JO
RIKSDAGENS OMBUDSMÄN
1809

The Swedish Parliamentary Ombudsmen

Annual Report 2025

Summary in English

RIKSDAGENS
OMBUDSMÄN

1809

The Swedish Parliamentary Ombudsmen

Annual Report

2025

JO

RIKSDAGENS OMBUDSMÄN

1809

Riksdagens tryckeri, Sweden, 2026
Production: Riksdagens ombudsmän (JO)

Contents

Background

Parliamentary control

Parliamentary control is a collective term for the Riksdag's (parliament) special powers to review and monitor the work of the Government and the public administration. The three pillars comprise:

1. **Parliamentary review**
   The right of Members of the Riksdag to pose questions to the Government, the Parliamentary Committee on the Constitution (KU) reviews the actions of ministers and the handling of government matters, the Riksdag has the power to initiate a vote of no confidence in a minister or the Government.

2. **Judicial review**
   The Parliamentary Ombudsmen (JO) ensures that governmental authorities treat citizens in accordance with the law.

3. **Efficiency audits**
   The Swedish National Audit Office reviews what government funds are used for and how efficiently they are used.

The Parliamentary Ombudsmen

The Parliamentary Ombudsmen form one pillar of parliamentary control in Sweden. The task of the ombudsmen is to review the implementation of laws and other regulations in the public sector on behalf of the Riksdag and independent of the executive power. This review includes courts of law and other public authorities, as well as their employees.

The four Parliamentary Ombudsmen are appointed directly by the Riksdag (parliament). The ombudsmen are independent in their decisions and answer directly to the Riksdag. Each autumn they submit an annual report to the Riksdag which contains an account of the work carried out during the previous working year with statistics and a selection of decisions.

The task of the Parliamentary Ombudsmen

The main task of the Parliamentary Ombudsmen (JO) is to ensure compliance with the law. The ombudsmen are specifically tasked with ensuring that public authorities and courts abide by the provisions of the Instrument of Government concerning impartiality and objectivity and that the public sector does not infringe on the basic freedoms and rights of the citizens. The ombudsmen's supervision includes ensuring that public authorities deal with their cases and in general carry out their tasks in accordance with existing legislation.

The ombudsmen's enquiries are prompted both by complaints filed by the public or initiated by the ombudsmen themselves. Regularly inspections are made of various public authorities and courts in the country.

Powers and sanctions

- The Parliamentary Ombudsmen have the authority to issue statements if the measures taken by a public authority or a public official are in conflict with an existing law or other statute or are incorrect or inappropriate in some other way.
- The ombudsmen have the right to issue advisory opinions intended to promote uniform and appropriate application of the law.
- In the role of extra-ordinary prosecutor, the ombudsmen may initiate legal proceedings against an official who, disregarding the obligations of his office or his mandate, has committed a criminal offence other than an offence against the Freedom of the Press Act and the right to freedom of expression.
- The ombudsmen may report a civil servant for dereliction of duty.
- The ombudsmen may recommend changes to statutes to either the Riksdag or the Government.
- The ombudsmen may refer cases to a regular supervisory authority for action.

History in short

1809 The Office of the Parliamentary Ombudsmen was established in connection with the adoption of the Instrument of Government in 1809.

1810 The first Parliamentary Ombudsman (JO), Lars Augustin Mannerheim, were elected.

1915 A Military Ombudsman (MO) were established to supervise the military authorities.

1941 The election period for the Ombudsmen (JO & MO) were extended from one year to four years.
The rule that only men could be elected as ombudsmen were removed.

1957 The Parliamentary Ombudsmen was given the power to supervise local government authorities.

1967 The office of The Military Ombudsman (MO) were abolished and the number of Parliamentary
Ombudsmen (JO) were increased to three.

1975 The number of Parliamentary Ombudsmen (JO) were increased to four.

2011 The Parliamentary Ombudsmen is designated National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) under the OPCAT.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman's reflection on the 215th year of operations

During the year, I was re-elected as Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman. In reflecting on the year's operations, I will permit myself to look back on my first mandate period, describe our operational objectives and report on significant events at the authority during this period.

In my opinion, even if – or, perhaps, precisely because – our mission is timeless and eternally necessary, we must always strive to ensure that we are in step with the times. This is equally true with regard to those over whom we exercise supervision as it is to our own internal working methods.

The Riksdag appoints four ombudsmen to independently execute their supervisory assignment. In addition, I have been elected as the authority's head of administration. The Parliamentary Ombudsmen are thus special and distinctive, yet at the same time also in many ways a public authority like any other. Our assignment is constitutional and we work in the service of citizens. However, due to our independent status, we do not receive annual appropriation directions, directives or other assignments from the Government. Our independence also means that we ourselves determine what we review and how and when we do so. It is therefore especially important to set our own goals to work towards.

In consultation with my fellow parliamentary ombudsmen, I have continuously reflected on our long-term objectives. This is a matter of what we four need to do in order to ensure that the Parliamentary Ombudsmen remains an authority that people feel they can trust and turn to, and that effectively contributes to increasing the legal certainty of public administration. We are agreed on our operational goals and on the issues that need to be prioritised if we are to achieve them. Although in the short term certain priorities require us to commit time and resources to matters other than pure case management, we are convinced that this has already borne fruit, and that it will continue to do so in the long term.

In the spring, I established a Strategic Vision for the Parliamentary Ombudsmen for the period 2026–2028. In terms of content, this is largely the same as the earlier strategic visions I have established.

It includes how we wish to be seen by other public authorities and individuals, as well as how we would like our staff to perceive the authority as a workplace.

If the Parliamentary Ombudsmen are to complete their assignment optimally and sustainably, the following goals must be attained:

- The Parliamentary Ombudsmen enjoy a high level of trust from the courts and public authorities whose activities we review, and from the individuals who complain to us.
- Communication concerning the Parliamentary Ombudsmen's assignment and decisions is clear and readily accessible.
- We are an attractive, efficient and modern authority with competent management and staff.

The Strategic Vision has been formulated based on both an external analysis and our own follow-up and evaluation. It is the basis for all strategic and operational planning of the authority's activities. The Strategic Vision provides clear direction and priorities and is a force behind the agencies continuous improvement work.

We have been actively working for several years now on the part of the Strategic Vision related to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen as a workplace. I and my fellow parliamentary ombudsmen are convinced that our good results are largely due to the fact that we and our competent staff enjoy a good and stimulating work environment and job satisfaction. We can see from surveys of our organisational and psychosocial work environments that our staff enjoy and are proud of their work with the Parliamentary Ombudsmen. We have had no difficulty recruiting qualified assessors in recent years, and we are retaining them and our legal experts for longer than previously. Our governance and management are based on trust and we encourage dialogue and exchanges of experience. We trial new working methods in pilot projects, including digitalising case documents and delegating decision-making to legal experts. We follow up, evaluate and retain, adjust or shelve methods. On the whole, we have a very good work and learning environment and continue to work to improve it further. The Parliamentary Ombudsmen's operational goals and activities are based on ideas and proposals from active employees, creating a level of shared ownership that increases job satisfaction and improves end results.

This is something that undoubtedly occurs in a similar fashion at other government agencies. The pace of development has increased significantly at the Parliamentary Ombudsmen over recent years and it is gratifying to see the commitment of our staff and the constructive contribution they make. This bodes well for our continued development in the coming years.

Our Strategic Vision includes the Parliamentary Ombudsmen enjoying a high level of trust from those whose activities we review, and from the individuals who turn to us. One cannot take trust for granted and maintaining this trust

is one of our highest priorities. Naturally, to earn trust the Parliamentary Ombudsmen's decisions must be of the highest legal quality. However, this is not enough. Our decisions must be notified with a reasonable period of time, which is the case at present. Moreover, the Parliamentary Ombudsmen need to communicate their assignment and decisions to the right addressees or target groups. For example, the Parliamentary Ombudsmen pronounces many decisions containing general guidance that can be applied by many public authorities, not just the one the case itself relates to. For such guidance, or other decisions, to have full effect, information about what the Parliamentary Ombudsmen do needs to be readily accessible to public authorities and individuals.

As we are all aware, how well democracy works is largely determined by the extent of citizens' knowledge and access to facts. We launched a new website a few years ago with improved information about what the Parliamentary Ombudsmen do, as well as what we do not do, and we have simplified and clarified the various stages of the complaint form. In addition, we have improved the website's decisions search engine and redoubled efforts to make decisions more searchable. We have also given lectures to various target groups, primarily young lawyers and municipal lawyers, about the Parliamentary Ombudsmen's assignment and decisions, as well as recently giving presentations to several committees of the Riksdag. We have increased the number of press releases we issue and otherwise improved our media service. We intend to continue to develop our external communication.

With regard to the continuous increase in the number of complaints received, in principle I view this as something positive. If they increasingly put their trust in us to give them redress, hopefully this is because we have earned that trust. As we are all aware, trust must be earned at any given moment. We cannot rest on our laurels. We must continue to relentlessly review our organisation and adapt it to the constantly changing conditions.

I shall now turn to the most important factor if we are to continue to develop in the right direction.

The assignment of Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman has been described as something of a challenge in both literature and public inquiries. In the most recent review of the Parliamentary Ombudsmen, it was noted that there are a number of issues concerning how the role and assignment of the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman relates to the independence of the other parliamentary ombudsmen and that, depending on how the regulations are applied, there may be consequences for both the ability of the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman to lead the authority and the ability of the other ombudsmen to adopt an independent position when undertaking their supervisory assignment (2021/22:URF2 p. 652).

For my own part, I have not experienced any such challenge. I have had the privilege of working with three forward-thinking colleagues with the best interests of the authority as a whole at heart. We fundamentally respect one another's roles, we exchange thoughts and ideas and we have a high level of consensus regarding our strategic vision for the Parliamentary Ombudsmen as an authority, both now and in the long term. Without the splendid collaboration that have enjoyed since I took up the post, and continue to enjoy, with my fellow ombudsmen Thomas Norling, Katarina Påhlsson and Per Lennerbrant, it would not be possible to pursue this long-term strategy.

Moving on, let us discuss some key indicators from 2025.

In the previous annual report submitted a year ago, I reported that the authority has never before experience such a sharp increase in the number of complaints received. Complaints increased by 11 per cent. The figure for 2025 is approximately 32 per cent, which roughly corresponds to an additional 3,700 complaints compared to the previous year. We have coped very well with this challenge and I would venture to say that we would not have succeeded had we not made all of the changes I previously noted.

It is worth noting that, despite the substantial increase in complaints, the Parliamentary Ombudsmen can report positive figures in all relevant indicators. (The figures in brackets below relate to 2024.) The number of decisions in referred cases has increased to 484 (401). At 488 (390), the total number of cases we referred was higher than for the last five years. During 2025, we reached twice as many decisions to launch initiatives as during 2024. Four years ago, the average processing time for a referred case was 500 days. This year, processing time has been cut to 306 (346) days. Five years ago, we had 166 open cases that were over 12 months old. The figure this year is 25 (32).

The number of supervisory cases has also increased on a broad front this year. Almost all supervisory cases (> 99%) were initiated by a complaint. There have been particularly notable percentage rises in complaints about the police, the general courts, the education system, social services and cases involving aliens. However, most complaints relate to prisons and the probation service. In terms of numbers, the largest rise has been in complaints about the police, with approximately 660 more complaints received than in the previous year. This corresponds to an increase of just under 50 per cent.

During the year, we have tried and succeeded in increasing the number of inspections, particularly with regard to our OPCAT activities.

In conclusion, I would like to mention that we will be leasing other premises in Stockholm for approximately two and a half years from autumn 2026. The Riksdag Administration has decided to renovate the property on Västra Trädgårdsgatan that we currently lease and while work is carried out we will

be operating from temporary offices on Sveavägen. We have also rented premises in Gothenburg and recruited legal experts, and are currently making other preparations prior to opening an office there in the spring. This will help to secure skills provision for the Parliamentary Ombudsmen.

Erik Nymansson
Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman

Observations made by the Ombudsmen during the year

- **Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman Erik Nymansson**
  Area of responsibility 1
- **Parliamentary Ombudsman Katarina Påhlsson**
  Area of responsibility 2
- **Parliamentary Ombudsman Thomas Norling**
  Area of responsibility 3
- **Parliamentary Ombudsman Per Lennerbrant**
  Area of responsibility 4

Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman Erik Nymansson

My supervisory area includes the courts, defence, healthcare, education and research, taxation and the Swedish Population Register. It also covers public procurement and a number of government agencies, including Finansinspektionen, the Swedish Companies Registration Office and the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth. In terms of the number of complaints, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman's supervisory area is somewhat smaller than the areas covered by the other parliamentary ombudsmen, with just over 3,000 new cases registered in 2025.

I have included an unusual decision in the annual report in that I did not criticise judges at Hälsingland District Court, despite the fact that the complaint related to such slow processing that in the normal course of events it would have warranted criticism. I have come to this conclusion due to the particularly strained staffing situation and working conditions at the court. In my observations, I find reason to comment on this decision specifically.

Given the size of its court district, Hälsingland District Court in Hudiksvall should have seven judges: one chief judge, four judges and two junior judges. During the period to which my decision relates, there were only two judges appointed and, to the best of my knowledge, there is now only one in the form of the chief judge. During the last three years, the court has advertised for judges on eight occasions. No-one qualified for appointment as an ordinary judge has applied for the posts. The adjudication process has instead largely been conducted by visiting judges drawn from a reserve pool at the Swedish National Courts Administration, who have travelled to Hudiksvall during the week. This reserve pool was not established in order to as good as replace the judges at a district court; rather, it was intended to cover in the event of illness and similar absences.

This situation is deeply concerning. Hälsingland District Court is not, however, the only district court with recruitment problems, even if it is the court where the problem is most pressing. Chief judges have bemoaned the difficulty of recruiting judges in many of my supervisory cases, often explaining that shortcomings were caused by just this. This is not simply anecdotal evidence obtained by me from a limited number of cases; these recruitment difficulties have been confirmed by the minutes of meetings of the Judges Proposals Board during the year. District courts that have experienced recruitment problems can be found in places such as Visby, Kalmar and Hässleholm, but also in larger cities such Linköping, Borås and Västerås. However, the picture that emerges is that district courts in Norrland are notable in this regard. In addition to Hudiksvall, there is a lack of applications for judges posts in Mora and Härnösand, but also larger cities such as Gävle and Sundsvall.

I would also like to mention that the problem of recruitment to the country's district courts has increased in recent years. According to the Judges Proposals Board's annual reports, the number of advertised judges posts that could not be filled was 27 in 2022 (30.7%), 31 in 2023 (35%) and 46 in 2024 (50%). The figure in brackets is the percentage of advertised judges posts that were not filled, so, half in 2024. This is ominous. In some places, recruitment problems result in a workload and work environment for judges that are far from desirable, which in turn has a negative impact on the attractiveness of the judge's profession.

There are 48 district courts in Sweden. It is worth noting that there is no corresponding recruitment problem at the country's 12 administrative courts.

In my general account, I have noted that one of the areas in which the number of complaints has increased most during the year is the general courts. We are talking about an increase of just over 40 per cent. Historically, complaints about the general courts have remained stable at around 400 per year, hence the current situation of approximately 700 is a break in the trend. There has been no comparable increase in complaints about the administrative courts.

The increasing number of complaints is in itself a matter for concern and, while it may have many explanations, it is clear that the difficulty in staffing the country's district courts with judges may have a negative impact on case management and turnaround time. This may exacerbate the stress involved in being a party to a trial and threatens to undermine public confidence in the legal system, which is so important to the rule of law.

Many courts have problems with long processing times. This has been confirmed by the inspections I have conducted during the year at the district courts in Uddevalla (reg. no. 1795-2025) and Kalmar (reg. no. 9398-2025), as well as a number of cases relating to complaints against Värmland District Court and Vänersborg District Court (reg. nos. 8128-2024, 9293-2024 and 1116-2025). One thing that has been noticeable during the year is the relatively large number of decisions criticising shortcomings in dealing with matters of secrecy (reg. nos. 8898-2023, 5387-2024, 8433-2024 and 2072-2025). That said, I would like to convey my general impression that the operations of courts generally function well.

With regard to my supervisory area education and research, I can confirm that the number of complaints has risen by approximately 55 per cent during the year. Most of these complaints relate to compulsory school and municipal committees and administrations. I have included two decisions in this year's annual report regarding cases in which headteachers have spoken out in a manner that has infringed upon teachers' freedom of expression, on one occasion after a teacher had spoken to the Swedish Schools Inspectorate. In several decisions, I have also noted shortcomings in the formal processing of, for example, decisions on action programmes or suspensions (reg. no. 9040-2024 and 3120-25). Another common failing is schools not processing appeals correctly. In many cases appeals have not been referred to the higher instance within a reasonable period of time, and in certain cases they have not been

referred at all (see, for example, reg. no. 8431-2014). I have also addressed three decisions concerning preschools in the annual report. In one decision, I find that a municipality has failed to comply with the legal requirement to offer preschool activities in which a significant part of teaching is conducted in Sami. The other two decisions concern a municipality's obligation to offer a minimum number of hours of preschool to, in one case, children of parents who are unemployed or on parental leave and, in the other case, to children whose parents are combining parental leave with studies.

With regard to my supervisory area healthcare, during the year I decided to conduct a series of four inspections of forensic psychiatric clinics and a series of four inspections of general adult psychiatric clinics. These inspections have been conducted within the scope of the Parliamentary Ombudsmen's OPCAT assignment as Sweden's National Preventive Mechanism. The results of the forensic psychiatry inspections have been published in a thematic report which is available on the Parliamentary Ombudsmen's website. Reports on the four adult psychiatry clinics are being published on an ongoing basis. One thing that has become clear during these inspections is that conditions within psychiatric care vary greatly between regions.

I have also had reason to highlight shortcomings within psychiatry when dealing with complaints, and two decisions in this regard have been included in the annual report. In one decision, I noted that a region had unlawfully refused to accept a patient sentenced to forensic psychiatric care. In another, I found that a hospital had routinely conducted unlawful body searches of patients.

In September, I conducted an inspection of the Health and Social Care Inspectorate (IVO) concerning the agency's processing of requests for access to official documents (reg. no. 9583-2025). The purpose of the inspection was to follow up a corresponding inspection conducted the previous year. Although IVO has made several positive changes to its processes, there is clearly much more work to do. During the review, it emerged that a significant percentage of requests received by the agency are still not processed in accordance with the constitutional requirement for promptness.

In the annual report, I have included a decision prompted by a complaint against the Swedish Armed Forces concerning a search of cadets quarters at Military Academy Karlberg. I noted that, while the Swedish Armed Forces' action was legal under the provision in question, from the point of view of legal certainty it should be considered whether there is a risk that the provision granting the coercive power might be too broadly applied. I was of the opinion that the provision could not be considered to fulfil the requirements for clarity and predictability that must be placed on a provision permitting coercive measures. I made a similar observation a couple of years ago when I reviewed the legality of a decision by a regiment to place conscripts in isolation due to the risk of COVID-19 infection (reg. no. 9432-2020). Given the extraordinary nature of its operations, there is reason to grant the Swedish Armed Forces the power to intervene in matters related to constitutional rights. However, there is a constitutional requirement that legislation be clear regarding under what

circumstances the Swedish Armed Forces has the right to take such measures. In light of the facts that emerged during my reviews, there may be reason to conduct a broader review of regulations concerning coercive measures within the Swedish Armed Forces to ensure that they are up to date and comply with the requirements that can be placed on such regulations.

Parliamentary Ombudsman Katarina Påhlsson

My supervisory area covers the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and parole boards, the Swedish Enforcement Authority, chief guardians, and bodies in the culture sector such as museums and libraries, the Swedish National Archives, the Swedish National Heritage Board and the Swedish Agency for the Media.

There are a number of decisions concerning the activities of chief guardians in this year's annual report. While the complaints are not great in number, they do ultimately concern people in need of society's support with regard to, above all, their rights and financial matters. Moreover, they are often in a vulnerable position. It is therefore vital that chief guardians can recruit suitable guardians and administrators and that they regularly check on the continued suitability of these representatives. I have been focused on this issue to a certain extent recently. In my opinion, it should be part of any examination of suitability to, for example, examine how many assignments a representative has in total, not only within their own municipality. Furthermore, it is important that their annual accounts are audited both within a reasonable period of time and thoroughly, and with due consideration for the circumstances of the individual they have been appointed to represent. After all, this is one of the most important supervisory tools at the disposal of chief guardians.

I have had reason to address the division of roles between chief guardians and the courts. In cases in which it falls to the court to determine whether representation should be arranged and, if so, who can be considered suitable to be entrusted with the assignment, it is the chief guardian's responsibility to provide the court with as complete a basis as possible for deciding on the appointment. Furthermore, a chief guardian must apply for administration when it becomes clear that the individual is in need of it, even if the question of representation has not been resolved. It is then the duty of the court to try the matter. In the course of my supervision, it has become apparent that district courts and chief guardians have differing opinions on whether a court has the power to order a chief guardian to conduct a given investigation when an individual has requested that administration cease. I decided to investigate this within the scope of an initiative and arrived at the conclusion that the legal rules are unclear on this point. I also confirmed that this difference of opinion may give rise to long processing times in the courts to the detriment of the individual, and that public confidence in the public sector may be negatively affected

when an authority fails to comply with an injunction from a court. In light of this, I raised the matter of amending legislation with the Government pursuant to Section 13 of the Act with Instructions for the Parliamentary Ombudsmen (SFS 2023:499).

A public authority must be accessible to the public and inform the public how individuals can contact the authority. Despite the fact that the Swedish Enforcement Authority states that the public can contact the authority on weekdays at certain times on a given telephone number, a review revealed that over half of the 1.5 million incoming calls during 2024 went unanswered. Naturally, this does not meet the requirements of administrative law and is a serious matter, not least from the perspective of legal certainty. The decision is included in the annual report. Issues concerning the accessibility of public authorities have been raised in several supervisory areas, including in Parliamentary Ombudsman Thomas Norling's observations.

During the year, I have given some attention to the principle of objectivity as expressed in the constitutional provision that courts of law, administrative authorities and others performing public administration functions shall pay regard in their work to the equality of all before the law and shall observe objectivity and impartiality. There has been cause to remind the Swedish Prison and Probation Service of this principle with regard to, for example, the agency's work to address undue and prohibited influence on the part of inmates. Given circumstances such as the present composition of the client population in combination with overcrowding, and the security threat posed by this kind of influence, it appears obvious that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service should give this particular consideration as a matter of urgency. However, both during inspections and in complaint cases I have noted how difficult it can be to draw the line. It has come to my attention that actions that, in my opinion, ought to be considered legitimate expressions of dissatisfaction or attempts on the part of inmates to quite simply exercise their rights have been reported as attempts to exert undue influence. This is unacceptable. An example of this is included in the annual report.

As I described in both my overview in last year's annual report and in my presentation to the Committee on the Constitution in March 2025, during the previous year I had conducted an investigation into the potential consequences and risks of cell-sharing for those deprived of liberty in remand prisons and prisons respectively. The series of inspections was conducted within the scope of the Parliamentary Ombudsmen's OPCAT assignment as a National Preventive Mechanism for the prevention of cruel, inhuman or other degrading treatment or punishment. A report on conditions in remand prisons was published in February 2025 and a report on conditions in prisons was published in May that year. Both reports are available on the

Parliamentary Ombudsmen's website. It should be reiterated that the lack of time inmates have to themselves is a recurring theme in the reports. Other specific risks identified included not matching, or poorly matching, cellmates, and that there was no structured follow-up of how cell-sharing was working in practice. My overall conclusion was that the conditions in remand prisons posed a real risk that inmates would be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment, while conditions in prisons were even graver.

Complaints related in one way or another to overcrowding remain common, and it is worrying that they increasing contain claims of inmates being subjected to threats of or actual violence by fellow inmates. The present overcrowding has had a negative impact on the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's conditions for differentiating between inmates and transferring inmates to another prison, or segregating them, should the need arise. In prison, an inmate should be able to be segregated at their own request if this is deemed appropriate in the case in question; information suggests that this is becoming increasingly rare, and that lack of places is the main cause. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service has reported that, due to the difficult circumstances, the agency has been forced to deliberately take more risks when placing inmates and that the trend is towards more reported incidents of threats and violence, while by the agency's own estimate the number of unreported incidents is significant. A number of decisions related to this have been issued during the year and a couple of them can be found in this annual report. One thing they have in common is that they relate to the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's responsibility for inmates safety and security.

Parliamentary Ombudsman Thomas Norling

The matters within my supervisory area are related to social insurance and social services, including the compulsory institutional care of addicts and youths. My supervision also covers labour market cases and cases related to the application of the Act (1993:387) concerning Support and Services for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments.

During the year, I have been particularly alert to shortcomings in the processing of cases that in one way or another have made it more difficult for individuals to exercise their rights pursuant to the Act concerning Support and Services for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments. Over the last 10 years, the number of complaints to the Parliamentary Ombudsman about the processing of such cases has increased from 100 in 2015 to 239 in 2025. This is such a significant increase that I considered it a matter of urgency to more closely examine what problems this might cause today from the point of view of legal certainty. Based on the complaints investigated during the year, I have been able to discern a pattern of deficiencies in relation to the formal requirements placed on processing. Let me be clear: it has not been within the scope of my review to determine whether an individual is entitled to a given intervention pursuant to the Act. This is ultimately a matter for the courts to decide once an appeal has been lodged.

Having reviewed the cases, one of the questions I have had cause to ask myself is whether the nature of the Act concerning Support and Services for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments as a law of rights is jeopardised by the formal shortcomings in processing. It would be a serious matter were such shortcomings to lead to an intervention not being implemented or being significantly delayed once the individual has been granted it. One critical consideration is that a law must be applied with respect for the purposes for which it is intended. In this regard, one worrying concern is whether the processing of cases under the Act by the criticised municipalities is representative of the processing by municipalities that have yet to be reviewed. I will be monitoring developments in this area to obtain a clearer understanding of the matter.

The Act concerning Support and Services for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments is a law of rights only if it is applied as such. I have described the rights that follow from the Act in more detail in a decision during the year (reg. no. 5244-2023). Activities pursuant to the Act must promote equitable living conditions and full participation in the life of the

community for those covered by the Act. However, I have recently noted that matters of, for example, the individual's right to exert influence and to self-determination have been overlooked during processing. Here, I would like to underline that the municipal committees that decide on cases related to the Act are just as responsible for ensuring that these elements of the legislation are complied with as they are for matters of a more formal nature.

In this year's annual report, I have included some decisions that exemplify the failure of municipalities to consistently comply with basic requirements of administrative law when processing cases under the Act. This selection is intended to illustrate some of the difficulties that an individual may have to contend with when processing fails to meet the requirement for, for example, legality, predictability and equal treatment.

In one of the decisions, the problem was that the municipality had not implemented the intervention personal assistance in the home to the extent to which the individual was entitled (reg. no. 6204-2023). Referring to work environment and recruitment problems, the municipality instead chose to partly implement the intervention through short-stay accommodation. I was critical of this. In another decision, I criticised a municipal committee for shortcomings in the processing of three administrative court rulings to refer a case concerning personal assistance back to the committee. Despite the fact that the court clearly stated that the individual was entitled to the intervention, and that the committee was solely to consider the scope of the intervention, the committee instead reached a new decision to reject the individual's application on different grounds (reg. no. 2428-2024). Once a court has finally adjudicated a matter within the scope of its review and referred the matter back, there is no scope for a committee to perform a new examination of the matter. If a committee is dissatisfied with the court's assessment of an issue of fact, its only recourse is to appeal against the judgement. In the case in question, the committee did not do so but instead acted in contravention of the administrative court's ruling. As a consequence of the committee's processing, the individual was forced to wait for almost four years for their case to be finally adjudicated, a state of affairs that is completely unacceptable. For this, the committee was severely criticised. The issue of slow processing was also actualised in four cases processed by a city district committee in Stockholm. As a result of passive processing, processing times for the cases significantly exceeded the guidelines for a case concerning personal assistance previously stated by the Parliamentary Ombudsmen (see JO 2019/20 p. 588). In all four cases, the individual had an unreasonably long wait for a decision, something I was critical of (reg. no. 6087-2024 etc.).

When assessing what is required of public authorities in terms of good administration, emphasis should be placed on the purpose of the Admin-

istrative Procedure Act to protect the individual and ensure that contacts between authorities and private persons are smooth and simple. Administration should be clearly characterised by a citizen perspective. An efficient and legally secure procedure, along with the authorities' ability to otherwise provide good service to the public, are critical to maintaining public confidence in the administration (Government Bill 2016/17:180 p. 20 f.). One thing the cases I have addressed in my overview have in common is that the requirement for good administration has not been fulfilled.

Over recent years, I have also highlighted shortcomings related to the public's opportunities to contact the authorities. In a decision from 2022 (see JO 2022/23 p. 372), the matter in hand was the Swedish Pensions Agency's recurring problem of poor accessibility and poor service when individuals attempted to get through to the agency on the telephone. A decision from 2023 (see JO 2023 p. 39) addressed the problems experienced by the Swedish Public Employment Service in meeting requirements in this regard. I have also criticised two unemployment insurance funds for failing to provide adequate access and service (see JO 2024 p. 30).

In this year's annual report, I have included two decisions on this matter. One concerns the Swedish Public Employment Service (reg. no. 9242-2024) and the other the Swedish Enforcement Authority (reg. no. 9915-2024), which is also commented on in Katarina Påhlsson's overview).

In both cases the authorities' accessibility has been far from meeting the requirements that can be placed on, for example, an authority that has chosen telephony as an important contact channel for the public to reach them. It is a matter of urgent public interest that an individual is able to contact an authority within a reasonable period of time, hence I am critical of the fact that telephone access was so deficient in these cases.

Parliamentary Ombudsman Per Lennerbrant

My supervisory area is broad, among other things covering law enforcement agencies, customs, county administrative boards and cases involving aliens at the Swedish Migration Agency, as well as large parts of municipal administration. Although the issues raised are often topical in nature, certain issues recur each year. These include long processing times, unlawful coercive measures and failure to respect the principle of public access to official documents. Something that many of the cases that lead to criticism have in common is that, in one way or another, they deal with issues that affect public confidence in the public sector and the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

It is easy to submit a complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen. The ombudsmen may also become aware of an issue themselves due to, for example, media coverage. As such, the Parliamentary Ombudsmen's reviews often delve deep into society's roots and, when someone has been mistreated, engage with issues that are of fundamental interest regardless of where the violation has occurred. The Parliamentary Ombudsmen are a unique institution that, as part of the Riksdag's checks and balances, plays a vital role in protecting individual rights. Given that the matters arising vary greatly, and that the Parliamentary Ombudsmen's resources are relatively limited, one important element of supervision is to concentrate reviews on those issues the Parliamentary Ombudsmen consider most pressing to comment on.

Over the course of the year, I have conducted a number of inspections on the premises of public authorities. Some of these organisations have not previously been inspected by the Parliamentary Ombudsmen. This is true of the Swedish Tax Agency's Criminal Investigation Division (reg. no. 3070-2025), which was inspected as a continuation of last year's inspection of the Swedish Economic Crime Authority, which was also being inspected by the Parliamentary Ombudsmen for the first time. Other inspections during the year included the Swedish Police Authority – including Police Region Stockholm's Border Police Unit (reg. no. 9952-2025) and Police Region Syd's Fraud Section (reg. no. 12407-2025) – the County Administrative Board of Östergötland (reg. no. 4402-2025) and Solna Municipality's Building Committee (ref. no. 12034-2025).

My main ambition when conducting an inspection is to identify and illuminate areas in which the authority needs to alter its working methods or take other measures. As part of the inspection, I usually give a presentation

on the Parliamentary Ombudsmen's role and assignment. During this presentation, and in discussions with management and staff, I emphasise the fundamental constitutional principles and key provisions regulating public activities. It is my impressions that this is a much-appreciated element that increases knowledge and awareness of public administration's role in society and the importance of public confidence in the authorities.

Some inspections have been conducted within the scope of the Parliamentary Ombudsmen's OPCAT assignment as a National Preventive Mechanism, which for my part involved inspections of Swedish Police Authority custody suites and Swedish Migration Agency detention centres. A separate series of inspections of police custody suites was conducted during 2024, although the conclusions were not reported until this year (reg. no. O 34-2024). Due to overcrowding in Swedish Prison and Probation Service facilities, suspects are sometimes held on remand in police custody suites. Conditions are completely unacceptable and there is a risk of suspects on remand being subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment while held in custody suites. I took an extremely grave view of the facts that emerged.

I have continued to focus on children and have initiated a wide-ranging review of how the Swedish Police Authority treats children when they are arrested and detained on the orders of the prosecutor (reg. no. 9554-2025). With regard to migration detention centres, three of the Swedish Migration Agency's six detention centres were inspected during the autumn. The inspections focused on four issues: the physical environment, the attitudes and competence of staff, access to healthcare, and specific risks to detainees with disabilities or special care needs (reg. nos. O 19-2025, O 24-2025 and O 26-2025).

The review of the Swedish Migration Agency's processing times is ongoing, now focused on the agency's failure to determine matters pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act having been ordered to do so without delay by a court. The Swedish Migration Agency has a substantial backlog of such cases that have not been processed within an acceptable period of time. In practice, this means that many court rulings are not complied with, something that has an adverse affect on respect for courts' rulings in general and, ultimately, on confidence in public administration. The Swedish Migration Agency was severely criticised for this and a copy of the decision was sent to the Government for information purposes (reg. no. 7753-2024 etc.). The Swedish Migration Agency's processing of written requests to determine overdue matters, which is partly automated, has been the subject of a new review (reg. no. 9043-2024).

Complaints against the Swedish Police Authority, the single largest subject of complaints within my supervisory area, have now reached record levels. These complaints are often related to various types of coercive intervention, such as body searches or strip searches, treatment meted out by

individual police officers, the failure to launch a preliminary investigation or the dropping of charges. I have once again had reason to criticise the authority for its slow and passive processing of crimes against property (reg. no. 6161-2024 and 8400-2024). The inspection of Police Region Syd's Fraud Section was a continuation of these reviews. The overall picture is one of many investigations being left pending for very long periods of time without any measures being taken.

Another issue, and one of general importance, that I have examined is how measures taken by officers in the course of their duties are documented. This documentation is crucial to the ability to conduct checks after the event, including by the Parliamentary Ombudsmen. This is especially true when coercive measures are taken. On reviewing the requirements for the documentation of prosecutor's detention orders I found that, in the interests of legal certainty and legitimacy, higher demands should be placed on documentation than is currently the case (reg. no. 7836-2024 etc.). I have also initiated a corresponding review of decisions concerning other types of coercive measures (reg. no. 6533-2025 and 6534-2025).

A Parliamentary Ombudsman may, in the role of extraordinary prosecutor, initiate legal proceedings against an official who, in disregarding the obligations of his office or his mandate, has committed a criminal offence other than an offence against the Freedom of the Press Act or the right to freedom of expression. During the year, I commenced two prosecutions. One prosecution was for a breach of duty of confidentiality when information subject to secrecy in a whistle-blowing case was disclosed. The other was for breach of duty when a prosecutor issued an arrest warrant without ascertaining with adequate thoroughness and care that there were grounds to suspect that a crime had been committed.

Summaries of individual cases

Summaries of individual cases

The following is a selection of summmaries of cases dealt with by the Ombudsmen during the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.

Armed forces

The Swedish Armed Forces' search of cadet accommodation at Military Academy Karlberg was lawful

While the Swedish Instrument of Government (SFS 1974:152) protects everyone from searches of premises by public institutions, there are legal limits to this protection.

In connection with a major investigation, pursuant to Section 47 of the Swedish Act (SFS 1994:1811) on Disciplinary Responsibility in the Total Defence etc. the Military Police searched a large number of residences used by cadets attending the military academy. The purpose of this measure was to search for drugs in order to, among other things, maintain order and prevent security problems.

It is the assessment of the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman that the Swedish Armed Forces' search of premises was legal under the provision in question. The measure can also be considered compatible with the general principles for the use of coercive measures. As such, there are no grounds for criticism.

However, according to the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, the formulation of Section 47 of the Act on Disciplinary Responsibility in the Total Defence etc. may not meet the requirements for clarity and predictability that must be placed on a provision permitting coercive measures. The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman is therefore of the opinion that the provision should be reviewed. [10628-2024]

Criticism of the Swedish Armed Forces because signage at the protected installation Falun Shooting Range failed to meet the requirements of the Installations Protection Act

On his own initiative, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman has inspected signage at the protected military installation Falun Shooting Range to assess whether it complies with the decision on protected status and the provisions of the Installations Protection Act (SFS 2010:305). The inspection related to one sign prohibiting entry and depiction and two notices stating times.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the prohibition sign incorrectly stated the scope of prohibited entry and that the stated prohibition of depiction gave the impression that it related to a larger area than that covered by the authority's decision. With regard to the prohibition on entry, the decision on protected status prohibits unauthorised entry when the shooting range is in use. However, the sign simply stated that unauthorised entry was prohibited. There was no information that the prohibition only applied during the times stated on the notices. This incorrect information may have led individuals to avoid visiting the area even when it was permitted to do so. Furthermore, the placement of one of the signs stating times was inappropriate, as this too may have given the impression that the prohibition on entry was more extensive than provided for in the decision to grant the installation protected status.

The inspected signs have not fulfilled the requirement for clarity in the Installations Protection Act. The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman criticises the Swedish Armed Forces for this. [5304-2025]

Chief guardians

Concerning a chief guardian's obligation to obtain doctor's certificates and make other inquiries in actions to end administration etc.

In the course of the parliamentary Ombudsman's supervision, it has become apparent that the views of district courts and chief guardians differ on the question of whether chief guardians are obliged to assist the courts with supporting documentation in actions to end administration. In this case, the Parliamentary Ombudsman has investigated whether chief guardians have such an obligation.

In the opinion of the Parliamentary Ombuds-

man, it is not self-evident that under applicable law chief guardians are obliged to submit a report concerning such actions when injuncted to do so by the district court. The relevant provisions of the Children and Parents Code (SFS 1949:381) are not entirely clear on the matter, nor does the legislative history or the Supreme Court's case law explicitly support such an interpretation. That said, the Parliamentary Ombudsman believes that there are compelling reasons for chief guardians to comply with any such injunction from the court.

She also states that the difference of opinions between chief guardians and district courts on this matter may prolong proceedings and cause other problems that will ultimately be to the detriment of the individual. Moreover, when an administrative authority does not feel able to comply with a court injunction, it may have a negative impact on public confidence in both the courts and other authorities. In light of this, the Parliamentary Ombudsman finds reason to raise the matter of amending legislation with the Government.

In her decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman also makes certain statements concerning the obligation of administrative authorities to comply with court rulings and injunctions. [6899-2023]

Criticism of the Chief Guardians Committee in Uppsala County for failing to apply for the appointment of a trustee for an individual deemed to be in need of trusteeship. Also certain observations concerning so-called professional trustees.

A healthcare facility reported to the Chief Guardians Committee that an individual receiving care there was in need of trusteeship. Despite the committee finding that the conditions existed to apply for trusteeship, the case was closed without any such application being made to the courts. The Chief Guardians Committee justified its decision by stating that the trustees whose services the authority engages are laypeople and could not be expected to have the necessary qualifications to handle the risks associated with the assignment. No attempt was made to recruit a suitable trustee. The Parliamentary Ombudsman criticises the committee.

In her decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that a chief guardian must apply for the appointment of a trustee if it becomes clear that the individual is in need of it. This obligation is linked to the need for trusteeship itself and the relevant regulations leave no room for the position the committee chose to adopt on the matter. She also emphasises that chief guardians have a far-reaching responsibility to ensure that the need for trusteeship can be met, and must make all reasonable efforts to recruit trustees regardless of the difficulty involved in the assignment. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, an application should have been submitted as soon as it was clear that trusteeship was needed, regardless of whether the matter of recruiting a trustee had been resolved.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman's decision includes a number of observations concerning so-called professional trustees. Among other things, she acknowledges that chief guardians may have difficulty finding suitable trustees and that the case in question illustrates the risk that an individual will not receive adequate help and support. A copy of the decision has been sent to the Government for information. [581-2024]

Concerning the chief guardian's audit of annual accounts from legal guardians. Also criticism of the City of Stockholm's Chief Guardian Committee for delays in this regard

In this case, the Parliamentary Ombudsman has investigated the general method applied by the City of Stockholm's Chief Guardian Committee to auditing legal guardians' annual accounts. The Parliamentary Ombudsman underlines that auditing annual accounts is an important part of the chief guardian's work to ensure that the client's assets are used correctly and appropriately. Among other things, she points out that a thorough audit must include an assessment of whether the reported items are reasonable and whether the expenses incurred actually relate to the individual and whether they are for their benefit. The Parliamentary Ombudsman also notes that vigilance is called for so that irregularities do not occur, and underlines that high demands must be placed on the chief guardian's supervisory activities. While the Parliamentary Ombudsman understands that in certain cases a more general audit may be permissible, she emphasises that a working method involving an initial general reconciliation and audit must not mean that only the formalities of the annual accounts are checked.

In the case reported to the Parliamentary

Ombudsmen, it took just under a year for the committee to complete its audit of the annual accounts and decide on the legal guardian's fee. The committee is criticised for its slow processing time. [5473-2024]

On the control of chief guardians over how many assignments guardians have. Also criticism of the City of Stockholm's Chief Guardian Committee for shortcomings in this regard

It is not uncommon for chief guardians to have difficulty recruiting an adequate number of people willing to take on the assignment of guardian. These recruitment issues increase the need for both so-called professional guardians and others who take on a large number of guardianships to the extent that may even be able to support themselves in this manner. The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes the risk that guardians who take on too many assignments will be unable to adequately serve the interests of all clients. The number of assignments must therefore be considered when assessing the suitability of guardians and administrators.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that the ability to undertake multiple assignments must be assessed individually based on the type of guardianship in question, how many other assignments the individual already has and their competence and experience. She emphasises that a chief guardian must be expected to have a good overview of how many and what type of assignments a prospective or already appointed guardian actually has. This knowledge should include assignments from other municipalities.

In the case in question, the Parliamentary Ombudsman has reviewed procedures at the City of Stockholm's Chief Guardian Committee to check how many assignments a guardian has. The committee does carry out certain enhanced checks both prior to the appointment and during the ongoing review of guardians who have multiple assignments from its own municipality. The Parliamentary Ombudsman is critical of the committee's failure to consider assignments from other municipalities.

The Parliamentary Ombudsmen have made a number of statements concerning the activities of chief guardians during the spring and on a couple of occasions drawn the Government's attention to the decisions reached. In this case too the Parliamentary Ombudsman finds reason to send a copy of the decision to the Government for information. [8841-2024]

Courts

The question of whether information about the treatment facility where an individual is staying due to a court-imposed care order can be subject to a secrecy provision pursuant to Section 3 a of Chapter 21 of the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act

A defendant with a protected identity was sentenced to probation with a court-imposed care order to follow a specific treatment model. A treatment plan attached to the judgement included the name of the residential treatment facility at which the defendant was to stay.

According to Section 3 a of Chapter 21 of the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (SFS 2009:400), in court cases when a party has a protected identity, secrecy applies to information that may disclose the party's permanent or temporary residence, unless the information can clearly be disclosed without the individual or any member of their family being subjected to violence or suffering other serious detriment.

One question in this case is whether this secrecy provision covers information about a treatment facility at which the defendant may reside as the result of a court-imposed care order. According to the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, details of an impending stay at a treatment facility must be considered to be information that may disclose an individual's temporary residence. The secrecy provision was therefore applicable to information about the treatment facility. The presiding judge ought to have considered whether information about the treatment facility could be subject to secrecy. He cannot escape criticism for having failed to do so.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman also criticises the district court for failing to document information supplied to the district court by telephone about the threat facing the defendant. [5387-2024]

Criticism of Gothenburg District Court for shortcomings in proceedings in a civil case pursuant to the Regulation establishing a European Small Claims Procedure

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman has reviewed proceedings in Gothenburg District Court in a civil case pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 861/200 establishing a European Small Claims Procedure. In the decision, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman explains the

regulation's special procedures and requirement for the court to act as soon as possible, and criticises the district court for the fact that initial proceedings in the case were incompatible with the Regulation in several areas.

As the plaintiff wished to be examined under oath, the district court arranged a preliminary hearing for party examination. This hearing was scheduled for over five months after the summons was sent. Moreover, the district court rejected the plaintiff's request to attend the hearing via video link from Poland.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the decision concerning the scheduling of the hearing and the plaintiff's attendance involved both a very long delay in relation to the time limits stated in the Regulation and a deviation from the general rule that preliminary hearings may be held via, for example, video conferencing. As to the reason for its decision, the district court essentially referred to uncertainty concerning the plaintiff's address, something that caused difficulties in applying for legal assistance with the presentation of evidence. While the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman sympathises with these difficulties, according to the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, the district court cannot escape criticism for failing to take additional measures to clear up the uncertainty surrounding the plaintiff's address before reaching a decision that so clearly deviated from the intended procedure and requirement to act promptly. The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman also expresses some criticism concerning the formulation of the district court's decision. [5470-2024]

Statement on new remand hearings when additional time has been granted to commence a prosecution and no hearing has been requested

According to the third paragraph of Section 18 of Chapter 24 of the Swedish Code of Judicial Procedure (SFS 1942:740), if a prosecution is not instituted within two weeks, the court shall hold a new remand hearing at intervals of not more than two weeks, as long as the suspect is detained and until the prosecution is initiated.

The court may extend the intervals if it is evident that holding hearings within the time mentioned above would serve no purpose. In the case in question, the detention of an individual remanded with restrictions was extended on a couple of occasions, one of which was after a hearing. The prosecutor then requested an extension to the deadline to commence a prosecution on a further ten occasions. The remanded suspect consented to the extensions and did not request a remand hearing on these occasions. The district court therefore adjudicated the prosecutor's requests to extend the deadline and application for restrictions based solely on the documents. As a result, the court did not hold any remand hearings in the case for six months.

In the opinion of the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, the scope for concluding that it was evident that holding hearings would serve no purpose appears to be almost non-existent given the length of time that elapsed in the case in question. This is especially likely to be the case when several different judges have tried requests to extend the deadline to commence a prosecution. Whether requested to or not, the district court ought to have held remand hearings and is criticised for not doing so.

In the experience of the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, it is routine procedure at certain district courts to hold remand hearings roughly every three months in cases where an extension to the deadline to commence a prosecution has been granted and no hearing has been requested. In the opinion of the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, such a procedure appears to be well-balanced. [7593-2024]

Criticism of Göta Court of Appeal for among other things deficient documentation when persons unaffiliated to the court were admitted to a main hearing behind closed doors. Also a statement on the application of the second sentence of Section 3 of Chapter 5 of the Code of Judicial Procedure

Under certain circumstances, a court hearing may be held behind closed doors. Pursuant to Section 3 of Chapter 5 of the Code of Judicial Procedure (SFS 1942:740), the presiding judge may also admit persons who are not serving in or officers of the court if there are special reasons for doing so.

In the case in question, which dealt with offences including rape, an adult defendant's mother and sister were admitted to a hearing behind closed doors in the court of appeal. The case documents do not state why their presence was permitted. The injured party, who was not in attendance at the court of appeal, found it humiliating that the defendant's family were able to watch videos of her examination in the district court.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that there is seldom reason to maintain secrecy with regard to persons whose presence has

been consented to by the person that secrecy is intended to protect. According to the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, when she or he has not consented to the presence of others, their presence must be presumed to be of benefit to the proceedings if special reasons are to be deemed to exist. Furthermore, there may be reason to balance the interests of secrecy and admitting others to the hearing.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman holds that, in the case in question, it is debatable whether such reasons existed to warrant the presence of others. That said, as this is ultimately a matter of judgement, the court of appeal's action in this regard is not cause for criticism. However, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman is of the opinion that the court of appeal deserves criticism for deficient documentation of grounds for the decision. [7649-2024]

District court judges escape criticism for slow processing due to an extremely strained staffing situation and working conditions

In his review of two civil actions amenable to out-of-court settlement at Hälsingland District Court, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman found that proceedings had been both deficient and slow. During 2024, the district court had one full-time judge and three vacant judge positions. At the beginning of the year, the two junior judge positions were also withdrawn. The adjudication process has largely been conducted by visiting judges drawn from a pool of reinforcements at the Swedish National Courts Administration.

In light of the staffing situation and working conditions at the district court, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman acknowledges that under the circumstances it has been very difficult, indeed nigh-on impossible, for the judges to live up to procedural requirements in each individual case.

The district court has had three different chief judges during the period in question and the extremely strained staffing situation and working conditions have made it very difficult for them to act and take measures when a case has not been adjudicated within a reasonable period of time.

While the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman is critical of how the two civil actions have been processed, given the facts that have emerged concerning the situation at the court he finds no reason to direct criticism at any official who is under his supervision.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the situation at the district court is a matter of grave concern and sends a copy of the decision to, among others, the Government and the Swedish National Courts Administration for information purposes. [9421-2024]

Education and research

Criticism of Vindeln Municipality for failing to offer preschool activities in which teaching is conducted in whole or in part in Sami

Vindeln Municipality has been part of the administrative area for Sami languages since 2019. Pursuant to the Swedish Education Act (SFS 2010:800), the municipality must offer children a place in a preschool in which all or a significant part of teaching is conducted in Sami if so requested by the child's parents/guardians.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman is of the opinion that the scope of the education offered by the municipality to the complainant's daughter does not fulfil legal requirements in this regard. While the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman sympathises with the municipality in that it can be difficult to recruit staff with the requisite language skills, it should have been possible for the municipality to create better conditions for meeting its obligations. The municipality cannot avoid criticism for the shortcomings in the education offered. [4080-2024]

The issue of how public holidays and planning days affect the obligation to offer minimum hours at preschool to the children of people who are unemployed or on parental leave

Pursuant to Section 6 of Chapter 8 of the Swedish Education Act (SFS 2010:800), the child of someone who is unemployed or on parental leave must be offered at least three hours of preschool per day, or 15 hours a week. The Act does not regulate how these hours are to be allocated over the course of the week but leaves this for the municipal organiser of the activities to determine.

However, pursuant to Section 3 of Chapter 8 of the Education Act, there is no obligation to offer preschool on major public holidays. It may also be necessary to close preschools on occasion for planning days. As such, as long as a municipality offers preschool for three hours per day, there is no obligation to offer preschool on major public holidays or planning days. According to the Chief Parliamentary

Ombudsman, this also applies to a municipality that has instead chosen to offer more hours on fewer days when these days fall on a major public holiday or planning day.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the above constitutes a minimum requirement. A municipality may decide on more hours and a different and more generous arrangement. [4252-2024]

The question of a municipality's obligation to offer preschool when parents combine parental leave with studies

Pursuant to Section 5 of Chapter 8 of the Swedish Education Act (SFS 2010:800), the children of parents who are studying must be offered a preschool place to the necessary extent with regard to the parents' studies. Pursuant to Section 6 of the same act, children of parents who are on parental leave pursuant to the Swedish Parental Leave Act (SFS 995:584) to care for another child must be offered at least three hours of preschool per day, or 15 hours a week.

This regulation does not exclude children who meet the criteria for preschool pursuant to Section 6 from the application of Section 5. Nor is there anything to suggest that the introduction of Section 6 permits a municipality to reduce the hours of preschool offered to the children of students. So, as a point of departure, a child must be offered a preschool place to the necessary extent with regard to the parents' studies.

In the opinion of the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, there is no reason to differentiate distance education from studies undertaken at a school or higher education institution in the application of Section 5. [7876-2024]

Criticism of the head teacher of a school in Tibro Municipality for violating an employee's freedom of expression

The head teacher of a school had a discussion with an employee after the employee expressed dissatisfaction with school management in a message to parents posted on the learning platform InfoMentor.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman has no objection to an employer issuing directives regarding the use of such communication tools, such as which type of information is to be conveyed there. However, according to the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, in this case there was reason for the employee to construe the head teacher's action as an attempt to hinder the exercise of her constitutional freedom of expression. The head teacher is criticised for this. [10801-2024]

Review of the Swedish Schools Inspectorate's use of the possibility to apply for the imposition of a fine when a school organiser fails to comply with an injunction

In December 2024, a number of radio programmes alleged that the Swedish Schools Inspectorate rarely applies for the imposition of a fine when a school organiser fails to rectify deficiencies after the inspectorate issues an injunction under penalty of a fine. In light if this information and statistics from the Swedish Schools Inspectorate's website, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman decided to investigate the matter. Documents related to a number of cases were obtained and reviewed.

While the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman finds no reason to criticise the Swedish Schools Inspectorate for its use of the possibility of applying for the imposition of a fine in the cases reviewed, he emphasises the importance of using the full range of sanctions that the Education Act (SFS 2010:800) places at the inspectorate's disposal. One important sanction is the possibility of issuing an injunction under penalty of a fine and consistently applying for the imposition of a fine in situations where the school organiser fails to comply with the injunction, presuming that the inspectorate assesses that the preconditions otherwise exist for submitting an application. The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman sees certain risks should the Swedish Schools Inspectorate not apply for the imposition of a fine in cases when an injunction is not complied with. One such risk is that the incentive for school organisers to comply with injunctions will be reduced if they have the impression that the Swedish Schools Inspectorate is unlikely to make good on its threat to apply for the imposition of a fine. In the long term, this may damage confidence in the Swedish Schools Inspectorate's supervisory work. [765-2025]

After a teacher spoke to the supervisory authority, a head teacher expressed themselves in a manner that violated the teacher's freedom of expression

During a discussion with a teacher, a head teacher raised the fact that the teacher had initiated an individual meeting with the Swedish Schools Inspectorate at which she expressed opinions about the school's activities in connection with an inspection of the school.

According to the Chief Parliamentary Om-

budsman, the teacher had reason to perceive the head teacher's statements during the discussion as a reprimand for exercising her constitutional freedom of expression. The head teacher has thereby acted in contravention of the constitutional ban on reprisals. The head teacher is criticised for this.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman states that one prerequisite for effective supervisory activities is that employees feel free to contact and speak to a supervisory authority, and that an employer should in fact encourage them to do so.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman therefore takes a grave view of violations of freedom of expression originating from an employee speaking to a supervisory authority. In the long term, such violations also pose the risk that employees will refrain from approaching a supervisory authority for fear of management's displeasure. [7140-2025]

The Enforcement Authority

Severe criticism of the Swedish Enforcement Authority for shortcomings in accessibility by telephone

In 2024, the Parliamentary Ombudsmen received several complaints from individuals who had difficulty reaching the Swedish Enforcement Authority by telephone. The Parliamentary Ombudsmen decided to investigate the matter and asked the authority to comment generally within the scope of the case.

The investigation revealed that of approximately one and a half million incoming telephone calls in 2024, over half went unanswered. In his decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman states that this result demonstrates that the Swedish Enforcement Authority is nowhere near fulfilling the requirements that can reasonably be placed on a public authority that has chosen telephony as a vital contact channel for the public to get in touch with it.

According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, it is a matter of urgent public interest that individual's are able to contact the Swedish Enforcement Authority without undue delay, and severe criticism is therefore directed at the authority for such serious shortcomings in access by telephone during 2024. He considers there to be cause to send a copy of the decision to the Government for information. [9915-2024]

Health and medical care

Criticism of Västra Götaland Region for the delay in admitting a patient pursuant to the second paragraph of Section 7 of the Forensic Psychiatric Care Act (SFS 1991:1129). Also criticism of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service

Forensic psychiatric care must commence without delay once the court's decision to order such care has gained legal effect. If the convicted person is on remand, care must begin even if the decision has not gained legal effect, on condition that the convicted person and prosecutor consent to it.

A person on remand was sentenced to forensic psychiatric care. The convicted person and the prosecutor consented to care commencing before the decision hade gained legal effect. Västra Götaland Region notified the Swedish Prison and Probation Service that the region could not accept the convicted person until the decision to commit the individual to forensic psychiatric care gained legal effect. The Parliamentary Ombudsmen's investigation suggests that, in principle, Västra Götaland Region never accepts convicts before a decision on forensic psychiatric care has gained legal effect.

According to the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, this attitude is completely unacceptable. The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the purpose of the regulation in question is for care to begin before the decision on care has gained legal effect, but that the region's processing undermines this. Furthermore, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman states that the healthcare authority must act to ensure that care can begin with the prescribed promptness and that a shortage of places is not an acceptable reason to delay a decision on admission to a healthcare facility. In the case in question, there was a delay of nine days from the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's notification of consent to care until the convicted person was admitted to a healthcare facility, and the region is criticised accordingly.

The Swedish Prison and Probation Service is criticised for the delay in notifying the healthcare facility that consent had been obtained. Västra Götaland Region and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service are also criticised for deficient documentation. [4389-2024]

Criticism of Uppsala University Hospital, Region Uppsala, for conducting routine body searches of patients without legal grounds

On a forensic psychiatric ward with security class 3, staff of Uppsala University Hospital in Region Uppsala routinely ask patients returning from leave or ground privileges to show the contents of their pockets and bags. The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman establishes that the procedure in question involves body searches of patients.

There are separate regulations concerning when patients being cared for under the Forensic Psychiatric Care Act (SFS 1991:1129) may be subjected to body searches. On a ward with security class 3, body searches are only permitted by decision of a physician executive in individual cases. As such, there is no leeway for the healthcare facility to apply the routine in question by invoking patient consent. The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman states that the procedure is unlawful.

An inquiry has submitted proposals on changing the rules on body searches on wards with security class 3. The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman therefore sends a copy of the decision to the Government for information purposes. [5786-2024]

Labour market authorities/ institutions

The Swedish Public Employment Service is severely criticised for multiple shortcomings in a case involving enterprise start-up support, and for continuing to process the case in the same manner long after the authority had realised and acknowledged its shortcomings

In the opinion of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Swedish Public Employment Service failed in several regards in its processing of a case involving enterprise start-up support. The processing time was unacceptably long and the authority failed to inform the individual at any point during processing that her case was likely to be significantly delayed. There were also serious shortcomings in documentation and the registration of documents in the case. Furthermore, the Swedish Public Employment Service urged the individual on several occasions to submit supplementation in a certain way, despite there being no legal grounds for doing so.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman takes a particularly grave view of the fact that the Swedish Public Employment Service continued to process the case in the same manner even after the authority had acknowledged shortcomings in a statement to the Parliamentary Ombudsman. The Parliamentary Ombudsman expects that, having admitted shortcomings in its processing, an authority will ensure that the continued processing of the case is not characterised by the same shortcomings, and considers it highly remarkable that the admission in the Swedish Public Employment Service's statement did not lead to more correct processing. The Parliamentary Ombudsman also takes a grave view of the shortcomings in the case given that the Swedish Public Employment Service has previously been criticised for similar shortcomings, such as slow processing and failing to observe the principle of legality. Overall, the Swedish Public Employment Service is deserving of severe criticism for shortcomings in the case. [2525-2024]

The Swedish Public Employment Service is criticised for shortcomings in the design and justification of a deregistration decision

The decision in brief: In decisions to deregister jobseekers from the Swedish Public Employment Service, it is not possible for the case officer to write a complete justification for the decision. Instead, they must select one of eight preset alternatives. The selected alternative can be supplemented by writing in a free-text field. The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that there is a risk that a system in which it is not possible to write the complete justification for a decision in free text will be misleading or inaccurate, and is of the opinion that it is unacceptable that the Swedish Public Employment Service's case management system makes it harder for case officers to fulfil the requirement to clearly justify a decision. The Swedish Public Employment Service is criticised for shortcomings in the design and justification of such a decision.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the Swedish Public Employment Service has previously been criticised on several occasions for shortcomings in justifying its decisions, and that shortcomings in the agency's systems have been repeatedly pointed out. It is concerning that these problems persist and the Parliamentary Ombudsmen will monitor the situation closely in their ongoing supervision.

The Parliamentary Ombudsmen have reached decisions in three other cases in which the Swedish Public Employment Service has been criticised for similar shortcomings (cf.

reg. nos. 4903-2024, 5673-2024 and 8401-2024). [6955-2024]

The Swedish Public Employment Service continues to demonstrate major shortcomings in accessibility and service

During 2023, severe criticism was directed at the Swedish Public Employment Service for shortcomings in accessibility and service via telephone and chatbot. Having continued to receive complaints, the Parliamentary Ombudsman has conducted a new review of the agency's ability to live up to the requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act (SFS (2017:900) in this regard.

The telephone and chatbot are vital channels of communication for the Swedish Public Employment Service, not least because a large part of the agency's contacts with jobseekers takes place in this manner. For this reason, the Parliamentary Ombudsman finds reason to place high demands on access to telephone and chat channels.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the Swedish Public Employment Service continues to have major shortcomings in accessibility, including many jobseekers enduring unreasonable telephone queue times and few being able to reach a case officer via the chatbot. These accessibility problems have existed for a long time and there has been no improvement since the previous critical decision. The Parliamentary Ombudsman considers these shortcomings very troubling and the Swedish Public Employment Service deserves severe criticism for them. The Parliamentary Ombudsman will continue to follow developments in this area and is also sending a copy of the decision to the Government. [9242-2024]

Migration

Criticism of a police officer for inappropriate behaviour while enforcing a deportation

A police officer provided incorrect information to an individual in order to facilitate the enforcement of a deportation. The individual was lured to a certain place under false pretences, where she was apprehended by the police. The incorrect information was omitted from the documentation of the case. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the police officer's actions were in contravention of, among other things, the requirement for objectivity in the Instrument of Government and the provisions on the conduct of police officers in the Swedish Police Ordinance (SFS 2014:1104). He is criticised for this. [50-2024]

Statement concerning the Swedish Migration Agency's processing of written requests pursuant to Section 12 of the Administrative Procedure Act when injuncted by a court to determine a matter without further delay

In his decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman expresses an opinion on the Swedish Migration Agency's processing of written requests pursuant to Section 12 of the Administrative Procedure Act (SFS 2017:900) when injuncted by a court to determine a matter without further delay. The investigation reveals that, in a large number of such cases, the Swedish Migration Agency has failed to process the matter within an acceptable period of time.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that, in practice, this means that the agency fails to comply with many court judgements, with the concomitant risk of negative impact on respect for the courts' judgements in general and, ultimately, confidence in public administration. The Parliamentary Ombudsman underlines the urgency of the Swedish Migration Agency getting to grips with this unacceptable state of affairs. The Parliamentary Ombudsman sends a copy of the decision to the Government for information.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman has also reviewed three separate cases in which a court injuncted the Swedish Migration Agency to determine a matter without further delay. The Swedish Migration Agency is severely criticised for failing to take any actual administrative measures in cases for many months. [7753-2024]

New review of the Swedish Migration Agency's processing of written requests pursuant to Section 12 of the Administrative Procedure Act to determine matters related to citizenship

The Parliamentary Ombudsman has previously criticised the Swedish Migration Agency for the use of automated processing of written requests pursuant to Section 12 of the Swedish Administrative Procedure Act (SFS 2017:900) to determine matters related to citizenship, when the outcome was predetermined and always resulted in the case being dismissed. Nor did these decisions fulfil the requirement of the Administrative Procedure Act that they contain a justification for the decision.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman has con-

ducted a new review of the Swedish Migration Agency's processing of written requests to determine matters that have been delayed by more than six months. The investigation revealed that an initial sorting process is now carried out to identify all cases that can be determined within four weeks. Cases in which the agency judges that the determination of a matter will be substantially delayed are also separated for manual processing, so that the agency can fulfil the requirement in Section 11 of the Administrative Procedure Act to notify the individual of the likely delay. While the system used means that there is scant justification for decisions to reject written requests to determine a delayed matter, the decisions usually do contain the main reasons for the delay in the case in question. In the assessment of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, this processing as a whole can be considered to constitute an adequate examination of whether the individual case has been unnecessarily delayed. It is therefore borderline acceptable.

In the case of one complaint, the Parliamentary Ombudsman criticises the Swedish Migration Agency for only sending the rejection decision to the applicant's registered address and not to their representative. The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that it is unacceptable that automated decisions are not sent to representatives and presumes that the Swedish Migration Agency will ensure that documents are sent to representatives when the case so requires. [9043-2024]

Criticism of the Swedish Migration Agency because notifications of decisions on the repayment of daily allowance failed to fulfil the requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act concerning service

The Parliamentary Ombudsman has reviewed the formulation of repayment notifications sent by the Swedish Migration Agency to individuals who had been paid a daily allowance. The Parliamentary Ombudsman concludes that such notifications are non-binding decisions, and in his decision states the requirements that therefore follow from the service obligation in the Swedish Administrative Procedure Act (SFS 2017:900).

Among other things, the Parliamentary Ombudsman states that a public authority inducing an individual to make a repayment must explain its position so that the individual can understand why the authority considers them to have a payment obligation. It must also be clear that this is the authority's opinion and that the matter has not yet been finally decided. The request must not be formulated so that it can be taken for a decision whereby the authority orders the individual to repay a certain amount.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman criticises the Swedish Migration Agency because the notifications failed to meet the service obligation placed on public authorities in their contacts with private persons. [9383-2024]

Severe criticism of the Swedish Migration Agency for leaving a detainee in a visiting room overnight at its detention centre in Mölndal

Due to an oversight, a detainee was left in a visiting room at the Swedish Migration Agency's detention centre in Mölndal after a family visit. The detainee was forced to spend the night there and was not discovered by staff until the next morning, by which time they had been in the visiting room for 14 hours.

This incident demonstrates that the detention centre did not have adequate procedures in place to ensure that detainees were collected from visiting rooms after visits. The Parliamentary Ombudsman had previously noted shortcomings in the detention centre's procedures in conjunction with inspections conducted in January 2023 and February 2024.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that the incident demonstrates that there are still serious shortcomings in the detention centre's procedures, which in this case have had unacceptable consequences for the treatment of a detainee. The Swedish Migration Agency is severely criticised for the incident. [700-2025]

The Swedish Migration Agency has not made adequate efforts to facilitate a wedding in a detention centre

A detainee and his girlfriend planned to marry in the detention centre were the man was being held. The man requested a visit by the girlfriend, a priest and two witnesses so that the wedding could take place. As the man was only permitted supervised visits, the Swedish Migration Agency refused to deviate from the procedure of permitting no more than two adults in the visiting room with a detainee. As a result, the planned wedding could not take place. The detainee was deported just over a month later.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the right of adult men and women to marry enjoys strong protection under Swedish law, even if the exercise of this right while in deten-

tion must be adapted to the Swedish Migration Agency's rules and procedures in order to, for example, maintain order and security.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that the responsibility for finding a reasonable and fair balance between the various considerations rests with the Swedish Migration Agency. In the opinion of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, adequate efforts have not been made to facilitate the wedding and he criticises the Swedish Migration Agency for this. [873-2025]

Cases involving police, prosecutors and custom officers

Statement concerning the failure of a prosecutor to inform a public defence counsel that the suspect had been detained

A person arrested on suspicion of committing an offence was interrogated prior to the prosecutor's decision on whether they should be detained. A public defence counsel had already been appointed for the suspect. Defence counsel was however not present for the interrogation. After the interrogation, the suspect was detained by order of the prosecutor. The prosecutor did not inform defence counsel until after the application for a detention order was dealt with.

According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, conducting the interrogation without defence counsel was in conflict with the suspect's right of defence. While there is no statutory provision in this regard, in the opinion of the Parliamentary Ombudsman the prosecutor should have ensured that defence counsel was informed that the suspect had been detained. As a consequence of the prosecutor's action, the suspect was deprived of liberty for over 48 hours without the knowledge of their defence counsel. This can be considered to have restricted the suspect's possibility to prepare their defence. The Parliamentary Ombudsman is critical of how the prosecutor dealt with the situation. [1376-2024]

Criticism of the Swedish Police Authority for the seizure and search of a mobile phone concerning a suspected minor drug offence (possession for personal use)

Due to a suspected minor drug offence of possession for personal use, it was decided to perform an examination in the form of a urine sample. At the same time, the suspect's mobile phone was seized and searched on site.

Regarding the seizure and search of the telephone, the Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that no specific circumstances have been reported to suggest that, in the event of a positive analysis result, the suspect would rely on a defence that needed to be refuted by referring to the content of the mobile phone. The Parliamentary Ombudsman therefore expresses considerable doubt as to whether there was a sufficiently unequivocal need to seize the mobile phone. The Parliamentary Ombudsman also questions whether the benefit of any supporting evidence recovered from the telephone was likely to be in reasonable proportion to the encroachment on the suspect's privacy caused by the measure.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman's overall assessment is that there were no legal grounds for the seizure and search of the mobile phone. The Swedish Police Authority is criticised for taking these measures regardless. [3535-2024]

Criticism of a patrol commander for deciding to arrest a suspect without legal grounds and of a duty investigation leader for failing to process a preliminary investigation in an acceptable manner

A 16-year-old was suspected of a serious offence. A patrol commander decided that the youth, who was in school at the time, should be arrested. Another police officer carried out the arrest.

As a general rule, before someone suspected of committing an offence is deprived of their liberty, a prosecutor must issue a detention order. Only if the suspect must be deprived of liberty immediately and it is not possible to wait for a decision by a prosecutor may a police officer make an arrest. The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the circumstances in this case did not preclude waiting for a decision by a prosecutor. Moreover, unlike a detention order, a decision by a police officer to make an arrest presupposes that the suspect is present in person. So, even as a matter of urgency, a police commander cannot decide that another police officer shall arrest a suspect in this manner. The Parliamentary Ombudsman takes a dim view of the commander's decision to arrest the youth and criticises him for issuing the order.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman also notes that the preliminary investigation should have been handed over to a prosecutor without delay, which was not the case. Nor was the prosecutor promptly notified that the suspect

had been deprived of liberty as required by the Swedish Code of Judicial Procedure (SFS 1942:740). Furthermore, an arrest interview was conducted with the youth before the prosecutor was notified, which in this case contravened the Swedish Police Authority's own guidelines. The Parliamentary Ombudsman criticises the responsible duty investigation leader for these shortcomings.

The Swedish Police Authority is criticised for further shortcomings that emerged during the review. [7539-2024]

Statement on the requirements that should be placed on prosecutors regarding the documentation of arrest warrants

On their own initiative, the Parliamentary Ombudsmen have investigated the matter of the requirements that should be placed on prosecutors regarding the documentation of arrest warrants. The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that, in present-day criminal procedure, it is self-evident that public authorities and individual officers must be able to demonstrate the legal grounds and justification for their decisions, not least when the decision relates to coercive measures that are especially intrusive for the individual. Moreover, the democratic control that the Parliamentary Ombudsmen and others are empowered to exercise requires adequate possibilities to subsequently review the measures that have been taken. For such a review to be conducted, it must be clear which considerations the decision was based on.

Primarily for reasons of legal certainty and legitimacy, the Parliamentary Ombudsman's conclusion is that higher demands should be placed on the documentation of an arrest warrant than seems to be the case today. The prosecutor should therefore always describe the circumstances on which the suspicion of crime is based and why she or he believes that one or more of the special grounds for detention exist. Additional deliberations may also need to be documented depending on the circumstances of the case in question. [7836-2024]

Renewed criticism of the Swedish Police Authority for the slow and passive processing of two preliminary investigations into crimes against property

In two preliminary investigations into crimes against property, the Swedish Police Authority has failed to take any investigative measures for just over six years and two years respectively. The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that the Swedish Police Authority's passive processing is in contravention of the requirement of the Code of Judicial Procedure (SFS 1942:740) that preliminary investigations be conducted as expeditiously as possible and is wholly unacceptable. The Swedish Police Authority is severely criticised for how both preliminary investigations have been handled.

The Parliamentary Ombudsmen have repeatedly criticised the Swedish Police Authority over recent years for slow processing of preliminary investigations into crimes against property. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, shortcomings in the Swedish Police Authority's investigative operations risk seriously damaging public confidence in the authority.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman emphasises that it is critical that the Swedish Police Authority continues its work to reduce processing times for investigations into crimes against property. [8400-2024]

A breach of regulations fine was issued by the Swedish Police Authority without legal grounds, and there were shortcomings in the prosecutor's processing of the matter of whether to commence a prosecution

A cyclist was hit by a car. The Swedish Police Authority issued the driver of the car with a breach of regulations fine for an offence against the Swedish Road Traffic Ordinance (SFS 1998:1276). When it emerged that the cyclist's injuries were more extensive than initially thought, the Swedish Police Authority filed a report of causing bodily harm and submitted a preliminary investigation report on the offence to the prosecutor. The prosecutor subsequently charged the driver with causing bodily harm. However, the district court dismissed the charge on the grounds that legal proceedings concerning the offence had already been concluded by the issue of a breach of regulations fine.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that a breach of regulations fine must not be issued if there is reason to assume that an action for a private claim will be brought. Nor should a fine be issued if it can otherwise be assumed appropriate for the prosecutor to consider whether a summary fine should be imposed or a prosecution commenced. Even if the examination of the cyclist's injuries were deficient, the Parliamentary Ombudsman is of the opinion that, given the information that had come to light, there was reason to assume that an action for a private claim could be brought. There was

also uncertainty regarding how the offence should be assessed. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, a breach of regulations fine should not have been issued. The Swedish Police Authority is criticised for doing so.

With regard to the prosecutor's processing, the Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the Swedish Police Authority's preliminary investigation report contained information on the issue of a breach of regulations fine. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, given the circumstances the prosecutor should have investigated and considered in more detail whether the conditions existed to commence a prosecution. The prosecutor is criticised for these shortcomings in processing. [9495-2024]

Criticism of the Swedish Police Authority because a police report on a complaint of domestic violence was not filed sufficiently promptly

Someone close to a woman referred to as NN in the Parliamentary Ombudsman's report contacted the police to express concern that NN was being subjected to violence by her boyfriend. NN had suffered a black eye and said that, among other things, her boyfriend had kicked her and pulled her hair, since when it had not been possible to reach her.

A police operator passed on the information to a police patrol, which was dispatched to NN's home. On arrival at NN's home, NN told the patrol that she was fine and that the injury to her face had been inflicted by her child. A police report was not filed until the following morning, when a duty investigating officer reviewed the incident report from the previous evening.

Assault is an offence that falls under public prosecution. If a police officer becomes aware of such an offence, she or he has a duty to report the matter, which is usually done by filing a police report. In the opinion of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the information passed on to the patrol by the operator was in itself grounds to file a police report.

Meanwhile, the patrol was dispatched to NN's home to check on her wellbeing and whether she required assistance. Given the situation, it is acceptable that this was prioritised over filing a police report. However, according to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, a report should have been filed immediately after the officers visited NN. The fact that NN herself did not wish to report the matter to the police – something that is not uncommon when an offence is committed in a close relationship – is irrelevant in this context.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman emphasises the importance of filing a police report without undue delay. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the delay in this case could have made a decision on whether to initiate a preliminary investigation more difficult and delayed appropriate investigative measures. The Parliamentary Ombudsman takes a grave view of this and criticises the Swedish Police Authority for the delay in filing a police report. [10659-2024]

Criticism of the Swedish Police Authority for taking someone into custody without legal grounds when providing judicial assistance

The police were requested to provide judicial assistance to ensure that an individual attended a doctor's appointment pursuant to Section 7 of the Swedish Act (SFS 1991:2041) on Separate Pre-Sentencing Reports in Criminal Cases. To this end, the individual was collected and held in a police custody suite overnight. The following morning, the individual was transported to the location where the doctor was to examine them.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that there is no legal provision that expressly allows the police to take someone into custody to ensure that they keep such a doctor's appointment as was the case here. The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that, when providing judicial assistance, it may be acceptable to detain the individual for a certain period of time while awaiting and during transportation. However, the deprivation of liberty involved in locking someone in a police cell for an entire night is such a restriction of fundamental rights and freedoms that the measure must be expressly provided for in law.

According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, there were therefore no legal grounds on which to take the individual into custody in this manner in conjunction with providing judicial assistance. The Parliamentary Ombudsman takes a grave view of the fact that the measure was taken regardless, and criticises the Swedish Police Authority accordingly. [11411-2024]

Prison and probation service

Criticism of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's procedures for recording and listening back to inmates' electronic communication. Also criticism of Kronoberg Remand Prison for its processing of requests for copies of such recordings.

On certain conditions, inmates on remand may be given permission for electronic communication, which is recorded and listened back to later. Permission may be revoked due to information that emerges when a conversation is listened back to, or if the Swedish Prison and Probation Service finds that the inmate has repeatedly failed to comply with the terms of permission.

In their decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman states that it is self-evident that, in conjunction with notification of suspected manipulation of the system or failure to comply with the terms of permission, the inmate must be informed of both what has been noted when listening back to the conversation and, when this is the case, that repeated infringements may result in permission being revoked. The inmate should then be informed of the prerequisites for receiving a copy of the recording and documentation of the observations. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, recordings of such conversations should not be erased immediately that an official note of the contents is drawn up.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman criticises Kronoberg Remand Prison for inadequate processing of an inmate's repeated requests to listen to recordings of conversations during which infringements were alleged to have taken place, resulting in the revocation of two of the inmate's telephone permits. [5128-2023]

Statement on the difficulties defence counsels face in reaching clients being detained by the Swedish Prison and Probation Service

The Parliamentary Ombudsman has investigated whether defence counsels generally have any difficulty visiting or telephoning clients in detention with the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. Opinions have been obtained from the Swedish Bar Association and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service as part of the investigation.

The Swedish Bar Association and Swedish Prison and Probation Service have expressed somewhat differing views on the scope of this problem. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service has however conceded that practical difficulties may arise at a relatively large number of facilities, and that it has become more difficult for defence counsels to contact clients remanded to some of the country's largest remand prisons in a timely manner. The Parliamentary Ombudsman finds this information very troubling.

According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, there is an obvious risk that, in practice, overcrowding within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service will erode suspects' right to access defence counsel and by extension to a fair trial. It is of the utmost importance that the agency plans for and ensures the practical prerequisites for contact with defence counsel within the scope of the major building and refurbishment works that are now underway.

In the decision, Fosie Prison is criticised for failing to mediate contact between a defence counsel and one of the prison's inmates. [6612-2023]

Inmates on two wings of a prison have been placed in segregation under Section 8 of Chapter 6 of the Act on Imprisonment without legal grounds for doing so

Hällby Prison has segregated all inmates on one wing of the prison on two occasions pursuant to Section 8 of Chapter 6 of the Swedish Act on Imprisonment (SFS 2010:610) while suspected misconduct was investigated. When the decisions were taken, the prison did not know which inmates had been involved in the incidents, hence all were suspected of misconduct.

According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, one prerequisite for segregation pursuant to the provision in question is that the inmate to whom the decision relates can be linked to the suspected misconduct. This implies that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service must be able to refer to specific circumstances that suggest that the inmate was actually involved in the incident or otherwise had a material connection to it. Only by doing so can the agency ensure that an individual assessment of the prerequisites for segregation is made for each inmate. The fact that it is not possible to immediately eliminate an inmate from an investigation cannot thus be considered to constitute a specific circumstance that meets the requirements of Section 8 of Chapter 6 of the Act on Imprisonment.

According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, in the case in question there were no legal grounds for placing all inmates on each wing in segregation under Section 8 of Chapter 6 of the Act on Imprisonment. Hällby Prison is therefore criticised for applying the provision.

In her decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman also criticises the prison for failing to accommodate the inmates' right to spend one hour per day outdoors while segregated.

The parliamentary Ombudsman also makes a statement concerning the prerequisites for segregation pursuant to Section 5 of Chapter 6 of the Act on Imprisonment. [6961-2023]

Severe criticism of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, Sollentuna Remand Prison, for a procedure that places unacceptable restrictions on inmates' right to telephone contact with their defence counsel

Sollentuna Remand Prison has introduced a procedure for calls with lawyers under which defence counsel can contact an inmate at any time but, as a general rule, inmates are not permitted to call their defence counsel after 17:00.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that it may be necessary to accept that a remand prison may restrict opportunities for inmates to call their defence counsel during certain times of day. However, in his opinion, a general limit as early as 17:00 is an overly far-reaching restriction on the right to contact one's defence counsel. The investigation also reveals that it is not possible for inmates sharing cells to speak to their defence counsel in private after this time. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, in this regard the remand prison's procedure violates the fundamental right to confidential communication with defence counsel.

According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the remand prison's procedure places unacceptable restrictions on inmates' right to telephone contact with their defence counsel. For this, the remand prison is deserving of severe criticism. The Parliamentary Ombudsman assumes that the procedure will be reviewed accordingly.

In the decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman also states an opinion on whether a specific room in Ystad Remand Prison is suitable for meetings between inmates and defence counsel. [944-2024]

Criticism of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, Norrtälje Prison, for the formulation of a decision to separate inmates pursuant to Section 5 of Chapter 6 of the Act on Imprisonment. Also an opinion on the proportionality of separating all inmates on a wing in response to a strike by inmates

Inmates on a wing of Norrtälje Prison have refused to participate in their assigned occupations. In response, the prison placed all prisoners on the wing in separate confinement during working hours with the support of Section 5 of Chapter 6 of the Swedish Act on Imprisonment (SFS 2010:610).

The Parliamentary Ombudsman questions the necessity of separating all inmates on the wing given that, among other things, according to the prison's decision the strike mainly involved inmates in industrial occupations. In her decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service must always consider whether a control or coercive measure is proportional to the purpose of the measure. She also points out that the fact that Section 5 of Chapter 6 of the Act on Imprisonment provides for multiple inmates to be separated from one another without each of them being connected to the circumstances on which the decision was based does not mean, for example, that all inmates on a wing must be separated.

According to the prison, it was not possible to exclude individual inmates from involvement in the strike in terms of who or which inmates were behind the strike or were influencing fellow inmates. The Parliamentary Ombudsman does not question that this was the case but notes that no such circumstances were mentioned in the prison's decision to separate inmates. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the decision also gives the impression of being solely related to the fact that inmates assigned to occupational activities in the prison factory have refused to participate. She is therefore sympathetic if inmates who have not been assigned to the factory, or who have not been assigned any occupational activities, feel that the prison's action constitutes collective punishment. The prison is criticised for the formulation of its decision. [10147-2023]

Concerning the interpreting of, among other things, supervised visits to the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's secure units. Also severe criticism of Hall Prison for its processing of an inmate's granted visitor permits etc.

The decision in brief: In the decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman expresses an opinion on the interpreting of supervised visits to the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's secure units when the conversation cannot be conducted in a language staff understand. The Parliamentary Ombudsman has no objection to visits being primarily supervised by prison staff with relevant language skills. However, in her opinion, this must not mean that, in practice, approved contact for an inmate of the secure unit who speaks a language other than Swedish with their friends and family is restricted.

Hall Prison's previous procedure was that it would never employ external interpreters when inmates on the secure unit had visitors. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, there were no legal grounds for this procedure and the arrangement clearly meant that an inmate's right to contact with friends and family was dependent on which language they spoke. She is highly critical of this.

In the case in question, this procedure meant that an inmate was granted visitor permits on a condition that could not be fulfilled. Moreover, it was more than two years until he could receive visits, something that only occurred after the Parliamentary Ombudsman had commenced her review. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the prison is deserving of severe criticism for its processing of the individual's visits. She also expresses criticism of how the prison dealt with the inmate's repeated questions concerning how he could go about actually arranging visits from his family. [93-2024]

A prison placed inmates in segregation under Section 5 of Chapter 6 of the Act on Imprisonment without legal grounds for doing so

In response to an incident, Hall Prison placed all inmates on a wing in segregation pursuant to Section 8 of Chapter 6 of the Swedish Act on Imprisonment (SFS 2010:610) while suspected misconduct was investigated. Once the investigation was completed, the prison decided to continue to hold some inmates in segregation under Section 5 of Chapter 6 of the Act on Imprisonment, which permits segregation if it is necessary to maintain order and security.

In her decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman reports that, on the same date, she had cause to criticise another prison for applying Section 8 of Chapter 6 of the Act on Imprisonment in a situation similar to that at Hall Prison (see decision nos. 6961-2023 and 7536-2023). As the Parliamentary Ombudsman has already made a statement on the conditions for segregation under this provision, she refrains from doing so in this case.

Hall Prison is however criticised for segregating inmates under Section 5 of Chapter 6 of the Act on Imprisonment after ending segregation pursuant to Section 8 of Chapter 6 of the same Act. The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that segregation pursuant to Section 5 of Chapter 6 must be temporary and shall never exceed the period of time necessary for the Swedish Prison and Probation Service to deal with the situation, normally no longer than a few hours or a few days. The provision is thus intended to be invoked as a stopgap solution to a more or less acute situation. The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that no facts have emerged to suggest that, four days after the incident, it was still necessary to hold several inmates in segregation in order to maintain order and security. [647-2024]

Severe criticism of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service for forcing a person placed on probation to provide urine samples despite the fact that there were no legal grounds for doing so

A person was placed on probation on condition that they provide samples to prove that they were drug-free when requested to do so by the probation service. While the verdict did not specify how long this condition was to apply, the law states that such conditions may only be imposed for a maximum of one year at a time. After one year had passed, the probation service did not notice that the period of validity of the condition had expired and continued to request urine samples from the convicted person.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that, regardless of the cause or explanation, it is completely unacceptable that on several occasions the probation service forced the individual to provide a urine sample without any legal grounds for doing so. For this, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service is severely criticised.

This is the third case to come before the Parliamentary Ombudsman in a relatively short period of time in which significant shortcomings have emerged regarding probation conditions. This has been a matter of inadequate operational support and inadequate checks, as well as errors on the part of individual officials. In all these cases, the individual has suffered by being subjected to interventions without legal grounds. As the Parliamentary Ombudsman understands it, this is not a matter of individual mistakes at certain probation offices, but rather a problem of a more systematic nature. This is a mater of considerable concern to the Parliamentary Ombudsman and she considers it essential that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service investigates without delay which measures need to be taken to address this, and then prioritises the implementation of these measures. [2651-2024]

Criticism of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, Mariefred Prison, for forcing an inmate to use a catheter to provide a urine sample

A prison forced an inmate to attempt to provide a urine sample by using a catheter themselves, this despite the fact that neither the inmate nor prison officers had adequate knowledge of how to use the equipment. No healthcare professional was in attendance during the sampling. The attempt was cut short due to an injury to the inmate.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that taking a urine sample is a form of coercive measure decided on by the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. The person subject to the measure is deprived of liberty and a refusal or inability to provide a urine sample may have real consequences for her or him. The scope for claiming that the measure is voluntary is therefore extremely limited, even with regard to the means by which the sample is to be provided. In the case in question, the inmate had attempted to provide urine samples in the usual manner on several occasions without success, which resulted in warnings being issued. As the prison does not use blood tests, the remaining option was a catheter. Unlike the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, the Parliamentary Ombudsman is of the opinion that in no reasonable sense can it be considered to have been voluntary on the part of the inmate to provide a urine sample in this way.

After the failed attempt, the inmate was required to continue to provide urine samples using a catheter, again without a healthcare professional in attendance. Given how the first attempt went, the Parliamentary Ombudsman considers this to be extremely dubious. All in all, she is severely critical of the prison's actions.

This is the second time the Parliamentary Ombudsmen have directed severe criticism at prisons for forcing inmates to use catheters to provide urine samples with no healthcare professional in attendance. She considers there to be reason for the Swedish Prison and Probation Service to review its procedures for obtaining samples for drug testing. As the case also relates to medical matters, a copy of the decision has been sent to the Health and Social Care Inspectorate (IVO). [4268-2024]

Criticism of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, head office and Gothenburg Remand Prison, for restricting inmates' right to outdoor exercise during the Eurovison Song Contest in Malmö

The right to daily outdoor exercise was restricted for approximately 70 inmates of Gothenburg Remand Prison for two weeks in spring 2024. The background to this restriction was a request from the police to the Swedish Prison and Probation Service to empty cells in Police Region Syd of remand prisoners to make places available prior to the Eurovision Song Contest in Malmö. In response to this request, inmates with restrictions were moved to Gothenburg Remand Prison, with consequences for many inmates.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman underlines that limiting the right to outdoor exercise is out of the question in a situation in which there were reasonable opportunities for the Swedish Prison and Probation Service to avoid doing so. In this case, the authority had just over one month to deal with the police's request and at a very early stage it was apparent that the planned measures risked infringing the right in question. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, there should have been scope to consider whether anything could be done to avoid such consequences, such as assigning additional staff to the prison so that exercise could be taken across a larger part of the day. However, it appears that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service did not even consider this. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the circumstances in question did not constitute the necessary extraordinary reasons to restrict the right to outdoor exercise. Furthermore, she states that it is highly unsatisfactory that Gothenburg Remand Prison does not appear to have considered whether the affected inmates could be compensated in some way. The Parliamentary Ombudsman is critical of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's handling of this matter, both at its head office and at Gothenburg Remand Prison. [4270-2024]

Criticism of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, Skogome Prison, for returning a request for the review of a decision. Also certain statements concerning the authority's work to address undue influence

An inmate had applied for telephone permission but the application was rejected. When he submitted a request for the decision to be reviewed, he wrote three words in capital letters. The request was received, date stamped and signed. Two days later, a prison officer came to him with the request and convinced him to withdraw it, among other things because the

use of capital letters might be perceived as an attempt to influence the decision-maker.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that the request was an official document received by the authority, and that there were no legal grounds for returning it. The prison is criticised for its processing.

While the Parliamentary Ombudsman commends the prison and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service in general for making considerable effort to address the issue of undue influence given the harsher climate within the authority, she underlines that reporting must be done with due consideration and understanding for the situation of inmates. The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that she may have reason to return to the matter. [5606-2024]

Statement on the preconditions for the Swedish Prison and Probation Service to segregate prison inmates for their own safety

Based on an individual case, the Parliamentary Ombudsman makes a statement concerning the preconditions for the Swedish Prison and Probation Service to segregate inmates for their own safety. Among other things, she underlines the importance of the agency making every effort to ensure that the possibility of segregating prisoners at their own request pursuant to Section 4 of Chapter 6 of the Swedish Act on Imprisonment (SFS 2010:610) is not diminished due to the present overcrowding.

According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, one unavoidable consequence of overcrowding appears to be that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's security assessments of inmates have become more complex and opportunities to adapt placements to individual assessments are more limited. In her decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman states that the current difficult situation notwithstanding, it can never be acceptable to expose inmates to the real risk of being subjected to violence by fellow inmates.

The Swedish Prison and Probation Service's Annual Report 2024 reveals that the strained situation is forcing the agency to consciously take greater risks when it comes to the placement of inmates. This is a conclusion that the Parliamentary Ombudsman shares based on information from inspections conducted as part of the Parliamentary Ombudsmen's assignment as a National Preventive Mechanism. She emphasises that, if taken to extremes, this risk-taking may conflict with Sweden's obligation under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights to protect inmates from inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Ultimately, it may even contravene the State's undertaking to protect inmates' right to life pursuant to Article 2 of the Convention. These obligations involve a specific duty to monitor persons deprived of liberty and take those measures that can reasonably be demanded to protect them from danger to life or threat to their physical integrity. [6541-2024]

Severe criticism of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service for placing an inmate in the same wing of a prison as a person suspected of subjecting him to a serious crime in remand prison

In a complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen, NN stated that he had been subjected to a serious crime by a fellow inmate of a remand prison, and that he was subsequently placed in the same prison as him.

The investigation into the matter reveals that, on becoming aware that NN had been the victim of a crime, the remand prison reported the matter to the police and took measures to protect him. However, the remand prison did not document information about what he had been subjected to. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the remand prison should clearly have done so, among other things so that this information could be considered when allocating NN to a prison. Due to the lack of documentation, when allocating a place, it would have been practically impossible for the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's placement section to know that the prison in question had an inmate who had been reported to the police for a crime against NN.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service placed NN in the same wing of a prison as the person suspected of subjecting him to a serious crime in remand prison, this despite the fact that there was awareness of previous events within the agency. Irrespective of the reason, this is completely unacceptable and, in the Parliamentary Ombudsman's opinion, contravenes the agency's obligations under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service is therefore severely criticised.

In his decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman also makes a statement concerning the treatment of NN in the prison and the processing of his application for reassignment to another prison. [9493-2024]

The Swedish Prison and Probation Service's use of cell name plates in remand prisons and prisons

In a decision several years ago, the Parliamentary Ombudsman called attention to a number of procedures within the Swedish Prison and Probation Service involving cell name plates, and welcomed the agency's stated intention to look into the matter.

It is now apparent that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service has neither implemented any strategic work to identify alternative solutions for identifying inmates, nor given any consideration to national guidance. The agency has stated that work is still required to develop national guidelines on cell name plates. The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that it is regrettable that this has not been done earlier and expresses surprise that no action whatsoever appears to have been taken concerning the matter

The issue of identifying inmates is complex and involves a difficult weighing up of interests, not least in the present strained situation with increasing numbers of inmates on most wings of Swedish remand prisons and prisons, with inmates sharing cells and many newly recruited prison officers. It therefore appears to the Parliamentary Ombudsman that there is a significant need for guidelines on the use and design of cell name plates.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman assumes that the work of preparing written guidelines on the use of cell name plates in remand prisons and prisons is now underway. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service must ensure that institutions use secure methods for identifying inmates that are also consistent with the rules on secrecy and the processing of personal data, as well as the requirement for enforcement to be designed to counteract the negative consequences of deprivation of liberty. [9861-2024]

Severe criticism of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service for shortcomings in the planning and implementation of the transportation of a 14-year-old child in care

A social welfare committee requested the assistance of the Swedish Police Authority with the transportation of a 14-year-old child in care at a home for care or residence pursuant to the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act (SFS 1990:52). The Swedish Police Authority subsequently passed the assignment onto the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, which transported the child without any representative of the committee in the vehicle and without the committee being aware that the youth did not have access to their telephone. During the journey, the vehicle stopped at a prison.

In his decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service's responsibility for planning and implementing the transportation of children in compulsory institutional care – which must be done with due consideration for, among other things, the best interests of the child – almost always includes consultation with the authority responsible for their care. If necessary, a representative of the authority should also be allowed to travel with the child. In any case, to make a stop at a location that would typically be considered unsuitable for children at least requires that alternative rest stops have been considered and that, if no such location is available, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service has determined that making a stop there is consistent with the child's best interests. The Parliamentary Ombudsman is severely critical of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and notes that transportation was not planned and implemented in accordance with the principle of the child's best interests, which should be the decisive factor in all decisions pursuant to the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman also takes a dim view of the lack of documentation in several regards, including the matter of the transport planner's deliberation over what would be in the child's best interests. [10486-2024]

The healthcare needs of an infant in prison with their mother have been mismanaged in several regards

An infant in prison with their mother was taken ill on two occasions, on both of which the mother wanted to obtain emergency medical care for the child. On both occasions, prison officers sought external medical advice without involving the mother in the conversation. During one of the incidents, a prison officer also conducted an examination of the child in order to provide the information requested by the healthcare provider. The nature of the examination was such that it constituted a strip search.

In his decision, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the requirement to consider the best interests of the child, and that this should weigh heavily in all matters concerning

the child, also applies to children accompanying a parent in prison. The same applies to the parent's overall responsibility for the child's personal circumstances. Consequently, it is unacceptable for a prison to disregard the parent's role and responsibility on matters related to the child's needs.

Furthermore, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman states that, while there must clearly be some scope to refuse a parent permission to leave the prison with their child to seek emergency medical care if medical advice has been obtained and the assessment is that no such care is necessary, in such situations the parent must be allowed to speak to the healthcare provider themselves. That said, it may be necessary for Swedish Prison and Probation Service personnel to be present during the call to obtain information on which to base a decision on whether or not to permit the parent to leave the prison. The prison is criticised for both occasions on which a healthcare provider was contacted without the participation of the child's mother.

The prison is also criticised because a prison officer conducted a strip search of the child without legal grounds. If an examination was necessary in order to provide the healthcare provider with information, the mother should have been allowed to conduct it and convey the requested information. [2118-2025]

Public access to documents and secrecy as well as freedom of expression

The Health and Social Care Committee in Östhammar Municipality is criticised for, among other things, processing a request for the disclosure of official documents in contravention of the provisions of the Freedom of the Press Act on the right to anonymity and the ban on inquiries

A woman formerly employed in a unit of Östhammar Municipality requested copies of the CVs of all social workers employed within the unit. In the course of processing the matter, her request was forwarded to the officials assumed to be in charge of the requested documents. Moreover, the social workers in question were informed of their former colleague's request, which was also discussed at several meetings within the unit. When the woman subsequently had contact with some of her former colleagues in a private group chat, they asked why she had requested copies of the documents.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the committee has not given any substantive reason as to why the information that their former colleague had requested documents was passed on to employees within the unit and discussed at meetings. The Parliamentary Ombudsman therefore considers this action to be incompatible with the right to anonymity prescribed in the Swedish Freedom of the Press Act (SFS 1949:105) and criticises the committee accordingly.

In their decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman also states that it is immaterial that questions about the disclosure were raised in a private group chat, as the employees had been given the information in their official capacity. The officials must be considered to have acted as representatives of the authority, even if this was not conscious and deliberate on their part. The Parliamentary Ombudsman holds that it would be unreasonable if the constitutional protection against an authority making inquiries into a person's identity could be circumvented by the expedient of officials using private contact channels to ask prohibited questions, or that this could be perceived to be the case. This action therefore showed disregard for the ban on inquires in the Freedom of the Press Act and the committee is criticised for this.

The decision also contains a statement on the right to receive a rejection decision in writing when a request for access to official documents cannot be accommodated in whole or in part. [4821-2023]

Criticism of the County Administrative Board of Uppsala for bringing up a complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen during a salary review

In negotiations within the scope of a salary review, it was mentioned to the employee in question that they had made a complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen. Given the constitutional role of the Parliamentary Ombudsmen, the Parliamentary Ombudsman holds that everyone has the right to make a complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen without running any risk whatsoever of criticism or any form of reprisals on the part of a public-sector employer.

The investigation sheds no light on exactly how the complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen was brought up in the negotiations, nor the purpose of doing so. However, the Par-

liamentary Ombudsman understands that the employee in question was given the impression that the complaint was something that might have a negative impact on her situation. The County Administrative Board cannot escape criticism for bringing up the complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen in the negotiations. [791-2024]

Criticism of the Municipal Executive Committee in Skinnskatteberg Municipality for poor service in failing to inform an applicant that a request for copies of official documents covered an exceptionally large number of documents and was therefore likely to incur a very high fee

A reporter requested copies of official documents from a municipal executive committee. The request turned out to cover considerably more documents than the reporter had anticipated.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that it is in the interests of both the applicant and the authority to avoid making unnecessary copies of documents, and that it would therefore have been reasonable to enter into a dialogue with the applicant. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the initiation of such a dialogue falls within the authority's service obligation pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act (SFS 2017:900).

The Municipal Executive Committee is criticised for failing to inform the applicant in a clear manner that the request covered an exceptionally large number of documents and was therefore likely to incur a very high fee. [1922-2024]

Criticism of Karolinska University Hospital for deficiencies in both the registration and processing of a request for the disclosure of official documents

Karolinska University Hospital commissioned a review of elements of women's healthcare at the hospital. The results of the investigation were sent to the home of the hospital's then CEO. The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that such a procedure is very rarely justified and, as a point of departure, highly inappropriate. This particularly applies when there is significant public interest in insight and scrutiny. Furthermore, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman states that this approach may give rise to suspicions that a public authority is attempting to circumvent the principle of public access to official documents, with the concomitant risk of seriously damaging trust.

The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman criticises the hospital for delaying the registration of a document and for its slow processing of a request for the disclosure of official documents. [3326-2024]

Statement concerning an authority's obligation to examine an individual's request for access to official documents pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act's provision on party transparency and what the authority needs to do to determine which documents the request relates to

An individual requested access to a social services investigation involving his child. The committee assumed that the request related to social services' compilation of written material related to the investigation.

In his decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that an authority needs to ascertain what a request for the disclosure of official documents relates to if its meaning is unclear. The authority may then also need to clarify what an individual means by certain terms. The term investigation can have various meanings within social services. As such, the committee should have enquired what the individual meant when he requested access to his child's investigation. The Parliamentary Ombudsman is critical of the committee's failure to do so.

The individual was a party to the case to which his request related. Despite this, the request was solely examined pursuant to the provisions of the Freedom of the Press Act (SFS 1949:105) on access to official documents. In the opinion of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the committee should also have examined the request pursuant to the provision of the Administrative Procedure Act (SFS 2017:900) on party transparency.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that, when the committee examines a request pursuant to the provision on party transparency, the decisive factor is whether the material has been added to the case file. Material that has not been added to the case file cannot be subject to party transparency. One particular difficulty is determining when, for example, a draft or memorandum should be considered to be added to the case. According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, documents of this nature – for example, a draft assessment and recommendation for a decision drawn up once investigative measures have been taken – should only be added to the case file if they contain factual information of significance to deciding on the case that is not documented elsewhere in the file. As the committee has

a far-reaching obligation to document its processing of cases involving individuals and its implemented interventions, it should not be the case that factual information of this nature is noted solely in such drafts.

In conclusion, the Parliamentary Ombudsman underlines that the principle of party transparency extends beyond the authority's obligation to notify the party of all the material of importance for its decision pursuant to Section 25 of the Administrative Procedure Act. [6184-2024]

The Family and Education Committee in Ängelholm Municipality is criticised for among other things failing to clarify which documents an individual was requesting access to and for not examining the request pursuant to the provision of the Administrative Procedure Act on party transparency

An individual requested access to documents in a case to which he was a party. Despite the fact that the committee appears to have been of the opinion that the request was not sufficiently specific, no measures were taken to clarify which documents the request related to. In his decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman states that an authority needs to ascertain what a request for the disclosure of documents relates to if it is unclear which documents the individual wishes to access. The Parliamentary Ombudsman is critical of the committee's failure to do so.

The individual reiterated his request at a subsequent meeting, when according to the committee he referred to an investigation. The individual was informed that the investigation was ongoing and that he would receive the statutory notification before a decision was made. As the term investigation can have various meanings within social services, it is the opinion of the Parliamentary Ombudsman that on this occasion too the committee should have sought clarification of which documents the individual was requesting. The committee is criticised for failing to do so.

The individual did not receive copies of any documents as the committee considered the request to refer to working documents that could not be disclosed. The committee is therefore also criticised for failing to inform the individual of the possibility pursuant to Section 3 of Chapter 6 of the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (SFS 2009:400) to request the authority to review the matter, which would have resulted in an appealable decision. Despite the fact that the individual was party to the case to which the request related, it was only examined pursuant to the provisions of the Freedom of the Press Act (SFS 1949:105) on access to official documents. The Parliamentary Ombudsman is of the opinion that the committee should also have examined the request pursuant to the provision of the Administrative Procedure Act (SFS 2017:900) on party transparency and is critical of the failure to do so. In conclusion, the Parliamentary Ombudsman underlines that an authority may not refrain from examining a party's request for access to official documents solely on the grounds that they will receive statutory notification of all the material of importance for its decision in the case. [7391-2024]

Statement concerning a public authority that directed an employee who requested access to official documents to retrieve the documents themselves from the municipality's system

A municipality received a request for access to official documents from a person who was employed by the municipality. The employee was directed to retrieve the documents themselves from the municipality's system.

The investigation in the case in question does not support the contention that the requested documents were actually official documents. The Parliamentary Ombudsman therefore makes no assessment of whether the municipality's processing was consistent with the Freedom of the Press Act (SFS 1949:105). Instead, the Parliamentary Ombudsman makes a general statement that, when an employee of a public authority requests access to official documents, the authority shall not direct the employee to retrieve the documents themselves from the authority's system. [9982-2024]

Criticism of the Swedish Police Authority for refusing to allow a person to photograph official documents in a police station with the status of protected facility

A person who was given access to official documents in a police station was told that they could not photograph the documents as part of the building was subject to a ban on photography.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that a decision to impose a ban on photography or other depiction, whether it is based on the provisions of the Installations Protection Act (SFS 2010:305) or is administrative in nature, cannot exempt an authority from the constitutional requirement to provide the public with access to

official documents. If there was an impediment to allowing the person to photograph the documents where they were made available, the person should have been given the opportunity to photograph the documents elsewhere.

The Swedish Police Authority is criticised for failing to provide access in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of the Press Act (SFS 1949:105). [10252-2024]

Criticism of the Municipal Executive Committee in Kristinehamn Municipality for the design of a digital service for requesting official documents that requires e-ID

An e-service on the municipality's website used for requesting official documents requires e-ID.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that an e-service requiring e-ID may not be designed to appear as the primary means of accessing official documents in a manner that overshadows or otherwise undermines other contact channels.

Among other things, the Municipal Executive Committee is criticised because the design of the e-service is incompatible with the protection of anonymity afforded by the Swedish Freedom of the Press Act (SFS 1949:105). [10735-2024]

Criticism of the Regional Assembly in Region Blekinge for a delay of almost four months in registering a whistle-blower report. Also criticism of the Regional Assembly for failing to meet its obligation to assist the Parliamentary Ombudsman's investigation

On 2 July 2024, Region Blekinge received a report from a whistle-blower. However, the report was not registered until 28 October 2024, almost four months later. The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that such a delay is of course completely unacceptable and criticises the Regional Assembly for this.

In a statement to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Regional Assembly initially claimed that the case was registered on 10 July 2024. It subsequently emerged, including from information in the media, that while the report had admittedly been registered then, it was only for a few minutes. When requested by the Parliamentary Ombudsman to clarify their statement, the Regional Assembly admitted that the report was not finally registered until 28 October 2024.

While, based on the investigation, it is not possible to conclude that the Regional Assembly has deliberately attempted to mislead the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Regional Assembly has failed to meet its obligation pursuant to the Swedish Instrument of Government (SFS 1974:152) to assist the Parliamentary Ombudsman's investigation, something that the Parliamentary Ombudsman takes a grave view of. The Regional Assembly is also criticised for this.

Finally, the Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the Regional Assembly's handling of the matter has led to speculation that it wished to suppress something in the report, with the concomitant risk of damage to public confidence and lingering mistrust. [1493-2025]

Criticism of the Municipal Executive Committee in Kumla Municipality because the municipality's intranet encouraged employees to challenge the principle of public access to official documents

A municipality's intranet encouraged employees to, among other things, "challenge the principle of public access to official documents". The Parliamentary Ombudsman finds this encouragement alarming and states that it may raise suspicions that the municipality deliberately attempted to restrict the constitutional right to access official documents and the right to avail oneself of the information therein. The Parliamentary Ombudsman takes a grave view of the formulation used on the intranet and criticises the Municipal Executive Committee for this.

According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, there does not appear to have been any illicit purpose behind the encouragement. However, the Parliamentary Ombudsman reminds the municipality that the measures it takes must be constitutional and that the municipality is responsible for ensuring that its staff have the requisite knowledge and experience to correctly process a request for the disclosure of an official document. [1524-2025]

Criticism of the Government Offices of Sweden for slow processing of seven requests for the disclosure of official documents

In his decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman gives an opinion on whether the Government Offices of Sweden has processed seven requests for the disclosure of official documents with sufficient urgency. The requests were submitted by reporters at Dagens Nyheter in connection with their investigation of the then national security advisor and those close to him.

The Parliamentary ombudsman criticises the

Government Offices of Sweden for failing to process the requests in question as promptly as the Freedom of the Press Act (SFS 1949:105) requires. In his decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman emphasises the importance of the Government Offices of Sweden in particular respecting the right of access that the Freedom of the Press Act is intended to guarantee.

In the opinion of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Government Offices of Sweden has failed to present an adequately detailed assessment of the individual requests, and this has impeded the review. The Parliamentary Ombudsman is critical of this shortcoming. [3792-2025]

Social insurance

In a case related to sickness allowance, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency is criticised for asking a question about violence that had no significance to the assessment of the case

The Swedish Social Insurance Agency has been given the government assignment of collaborating with certain other government agencies to improve the detection of certain forms of violence. The agency has chosen to implement the assignment by routinely asking questions about clients' experiences of violence when processing certain types of cases.

As a result, when assessing a case related to sickness allowance, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency asked an individual whether he had perpetrated violence against anyone else or had himself been subjected to violence.

In the decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman states that a public authority's investigation of a case must be objective, implying that the questions asked when assessing the right to a given benefit must be relevant to the criteria for qualifying for that benefit. That a government agency has been given a specific government assignment does not alter this fact. The question about perpetrating and being subjected to violence asked in this case had no relevance to the investigation of the case and should not have been asked. The Parliamentary Ombudsman is especially critical that the individual was not informed of their right to refuse to answer the question of whether he had subjected someone else to violence, which was tantamount to asking if he had committed a criminal act. [6732-2023]

The Swedish Social Insurance Agency is severely criticised for delays in restoring incorrectly paid out days of parental benefit, resulting in a large number of days being forfeited

The decision in brief: Having decided to demand repayment for 255 days of parental benefit incorrectly paid out, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency then took seven months to restore the days so that the individual could once again apply for parental benefit. This delay was despite the fact that the individual repeatedly contacted the agency to ask for the days to be restored. Nor did the agency inform the individual during these conversations that they could apply for parental benefit using a paper form instead. The child turned four years old before the days were restored. Pursuant to the third paragraph of Section 12 of Chapter 24 of the Social Insurance Code (SFS 2010:110), parental benefit is payable for a maximum of 96 days after a child's fourth birthday, meaning that, in this case, when the individual's days were eventually restored they forfeited just over 200 of the restored days. The Swedish Social Insurance Agency is severely criticised for the delay in executing the repayment decision by restoring the days in question, as well as for poor service. In the decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman is especially critical of the fact that no one at the agency took overall responsibility for restoring the days for which repayment was demanded, and that no measures were taken despite AA's reminders. [418-2024]

Social services

Social Services Act

Hägersten-Älvsjö City District Board in the City of Stockholm is criticised for attempting to prevent a parent/guardian from participating in an investigation concerning their child pursuant to the Healthcare Act

Pursuant to Section 13 a of Chapter 6 of the Children and Parents Code (SFS 1949:381), a city district board decided to allow a child to undergo an investigation pursuant to the Healthcare Act (SFS 2017:30). When the investigation was to be conducted, the board attempted to prevent one of the child's parents/guardians from participating in the investigation.

In the decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman states that the board had no legal grounds for preventing the parent/guardian from participating in the investigation. The board is criticised for attempting to do so despite this. Furthermore, the Parliamentary Ombudsman makes certain statements concerning the design of the board's decision. [8154-2023]

Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act (LVU)

The Social Welfare Committee in Bjuv Municipality is criticised for its processing of a letter to a child in care pursuant to the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act

A social welfare committee opened and read a letter sent to a three-year-old child who was in foster care pursuant to the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act (1990:52). The envelope stated that the letter was sent by a bank.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that there is nothing to suggest that the committee needed to act as a matter of urgency in this case, nor were there any other circumstances that gave the committee cause to open the letter without first consulting the child's parent/ guardian. This is especially true given that it was clear that the letter came from a bank and was therefore highly likely to concern financial matters over which the committee had no authority to decide. The Parliamentary Ombudsman criticises the committee for its processing of the letter. [472-2023]

The Social Welfare Committee in Linköping Municipality is severely criticised for requesting police assistance pursuant to the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act without legal grounds for doing so, and for its processing when assisting the Parliamentary Ombudsman in his investigation

When planning a home visit to determine whether a child was in need of immediate protection, the Social Welfare Committee in Linköping Municipality sent a request for assistance to the Swedish Police Authority. As grounds, the committee referred to Section 43(2) of the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act (SFS 1990:52), which states that the Swedish Police Authority shall provide assistance with the enforcement of decisions to detain or take a child into care pursuant to the Act. However, at the time the request for police assistance was sent, no such decision had been made concerning the child in question.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman holds that the committee is deserving of severe criticism for requesting police assistance pursuant to Section 43 of the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act without legal grounds for doing so. The criticism extends to shortcomings in documentation in the case and to the fact that one of the committee's statements to the Parliamentary Ombudsman contained ambiguities and inaccuracies. [1763-2024]

The Social Care Committee in Hudiksvall Municipality is criticised for turning over the right to decide which school a child in care should attend to the foster home without legal grounds for doing so

A child was taken into care pursuant to the Swedish Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act (SFS 1990:52) and placed in a foster home. When the child was due to start school, the committee left it to the foster home to decide which school the child should attend.

Pursuant to Section 11 of the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act, the committee, or the person charged by the committee with the care of the child, shall make the decisions on the child's personal circumstances that are necessary to provide care. This implies that on matters of no significance to providing care, the right to decide rests solely with the child's parents/ guardians.

While the Parliamentary Ombudsman concedes that choice of school is a matter related to the personal circumstances referred to in the provision, in this case the committee declared that the matter of choice of school was of no significance to providing the child with care. The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that there are thus no legal grounds for the committee, or the foster home, to decide which school the child should attend. Rather, this was a matter for the child's parents/guardians to decide. The Parliamentary Ombudsman therefore criticises the committee for turning over the decision on where the child should go to school to the foster home, and for failing to involve the parents/guardians in the decision. [7940-2024]

Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments Act (LSS)

Hässelby-Vällingby City District Committee in the City of Stockholms is severely criticised for shortcomings in the processing of two judgements in cases related to the Act on Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments

A person appealed against two different decisions by a municipal committee concerning personal assistance pursuant to the Act (1993:387) on Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments. In both cases, the court referred the matter back to the committee for further processing. In one case, the committee remained passive for almost a year. In the other, it took almost five months for the board to process the court's judgment.

In his decision, the Parliamentary Ombuds-

man states that the processing of the cases has been characterised by significant and serious shortcomings, and that the committee is deserving of severe criticism for its deficient processing of the two judgements.

In the decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman also summarises his supervision, as well as some of his statements and observations, regarding the Act on Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments. [5244-2023]

Criticism of the Social Welfare Committee in Borgholm Municipality for failing to implement the intervention personal assistance to the extent the individual was entitled

An individual had been granted assistance allowance and submitted a request for the municipality to arrange personal assistance. Referring to work environment and recruitment problems, the municipality chose to partly implement the intervention through short-stay accommodation.

According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, assistance rendered in short-term accommodation does not constitute the personalised support that the intervention personal assistance is intended to provide, nor can the staff performing the intervention for the individual be considered to be personal assistants in the meaning of the Act (1993:387) concerning Support and Services for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments. In the opinion of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the municipality did not implement the intervention personal assistance while the individual was in short-stay accommodation. This implies that the individual did not receive personal assistance to the extent they were entitled, for which the municipality is deserving of criticism. [6204-2023]

The Health and Welfare Committee in Sigtuna Municipality is severely criticised for inadequate management of three rulings referred back to the committee by the administrative court in a case related to personal assistance

An individual applied to a municipal committee for continued personal assistance pursuant to the Act (SFS 1993:387) concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments. The committee rejected the application, whereupon the decision was appealed to the administrative court, which found that the person was entitled to personal assistance and referred the case back to the committee for further processing. Despite this, the committee reached a new decision to reject the application for personal assistance. This decision was also appealed and the case was referred back to the administrative court, which once again found that the person was entitled to the intervention. The committee then once again decided to reject the application and this decision was also appealed, whereupon the administrative court referred the case back to the committee for a third time. The committee subsequently decided to reject the application for personal assistance once again. After this decision was appealed, the administrative court concluded that there was no point in once again referring the matter back to the committee, whereupon the court decided to try the case itself.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman takes a very dim view of the committee's disregard for the administrative court's rulings and express instructions on three occasions in the same case. Moreover, on one occasion the committee applied the wrong legislation when assessing the case, something that the Parliamentary Ombudsman finds remarkable. The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the committee's processing of the case has been inconsistent with its obligations pursuant to the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments, and that there has been a fundamental lack of knowledge within the committee. As a consequence of the committee's processing, the individual was forced to wait for over four years for their case to be finally heard, which is completely unacceptable. The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that the committee deserves severe criticism for its deficient processing of the case. [2428-2024]

The City District Council of Bromma in the City of Stockholm is severely criticised for its slow processing of four cases relating to personal assistance pursuant to the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments, and for breaching its notification obligation pursuant to Section 11 of the Administrative Procedure Act

In four cases pursuant to the Act (1993:387) concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments, individuals complained to the Parliamentary Ombudsmen that processing by the City District Council of Bromma in the City of Stockholm had been too slow. In one case, processing had been ongoing for 10 months before a decision was reached and in another 14 months. In two

of the cases, processing time was around 18 months.

In his decision, the Parliamentary Ombudsman underlines that the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments confers certain rights, including the right of the individual to have their case heard without undue delay. The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the processing times in the four cases in question were excessive and significantly exceeded the guidelines on cases relating to personal assistance previously issued by the Parliamentary Ombudsmen. The council has shown no urgency in processing the cases and ensuring that decisions could be reached within a reasonable period of time. In some cases, no or only a few procedural measures had been taken during the period. Processing has been delayed and the individuals were forced to wait for decisions on personal assistance for an unreasonably long time. The council has not processed the cases as promptly as the Administrative Procedure Act (SFS 2017:900) requires, something that the

Parliamentary Ombudsman is critical of. In some cases, the Parliamentary Ombudsman also criticises the council for failing to document procedural measures in the manner required by law. Among other things, inadequate documentation has made it impossible to subsequently follow the process and see which measures the council has taken. Furthermore, the Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that in none of the cases has the council considered whether the individual should be notified that the matter will be substantially delayed, as required by Section 11 of the Administrative Procedure Act. The Parliamentary Ombudsman also criticises the council's processing of the cases in this regard.

In summary, the Parliamentary Ombudsman considers the council to be deserving of severe criticism for its deficient processing of the four cases. [6087-2024]

Taxation

Complaint against the Swedish Tax Agency regarding the fact that in Blekinge it is not possible to pay an application fee for an ID card in cash

The Swedish Tax Agency accepts cash for the payment of an application fee for an ID card at the agency's service centres in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö. According to the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, the principle in Section 12 of Chapter 4 of the Riksbank Act (SFS 2022:1568) applies to the payment of this fee, meaning that the Swedish Tax Agency has an obligation to accept cash as payment for such a fee. As it is only possible to pay in cash in Sweden's three metropolitan areas, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that, in practice, it is not possible for the majority of people to pay a fee for an ID card in cash. According to the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, it is therefore questionable whether the level of service offered by the Swedish Tax Agency can be considered acceptable. The Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman is however of the opinion that it is very difficult for an agency to determine the level of service required to live up to the Riksbank's requirements, in light of which there is no reason to direct criticism at the Swedish Tax Agency.

Two recent commissions of inquiry have made recommendations concerning the obligation of, among others, government agencies to accept cash for the payment of statutory fees. In light of this, and as the case highlights the possible need to increase service levels regarding the possibility to pay such fees in cash, the Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman passes on a copy of the decision to the Government for information purposes. [2526-2024]

Other areas

Criticism of the chairperson of the Municipal Assembly in Uppsala Municipality for failing to observe the objectivity required by the Instrument of Government in a statement to a court

A member of the municipality appealed against the municipal assembly's decision that the municipal housing company should acquire certain properties. In a statement to the court, among other things the chairperson of the municipal assembly stated that it was completely contrary to the basic concept of democracy for a decision taken lawfully and according to democratic principles to be delayed or nullified by a baseless, poorly substantiated appeal, and that the appeal was rather politically motivated.

According to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the formulation of the chairperson's statement expressed a lack of respect for the appellant's right to have the legality of the decision tried, and the chairperson is criticised for thereby failing to observe the objectivity required by the Instrument of Government (SFS 1974:152). [2159-2024]

Criticism of the chairperson of the Municipal Executive Committee in Haninge Municipality for, in contravention of the requirement for objectivity in the Instrument of Government, contacting a shop manager about a petition posted in the shop

The chairperson of a municipal executive committee emailed the manager of a shop concerning a petition posted on a noticeboard in the shop. The upshot of the correspondence was that the petition was to be taken down. The chairperson has stated that he sent the email in a private capacity.

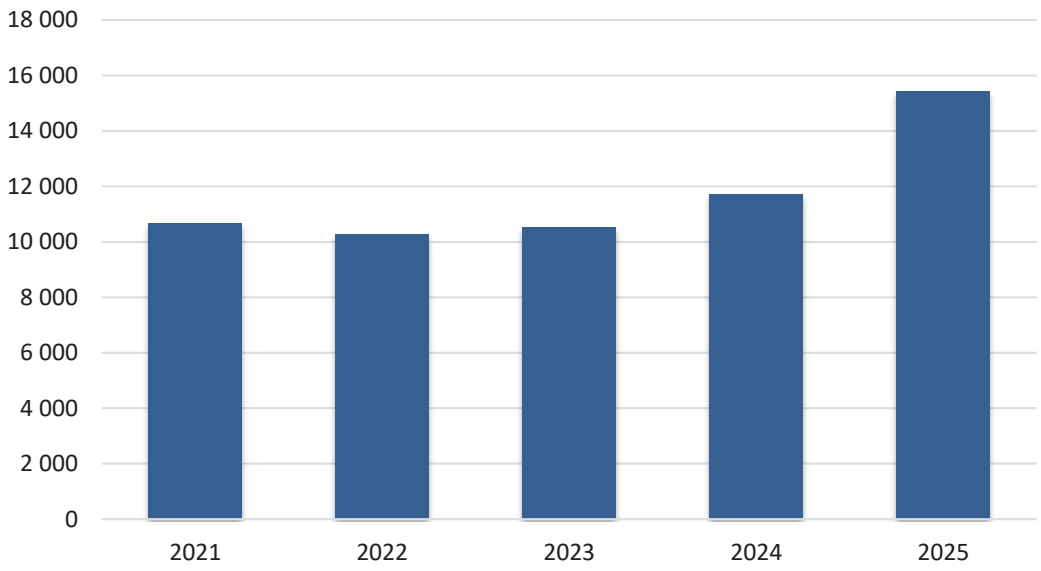
The Parliamentary Ombudsman states that the chairperson holds an important position and that he can be assumed to be well-known in the municipality. When acting in a private capacity, it is therefore especially important that he ensures that his actions cannot be perceived in any other way.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman notes that the chairperson sent the email from his official email account during office hours, and that it concerned a matter of relevance to the municipality. The email contained no information or reservation that the chairperson was writing in a private capacity. The email must therefore be considered to have been sent in an official capacity. The purpose of the email cannot be understood in any way other than as an exhortation to take down the petition.

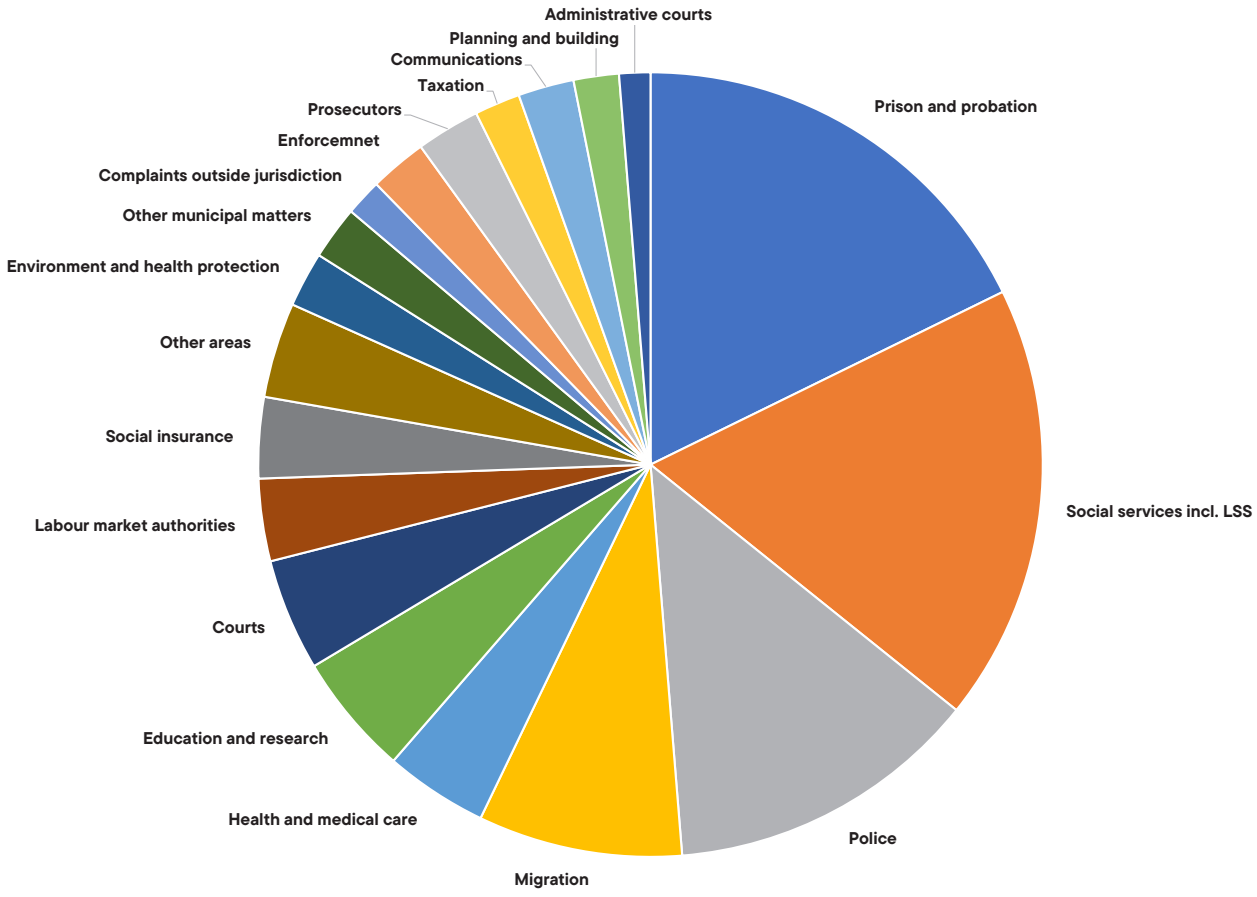
In the opinion of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the chairperson acted inappropriately and in contravention of the requirement for objectivity in the Instrument of Government (SFS 1974:152), for which he is criticised. [2257-2025]

Statistics

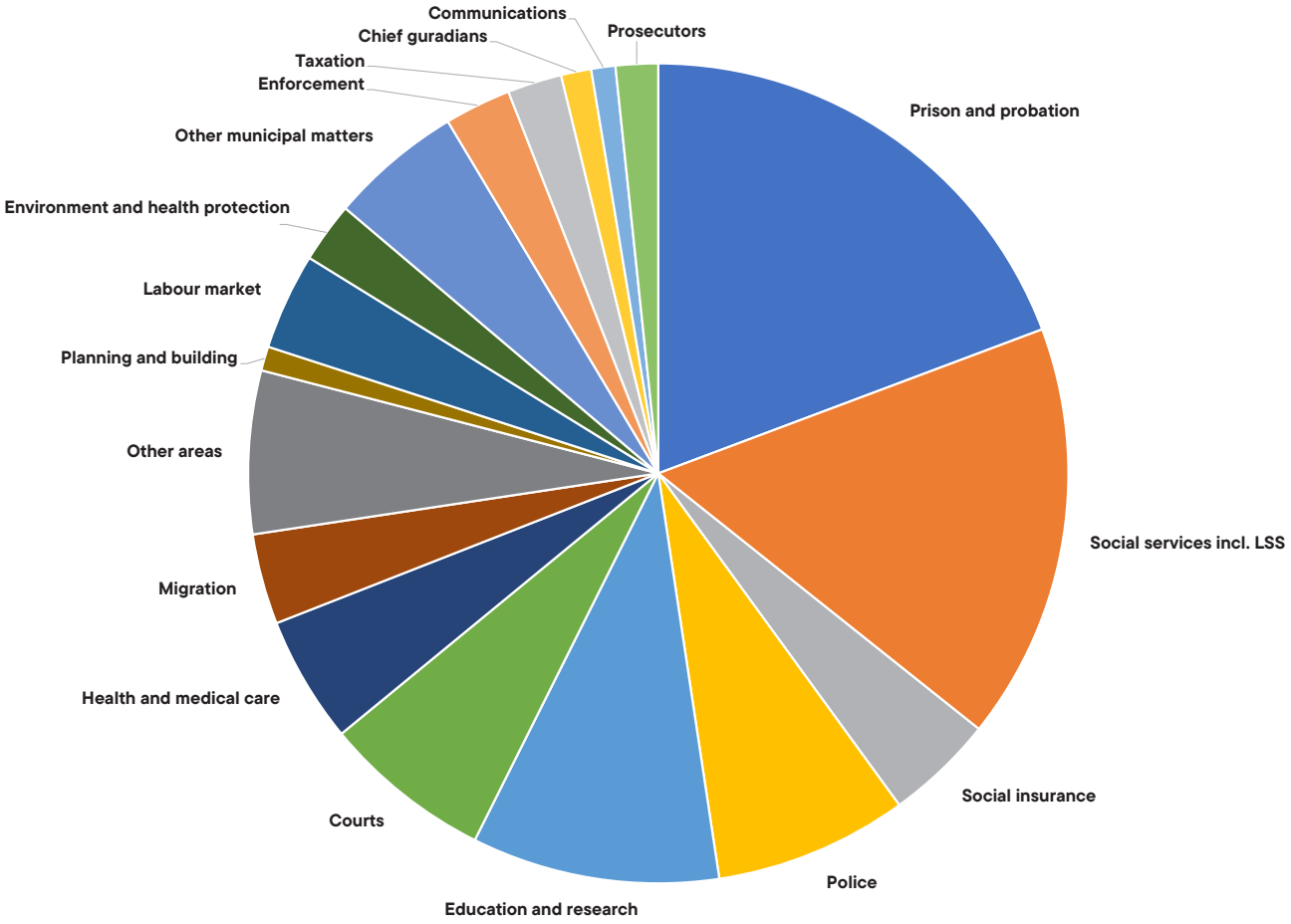
Development of complaints received and initiatives in the last 5 years



Registered complaints in 2025



Distribution of criticism 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025




JO
RIKSDAGENS
OMBUDSMÄN
1809

The Swedish Parliamentary Ombudsmen – JO
Box 16327
SE-103 26 Stockholm
SWEDEN

Phone +46 8 786 51 00
E-mail jo@jo.se
Web site www.jo.se