

23 September 2021

Dear all

Due to the lifting of most restrictions on 29 September the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (Försäkringskassan) informs that as of 1 October, several temporary benefits introduced by the government during the pandemic will cease.

This include:

- compensation for the first sick day (karensdag);
- risk group compensation; and
- compensation for sick pay costs.

However, the e-services remain so that you can apply for compensation afterwards for days before 1 October 2021.

The government also removes the exemption that applies to medical certificates. This means that you who are employed will need to show a medical certificate to the employer on day 8 of the sick pay period and for the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (Försäkringskassan) on day 15 when you apply for sickness benefit.

More detailed information can be found here:

<https://www.forsakringskassan.se/english/the-coronavirus-covid-19---applicable-regulations>

Best regards,
Helena

24 August 2021

Dear All

As I said during our Monday morning meeting [yesterday](#), the Senior Management Team (SMT) has made some decisions that I want to communicate to you straightaway. I outlined them at the meeting and this confirms what I said then, informs those who weren't able to participate, and gives you some further detail.

This email concerns working from home and in the office; a separate email covers our decision on staffing levels.

Working from home and in the office: short-term

The current official guidance is to work from home if you can. This guidance is expected to be in place until 30 September. **SMT agreed** that until 30 September, we will operate with a soft interpretation of the guidance.

Thus, please continue to work from home if you can but if you want to work in the office sometimes, or need to, or need to have meetings, you may come to the office, on the following conditions:

- That you are double-vaccinated *or* recovered *or* have a clear rapid test from the day before;

– That you only come to the office if you have informed Christina Ekberg by 15.00 of the [Friday](#) before before your visit.

The reason for the first of these conditions should be clear without further explanation. The reason for the second condition is that **SMT also agreed** to shift to this interpretation without setting a quota or establishing a rota system like we did last year. However, if numbers in the building go above our estimated safe level, we will have to do so. Therefore, if you are coming into the office at all, you must email Christina Ekberg (christina.ekberg@sipri.org) by 15.00 on [Friday](#) about any visit to the office you will make in the following week.

And please continue to be careful about how you travel to and from the office, avoiding peak hours on public transport.

Please note that while [Monday](#) morning meetings, the RSC and cluster meetings will continue to be held virtually, programmes and project teams can meet in person and are expected to choose appropriate rooms in which to do so.

Working from home and in the office: longer-term – the new normal after the pandemic
SMT agreed that, when normal office working can resume, staff members may have a maximum of 2 days a week working from home (WFH). There will be a framework of regulation, and an agreement with each staff member. The PAD will offer opportunity to discuss, assess and adjust the agreement if necessary.

The regulation will include the following points:

- For tax and legal reasons, the primary place of work for each staff member is the SIPRI office.
- Staff must be available to colleagues including managers and other teams when they are WFH.
- Staff must also be available for meetings online or, if required, coming into the office.
- Virtual participation in a conference can be done from home in addition to WFH.
- Staff will be responsible for providing their own home office including equipment (except laptop provided by SIPRI) because working from home will be a choice that is available to SIPRI staff, not a requirement.

Moving to Sweden

SMT agreed that to encourage staff who have been appointed to positions at SIPRI to take the opportunity to move to Sweden. Several colleagues have done so or are planning to already. This is encouragement, not pressure, and if there are issues about moving to Stockholm, new staff members should discuss them with their line managers.

Best wishes
Dan

1 July 2021

Dear all

Below please find a summary of a few important - positive! - updates on the Covid-19 related

regulations and recommendations in Sweden.

Today, Sweden enters phase 2 of a 5 phase government plan to lift restrictions. Additional information can be found at <https://www.government.se/articles/2021/05/government-plan-for-phasing-out-restrictions/>

Vaccination

In Stockholm county, vaccination has been open for all born 1991 or earlier. You can book your appointment through Alltid öppet app on your phone. Please be reminded that Alltid öppet mobile app is only available if you are registered in the Stockholm region; if you are registered in another Swedish region e.g. Uppsala, please visit 1177.se website for latest updates and bookings.

Covid certificate (Covidbevis in Swedish)

As of **July 1**, a Covid certificate is being introduced. It shows whether you have been vaccinated against Covid-19. The information on the vaccination is being registered, digitally, by health authorities within seven days after you have taken your first shot. Later on, the certificate will also contain information about test results and recovery from Covid-19.

The certificate is required for travel within Europe.

How to obtain the certificate: log in to <http://www.covidbevis.se> and follow the instructions on the website.

NB: Since the service opens **today** at 9 am, it might be difficult to log in because of high demand.

Updated guidance in Stockholm region

As of **July 1**, the Public Health Agency has lifted a number of restrictions in Stockholm due to the reducing number of Covid-19 infected and the growing number of vaccinated. The updated guidance provides for an increased number of people allowed to meet in public spaces. Recommendations to do your grocery shopping alone as well as to wear a face mask on public transport during rush hours no longer apply.

A full list with exact numbers of people allowed to meet in different settings is available here (so far, in Swedish only): <https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/smittskydd-beredskap/utbrott/aktuella-utbrott/covid-19/skydda-dig-och-andra/anpassning-av-atgarder-mot-spridning-av-covid-19/>

At the same time, all general safety recommendations still apply. These include Covid-19 testing when showing symptoms, self-isolating if tested positive, working from home if possible, social distancing, avoiding crowded spaces and holding meetings - business and private - outside whenever possible.

Travel

When it comes to travel, guidance is frequently revised. Hence, it is important to keep yourself up-to-date if you plan travelling during your holiday.

All the recent guidance issued by competent Swedish authorities on **June 30**, 2021 can be

found here: <https://www.krisinformation.se/en/hazards-and-risks/disasters-and-incidents/2020/official-information-on-the-new-coronavirus/travel-restrictions>

To stay up-to-date on the pandemic situation within the EU, you can use the **Re-open EU** website <https://reopen.europa.eu/en> (also available as a mobile app).

Stay healthy and have a good summer!
Elena and Joakim

29 April 2021

Dear all,

Correction: The Alltid öppet app is only available to people who belong to the Stockholm health care region. For those of you who don't live in this region, please consult 1177.se

Joakim

29 April 2021

Dear Sweden-based colleagues,

As preparation for getting your COVID-19 vaccinations, please be advised that you can download a mobile app called "Alltid öppet", which can be used to make appointments for getting your shots once the booking system is open for your age group. You need a valid BankID to be able to log on.

Please note that while the app is in Swedish, information regarding testing and vaccinations is also available at 1177.se, which is available in English as well as a number of other languages.

Joakim

27 April 2021

Dear all

Please read carefully this overview based on the latest guidance issued by Sweden's Government and Public Health Agency in relation to the Covid-19 situation in the country.

On April 22, 2021 the Government and the Public Health Agency of Sweden decided to prolong several restrictions that have been in force countrywide until 17 May.

This is because the rate of spread of Covid-19 remains high, and healthcare services are under heavy strain. There are now more patients with Covid-19 being admitted to hospitals than during the fall, and the number is increasing. County administrative boards (Länsstyrelsen) are increasingly reporting that general public is not complying with recommendations. Therefore, several restrictions are now being prolonged until 17 May. They may be eased after this date if the rate of spread of infection falls and pressure on the healthcare system reduces.

Here is the link to the comprehensive list of restrictions, in English:

<https://www.krisinformation.se/en/hazards-and-risks/disasters-and-incidents/2020/official-information-on-the-new-coronavirus/restriktioner-och-forbud>

Personal responsibility

The government's guidance makes explicit that it is the responsibility of each and every one of us to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Everyone in society, individuals as well as employers, has a duty to take measures to prevent the spread of infection. The guidance is valid until 30 June 2021.

Updated guidance on travel to Sweden

The Government has decided that foreign nationals will have to present a negative Covid-19 test result before they are permitted to enter Sweden. The traveler must be able to present a certificate at the border showing a negative test result. The test must have been conducted a maximum of 48 hours prior to arrival.

The Government has decided to extend the general entry ban for foreign citizens who cannot present a negative COVID-19 test result on arrival in Sweden until 31 May 2021.

Testing recommended upon arrival to Sweden

The Public Health Agency recommends everyone who travels to Sweden from abroad to get tested upon arrival and on day five as well as to avoid contacts for seven days, regardless of citizenship. This applies regardless of whether you are covered by the requirement to present a negative Covid-19 test result before entry.

Travelling abroad

Recommendation against non-essential travel to countries outside the EU is effective until 31 Mai 2021. You can always find all the recent information about travels abroad, with specific and updated information on each country on www.swedenabroad.se

Work from home

All those who are able to, are advised to continue to work from home. At SIPRI, we all continue to work from home. The only persons who have been authorized to work from the office are Olle (Mon-Fri) and Christina (selected days per week). Currently, those members of the Outreach team and P&D cluster who work directly on the Forum preparations have been authorized to work from the office if they so wish.

Office premises

If you must visit the office, always check with your line manager first; if you receive the green light from your line manager, inform Christina in advance.

Avoid using public transportation if you can. If you have to come to the office by public transport, avoid rush hours and use a face mask. If you come by car, there are parking permits in Christina's office.

If you have borrowed a screen from the interns' room, please remember to return it before you leave. Please wipe it carefully after use.

While at the office, keep a safe distance to other colleagues whom you might meet.

No-one should be in the office on weekends.

- **Stay at home for at least seven days** even if you experience only mildest symptoms for more than one day (unless you have taken the test and it is negative).
- **Take the test if you have symptoms.** Visit 1177.se for advice on how to do the test.
- **Self-isolation:** If someone you are living with has been tested positive you should stay at home for seven days and do a test on day five. This includes children who go to pre-school or to school.
- **Socialise** only with a very few people.
- **Limit travel.**
- **Maintain social distance** from other people, both indoors and outdoors.
- **Use face mask** when using public transportation during rush hours (working days between 07:00 and 09:00 and between 16:00 and 18:00).

Additional information

Stay up-to-date with all the specific recommendations issued by the Public Health Agency of Sweden by visiting:

<https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/the-public-health-agency-of-sweden/communicable-disease-control/covid-19/>

Take care and stay healthy!

Best wishes
Dan and Elena

22 March 2021

Dear all,

Please find below updated information about the Corona situation in Sweden.

General information from the Swedish Public Health Agency (Folkhälsomyndigheten) and Region Stockholm.

Vaccine

Here you can find continuously updated information about vaccination against covid-19 in the Stockholm region:

<https://www.1177.se/en/Stockholm/other-languages/other-languages/covid-19/vaccin-engelska/>

Public transportation

Travel only by public transport if you have to. If you must travel, make it as infectious safe as possible.

Mouth guard

You should use disposable mouth guards (this applies to people born in 2004 and earlier) when traveling by public transport in rush hour traffic but also at other times in public transport as long as there is widespread societal spread of covid-19. Note that mouth guards do not replace the rule of avoiding close contact and keeping a distance. Use disposable mouth guards in situations where close contact, for a long time in an indoor environment, cannot be avoided with certainty. Mouth guards are recommended in, for example, shops.

Restaurants

From 1 March, opening hours at restaurants are limited; they need to close by 20.30. This applies regardless of whether alcohol is served. However, the businesses can continue to deliver food for take-away.

For restaurants that form part of a shopping centers or malls, the number of visitors in a party may only amount to 1 person, unless the restaurant can be reached through its own entrances.

Workplaces

Keep working from home as often as you can. In workplaces where homework is not possible, avoid congestion, keep your distance and try to meet as few people as possible. This also applies to coffee rooms and staff rooms, and even if you meet the same co-workers every day. If you have respiratory symptoms, even mild ones, you need to stay home.

Office premises

We should all as a rule work from home. Sometimes there are reasons why one needs to come and work in the office. Please *inform Christina in advance* as she has an overview of how many people who can be in the office. No-one should be in the office on weekends to avoid to inadvertently trigger the alarm which has occurred a couple of times recently. Choose to travel at off-peak hours and always wear a mouth guard on public transports. If you come by car, Christina has parking permits for 2021 in her office.

Take care and stay healthy!

All the best

Helena

11 January 2021

DearAll

First of all, welcome back to a New Year. Everybody has been expressing to everybody the hope that 2021 is better than 2020 – less weird, at least – so I won't bother to. But I hope we all come back with energy refreshed and in good spirits.

Having said which, unfortunately we need to be sure we are all reminded about the needs of the day in view of the pandemic. As I mentioned before [Christmas](#), we have compiled the accumulated guidance into a single memo so you can all be up to date with it. Please find it attached. It is only two pages and, though most of the information and guidance in it is surely familiar to you, please do make sure to read it carefully.

Best wishes to all
Dan

24 November 2020

Dear All

I write because I want to ensure everybody is up to date about the current guidelines and regulations relating to the pandemic; I realise not everybody is easily able to keep with the latest developments.

First off, as to SIPRI's guidelines, we continue to ask everybody to work from home. We have allowed a few exceptions but need to be very tight and restrictive about who can come to the office when. Please, if you need equipment that you do not have so as to be able to work at home, do talk with your manager and with Helena about it. I cannot guarantee that we will help but we may be able to and if we can, we will.

Second, the bigger picture in Stockholm:

-- From 29 October, stricter guidelines were announced for everyone who lives in the Stockholm region; these have now been extended until 13 December and may be extended after that.

-- As of [today](#), a maximum of 8 persons are allowed at public gatherings and events. This restriction is applicable until further notice. An exception is made for funerals, where a maximum of 20 persons are allowed.

On [Sunday](#) the Swedish Prime Minister made a speech in which he stated very strongly that human health and lives are still in danger, that we all need to do more and that we should all refrain from all activities which are not necessary. He pointed out that the new norm for the whole of Sweden is to:

- Stay up to date on what advice and recommendations apply where you are.
- Only meet people you live with.
- If you live alone, choose one or at most two friends to hang out with. But keep your distance.
- Stay home if you have the slightest symptom.
- Wash your hands often and thoroughly.
- Work from home if at all possible.

More information (in English):

<https://www.krisinformation.se/en>

The Prime Minister's speech (in Swedish):

<https://www.regeringen.se/tal/2020/11/statsminister-stefan-lofvens-tal-till-nationen-den-22-november-2020/>

Tough times but we continue to do what we can to help each other.

Stay in touch and stay safe!

Best wishes

Dan

3 November 2020

Dear all,

The increasing spread of Covid-19 in Sweden has led to stricter recommendations being issued by the Public Health Agency in specific regions in Sweden, including Stockholm.

This means, as Dan wrote in an email [last Friday](#), that we must now return to working from home. The recommendations remain and we continue to ask you to avoid coming to the office. If you need to pick up something from the office, you could, but remember to travel to and from the office in a safe way, i.e. avoid public transport if possible.

A temporary exception to meet in the office is during PAD talks if both parties agree and feel comfortable meeting.

No routine days at the office are allowed. Some exceptions may be made and this applies to e.g. for the SSC.

We will continue to monitor the development closely and will keep you informed.

Thank you all for your cooperation. Take care of yourself and each other and stay safe.

All the best

Helena

30 October 2020

Dear All

As you have probably seen in the news, the rate of Covid-19 infection in the Stockholm region has increased significantly in the recent period. [Yesterday](#), as Maria's email informed you, Stockholm joined Uppsala and some other regions in having revised and stricter

guidelines on behaviour. These are intended to be in place for the coming three weeks (and could be extended beyond that period if need be).

I am sure you will appreciate that the SMT has not yet had a chance for a proper discussion — only a brief exchange by email — but, at the same time, we want to respond to the changed guidance without delay. Accordingly, with this, I am issuing new guidelines for us all, which may be changed after SMT has had our next meeting on [Tuesday](#) afternoon.

These are the key points:

1. Until further notice, please work at home if you can. That is, we are returning to guidelines in place before the summer:

- **NO routine working in the office;**
- **NO in-person team meetings or other meetings.**

2. The exception to this guidance is PAD meetings. if both the manager and staff member agree, the PAD meeting may be held in-person. Our experience so far is that they are generally more relaxed and therefore productive in person than online. HOWEVER, be very careful about travel to and from the office (or wherever you are having the PAD meeting); public transport remains an obvious site of additional risk.

3. In all other ways, maintain the discipline of our times according to Public Health Agency guidelines:

- **maintain social distancing;**
- **avoid shops except food stores and pharmacies as necessary;**
- **avoid malls, museums, libraries, gyms, concerts, and sports training;**
- **minimise new social and professional contacts;**
- **isolate yourself if someone in your household or with whom you have regular contact has symptoms;**
- **isolate yourself and get a test if you have symptoms.**

These rules are effective immediately. If you are having a team meeting [today](#), please be responsible: if it is possible to hold it by Zoom, please do so. If you are in the office because it was your day to be, there is no need to drop everything and rush home but please leave the office as soon as you reasonably can.

SMT will discuss this guidance as a matter of priority on [Tuesday](#) and will adjust them if we conclude it's necessary. We will also discuss how to assess the impact of this change on finalising work in 2020. In our email exchanges, we have acknowledged that there is the possibility to agree other exceptions to the no-in-person-meeting rule; *inter alia*, we are going to look very closely at how to go through with the Stockholm security Conference safely, just as we did with the Forum in May. Exceptions, if any in addition to SSC, can only be approved after discussion at SMT and by SMT decision.

I hope all this is clear. As already stated, SMT will come back to this at our first opportunity and I will be in touch with you all again thereafter.

In the meantime, have a good weekend, be careful, be safe, be well

Best wishes

Dan

29 October 2020

Dear all,

At their press conference this afternoon they issued stronger recommendations/restrictions for all of us living in Stockholm.

These are:

- Avoid shops (other than grocery stores and pharmacies), malls, museums, libraries and gyms
- Avoid participating in physical meetings, concerts, sports training and games
- If possible, avoid physical contact with others than the people you live with
- The employers should encourage the staff to work from home as much as possible

This is valid for 3 weeks from [today](#).

We will follow up with more specific recommendations and guidelines regarding how this affect our work as soon as possible.

Best regards,
Maria

13 October 2020

Dear All

SMT has decided to change the rules on access to the office for all staff after traveling from abroad to Sweden. We are aiming for consistency and simplicity, and at the same time reflecting the way understanding of the virus has evolved over the past several months.

From now on 7 days of self-quarantine before coming to the office apply to all staff who arriving from all countries.

NOTE: This applies to all staff, not just new, and all countries equally.

In addition: Please be sure always to stay home from the office if you have the slightest symptom.

Best wishes
Dan

5 October 2020

Dear All

After discussions at the SMT and HR group last week, I want to bring a few points to your attention, to update and clarify our guidelines on the use of the office (dated 2 September).

We are aware of and monitoring closely the changing situation with the pandemic in Sweden and especially the Stockholm area. At present, with the rotation system we have established, we see no need to change the arrangements for when staff members may be at the office. Within the building, we see people maintaining social distance and taking care in the appropriate ways. While that continues, and in the absence of a dramatic shift in official regulation, we will leave things as they are. **BUT please note**

1. The moment of greatest risk is not at the office but on your way to it. If you are using public transport, please take the time to figure out when is the least busy time to travel both to and from work.
2. If you use one of the office computer monitors while at SIPRI, please be sure to return it to the interns room where they are kept and clean the surfaces including the cables with the spray and paper towels provided there.
3. Please continue to respect the guidance that meetings with people from outside SIPRI should in general happen outside the building — e.g., in a cafe — where you should, of course, continue to follow social distancing guidelines.
4. Nobody should feel they must come to the office if they judge it is too risky.

AND IN ADDITION, if you are ill, stay at home and if somebody in your household (or with whom you have regular contact) tests positive for the virus, you should follow the official guidance and also stay home for seven days.

Everybody take care!

Best wishes
Dan

14 July 2020

Dear all,

The following information was published by the Swedish Government on [14 July 2020](#).

The MFA has decided to remove the advice against non-essential travel to Germany, Poland and Andorra from July 15th onwards, but reintroduce them for Switzerland until 29th July.

The advice against non-essential travel was earlier this summer lifted for Belgium, France, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Croatia, Monaco, Luxembourg, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Hungary and the Vatican (and Switzerland), and with the exception of Switzerland this decision remains in place.

The ministry's advice against non-essential travel to other countries in the EU, the EEA and the Schengen area, as well as the UK, have been extended until [July 29th](#).

Please find more information (in Swedish) here: <https://www.regeringen.se/uds-reseinformation/ud-avrader/a--andringar-av-avradan-fran-icke-nodvandiga-resor-till-alla-lander/>

Unfortunately, the English version is not available on the Government's website yet but I will get back to you with this as soon as it is.

Best wishes,
Elin

18 June 2020

Dear all,

The following information was published by the Swedish Government on [17 June 2020](#).

The MFA has extended the advice against travel to countries outside the EU, the EEA and the Schengen area until 31 August, and will remove the advice against travel to a number of countries in the EU, the EEA and the Schengen area as of 30 June.

There have been developments recently in the EU, the EEA and the Schengen area that have led to the easing of restrictions that had previously represented obstacles and risks to Swedish travellers. Therefore, as of 30 June, the MFA will remove the advice against non-essential travel to the following countries: Belgium, Croatia, France, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland.

For other countries in the EU, the EEA and the Schengen area, the advice against travel remains in place until 15 July.

Please find more information here: <https://www.government.se/press-releases/2020/06/the-mfa-has-extended-the-advice-against-travel/>

Best wishes,
Elin

12 June 2020

Dear all,

The following information was just shared from the Swedish Government:

Extension of temporary entry ban to the EU via Sweden due to COVID-19 (Published [12 June 2020](#))

[Today](#) the Government decided to extend the temporary entry ban to the EU via Sweden until 30 June.

The decision was taken following a recommendation of the European Commission.

The aim of the entry ban is, as previously, to mitigate the effects of the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and reduce the outbreak of COVID-19.

You can read more here: <https://www.government.se/press-releases/2020/06/extension-of-temporary-entry-ban-to-the-eu-via-sweden-due-to-covid-19/>

Best
Helena

9 June 2020

Dear All

Recent official statements change and relax the guidance for Swedish residents on private travel both within Sweden and internationally. However, there are still restrictions and they must be taken seriously. Helena has compiled the guidance in the attachment. We hope you find it useful.

Best wishes
Dan

15 May, 2020

Dear All

I want to give you an update on the situation with Covid-19.

From the moment that the seriousness of the spread of the virus started to be recognised, it has been policy at SIPRI to follow the guidance from the Swedish authorities. We are not epidemiologists or public health experts and will not second-guess the authorities. That policy has not changed.

[Yesterday](#), the government held a press conference. As we are an international staff, I think many of us may pay as much or more attention to our home country's news media, compared to how much attention we pay to Swedish media. So I wanted to pass on a couple of points from the press conference.

For one thing, the Minister of Foreign Affairs announced that the guidance to avoid unnecessary travel to all countries is being extended until [15 July 2020](#).

Second, the Prime Minister announced that trips to more than one or two hours' drive away are also discouraged.

In general, the Prime Minister urged us to recognise that the danger is not over and we should all continue to follow the public health authority's rules and recommendations.

I want to emphasise that the guidance has not been eased or relaxed in any way. In many countries, we read of lockdown measures being relaxed but Sweden did not lockdown and is not now relaxing its guidelines.

I ask you please to respect this. The guidance remains that if you can work from home, you should. The guidance remains that travel should be highly restricted.

I understand, of course, that there are pressures resulting from this extraordinary situation. We want to be both practical and creative in how we help each other in these times, and realistic in continuing to respect the Swedish official guidelines. If you need to, please talk with your line manager or with Helena about particular difficulties you are facing.

Overall, I know that many of us are wondering how long this situation will last. So far as I know, the honest answer is that nobody knows. We will all do the best we can and adapt as well as possible.

Everybody, stay healthy!

Best wishes
Dan

14 April, 2020

Dear All

I hope everybody had a good Easter break and was in touch with family. More than that, I hope we are all staying healthy and focused on doing everything to keep it like that – keeping social distance, getting exercise, doing essential shopping at times when you know the shops won't be full, and having plenty of contact with friends, loved ones, family and colleagues.

This note is really just to say, Welcome back after Easter. We don't have an all-staff meeting this week but we will [next Monday](#) as usual.

There is nothing to add to the guidance I sent out on 17 March just after the government decided to advise everybody who can work from home to do so. But I wanted to offer you two reminders and two thoughts looking ahead:

Reminder 1: Normally under Swedish regulations, for the first day you are off sick, there is no "sick pay"; in the present situation, there is sick pay for the first day. The government has also extended the period of time for which you can be off sick without needing a certificate from your doctor. Contact Helena with any questions about these points.

Reminder 2: If schools shut, our approach is to be as flexible as possible in helping each other to make sure work doesn't suffer too much. I want to re-state the principle that nobody will be penalised for being unable to work as efficiently and productively as they normally do for reasons over which they have no control. And again, contact Helena if you are not clear about government regulations in the event that your child(ren)'s school does shut.

Looking ahead 1: The working assumption has to be that, until the end of June, large meetings, roundtables and seminars will only be possible online and that there will be no travel either.

Looking ahead 2: SMT has also concluded that after the summer, those meeting and travel restrictions may well change. The working assumption for after the summer break is that travel, including international, though not necessarily to all destinations, and in-person meetings will be possible for a period of time. It looks reasonable to be planning for such activities in September, October and November. But it is wise – indeed, essential – not to make financial commitments that involve non-refundable payments until restrictions do start to be lifted. Please turn to your DoS with any questions about this.

Best wishes and see you (virtually) soon

Dan

17 March, 2020

Dear All

Following the government's decision to advise us all to work from home, SMT had our first fully virtual meeting [today](#). We spent most of the time discussing the situation with Covid-19 and have some more points to communicate with you, arising out of the guidance now to work from home if you can. Please also revisit the Risk Assessment I circulated [last Friday](#) and my other previous emails.

1. Maintaining contact: We think it is crucial to ensure that working from home does not lead to individual isolation, or to atomisation of SIPRI's teams and a loss of our strong collective spirit. So:

a) Staff members must send a message each day before 09.30 to their manager, with a copy to either the relevant SMT member — the DoS for your cluster, or Steph for the outreach team, or Maria for the operations team. The message can be by email, SMS or whatever, needn't be long, and could outline expected work that day but doesn't have to. Its primary purpose is so we know how everybody is. The reason for copying it to an SMT member is in case the line manager falls ill. Line managers who do not receive a message from a staff member must make contact themselves.

b) Each programme team should have a virtual meeting once a week.

c) Project teams must carry on working together remotely as best they can, with the virtual meetings and other kinds of contact that you need to keep the work proceeding well.

d) Line managers should contact their staff once a week for a friendly chat, just checking in to see how people are and how we are all feeling.

Overall, please stay in touch with each other. The effort we put into that will be well worthwhile.

2. Possible schools' closure: A quite likely contingency is that schools will close. Helena will send a separate email about the government regulations for parents' absence from work when children cannot go to school. Obviously, how schools closing affects parents depends on lots of factors like age of the children, whether there are two active parents or just one, whether either or both parents is doing a job in which working from home is not possible, what kind of space the family has at home, and so on. We can't really make a policy to address every possible situation so the guidance is that we should all be flexible and help each other out as best we can so that any risk that the work will suffer is minimised. In addition, as a matter of principle, nobody should be penalised for being unable to work as efficiently and productively as they normally do for reasons over which they have no control.

3. Sources of information for those not fluent in Swedish: There are some good English-language sources of information that will help those of us who are not so good in Swedish to follow what is happening here. We recommend:

— *The Local*, a newspaper in English on Sweden: <https://www.thelocal.se/>

— Radio Sweden, broadcasting recent news in English: <https://sverigesradio.se/gruppsida.aspx?grupp=20817>

— Krisinformation: This is the official website in Sweden on emergency information from Swedish authorities: <https://www.krisinformation.se/en>

— Folkhälsomyndigheten (The Public Health Authority): This agency has a key role in monitoring the development of Covid-19 and advising the government. The website is not there easiest to use but useful once you get to the right place in it: <https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/the-public-health-agency-of-sweden/communicable-disease-control/covid-19/>

— MSB (the Civil Contingencies Agency) The agency has no operational responsibility but is a node in cooperation across public and private actors in Sweden. There is background information on that but, for current updates, Krisinformation is the primary source: <https://www.msb.se/en/about-msb/>

I hope this guidance and information helps everybody. To repeat, the main thing while we work from home is to stay in touch.

Best wishes
Dan

16 March, 2020

Dear All

Today, the Public Health Authority has issued guidance that, if you live and/or work in the Stockholm region, you should work from home if you can.

As I have said in earlier emails, our policy is to follow the official guidance. This therefore becomes the guidance for us all as of now. Please make sure that you are in touch with your manager and colleagues so that you can continue to work to optimum effect in these difficult times.

The team at SIPRI that is discussing and handling Covid-19 issues consists of SMT plus Helena and we will continue to work on them. Please feel free to bring us questions if you have any.

With best wishes
Dan

13 March, 2020

Dear All

Here comes one more communication on the Covid-19 virus. It is the risk assessment, including advice on how to manage the risks, and is co-signed by Siemon Wezeman, as Health and Safety Officer, and myself.

The assessment incorporates much of what I have circulated in previous emails and adds to it. Please read it carefully as it contains material about prevention measures, about what to do if somebody shows symptoms, and offers advice about how to prepare just in case you do have to self-isolate at some point.

Have a good weekend!

Best wishes
Dan

12 March, 2020

Dear All

Another communication on the situation with Covid-19 and the unfolding response, including SIPRI's.

Following a risk assessment discussion [today](#), there are two points to add to the guidance you have already received:

1. If you have any symptoms of a cold, please stay at home. Let's hope it is only a cold or a normal flu but in case it is not, stay home and get better.
2. Please remember, if you are off sick, to inform your line manager and/or Helena and say why.

In addition, I am aware that some people want to work at home because of feeling it is more risky to be at work, or to make the journey to work by public transport, than it is to stay at home. I have also received second hand some comment that the guidance in my email [yesterday](#) was not clear. I will go into the issue in a little detail.

First, please note that [yesterday](#)'s guidance does not ban you from working at home and nor does it encourage you to. What I wrote was that the government and the Public Health Authority had not identified a general medical reason for healthy people to work from home and we are in general following that guidance. That means the institute is not asking or telling you to work from home. But it does not change our normal practice, which is that if, from time to time, somebody needs to work from home in order to be able to concentrate and be productive, we generally allow that. And, as my email [yesterday](#) said, if you need to work from home because your child's school is closed, you can do so.

However, I will be straightforward and say that I am very wary of giving out a general instruction for people to work from home until and unless that becomes firm government and Public Health Authority policy — unless there's a general lockdown, in other words. There are several reasons for that, relating to the life of the institute, including the morale of the people for whom it's not so easy to carry out their work at home, as well as the social interaction and intellectual exchange that we get by being at work, and other issues.

It is at this point, therefore, an individual decision as to whether you want to turn to your line manager and ask to work from home for a specified period on the basis that, by so doing, you will be able to concentrate better and be more productive than if you were in the office.

As and when the official guidance changes, we will assess how to respond and make changes if necessary.

I hope this clarifies this issue for everybody.

Best wishes
Dan

11 March, 2020

Dear All

As everybody has noted, the situation with Covid-19 and responses to it is changing fast. It has now been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation. In view of information disseminated and decisions announced [today](#), I have decided to circulate the following additions and clarifications to supplement the policy I circulated on [Tuesday](#) after the SMT meeting. For your convenience, [Tuesday](#)'s email is copied below. In addition to those points and/or to clarify them:

1. Until further notice, please interpret the travel guidance to mean there is a presumption against professional international travel. The working assumption is that we don't travel to meetings, conferences, for field research or for other work-related reasons. There may be cases where travelling is so important and alternatives are so inadequate that there is a strong case for going. In that case, raise it with your DoS and it will be discussed on a case by case basis. When discussing it, we will try to think about the risk of events that are out of our control, such as short-term lockdown of a major airport or refusal of entry by the country one wants to visit.
2. We have decided that our policy must follow the Swedish authorities' regulations and recommendations, as well as Swedish law, of course. That is the framework and guide for our policy. The government and the Public Health Authority have not identified a general medical reason for healthy people to work from home and we are in general following that guidance. Our exception is that if you have for personal reasons recently visited one of the four risk countries noted below — China, Iran, Italy or South Korea — we ask you to self-isolate for two weeks upon your return.

However, there may be a family welfare reason for working from home — if, for example, your child's school is closed temporarily, as is happening with some schools in the Stockholm area. In that event, working from home is an option so please discuss with your line manager if you need to take the option up.

3. We want to continue welcoming visitors to SIPRI for meetings, job interviews and other professional reasons. We hope that everybody behaves responsibly and that somebody who has, for example, had contact with an infected person does not then visit SIPRI and bring the infection in along with them. If you can manage to put that point tactfully to people who want to visit, so much the better.

4. The Swedish government [today](#) announced a ban on public gatherings of more than 500 people, effective from 12 March. That means that we are having to look at virtual means of convening the Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development. We will keep you informed. At present, that regulation does not affect the SIPRI Lecture.

I hope these points help. We are, as you can see, constantly monitoring things and will continue to adjust the policy as necessary.

Our keynote is to be responsible as well as responsive in shaping the policy; that means taking the issue and risks seriously, being calm and staying focussed on the evidence and on expert guidance in working out what to do.

Best wishes
Dan

10 March, 2020

Dear All

The Senior Management Team has again discussed the Covid-19 situation. The picture is still changing fast and remains full of uncertainties. Indeed, it is changing so fast that just this afternoon the Public Health Authority has raised the level of alert in Sweden. Further details on that are hard to work out at the moment as the Authority's website is not functioning. We return to the issue [tomorrow](#) and issue you with further guidance if necessary.

As previously said, SMT is basing its approach on guidance from the Swedish Public Health Authority. As of [today](#) **China, Iran, South Korea and Italy** are the key areas of current risk.

SMT advises as follows:

1. Work-related travel

- It remains valid that no work-related travel may occur to those four countries; **note that last week it was Italy north Rome that was regarded as a risk area and [today](#) it is all of Italy.**

Please note carefully these additional points:

- In general, we want to be as restrictive as possible as regards to travel.
- Please assess carefully if the nature of the event or meeting causes extra risk both to you and to external partners.
- Please reflect on whether the travel you are thinking of undertaking is necessary and for whom.
- In the case of all travels, consider alternatives first. These might include meeting (or participating in a meeting) by Skype or Zoom, or postponing the travel. Please talk to the Director, the Deputy Director or your Director of Studies as part of SMT if you want to reflect on your individual travel.

2. Private travel

It remains valid that, if private travel to the four countries mentioned above is necessary, please inform Helena Berger. When returning to Sweden, SIPRI requires a two-week period of working from home.

3. Visitors to the SIPRI premises or to SIPRI-hosted events

It remains valid that, no visitors from the above-mentioned countries may be hosted at SIPRI or at an event hosted by SIPRI at any outside venue.

4. Forthcoming and already scheduled events

We are monitoring and reviewing all plans for forthcoming events. For now, we continue to plan for the Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development 2020 to take place as envisaged hitherto. We will inform you and all partners and participants in a timely manner if plans change. The same goes for other events such as the SIPRI Lecture.

5. Further general points:

- **We would like to further emphasise that no SIPRI staff should feel any pressure to pursue any travel if you have personal reservations and concerns.** MY email last week also made this point and I am only emphasising it again because apparently some colleagues have been worried about this issue.
- Similarly, staff should not feel pressure against necessary travel to areas that are as of [today](#) NOT identified as high risk.
- Please book flexible tickets that can be cancelled if the situation changes and the trip will need to be cancelled. Please also pay close attention to which itinerary and route may be best in the current circumstances.
- Turn to Sigrún and Helena as your main points of contact for any advice and questions you have regarding the situation or SIPRI's policy and any impact it has on your work or personal situation.

The Covid-19 situation remains a standing item for the weekly SMT meeting. We are monitoring the situation closely and update you if and when needed.

If the situation worsens, the SMT has a contingency plan.

Thank you everyone for your continued understanding and cooperation!

Best wishes

Dan

4 March, 2020

Dear All

The Senior Management Team has been discussing the Covid-19 situation over the past several weeks. We are well aware that some major events are being cancelled — the World Bank's Fragility Forum this week and the Commission on the Status of Women at the UN, among others. The situation is changing fast and full of uncertainties but we now feel able to establish a policy for SIPRI. You should all follow this policy but please note that, because the situation is quite fast moving, SMT is keeping it under review and will make changes in the policy as necessary. We will keep you informed of changes, of course.

SMT is basing its approach on guidance from the Swedish Public Health Agency, which has identified China including Hong Kong, Iran, South Korea and all provinces in Italy north of Rome as the key areas of current risk. SMT has decided as follows:

1. Work-related travel

As of [today](#), no work-related travel may occur to the following countries/ regions: China, South Korea, Iran and Northern Italy (all provinces north of Rome).

2. Private travel

As of [today](#), if private travel to the above regions need to take place, please inform Helena Berger. When returning to Sweden, SIPRI requires a two-week period of working from home.

3. Visitors to the SIPRI premises or to SIPRI-hosted events

As of [today](#), no visitors from the following countries/ regions may be hosted at SIPRI or at an event hosted by SIPRI at any outside venue: China, South Korea, Iran and Northern Italy (all provinces north of Rome).

4. Forthcoming and already scheduled events

We continue to plan for the Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development 2020 to take place as envisaged hitherto. We are of course monitoring the situation closely and we will inform you in a timely manner if plans change. The same goes for other events such as the SIPRI Lecture.

5. Further general points:

- No SIPRI staff should feel any pressure to pursue any travel if you have personal reservations and concerns. Please talk to your manager and/or Helena Berger if you have concerns
- Similarly, staff should not feel pressure against necessary travel to areas that are not identified as high risk. However, when making any travel plans, consider carefully if the travel is really necessary or if it can be cancelled or postponed.

- Please book flexible tickets which can be cancelled if the situation changes and the trip will need to be cancelled. Please also pay close attention to which itinerary and route may be best in the current circumstances.
- Turn to Sigrún and Helena as your main points of contact for any advice and questions you have regarding the situation or SIPRI's policy and any impact it has on your work or personal situation.

The Covid-19 situation is for now until further notice a standing item for the weekly SMT meeting. We will be monitoring the situation closely and update you if and when needed.

Thank you everyone for your understanding and cooperation!

Best wishes
Dan