

The Swedish Institute for Human Rights was established in 2022. It is Sweden's national human rights institution (NHRI) and has been accredited with A-status. The Institute's mandate is to monitor, investigate and report on how human rights are respected, protected and fulfilled in Sweden.

With our report and factsheets, the Institute contributes to the 4th UPR cycle review of Sweden on 5 May 2025 at the UN Human Rights Council.

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Explicit legal protection is needed

Swedish legislation against hate crime does not include disability as a protected ground. The existing general provisions are insufficient to combat hate crimes against persons with disabilities and hamper effective data collection. The Institute is concerned that Sweden risks failing to fulfil its obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) regarding legislation for better protection of rights and effective justice.

Suggested recommendations

- › Introduce disability as a protected ground in hate crime legislation.
- › Strengthen the involvement of persons with disabilities, including children and young people, in the implementation of the CRPD.

Suggested questions for Sweden

- › How does the Swedish government ensure that persons with disabilities are protected against hate crime in line with the human rights model of disability?
- › How will Sweden ensure systematic review of existing laws, policies and regulations and take the legislative action required to conform with the obligations under the CRPD?

Relevant recommendations from the third cycle

- › “[i]mprove the accessibility of effective remedies against any form of discrimination, including hate crimes” by the Philippines, (supported).
- › “[f]urther improve equal access of persons with disabilities to employment, education, health care as well as justice and governmental services” by Poland, (156.274) (supported).

The Institute has not observed any initiatives by the Government to amend the legislation to include disability as a protected ground in the legal framework against hate crime in Sweden. Nor has there been any general legislative review of CRPD compliance since Sweden ratified the CRPD. The Government should better involve persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in CRPD implementation, including legislative action, in a manner they find meaningful.



In 2024, the CRPD Committee recommended Sweden to

- › Systematically review existing laws, policies and regulations to ascertain the legislative action required to conform with the obligations under the Convention and establish human rights-based action plans with a clear concept of disability that contain measures to promote, protect and fulfil the rights under the Convention.¹
- › Amend the national legislation on hate crimes to include provisions on hate crimes against persons with disabilities and ensure the collection and analysis of data on hate crimes specifically against persons with disabilities.²

1. See CRPD/C/SWE/CO/2-3 p. 8 (c).

2. CRPD/C/SWE/CO/2-3 p. 13 (c) and (14 c). Before the last review of Sweden, the Swedish Institute for Human Rights urged the CRPD Committee to recommend that Sweden to “[p]rovide explicit protection against disability-based hate crimes and gather statistics on its occurrence”, see Supplementary information to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Regarding the 2nd/3rd State party review procedure of Sweden 2024.

Insufficient laws and statistics on hate crimes against persons with disabilities

Swedish hate crime legislation protects groups and individuals who are targeted with a motive to insult on grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation or transgender identity or expression, or another similar circumstance.³

In 2020, the Swedish Disability Rights Federation sent letters to the Government addressing the need to include hate on the basis of disability in the framework. The reply from the Government included an overview of the legal framework regarding hate crime, discrimination, and general provisions regarding sentencing.⁴

The current legal framework against hate crime does not fully comply with the human rights model of disability established by the CRPD. Further, the exclusion of hate crime on the grounds of disability risks perpetuating insufficient and fragmented reporting, investigation and prosecution of de facto hate crime against persons with disabilities. Data collection on hate crimes against persons with disabilities is almost non-existent.

3. Chapter 16 Section 8-9 and chapter 29 Section 1-3 of the Swedish Criminal Code.

4. <https://funktionenratt.se/wp-content/uploads/frs/2024/11/svar-pa-brev-03479.pdf>, 2025-01-20 with reference to Chapter 29, Section 1-3 of the CrC.