



# Prosecutor

– part of the legal system



ÅKLAGARMYNDIGHETEN  
Swedish Prosecution Authority



# A prominent role in society

Prosecutors have a prominent role in the legal society, and form an important part of the democratic system. No other category of professionals within the judiciary is similarly involved in all the phases of a case or matter.

The Swedish Prosecution Authority is a modern authority whose primary strength is its highly qualified staff. The work they do must be characterised by objectivity and respect for the individual. Prosecutors have considerable powers, which brings significant responsibility.

In collaboration with other government authorities within the judiciary, we work to ensure that investigations and legal proceedings are carried out in an efficient way and in accordance with the due process of law. Limiting the proceeds of crime is part of this work.

Through our work we make Sweden safer.

*Katarina Johansson Welin*  
Prosecutor General





**OUR VISION**  
Through our work  
we make  
Sweden safer.

#### **THE PRINCIPLE OF PUBLIC ACCESS**

The principle of public access means that the public has a right to insight and access to information about operations by the authority.

Among other things, this means that anyone may read the Swedish Prosecution Authority's public documents, except those that are protected by secrecy.

# From crime to sentence

In the Swedish judicial system, a prosecutor is involved in the whole process from a person being deprived of their liberty to a verdict being given.

## Starting an investigation

A decision will be made by either the police or the prosecutor on whether or not to initiate an investigation.

## The investigation

Gathering different types of evidence. A prosecutor may submit an application for a remand order to the court.

## Prosecute or discontinue

Duty to prosecute: the prosecutor's obligation to file a prosecution.

If there is insufficient evidence of a crime having been committed, no prosecution can be filed and the prosecutor must discontinue the case. The investigation may be reopened if new information regarding the crime is forthcoming.

In certain cases, the prosecutor may also decide on prohibitions and penalties.

## Trial

The prosecutor plays a very active role in court.

The principle of immediacy: only the evidence presented during the trial should be considered.

There are no juries in the Swedish courts.

## Conviction and sentences

In most cases, the court decides on penalties.

Fines are the most lenient penalties.

A prison sentence may be for anything from 14 days to life imprisonment.

A District Court judgement may be appealed to the Court of Appeal. A judgement from a Court of Appeal may be appealed to the Supreme Court.

# “I have an active role in the legal process”

The Swedish Prosecution Authority's approximately 1,275 prosecutors work with different types of matters at local public prosecution offices throughout the country. One of them is Public Prosecutor Fredrik Normark at Gävle Public Prosecution Office.

“My main tasks are to lead criminal investigations carried out together with the police, to make decisions regarding prosecution, and to litigate in court.”

“The most time-consuming of these is investigations. When you investigate a crime you have to determine who committed the crime, how it was done, and preferably why. The most important tools for that include interviews and interrogations, viewing at surveillance footage, fingerprints and DNA tests, evidence from mobile phones, and other technical equipment.”

## **What crimes are investigated at a local public prosecution office?**

“In essence, all crimes committed within the geographical area covered by the prosecution office. That includes everything from theft and fraud to serious violent or sexual

crimes and drug offences. It's very broad, and all prosecutors can be involved with almost all types of crimes.”

## **Do you collaborate with other government agencies and authorities?**

“We maintain close and regular contact with the Police Authority, since we investigate crimes together. As a juvenile prosecutor I also have a lot of contact with the municipality's social services. We also collaborate with the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and with Swedish Customs, for example.”

## **What distinguishes the prosecutor's profession from other legal professions?**

“A defining aspect of our work is that it is extremely governed by criminal activity, and therefore unpredictable. When you get to work in the morning you often have to change your plans in order to deal with something that happened during the night. Another characteristic is that we have to know a lot about all kinds of crimes, and that we can never become fully trained because we continually have to keep up with developments within society and in criminality.”



Public Prosecutor Fredrik Normark.

“Another thing is that prosecutors focus exclusively on penal and procedural law, particularly on crime and sentencing.”

### **Why did you choose to become a prosecutor?**

“The prosecutor’s driven and active role in the legal process appeals to me, and I enjoy being in the middle of the action. If you are interested in crime and punishment and you want an active role, I think prosecutor is the obvious career choice.”

### **What motivates prosecutors?**

“As I see it, you need to want to have an influence and to contribute to society. But you should also want to help other people – both those who have been subjected to crimes and those who have committed them. When someone has been convicted of a crime and then manages to refrain from committing more crimes, it feels very good to have been able to contribute to that – both for the individual in question and for society.”

### **What are some important personal characteristics for working as a prosecutor?**

“The courage to want to make an impact and do justice is something you should have. You have to be able to make independent and quick decisions, but also be able to collaborate. You need to be well balanced and to have personal integrity – many of the issues we deal with are difficult ones.”



# We work so that people can feel safer

The overall objective of Swedish criminal policy is to reduce crime and increase people's feeling of safety. The Swedish Prosecution Authority helps to achieve this goal by ensuring that criminals are accountable for their actions in an efficient and legally grounded manner.

Crime develops at the same pace as changes in society. There are a number of challenges ahead for the legal system, which must develop at the same rate as the rest of the world. Depending on the nature of the crime, some categories are given particular priority by the Prosecution Authority.

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF CRIME

**Everyday crimes**, also known as high volume crimes, make up the majority of all crimes. These include driving offences and car theft, shoplifting, theft, burglary and vandalism; in other words, crimes that affect people in their everyday lives and make society less safe. The large volume of every-



day crimes means that efficient procedures and working methods are essential in our prosecution offices.

***Terrorist crimes, money laundering and financing of terrorism*** are becoming ever more frequent. These crimes are often organised and involve international networks. The National Security Unit at the Prosecution Authority specialises in work with terrorist offences and espionage, among other things.

***IT-related crime*** involves offences connected with computers or computer systems, including data breaches and crimes in which computers or other digital equipment are used as an aid in criminal activities, or where evidence may exist in the digital environment. Examples are unlawful threats, abuse, defamation, fraud, crimes involving child pornography and sexual offences primarily committed against children. There are prosecutors who are specially trained in the area of IT-related crime.

***Crimes against children, violence in close relationships and sexual offences*** are high-priority but often difficult to investigate due to poor or non-existent evidence. In the case of sexual crimes against children, methods of interviewing victims can be problematic. There are special courses for prosecutors involved in these types of crime and their work is carried out in close cooperation with the police. In order to ensure quality and consistency of inves-

tigations into rape, there are checklists and other aids for police and prosecutors.

The Swedish Prosecution Authority continuously works in parallel with other authorities on ***youth crime***. When a young person is suspected of a crime, a rapid response from society is particularly important so that the link between the criminal offence and the punishment is clear to the offender. To this end, there are statutory time limits on investigations.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

There is one development centre at the Swedish Prosecution Authority that collates information of importance for daily prosecution work. It collects knowledge of different types of crime and analyses the legal situation surrounding them. The centre develops efficient methods for processing different crimes and relevant information is then passed on to prosecutors working with those crimes.

Each prosecutor has an obligation to be objective and must also investigate and examine evidence that is beneficial to a suspect. Prosecutors must be objective when they initiate legal actions.

# Crime is becoming increasingly international

Society is constantly changing and crime has become increasingly complex and international. There is a national unit at the Swedish Prosecution Authority with experienced prosecutors who specialise in this type of crime.

The National Unit for International and Organised crime investigates cross-border crime. The unit also covers organised or other forms of serious national crime and certain special categories of crime such as war crimes and international criminality.

“The most common types of cases we handle at the national unit are cross-border, drug-related crimes and human trafficking, says Senior Public Prosecutor Karolina Lindekrantz.”

“But there are other cases; recently, for example, we completed proceedings on a very large case of serious fraud regarding the welfare system.”

Increased internationalisation has resulted in more legal and political cooperation on criminality across borders.

New procedures and agreements are made between countries through different cooperation schemes.

## **PROSECUTORS HAVE MISSIONS ABROAD**

Swedish prosecutors are also sent out on international missions. These may include cooperation on development or peace-promoting, security and conflict prevention activities, in particular within the EU and the UN. Prosecutors from the Swedish Prosecution Authority have been involved in EU missions in Kosovo, Palestine and Ukraine, for example.

## **INTERNATIONAL JUDICIAL COOPERATION**

In all types of criminal cases, prosecutors come into contact with police and prosecutorial cooperation abroad.



Senior Public Prosecutor  
Karolina Lindekrantz.



# The rule of law is the guiding principle

The Swedish Prosecution Authority has a special department responsible for internal supervision and auditing of its own activities. The purpose is to ensure high quality and the rule of law.

Examinations are often related to prosecutors' processing of individual cases, such as looking into time limits that have been exceeded. The supervisory department also deals with the national prosecutor's special supervisory tasks and referrals from the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Chancellor of Justice and the Commission on Security and Integrity Protection.

Supervisory activities should not be confused with investigations of offences committed by prosecutors, such as professional misconduct, which are dealt with by Separate Public Prosecution Office. Sensitive issues are investigated here, including reports and suspicions regarding police

Swedish prosecutors are independent when making decisions concerning prosecution or coercive measures, such as search and arrest.

This means that each prosecutor is solely responsible for his or her decisions, and that these decisions cannot be changed by a prosecutor's superior, for example.

However, people affected by a prosecutor's decision may request that it be reviewed by another prosecutor at a higher judicial level.

employees, prosecutors, judges, members of parliament and others. The operations are separate from normal police and prosecution activities to ensure legal correctness.

# The Supreme Court guides

Senior Legal Manager My Hedström is one of three people responsible for appeals by the Prosecution Authority, and responses to, the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court is the final legal instance of the public courts and the court of record, which means that it primarily takes up appeals which require indicative statements in a legal issue. This may relate to how a specific statutory clause should be interpreted, whether a clause is compatible with EU law, or how long a custodial sentence should be for a particular offence.

“My work with Supreme Court cases is particularly focused on legal issues relevant to prosecuting operations that the Supreme Court should clarify. Sometimes cases are decided after a hearing in the Supreme Court. Working with Supreme Court cases is very interesting and stimulating for those who, like me, enjoy writing about and looking into legal matters in great depth.”

The Prosecutor General is the only public prosecutor in the Supreme Court. Leave to appeal is required for the Supreme Court to examine a case. The Supreme Court



tries about 25 criminal cases each year. The Prosecutor General appeals around 10–20 appeal court judgements per year. When a defendant appeals a judgement, the Supreme Court may ask the Prosecutor General to give an opinion.





Senior Legal Manager  
My Hedström.

On average, prosecutors work with 30 investigations at the same time.

In addition to formal legal qualifications and court practice, a number of personal qualities are needed to work as a prosecutor. You must be independent, mature, analytical, able to make quick decisions and have integrity and courage.

# The Swedish Prosecution Authority in figures

**1** Prosecution Development Centre for methods and legal development

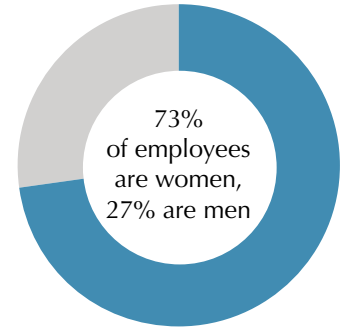
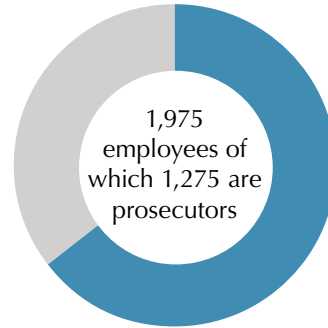
**4** National Units with specialised operations

**31** Public prosecution offices in 27 places

The average age of employees is **43**

**178,000** cases received in 2023

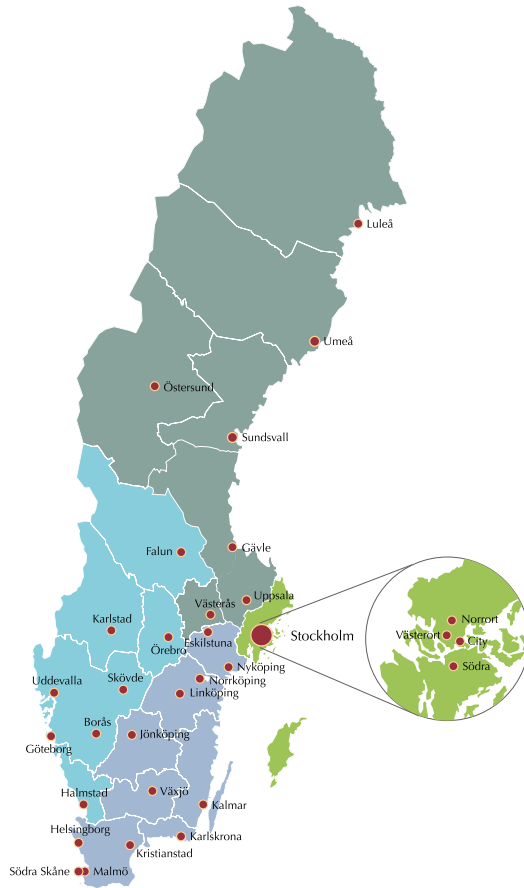
**389,000** reports of suspected crimes received in 2023







# We are represented in all parts of the country



- North-Central Public Prosecution Area**  
Norrbotten, Västerbotten, Jämtland, Västernorrland, Gävleborg, Uppsala and Västmanland
- West-Bergslagen Public Prosecution Area**  
Västra Götaland, Halland, Värmland, Närke and Dalarna
- Stockholm Public Prosecution Area**  
Stockholm and Gotland
- South-East Public Prosecution Area**  
Skåne, Blekinge, Kronoberg, Kalmar, Jönköping, Östergötland and Sörmland
- National Public Prosecution Department**  
Nationwide



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