Sweden’s response to the letter from the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

**See below for Sweden’s response to the questions 1 and 4.2.**

**1. Research: understanding the health care needs of LGTBI and GNC people**

On January 21, 2021 the Swedish Government adopted an action plan for equal rights and opportunities for LGBTIQ people, with a view to ensuring the full and equal enjoyment of human rights by LGBTIQ persons. The action plan applies until 2023 but also contains strategic initiatives to complement the long-term national strategy adopted in 2014.

Governments work and policy is to be based on reliable and up-to-date information and it is therefore a continuous need to gather information about the living conditions for LGBTIQ-persons in Sweden. The main part of that information is gathered through reports from government authorities, especially those who have been appointed as LGBTIQ-strategic authorities but also from other information gathering assignments given to other government authorities.

Examples of sources of information on the area of LGBTIQ-equality:

The Public Health Agency of Sweden collects statistics on broad spectrum of determinants for health, ranging from experiences from degrading treatment based on sexual orientation and gender identity, to experience of violence, participation in civil society, level of trust in other people and society, physical activity, employment, health status etc. Some main results from the national health survey “Health on Equal Terms” are presented on the agency website. The survey is conducted every second year. The information that can be extracted from the national health survey makes it possible to follow up and compare different aspects of living conditions and experiences of LGBT-persons such as exposure to discrimination, violence, physical health and mental health etc. The latest reports on LGBT-persons were published in 2014 and 2015 and included a comparison on LGBT-persons situation and health during the last ten years.

The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) have published several reports regarding young LGBTQ-persons situation in Sweden. In 2019 they published the report “Olika verkligheter – Unga hbtq-personer om sina levnadsvillkor” (Different realities – Young LGBTQ persons about their living conditions) and they are currently working on a government assignment to produce an extensive report on young LGBTQ persons living conditions, health and risk of exposure to conversion therapy. The reports will be published in 2022.

The Equality Ombudsman (DO) collects and analyses complaints made to the Ombudsman on discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. It is important to follow-up on the number of complaints made, however, it is equally important to remember that the number of complaints does not reflect the prevalence of discrimination since the majority of people who have experienced discrimination do not file a complaint.

The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention collects and presents biannually statistics on hate crimes based on police reports with identified hate crime motives, including where a homophobic or transphobic motive has been identified. Details on homophobic hate crime such as type of offence committed, location of the crime, relationship between victim and offender are included in the statistics. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention have also done in-depth studies on investigation and prosecution decisions for reported offences with an identified hate crime motive (Brå 2021:1), and self-reported exposure to homophobic or transphobic hate crimes and harassment (Brå 2020:14).

The Government has also commissioned the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention to investigate the possibilities of supplementing the background information in the Swedish Crime Survey in order to obtain data on LGBTIQ people’s vulnerability to crime, their safety, and their trust in the criminal justice system.

There is also a need for up-to-date knowledge about older LGBTQ persons need in care, health, and life conditions. The Government has therefore given The Swedish Public Health Agency the task of mapping the health and living conditions of older LGBTQI people, and the National Board of Health and Welfare is tasked with mapping municipal care and service for older LGBTQI people. The reports are to be submitted on 29 September 2023.

An improved structure for coordinating and monitoring LGBTIQ-equality

In December 2021, the government appointed the Swedish Public Health Agency to support, coordinate and follow up the LGBTQI-strategic authorities and the implementation of the action plan for equal rights and opportunities for LGBTQI people. There are now eleven LGBTQI strategic authorities and this assignment will strengthen and promote long-term knowledge-based work, coordinated exchange of experience, allow for more effective coordination, systematic follow-up, and support in knowledge development.

Terminology and methodology

LGBTIQ is an umbrella term for a very heterogeny group of individuals and many different ways of identifying and relating to society's norms around gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation. Hence, there are several methodological challenges when it comes to gathering of information about the living conditions for LGBTIQ-persons. This means that it is not always possible to obtain information through statistical surveys and instead a more qualitative approach is necessary.

Data protection rules to secure respect for private and family life

All people have the right to respect for private and family life and to the protection of their personal data. Hence, organizations, public authorities and businesses that handle personal data must comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). GDPR creates a uniform regulatory framework across the EU for the processing of personal data. The regulation contains rules on how authorities, companies and others may process personal data. The regulation is directly applicable in each member state.

**4.2. What measures are being taken to provide age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education inclusive of sexual and gender diversity in educational institutions?**

Sweden has a long history of standing up for issues relating to sexual and reproductive health and rights through education. Comprehensive sexuality education has been integrated in national curricula since 1955. Step by step, reforms have empowered women and girls as societal actors, which has contributed to Sweden’s social and economic development. CSE is not only a matter for women and girls, but important for all genders. It is the best way to provide children and young persons with the tools they need to stay healthy, become empowered and be respectful and inclusive. Sweden remains committed to empowering young persons so that they can take charge of their lives and ultimately help contribute to the 2030 Agenda goals, not just in Sweden but all across the globe.

It is stated in the curriculum of the preschool that no child should be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of the gender, gender identity or expression, ethnic origin, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age, of the child or any person with whom the child is associated, or to any other abusive treatment. All such tendencies should be actively counteracted.

It is also stated in the curriculum for the compulsory school, preschool class and school-age educare, as well as in the curriculum for the upper secondary school, that no one should be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age or disability, or to other degrading treatment. All such tendencies should be actively combated.

Comprehensive sexuality education is integrated in school curricula. In February 2021, the Swedish government decided on changes in the curricula concerning comprehensive sexuality education. As of 1 July 2022, the knowledge area of comprehensive sexuality education will be named “sexuality, consent and relationships”, emphasising what is seen as the core components of good quality comprehensive sexuality education. In the curricula, there are both overall wordings about the aims of comprehensive sexuality education, and more detailed learning objectives in different school subjects, e.g. biology and civics. In recent years it has become common to teach comprehensive sexuality education with a cross-curricular approach.

The Swedish National Agency for Education was appointed as an LGBTIQ strategic government agency in 2018. The Agency plays an important role in promoting access to education, also including comprehensive sexuality education, in a safe environment for all pupils.

The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, also an LGBTIQ strategic government agency since 2014, is commissioned to work for an open and inclusive school environment for young LGBTIQ persons.

In 2020, degree objectives for comprehensive sexuality education were introduced in all teacher education programs, which means that teacher students must be taught and be able to demonstrate an ability to communicate and reflect on issues concerning identity, sexuality and relationships. The purpose of the changes is that the teacher education programs will give students an increased competence in matters concerning identity, sexuality and relationships.