

§ THE LAW GRANTS RIGHTS TO NATIONAL MINORITIES

On 1 January 2010 the Act on National Minorities and National Minority Languages entered into force in Sweden. The Act's three sections on basic protection grant the national minorities the right to information, the protection of culture and language and the right to participation and influence.

§3 The administrative authorities shall, when required and in an appropriate manner, inform the national minorities about their rights in accordance with this Act.

§4 The Language Act (2009:600) states that the public sector has a particular responsibility to protect and promote the national minority languages. The public sector shall also support the national minorities in other ways that enable them to maintain and develop their cultures in Sweden. The development of a cultural identity and the use of one's own minority language must be particularly supported among children.

§5 The administrative authorities are to provide the national minorities with the opportunity to exert an influence on issues that affect them and are, as far as is possible, to discuss such issues with the minority representatives.

3 INTERMEDIATE GOALS FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES

The objective of the government's policy on minorities is to provide protection for the national minorities, to increase their opportunity to exert an influence and to support the historical minority languages so that they are kept alive.

1 DISCRIMINATION AND VULNERABILITY
Discrimination, vulnerability and unfair treatment of persons belonging to national minorities is to be combated. They are to have the same opportunities as the rest of the population to participate in the life of society.

2 INFLUENCE AND PARTICIPATION
The national minorities' opportunities for influence and participation are to be increased by, for example, the authorities turning to them for advice. The minorities are to be given real influence in issues that affect them.

3 LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL IDENTITY
The languages and cultures of national minorities are to be protected and promoted. Persons belonging to national minorities are to be given the opportunity to learn and use their mother tongue and to develop a cultural identity. The national minority languages are to be living languages in Sweden.

5 NATIONAL MINORITIES IN SWEDEN

Sweden has always been multilingual and multicultural. The Sami, the Swedish Finns, the Tornedalers, the Roma and the Jews have existed in the country for a very long time. Their languages and cultures are a part of Swedish society and our common cultural heritage.

THE SAMI: There are 20 000 - 35 000 Sami in Sweden who speak different varieties of the Sami language. The Sami are also an indigenous people.

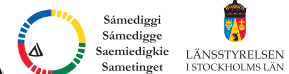
SWEDISH FINNS: There are 450 000 - 600 000 Swedish Finns in Sweden. Many of them live in the Stockholm-Mälardalen region. The minority language is Finnish.

TORNEDALERS: There are approximately 50 000 Tornedalers in Sweden who are primarily resident in Norrbotten. The minority language is called Meänkieli or Tornedal Finnish.

ROMA: There are 50 000 - 100 000 Roma in Sweden, living all over the country. The minority language is different varieties of Romany Chib.

JEWS: There are 20 000 - 25 000 Jews resident in Sweden. The minority language is Yiddish.

AN INFORMATION LEAFLET FROM



A selection of languages on the map of

Sweden's policy on minorities is rooted in the work on human rights and minority issues performed by the Council of Europe. National minorities and provincial or minority languages are to be found in many countries in Europe. Here is a selection of some countries and languages.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

- Cornish
- Irish Gaelic
- Manx
- Scottish Gaelic
- Ulster Scots
- Welsh

DENMARK

- German

THE NETHERLANDS

- Frisian
- Limburgish
- Low Saxon
- Romanes
- Yiddish

SPAIN

- Arabic
- Aragonese
- Aranese
- Asturian
- Basque
- Berber
- Catalan
- Galician
- Portuguese
- Valencian

NORWAY

- Kven
- Romany
- Sami

SWEDEN

- Sami
- Finnish
- Meänkieli
- Romani chib
- Yiddish

FINLAND

- Romanes
- Russian
- Sami
- Swedish
- Tatar
- Yiddish
- Karelian

GERMANY

- Danish
- Low German
- Lower Sorbian
- North Frisian
- Romany
- Saterland Frisian
- Upper Sorbian

HUNGARY

- Armenian
- Beas
- Bulgarian
- Croatian
- German
- Greek
- Polish
- Romanian
- Romany
- Ruthenian
- Serbian
- Slovak
- Slovenian
- Ukrainian

ROMANIA

- Albanian
- Armenian
- Bulgarian
- Croatian
- Czech
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Italian
- Macedonian
- Polish
- Romani
- Russian
- Ruthenian
- Serbian
- Slovak
- Tatar
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- Yiddish