Together for the good of the Riksdag

The Riksdag Administration in brief

PHOTO: MELKER DAHLSTRAND
Together for the good of the Riksdag

The Riksdag Administration has the task of facilitating the work of the Riksdag. The Administration is a knowledge and service organisation in which many different professions are represented. In total, the Riksdag Administration has approximately 680 employees.

“Together for the good of the Riksdag” is our vision. This means that:

- we provide professional support to the parliamentary process;
- the MPs are able to focus on their political duties;
- the Riksdag is open to everyone; and
- we develop both our activities and ourselves in our daily work.

The tasks of the Riksdag Administration

The Riksdag Administration should, in the best possible way:

- support work in the Chamber and the committees;
- support and provide services to members of the Riksdag and the party secretariats;
- spread knowledge about the Riksdag and its work;
- maintain and preserve the buildings and collections of the Riksdag; and
- be an efficient authority and employer.
Working in the service of democracy – that is the primary task of the Riksdag Administration. This means that we give our MPs the best possible conditions in which to perform their political duties.

We, the employees at the Riksdag Administration assist them with their professional knowledge and with good and personal service. Our work requires great integrity, together with an impartial and objective approach.

The Riksdag Administration should be a modern workplace. By this, I mean that work procedures and employees should constantly be developed in order to meet the changing needs of the MPs and society. This means that we need to be professional and committed. The work we carry out should be characterised by team spirit, integrity and respect for all people’s equal value.

The Riksdag is an exciting workplace. This brochure provides readers with a small insight into the work of the Riksdag Administration.

Kathrin Flossing
Secretary-General of the Riksdag
A modern workplace in a historical environment

Our development efforts have been incorporated into our everyday working life. Making use of new ideas and always asking what can be done better are two elements of the working model we apply.

A prerequisite for a successful Administration is that we have a common view of what we do, and a sense of community where both managers and staff contribute with their skills and ideas. At the Riksdag Administration, we work for the elected representatives and for democracy. We are impartial and objective, we take responsibility and we cooperate.

A compass in our everyday work
Our core values serve as an ethical compass in our everyday work. They encompass our culture – the norms and values that should permeate the Riksdag Administration.

Our culture includes being a modern workplace with an open work environment. The basis for this is the principle of all people’s equal value and that all forms of

We apply modern and efficient methods to our work with IT support and digital development. Here, project members prioritise among different wishes.
Discrimination are to be combated. The Riksdag Administration works to promote gender equality and diversity, for example by means of courses for the employees in LGBTQ matters.

**Develop and improve every day**

The Riksdag Administration has a broad remit. In order to be able to fulfil this, employees with a broad variety of skills are needed. Our staff includes lawyers, political scientists, systems developers, research officers, communications officers, human resources officers, security guards, language usage experts and carpenters, to mention but a few.

Everyday activities at the Riksdag Administration are characterised by efforts to develop our support to the MPs and the parliamentary process. The focus is on our 349 members of the Riksdag. Quality and efficiency are guiding principles.

The Riksdag Administration’s Strategic Plan sets out the ambition and direction of our development efforts. During the next few years we will, for example:

- continue to simplify the work of our MPs with the help of user-friendly IT systems which support the parliamentary process;
- improve the Riksdag website and our digital channels in order to make it even easier to follow the work and decisions of the Riksdag; and
develop strategic skills provision in the Riksdag Administration, as well as leadership and employee involvement and empowerment.

Scope for new ideas
We strive to develop new working methods and procedures in order to achieve better results. A lot of our work is in project form and focuses on processes involving several functions and departments. The meetings in the Chamber of the Riksdag are one such central process. Together, the officials go through the information and responsibility at each stage with the aim of quality assurance.

The Riksdag Administration aims to continuously improve and make use of new ideas. One element is to reflect on and evaluate projects and work contributions. To always ask what can be done better next time.

Polishing knowledge and learning new things
Leadership and employee involvement and empowerment are priority areas in the Riksdag Administration. Being a manager involves leading and developing operations through open and responsive dialogue with the employees. Involvement is crucial if employees are to feel engagement, take responsibility and act in a professional way.

Knowledge needs to be polished on an ongoing basis, and no cooperation is so good that it cannot be improved. For this reason, the Riksdag Administration offers its employees good opportunities for skills development. Managers are offered management development programmes in several stages.

In order to fulfil the Riksdag Administration’s remit and achieve our goals, we need knowledgeable and competent employees. In order to secure this in both the short term and the long term, the Riksdag Administration has prepared a skills provision strategy.

Certification in health and environment
The Riksdag Administration endeavours to be a workplace with a good work environment and good preventive healthcare and occupational health opportunities. We have a workplace health diploma and environmental certification in accordance with ISO 14001. We are committed to continually reducing the environmental impact of our activities, for example, by reducing our electricity and paper consumption and by choosing services and products from a sustainability perspective.
Leadership and organisation of the Riksdag Administration

The Riksdag Administration is led by the Riksdag Board. The Speaker is Chair of the Board and the other ten members are all MPs. The Board is appointed by the Riksdag.

The Secretary-General of the Riksdag is head of the Riksdag Administration and reports to the Riksdag Board. The duties of the Secretary-General include being responsible for and leading the work of the Riksdag Administration. The Secretary-General of the Riksdag is elected by the Riksdag.

The Riksdag Administration’s Management Group consists of the Secretary-General of the Riksdag and the heads of division. The Management Group coordinates and plans general issues concerning the Administration, but is not a decision-making body. The Riksdag Administration has around 680 employees.
The Riksdag Administration supports the MPs throughout the Riksdag’s decision-making process, from the legislative proposal stage to a decision in the Chamber. In concrete terms, this means providing background knowledge, practical support and access to new technology.

The remit of the Riksdag Administration is to support the members of the Riksdag so that they can perform their political duties in the best possible way. This includes knowledge provision, administrative support and technical support for work with the legislative process. Other tasks include providing the MPs with offices and overnight accommodation as well as administration of members’ pay, financial support to the political parties and travel allowances. Everyday services such as ensuring that everything is in place in the Chamber before debates, and that postal and cleaning services function smoothly are also important.

**Voices the opinions of all the parties**

Employees from the Riksdag Administration are involved right from the start when an item of business is submitted to the Riksdag. Many items of business are legislative proposals from the Government or private member’s motions from MPs.

Officials in the Riksdag Administration are responsible for preparing meetings in the committees and drawing up draft committee reports. They acquaint themselves with the different parties’ positions and record them in an impartial and objective way in draft committee reports. They then present the contents at committee meetings, compile the MPs’ opinions and assist in the final editing of the committee report.

When decisions are made in the Chamber, the Speaker is assisted on the rostrum by clerks of the Chamber and other employees from the Riksdag Administration.

EU matters are dealt with in the Committee on EU Affairs, but are also part of everyday work in the committees and the Chamber.

**Modern technology and knowledge provision**

The Riksdag Administration is currently making intensive efforts to provide the MPs with the best possible IT support. Stable and modern technology is crucial if the work in the committees, the Committee on EU Affairs and Chamber is to function smoothly. It must also be possible to find important documents in the parliamentary process quickly. The MPs are provided with the latest technical equipment such as mobile phones, tablets and portable computers.

The MPs have access to a digital meeting service which enables them to receive and work with committee documents. This makes their work more efficient and reduces paper consumption. The intranet and a special app – the Chamber app – makes it easy for MPs to follow the work of the Chamber on a mobile or tablet.

When the MPs need more information in order to make decisions, they can order a survey from the Riksdag Research Service. The Riksdag Administration’s Research Officers also monitor research and are involved in the evaluation of decisions of the Riksdag.
Impartiality and objectivity are crucial for officials in the Riksdag Administration. The officials of the Committee on Civil Affairs sit at the white table ready to assist the MPs.

The Riksdag Library is a specialist library for the social sciences and law. The librarians also make sure that it is easy for MPs to monitor information and news flows.

**Openness is weighed against security**
The Riksdag should be a safe environment for those working there and for visitors. At the same time, the Riksdag should be open and accessible to everyone. One of the Riksdag Administration’s tasks is to balance these interests.

The meetings of the Chamber are prepared thoroughly. There is a digital support system, but background materials are also distributed in print.
The Riksdag – open to everyone

Openness and transparency are guiding principles for our work, as is teaching young people the foundations of democracy.

When the Riksdag invites the public to attend the Open Day it usually receives around 4,000 visitors. But openness is also an important part of day-to-day activities. It should be easy for the public to follow the work of the Riksdag.

The website www.riksdagen.se is a gateway to a great deal of information about the Riksdag. Visitors can follow debates via the webcast service, and read decisions and preliminary records of meetings in the Riksdag.

The IT Division is responsible for TV production and webcasts. Every year, almost 700 hours of meetings of the Chamber are broadcast. Public hearings in the committees and other events are also sometimes shown on TV.

The process of developing our website is open to the public. A development blog enables users to follow our work and submit their comments. This transparency enables visitors to contribute to the design of new functions and formulation of new content.

Work with plain language permeates the Riksdag Administration. Employees receive training in how to write texts that are correct, simple and comprehensible at different levels. Language revisers work with parliamentary documents in order to ensure that they are easy to understand. The Information Department writes about all decisions that are taken by the Riksdag in brief and reworks content and texts for several different communication channels. All of the Riksdag’s decisions are summarised and communicated both on the website and via Twitter.

The Riksdag’s open data at data.riksdagen.se makes it possible for anyone who is interested to use the contents of the Riksdag’s databases free of charge, develop their own services and produce statistics.

Transparency for the media and the public

The media monitors what is happening in the Riksdag on an ongoing basis. The Riksdag Administration creates the preconditions to enable the media to fulfil its role of scrutinising the public powers. Offices for the media and a press centre are located close to the Chamber.

The Information Department is responsible for accreditation to journalists and photographers, coordinates media coverage at larger events such as the opening of the parliamentary year, and writes press releases and sends out other news items.

Ahead of important decisions and political events, many people contact the Riksdag directly with questions. Employees at the Riksdag Information Service answer around 12,000 questions from the public about the Riksdag and the EU every year, by telephone and e-mail.

Teaches young people about democracy

Young people are our future voters and politicians. Teaching them about democracy and how it works is an investment in the future. This is the aim of the role-play activities at the Democracy Workshop, where students
An Open Day is held by the Riksdag every other year and attracts some 4,000 visitors. A Youth Parliament for upper-secondary school students is held in years when there is no Open Day.

get to try out what it is like to be a member of the Riksdag. The game was launched in a new form in renovated premises in the spring of 2015. The Riksdag Administration’s Education Officers also guide older pupils on discovery tours of the Riksdag. These activities are very popular and quickly become fully booked.

Every other year, the Riksdag Administration invites upper-secondary school students to the Youth Parliament; an event that involves a broad circle of employees and MPs. The autumn before the Youth Parliament, students from all over the country start to write and submit their motions, and the finale is a visit to the Riksdag in the spring for 349 specially chosen students.

Courses and further training for teachers and librarians are held by the Riksdag Administration several times a year.
International issues are an important aspect of the Riksdag Administration's work.

The members of the Riksdag work internationally for peace, democracy and human rights. The Riksdag Administration supports the MPs in this work.

The Speaker is the highest-ranking elected position in Sweden. The Speaker and the Deputy Speakers receive many international visitors and are invited to countries all over the world. Their guests include other Speakers, heads of state, ministers, members of parliament and representatives of international organisations.

The International Department organises the international visits of the Speaker and the committees. The programmes are planned so that the visitors have an opportunity to meet Swedish colleagues with similar areas of responsibility.

The International Department also plans the MPs' official journeys and their participation in parliamentary assemblies, such as the Nordic Council and the Council of Europe. Approximately one hundred members of the Riksdag are active in various parliamentary assemblies. When parliamentarians meet in Sweden, the International Department organises these meetings. MPs are also involved in election observation missions in various countries. During these, MPs are sent out as election observers to help to ensure that election procedures are correct.
India’s President Shri Pranab Mukherjee and delegation are welcomed by the Speaker Urban Ahlin.
Historic buildings need to be preserved

The Riksdag Administration is responsible for maintaining the buildings and collections of the Riksdag so that they are preserved and can continue to be used in the future. This requires cooperation among many different occupations, such as administrators, project managers, property planners, property technicians and architects.

The Riksdag buildings are from different centuries, and some have foundation walls dating partly from the Middle Ages. The Riksdag Administration is renovating and adapting its premises, step by step, to ensure that they meet today’s energy and environmental requirements. The challenge is to create space for a modern workplace, with the smallest possible impact on the historical environment. This requires specialists in the conservation of buildings.

This task also includes conserving around 4,000 works of art in the Riksdag. These collections include paintings, sculptures, sketches and textiles.
A chair that belonged to the original interiors in the early 20th century being renovated in the Riksdag Administration’s joinery.

Renovation of the Mercurius buildings.

The Riksdag has a large collection of art which needs constant maintenance.

The wooden interiors and furniture in the former First Chamber are well-preserved.