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Ministry of Culture

Division for Cultural Heritage and Living
Environment
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UNESCO

Mr Indrajit Banerjee,
The Knowledge Societies Division,
Communication and Information
Sector

First consultation on the implementation of the 2015
Recommendation concerning the Preservation of, and Access
to, Documentary Heritage including in Digital Form

Director Banerjee,

*Please find enclosed the report from Sweden on the implementation of the
2015 Recommendation concerning the Preservation of, and Access to,
Documentary Heritage including in Digital Form.*

Yours sincerely,

Eva Stengård

Deputy Director

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Country: Sweden

Organization(s) or entity (s) responsible for the preparation of the report: The National Archives (Riksarkivet), the Ministry of Culture and the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO.

Officially designated contact person/institution: Eva Stengård, Deputy Director, Ministry of Culture, Government offices of Sweden

Name(s) of designated official(s) certifying the report: Fredrik Linder, Deputy Director-General, Head of Division, Ministry of Culture, Government offices of Sweden

Brief description of the consultation process established for the preparation of the report: The task of providing input to the report was given to the National Archives (Riksarkivet), a state authority responsible for having a national overview of archival issues and to follow archival activities in Sweden. The Swedish National Commission for UNESCO has also been a partner in the process and the Swedish National Memory of the World Committee has been consulted.

REPORTING ON THE SPECIFIC PROVISIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION:

General support:

1. Has the Recommendation been promulgated to appropriate ministries and institutions? (Section 1)

Yes.

2. Has the Recommendation been translated into the national language(s) (if applicable)?

Yes. The recommendation in Swedish: www.unesco.se/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/unesco_rekommendation_för_dokumentarv.pdf

3. *Has your country created a supportive, participatory, enabling and stable environment for all parties? (1. 1, 1.2, 3. 1, 4. 5, 5. 1, 5. 2)*

Yes. The National Archives (Riksarkivet) is authorized in national legislation to regulate and support archives at state agencies and to provide guidelines to other public archives. Support may be extended outside the public sector. For more information, please visit <https://riksarkivet.se/startpage>.

4. *How, if at all, has your country applied international standards and curatorial best practice*

Riksarkivet participate, together with several other authorities, in the development of standards within records management. They also implement and prescribe standards for state authorities through their regulations. These regulations are also available for others to adhere to on a voluntary basis.

5. *What consultation mechanisms does the government maintain with stakeholders in the documentary heritage sector (national and private memory institutions, professional associations, relevant NGOs)? (1. 2)*

Stakeholders are invited for consultation in legal and policy development within archival or heritage according to standard procedures.

6. *What actions has your country taken in order to support memory institutions in establishing policies and standards by research and consultation, guided by internationally established norms? (1. 1, 1. 2, 2. 2, 2.3, 3. 2)*

The regulations issued by Riksarkivet are expected to be based on established policies and standards and guided by internationally established norms. In the area of digital public records Riksarkivet have the last years been given the task to develop intergovernmental formats primarily by adopting international standards.

7. *What major capacity-building measures and policies have taken place within the sector?*

Is research and training for documentary heritage professionals organized in your country? How often? (2.4, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 5. 1, 5.2)

Academic education and research within the fields of archives and information science are represented at several universities and polytechnic colleges throughout Sweden and courses are offered annually.

(Legislation and mandates 8-11)

8. What legislation does your country have in place to:

a. define the authority, mandate, independence and governance structure of your national memory institutions? (3. 1, 4. 5)

State authorities are governed by the government, this includes the national archive, national library and several national museums. The state authorities operate independently of the government's direct influence. The government gives an overarching annual instruction to the state authorities which is issued together with financing decided by the parliament. The state authorities then report back on the implementation. Furthermore, the Swedish constitution ensures independence for state authorities from the government in any issue that involves decisions concerning a private individual or interpretation of the law. There are also memory institutions at regional and local level. In Sweden local governments are independent from the national government. Any infringement of this independence is subject to law.

Riksarkivet is authorised to prescribe on archival issues primarily for state authorities. The authorisation is given in the archival decree and in some other statutes such as those regulating how personal information may be handled.

b. guarantee the ability of memory institutions to take unhindered presentation action on documents in their collections? (3.5 to 3. 7)

Most of the documents are public records that, unless they're secret (subject to scrutiny for each request), are freely available upon request. The same is true for a large part of archival material originating from the private sector but kept at a public archival institution.

Sweden have a long tradition of governing cultural institutions (including memory institutions) with “arms-length distance”. In practice this concept means that politicians should not make any decisions on the content presented by the cultural institutions. For public museums this is now regulated by law.

c. promote and facilitate maximum inclusive access by empowering memory institutions? (3.2)

See previous answers 8 a-b.

The national memory institutions are aided in this for their digital material by a national secretariat coordinating and promoting issues regarding digitization, long-term preservation of digital material and digital presentation.

d. support memory institutions providing access to material whose copyright status cannot be clarified? (3.5 to 3. 7)

There are normally no copyright issues with material that is part of the public records. Swedish copyright law enables memory institutions to enter into collective licensing agreements with copyright organizations making it possible for them to provide access to such material.

e. ensure statutory deposit of documents in memory institutions? (4. 6)

Public authorities are required by law to deposit public documents at archival institutions in principle when public records no longer are needed by the authority or if the authority is terminated or undergo major changes. Deposits are nor statutory for organizations or private companies within the private sector unless they handle certain public tasks and the resulting records are considered public according to national legislation.

9. Has government net funding of national memory institutions (in recent years) increased or decreased? By how much? (4. 1)

Public funding for the national memory institutions have increased over the last 3 years by approx. 9,5 %.

10. *What long term investment in analogue and digital documentary presentation has been made? (4. 1)*

Riksarkivet have been given the task to offer memory institutions access to an infrastructure for mass digitization. At this centre there is i.e. in collaboration between Riksarkivet and the national library (Kungl. biblioteket) an ongoing a project digitizing all Swedish newspapers. At present this project has private funding.

Swedish archival law states that public records are part of the cultural heritage. Riksarkivet is as the national authority expected to plan and work strategically with the preservation of the cultural heritage.

11. *What encouragement has been given in the development of open source software and access to proprietary codes by memory institutions? (4.7, 4. 8)*

Regulations issued by Riksarkivet stipulate use of standards and non-proprietary formats. Programs (source code) developed by public authorities are considered public records.

(Identification and preservation status of documentary heritage 12-15)

12. *Do all national memory institutions have published collection development, preservation and access policies? Are there in your country established policies, mechanisms and criteria for selecting, acquiring and deselecting documentary heritage? What policies have been developed recently? (1. 1)*

No, not all national memory institutions publish their policies but many have such policies. Riksarkivet has since several decades an elimination- and preservation policy that is subject to updating soon. Riksarkivet also has an access policy regarding private archives and also guidelines for deposits of public records from state authorities.

13. *What documentary heritage has been identified as at potential or imminent risk (if any)?*

What action has been taken? Was it brought to the attention of competent bodies? (1. 3, 2. 7, 5. 5)

There are examples from the private sector not subject to the archival law such as power industries where records of great public interest may exist without sufficient guarantees for their long-term preservation. A public inquiry is now considering the potential need for extending the remit of the archival law into certain parts of private archives.

14. What arrangements are in place to protect the documentary heritage from danger? (5. 4)

There are regulations by Riksarkivet regarding storage and handling in place for the public government (local, regional and national), mandatory for state authorities and optional for other public authorities.

15. What practical support has been given to private, local and individual collections of documentary heritage? Are they visible in national directories? (1. 3, 4. 3)

Riksarkivet works continually with archives within the private sector, with collaborations, conferences and other meetings. Any archive, both public and private, may register in the national directory of archives.

(Capacity-building 16-19)

16. What specific steps have been taken to encourage consistency of best practice, coordination and sharing of tasks among memory institutions? (2. 1, 2. 7)

Riksarkivet collaborates with other authorities such as Kungl. Biblioteket and is also an active part in a specific program for collaboration by public authorities on digital issues (eSamverkansprogrammet).

17. What training schemes have been developed? (1. 5)

Training courses and other knowledge raising activities are arranged continually.

18. What is the level of involvement of national memory institutions in international professional associations and networks? (2.8, 2. 9)

Riksarkivet is active in numerous international networks and projects on the Nordic, European and international level. Other archives are also active internationally in varying degrees.

19. Are there partnerships, including public-private ones, established allowing sharing of costs, facilities and services? (2. 2, 3.4, 4. 2)

Yes, the present project regarding digitization of Swedish newspapers is an example of such a partnership.

(Memory of the world programme)

20. Is there in your country a national Memory of the World committee? If not, what plans exist to establish one? (4. 10, 5. 6)

Yes, Sweden has a national Memory of the World-committee:

https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/mow_national_committee_swed_en_en.pdf

21. What recent nominations have been made to Memory of the World registers (international, regional, national)? (1. 4)

There is no national Memory of the World register in Sweden neither a regional European Memory of the World register.

Sweden has 7 Memories of the World in the international register. The last Swedish nomination to the international register was the Dag Hammarskjöld collection which was included in the international register in 2017: www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/memory-of-the-world/register/access-by-region-and-country/se/

22. Are there any Memory of the World outreach and visibility activities organized in your country enhancing accessibility of documentary heritage? Please give examples. (3. 7)

Each organisation is responsible for outreach and visibility activities regarding any documentary heritage listed as a Memory of the World. For instance, Riksarkivet arranges outreach activities regarding the Nobel archive and Kungl. Biblioteket regarding the archive of Dag

Hammarskjöld. Some owners of Swedish entries on the UNESCO register of Memory of the World have organized information meetings once their memories have been included in the international register.

*There is an open web site dedicated to information on Memory of the World where tentative nominations can be made. The nominations are then considered by the Swedish National Memory of the World Committee. The Committee decides which nomination(s) are forwarded to the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO. The Swedish National Commission for UNESCO decides which nomination(s) are to be made to UNESCO. For more information please visit:
<http://www.svenskavarldsminnen.se/index.html>*

The Swedish National Memory of the World Committee has organized regional meetings with the National Archives regional branches in Sweden and published articles in all specialized publications on archives etc.

The Swedish National Memory of the World Committee has also organised meetings for all the Swedish entries on the UNESCO register of Memory of the World.

*The Swedish National Commission for UNESCO has published two publications/information materials on the Memory of the World programme (in Swedish):
<https://www.unesco.se/nyhetsrum/informationsmaterial/?catid=48>*

The Swedish national Commission for UNESCO informs regularly about the programme via social media and the web site: www.unesco.se