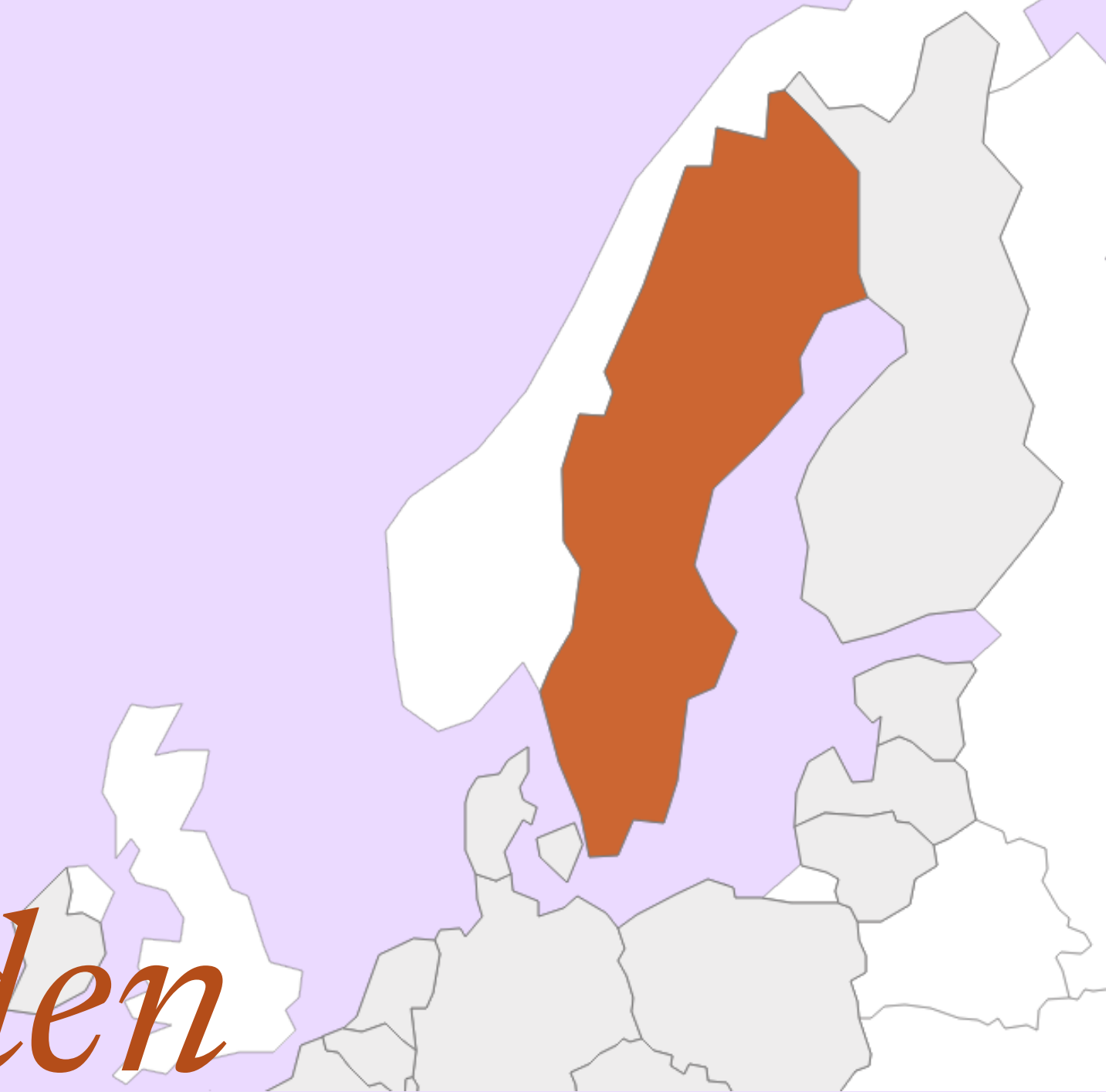
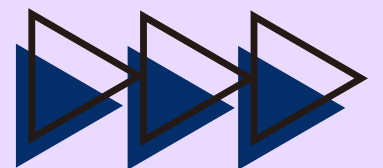


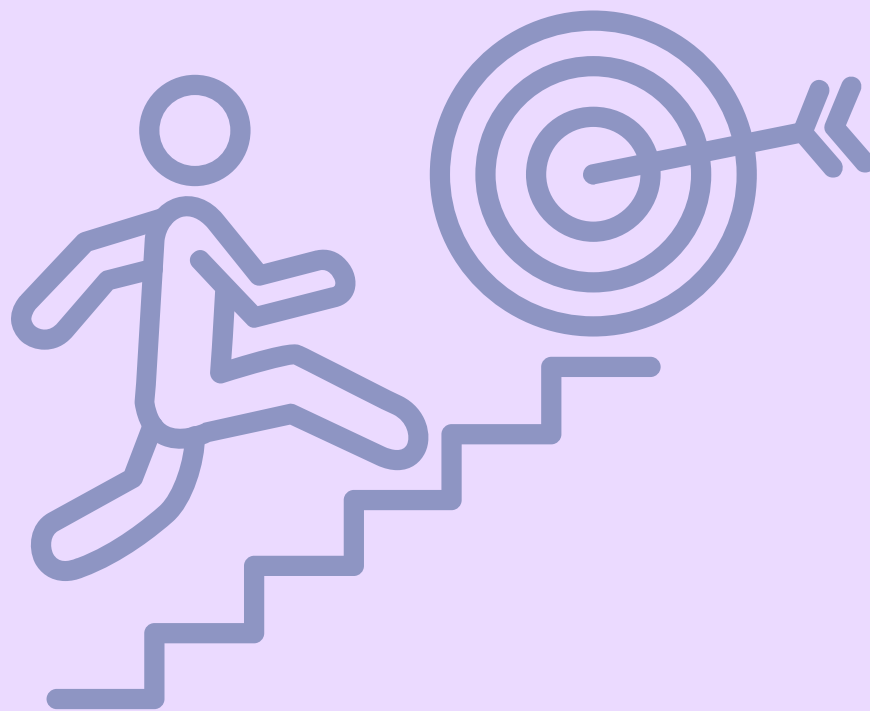


Sweden non-discrimination country report

Key highlights

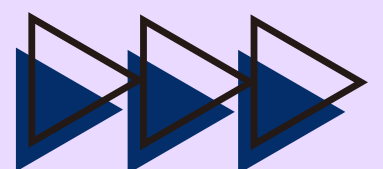


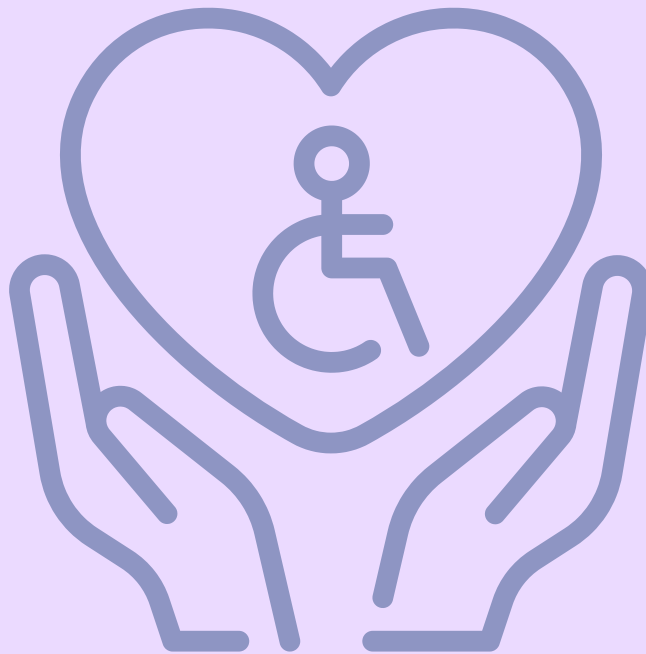
European network of legal experts
in gender equality and non-discrimination



Progressive Legislation

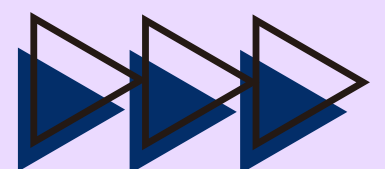
Sweden's 2009 Discrimination Act consolidated multiple ground-specific laws into a single framework that fulfills and often exceeds EU requirements. It applies a broad material scope of protection, including education, healthcare, and housing, to all seven protected grounds.





Disability Rights

The 2015 addition of inadequate accessibility as a form of discrimination expanded reasonable accommodation duties to nearly all areas of social life. However, pupils still struggle to receive timely support, although recent Supreme Court rulings emphasise that schools cannot remain passive when needs are apparent.

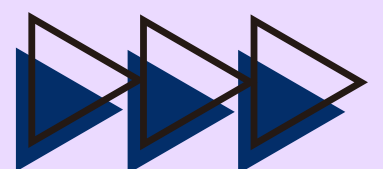
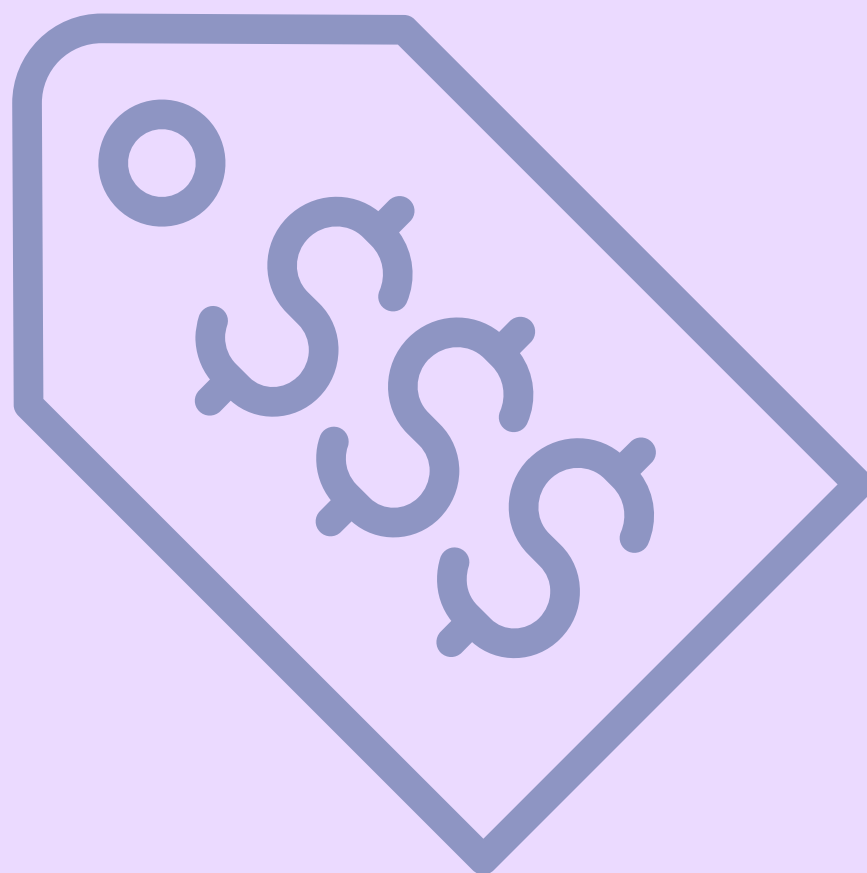


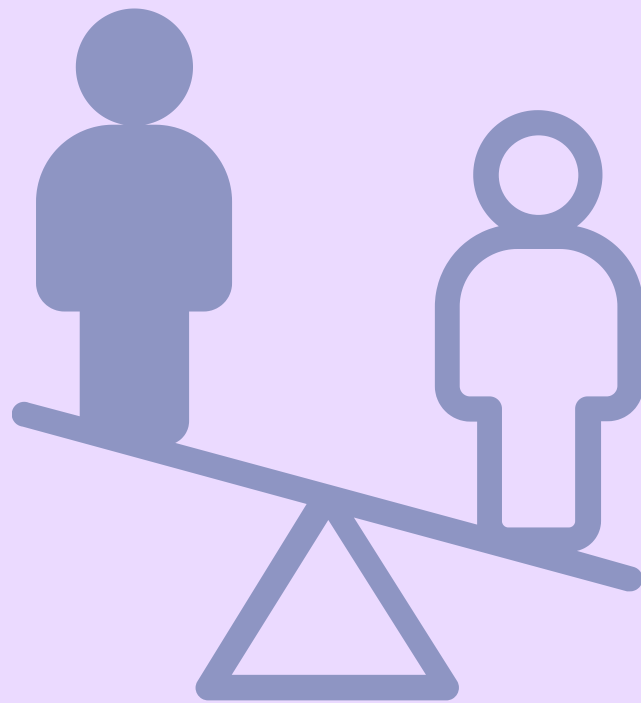


Deterrent Costs

The Swedish loser-pays rule is a primary barrier for victims and NGOs seeking to enforce non-discrimination laws.

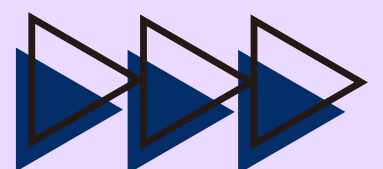
Because potential legal fees frequently dwarf the limited compensation awards, this system creates a significant deterrent for individuals pursuing justice.





Racialised Discrimination

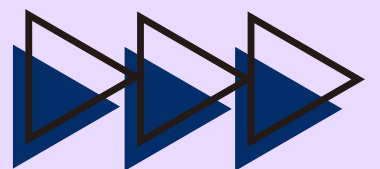
Racialised ethnic groups, particularly Afro-Swedes and Muslims, face well-documented exclusion and discrimination in the labour market and schools. There is also an ongoing concern that new government proposals may justify the limiting of human rights by targeting those with migration backgrounds.

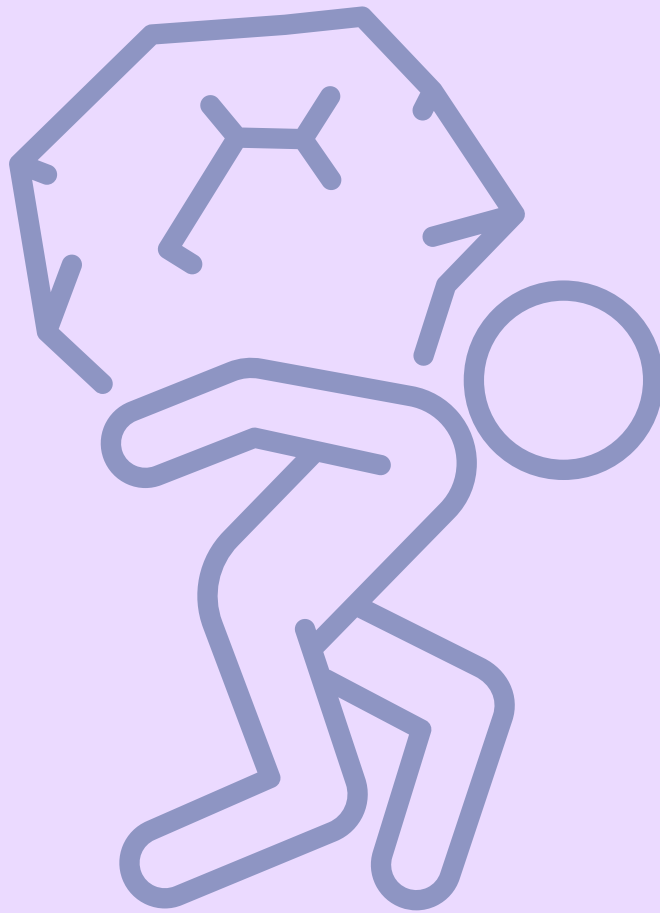




Shifted Enforcement

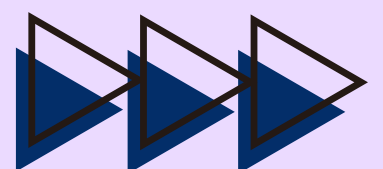
The Equality Ombudsman has recently shifted its focus away from general equality promotion toward the investigation and enforcement of individual claims. This change resulted in a record 31 settlements in 2025, which typically include both an admission of wrongdoing and financial compensation.

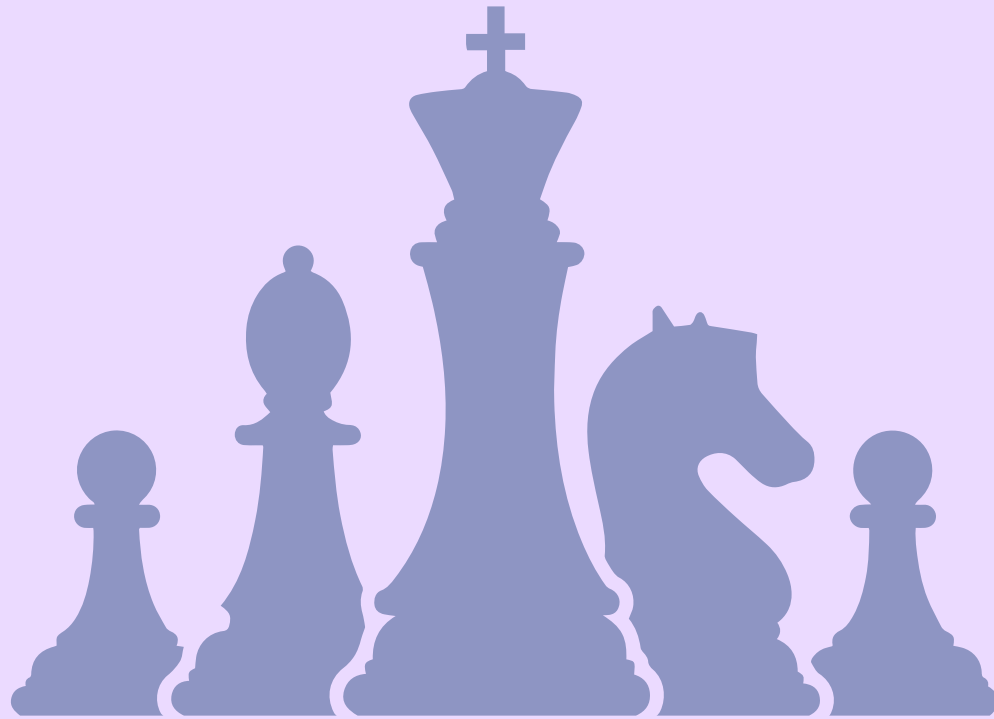




Restrictive Burden of Proof

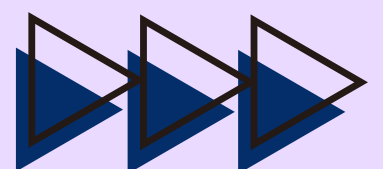
Although the law requires a shifted burden of proof, the Labour Court often applies this rule more restrictively against claimants, compared to in ordinary courts.

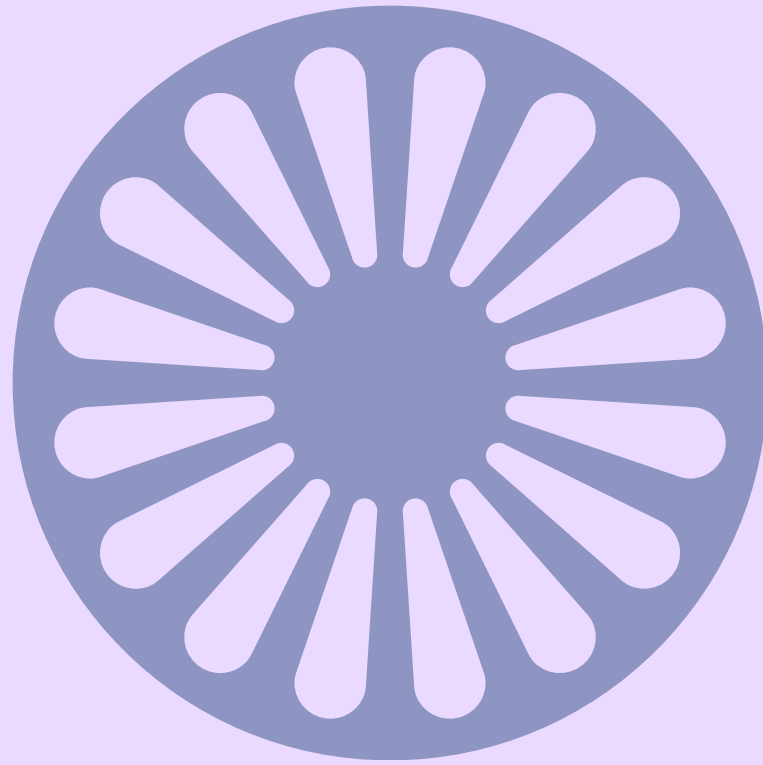




Strategic Litigation

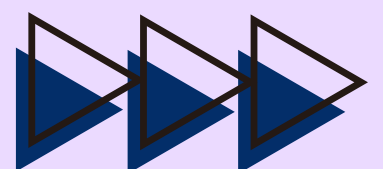
Local anti-discrimination offices are increasingly using small claims cases to bring landmark issues to court while minimising financial risk. These NGOs are helping to develop a law-in-action culture by using litigation as a form of advocacy for marginalised groups.





Structural Roma Inequality

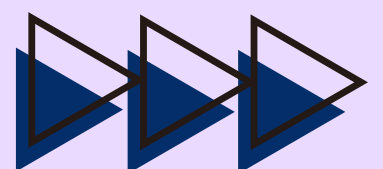
Roma pupils continue to encounter severe obstacles in the education system and often report feeling insecure due to their identity. Despite various government inclusion strategies, critics argue there is still a lack of focus on individual rights enforcement to combat structural patterns.

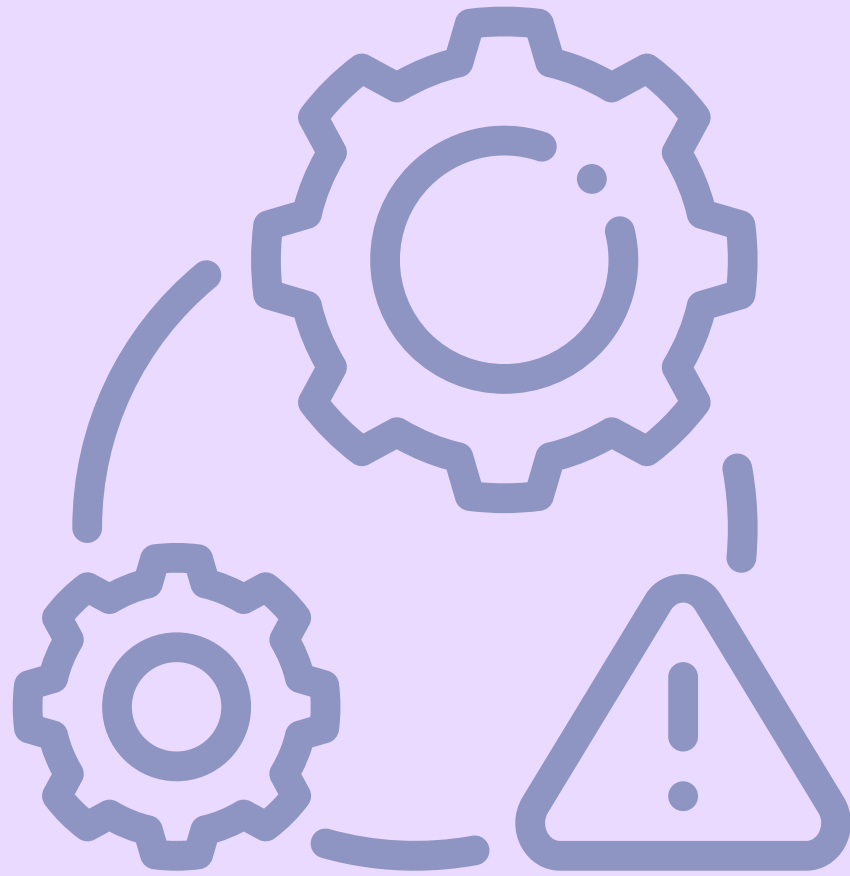




Religious Conflict

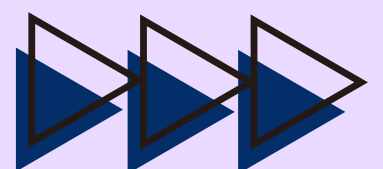
Freedom of religion issues have intensified, evidenced by several court cases involving workplace or healthcare bans on religious headscarves. In some instances, the Labour Court has accepted employer safety claims as justification for these bans, without requiring scientific evidence of risk.

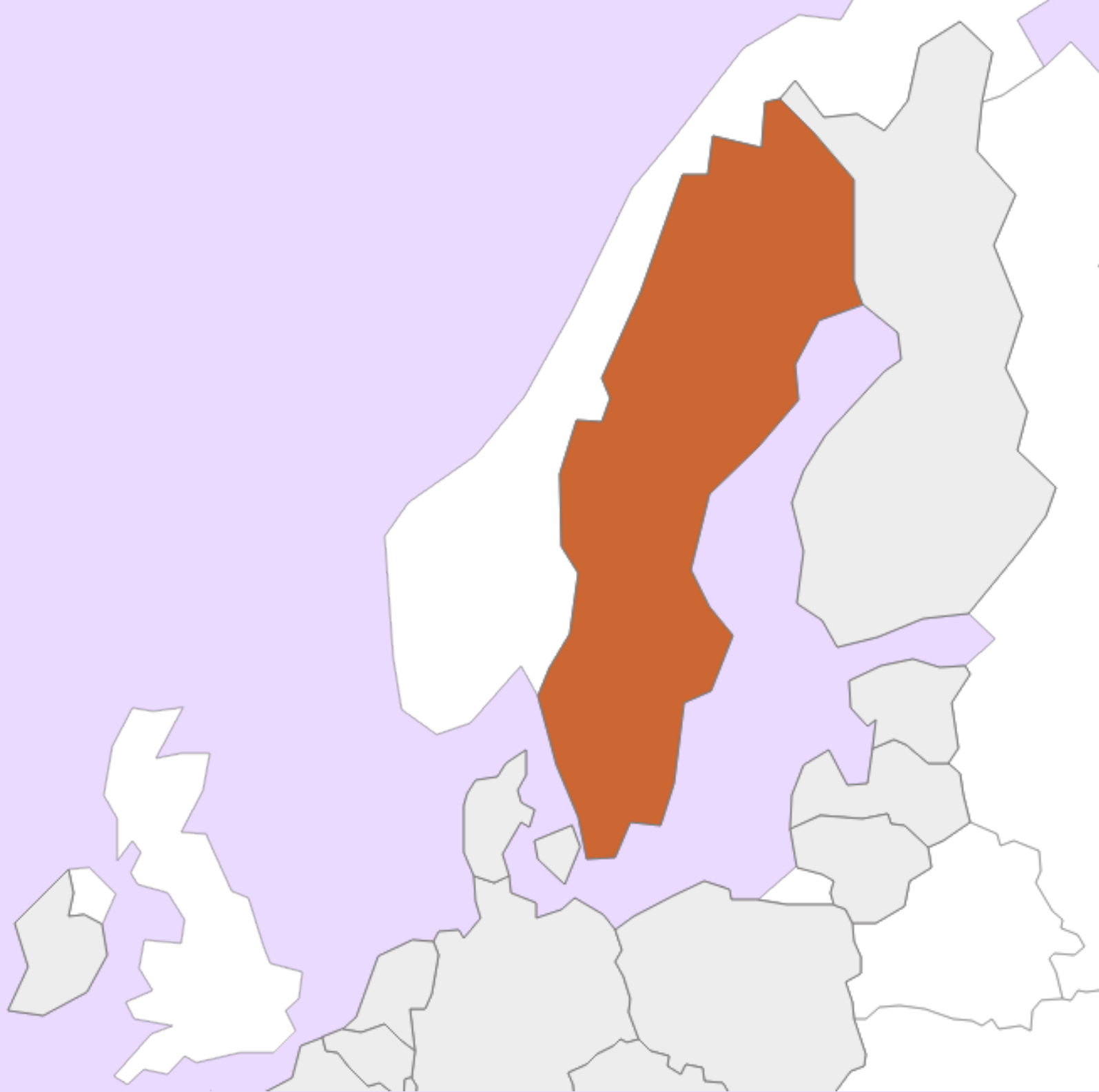




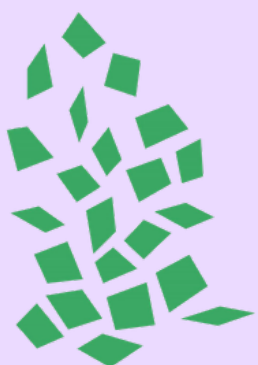
Ineffective Sanctions

Discrimination compensation awards remain relatively low and have not significantly increased despite a shift in the legal terminology which meant to enhance them. Many experts argue these sanctions are not “effective, proportionate and dissuasive” for larger employers or government agencies.





See the full report on
non-discrimination
in Sweden on our website.



European network of legal experts
in gender equality and non-discrimination