were already addressing this matter. The *Swedish National Council of Adult Education* also states in its reply that courses in running associations and other forms of cooperation with not-for-

profit organisations have long been an established subject area in folk high schools and educational associations.

Södertörn University mentions in its reply that Roma organisations need assistance with applications and are calling for people responsible for Roma issues to be appointed within various funding bodies, such as the Swedish ESF Council, the National Board for Youth Affairs and the Swedish Inheritance Fund Commission. This is to provide support throughout the application process. The *City Mission* wishes to highlight the importance of Roma organisations working with the academic or not-for-profit sectors, as this could give them access to networks, exchanges of experience and knowledge and identity as part of the ‘third sector’.

Reaching out to young Roma who are already active in the organisations of civil society

Support can also be given to tempt more people to get involved. The Delegation has suggested that the National Board for Youth Affairs should be tasked with establishing engagement guides for young Roma and with setting up a school for Roma youth leaders who are or plan to be active in associations. It is proposed that the school for youth leaders should have a programme running for at least a few years for each youth group and should aim to train young Roma people who want to engage in social issues, both in matters concerning the Roma minority and social issues in general. Many bodies consulted, including the National Board for Youth Affairs, agree with the Delegation on the need to support young Roma in particular.

In its budget bill for 2010 (Govt. Bill 2009/10:1), the Government wrote that the not-for-profit sector, with its ability to create contact between people and participation in society, had great potential to help make better use of the diversity within society. Today, it is mainly people with a high level of education and a long tradition of organisational engagement in social affairs who become involved, and civil society does not reach all parts of the population to the same extent. People who are out of work or have a low income, for example, are not engaged in civil society to the same extent as those who have jobs. The Government concluded that it was likely that more people would want to engage in the not-for-profit sector if organisations could more actively search out people in different areas and sections of the population. In view of this, the Government tasked the National Board for Youth Affairs in 2010 with providing support to organisations working on engagement guides or other similar methods of outreach in the housing sector for residents with a lower level of organisation. This support continued in 2011. The purpose of the assistance with engagement guides is to conduct outreach activities to stimulate people in areas with low levels of organisation, particularly young people and women, to make contact with the organisations of civil society within certain areas of activity.

In its budget bill for 2012 (Govt. Bill 2011/12:1), the Government reports that over 300 associations worked on local projects in 2010 and that work on engagement guides reached around 6 000 young people of different ages. This effort made new groups aware of local activities arranged within these projects. The results of these efforts have so far shown that discussions on attitudes and values with parents are a very important way of ensuring that young women in particular are given access to association activities, local democratic processes and the development of their local society.

The National Board for Youth Affairs should continue with its efforts to support organisations that wish to work on engagement guides and similar methods among young people and women in residential areas with a low level of organisation in 2012 and 2013.

Developing Roma commitment to forming and participating in organisations

In the Government’s view, it is important to assist both young and adult Roma to engage in the organisations of civil society. This may mean assistance to individuals on organising associations, involving established organisations as

mentors for newly-formed Roma organisations, increasing awareness of the grants that can be applied for and how to do so, etc. Even now, some assistance is given to Roma associations with the application procedure, and some Roma themselves are training each other in running their organisations. There is also collaboration between some Roma and non-Roma organisations. The Ministry of Employment intends to invite Roma and non-Roma organisations to a joint meeting to discuss ways of developing Roma engagement in the organisations of civil society. The National Board for Youth Affairs is also expected to report to the Government at the end of 2012 on what has been achieved by the work on engagement guides for residents in areas with a low level of organisation. This will also indicate whether Roma who live in these residential areas and belong to the target group have been reached by the measure. It is not appropriate, however, to allocate further funding to the organisation of the national minorities.

10.3.2 Work against discrimination and for equality of opportunity in organisations' own activities

In 2010–2012, the National Board for Youth Affairs was tasked with distributing funding to organisations wishing to step up their efforts against discrimination and in favour of equality in their own activities. These projects have so far been mainly directed at gender discrimination and towards equality and the intended development and monitoring of equal treatment plans, inclusion policies and the development of overall strategies for anti-discrimination and equality work.

As early as 2008, the Government identified the need for efforts towards equality among the national minorities. A special effort was therefore made in 2008–2010. This is felt to have resulted in increased awareness of equality issues among the groups, and to the start of more systematic work on equality issues. Some minority organisations report changed attitudes among participants in the projects. The initiative has also contributed to an important exchange of experience between the minorities and to the establishment of networks among national minority women. This work is felt to have helped to reinforce the autonomy of the minorities, and particularly that of Roma women, who held a conference in the spring of 2011.

In the light of this, the Government found it appropriate to continue to support the work of the national minorities both for equality and against discrimination, in line with the assignment already given to the National Board for Youth Affairs for 2010–2012 and described above. The Government therefore decided in July 2011 to instruct the National Board for Youth Affairs to advertise and allocate grants in 2011–2014 to activities within the national minority organisations in favour of equality between men and women and against discrimination. The allocated funding can be used for projects to support women and put them in a better position to perform representative functions within the organisations. Some of the aid can also be given to women's organisational and networking activities within their respective national minorities and for collaboration between the national minorities in the field of equality and discrimination.

The Discrimination Ombudsman and the former Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination have also conducted systematic campaigns for Roma rights. Rights-based educational activities for Roma representatives and organisations have increased awareness of protection against discrimination and thus enhanced the chances for the Roma to assert their human rights.

10.3.3 Diversity of providers

Agreements have been concluded between the Government, not-for-profit organisations and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions within the social and integration fields. Roma organisations have also taken part in these discussions. One of the goals of the agreement in the social area is that not-for-profit players providing services should be able to compete on

equal terms with other players operating in this field. The Government aims to foster a greater diversity of service providers within the social field, both to make use of people's commitment and skills and to meet the need for freedom of choice and quality within the welfare system.

In section 4.7, the Government emphasises the importance of involving Roma in the strategy to improve their living conditions and of basing some of the measures on the work of the Roma themselves in civil society. At the local level, this should be included as a major objective in the work of the pilot municipalities. In the longer term, the provision of services by Roma organisations should become a reality, to make use of important skills and initiative. This could help to reinforce Roma autonomy and increase the diversity of providers.

10.3.4 Roma representation

The issue of Roma representation is a complex and controversial one, partly because the Roma population in Sweden belongs to a culturally heterogeneous ethnic group. With regard to the Delegation's proposal to set up an official Roma representation, the Government believes that the Roma themselves must express a common desire and vision for such a representation. Neither the results of the consultation process nor the views put forward at the consultative meetings suggest that there is any strong desire for this.

The Government welcomes and supports a trend towards stronger national Roma organisations and intends to continue monitoring developments in this area. It is important that consultation and cooperation should take place at all levels in the twenty-year strategy for Roma inclusion.

Ministry of Employment

Extract from the minutes of the Government meeting on 16 February 2012

Present: Prime Minister Reinfeldt, chairman, and Ministers Ask, Larsson, Erlandsson, Hägglund, Carlsson, Borg, Sabuni, Billström, Adelsohn Liljeroth, Tolgfors, Ohlsson, Norman, Attefall, Engström, Kristersson, Elmsäter-Svärd, Ullenhag, Hatt and Löf

Rapporteur: Minister Ullenhag

The Government approved communication 2011/12:56 'A coordinated long-term strategy for Roma inclusion 2012–2032'.

Annex 1: List of bodies consulted

The report on ‘Roma rights — a strategy for Roma in Sweden’ (SOU 2010:55) was forwarded for comment to: the Parliamentary Ombudsmen, the Office of the Chancellor of Justice, the National Courts Administration, the Swedish Prosecution Authority, the National Police Board, the National Council for Crime Prevention, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, the National Board of Health and Welfare, the Swedish National Institute of Public Health, the Office of the Children’s Ombudsman, the Swedish Agency for Government Employers, the Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency, Stockholm county administrative board, Södermanland county administrative board, Kronoberg county administrative board, Skåne county administrative board, Västmanland county administrative board, Örebro county administrative board, Norrbotten county administrative board, the National Agency for Education, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate, the National Agency for Higher Education, the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, the Swedish National Board of Student Aid, Stockholm University, Södertörn University, Uppsala University, Linköping University, the Sami Parliament, the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth, the Discrimination Ombudsman, the National Board for Youth Affairs, the National Council for Cultural Affairs, the National Archives, the Institute for Language and Folklore, the National Heritage Board, the National Historical Museums, the National Museum of Fine Arts, the Swedish National Museums of World Culture, the National Music Collections, the Living History Forum, the Council for the European Social Funds in Sweden, the Swedish Public Employment Service, the Swedish Work Environment Authority, Nordiska museet (the Nordic Museum), Malmö Museums, Bohuslän Museum, Sveriges Radio AB, Sveriges Television AB, Sveriges Utbildningsradio AB, Norrbotten county council, Skåne county council, Stockholm county council, Västmanland county council, Alingsås municipality, Alvesta municipality, Aneby municipality, Arboga municipality, Boden municipality, Borlänge municipality, Borås municipality, Botkyrka municipality, Boxholm municipality, Dals-Ed municipality, Degerfors municipality, Eksjö municipality, Emmaboda municipality, Enköping municipality, Eskilstuna municipality, Eslöv municipality, Falu municipality, Filipstad municipality, Finspång municipality, Flen municipality, Gislaved municipality, Gotland municipality, Gullspång municipality, Gävle municipality, Gothenburg municipality, Götene municipality, Hallsberg municipality, Halmstad municipality, Haninge municipality, Haparanda municipality, Helsingborg municipality, Huddinge municipality, Hudiksvall municipality, Hulstafred municipality, Håbo municipality, Hässleholm municipality, Hörby municipality, Järfälla municipality, Jönköping municipality, Karlskoga municipality, Karlskrona municipality, Katrineholm municipality, Klippan municipality, Knivsta municipality, Kramfors municipality, Kristianstad municipality, Kristinehamn municipality, Kumla municipality, Kungsbacka municipality, Kungsör municipality, Köping municipality, Laholm municipality, Landskrona municipality, Lerum municipality, Lindesberg municipality, Linköping municipality, Ljungby municipality, Ljusdal municipality, Luleå municipality, Lund municipality, Lysekil municipality, Malmö municipality, Mariestad municipality, Markaryd municipality, Mark municipality, Mellerud municipality, Munkedal municipality, Nacka municipality, Nora municipality, Norrköping municipality, Nyköping municipality, Oskarshamn municipality, Oxelösund municipality, Pajala municipality, Ronneby municipality, Sala municipality, Sigtuna municipality, Sjöbo municipality, Skinnskatteberg municipality, Skurup municipality, Sollefteå municipality, Solna municipality, Staffanstorps municipality, Stockholm municipality, Sundbyberg municipality, Sundsvall municipality, Svalöv municipality, Sävsjö municipality, Södertälje municipality, Tibro municipality, Tierp municipality, Tranås municipality, Trollhättan

municipality, Täby municipality, Uddevalla municipality, Ulricehamn municipality, Umeå municipality, Upplands-Bro municipality, Uppsala municipality, Vallentuna municipality, Vingåker municipality, Vänersborg municipality, Värnamo municipality, Västervik municipality, Västerås municipality, Växjö municipality, Åmål municipality, Åstorp municipality, Älvkarleby municipality, Örebro municipality, Örkelljunga municipality, Örnköldsvik municipality, Östersund municipality, Amnesty international, Carers Sweden (AHR), Civil Rights Defenders, Coompanion, É Romani Glinda, the Swedish Property Federation, the Swedish National Council of Adult Education, the Lovara Association in Lund, the Federation of Private Enterprises, the Swedish Disability Federation, the Swedish Union of Tenants, the International Roma and Traveller Women's Forum, the Islamic Collaboration Council, the Council of Swedish Jewish Communities, the Swedish Trade Union Confederation, Le Romané Nevimata, Lika Unika ('Equally Unique'), Länkarnas Riksförbund, the National Mental Health Network, the Swedish National Pensioners' Organisation, Uppsala Pentecostal Church, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute, the National Roma Travellers' Federation, the National Travellers' Federation, the International Association for Immigrant Women (RIFFI), the Swedish Sports Confederation, the National Association for Aid to Drug Abusers, the National Parent-Teacher Association, the National Union of Roma in Europe, the National Federation for Adult Education, Roma International, the Roma 'Svarta Safirer' ('Black Sapphire') Association, the Roma National Union, the Roma Delegation, Roma Christian Social Democrats, the Roma Cultural Centre in Malmö, the National Roma Youth Association of Sweden, the Roma Cultural Centre in Stockholm, Save the Children, the Red Cross, United Student Unions of Sweden — Adults (SFS Vux), the Cooperation Group for Ethnic Organisations in Sweden (SIOS), the Social Mission, Stockholm City Mission, the Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations, the Swedish Section of the International Commission of Jurists, the Swedish United Nations Association, the Swedish Tornedaler Federation, the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, the Sweden Finnish Delegation, the Swedish Association of Municipal Housing Companies, the Christian Council of Sweden, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, the Swedish Pensioners' Association, the Confederation of Professional Employees, the Church of Sweden, the Roma Cultural-Historical Association.

The following also submitted comments on their own initiative: the Stockholm School of Theology, Agnesberg folk high school, Naim Tahiri, Fatima Bergendahl, the Cultural Group for Traveller People — Gothenburg region, the Romano Pasos Research Centre, the Roma Association for Cultural Development, Justitia et Pax, Robert Brisenstam, the National Union of Teachers in Sweden, the Discrimination Office in Uppsala, the Malmö Cultural Committee, the Swedish Medical Association.