



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Education and Research

# Ministers received filmmaker Leslee Udwin

Published 10 September 2015 Updated 11 September 2015

Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin and Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Aida Hadzialic today received filmmaker and producer Leslee Udwin for a visit to the Ministry of Education and Research. Ms Udwin is one of this year's winners of the Anna Lindh Memorial Prize, which will be presented in the Riksdag on 11 September.

She is the creator of the documentary film *India's Daughter*, which has attracted a great deal of attention internationally. The Anna Lindh Memorial Prize is awarded each year to a person or organisation that has worked in the spirit of Anna Lindh to promote human rights in a global context.



Government Offices of Sweden

Article from Ministry of Education and Research

# OECD presents Swedish school review

Published 05 May 2015 Updated 05 May 2015

Today, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) presented the Government with its report 'Improving schools in Sweden: An OECD Perspective'. The review was conducted in light of Swedish pupils' falling performance in the OECD's PISA survey.

The recommendations of the OECD report focus on three priorities: conditions that promote quality and equity across Swedish schools, a long-term human resource strategy to build capacity for improved teaching and learning, and strengthened policy steering and accountability with a focus on improvement.



Article from Ministry of Education and Research

# Aida Hadzialic met her Croatian counterpart Vedran Mornar

Published 24 April 2015 Updated 28 April 2015

Aida Hadzialic met her Croatian counterpart Vedran Mornar for a breakfast meeting on Friday 24 April. Mornar visited Sweden to glean ideas for Croatia's major curriculum reform, whose important aim is to improve students' creative thinking and problem-solving skills.

The lack of attractiveness of the teaching profession was a common challenge discussed at the meeting. Hadzialic described the Government's initiative to increase teachers' salaries, but acknowledged that it was a complex problem that required measures in several areas.

They also spoke about digitalisation and ICT in education. Mornar was interested in how widespread ICT use is in Swedish schools. Hadzialic explained that although many preschools and schools have come a long way, great differences remain across the country. One of the aims of the Government's upcoming strategy for digitalisation is to create greater equality.



Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

# Aida Hadzialic leads video game delegation in the US

Published 13 June 2016 Updated 13 June 2016

On 13–17 June, Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Aida Hadzialic is traveling to the United States to participate in the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3), the world's largest video game trade fair, in Los Angeles, California. The aim is to promote the Swedish gaming industry.

"One in every ten people in the world – around 700 million people – plays Swedish video games. This is why it is extremely important for me to draw attention to this type of sector of the future," says Ms Hadzialic.

For the past few years, Sweden has been the fastest growing country in the gaming industry, with a turnover of approximately EUR 6.5 million each year, spread across 170 companies. The purpose of the visit to the E3 trade fair is to help Swedish companies in their contacts with international counterparts and to discuss how the Government should work on skills supply in the sector.

Ms Hadzialic will also meet representatives of various organisations and companies that work on how to naturally incorporate new technology and ICT in education.



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Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

# Aida Hadzialic to speak at European Youth Forum in Brussels

Published 13 April 2016 Updated 13 April 2016

On Thursday 14 April, Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Aida Hadzialic will travel to Brussels to participate in the European Youth Forum's Council of Members, together with European Commissioner Tibor Navracsics. Ms Hadzialic will give a speech describing how she became involved in politics and discussing the importance of giving young people influence and power to shape their own lives.

Ms Hadzialic will also take part in an exchange of experience on Europe and youth for inclusive societies, with a special focus on education within the framework of the Paris Declaration.

"Xenophobia, nationalism and extremism are spreading around Europe. The solution lies in broad measures that will promote more jobs, increased equality and stronger education. I look forward to talking about this at the European Youth Forum," says Ms Hadzialic.

The European Youth Forum is an umbrella organisation for 100 youth organisations from all over Europe. European Commission Vice-President Jyrki Katainen, from Finland, will also participate in the day's events.



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Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

# Aida Hadzialic in the Netherlands to discuss external grading

Published 23 February 2016 Updated 23 February 2016

On 24–25 February, Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Aida Hadzialic will visit the Netherlands. There, she will visit the IB Global Centre (the International Baccalaureate Global Centre for the Africa, Europe, Middle East region) to hear about their work on external marking and grading.

She will also meet representatives of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to discuss efforts in the Netherlands to improve the attractiveness of the teaching profession.



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Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

# OECD to report on how the Swedish education system compares internationally

Published 23 November 2015 Updated 23 November 2015

On Tuesday 24 November, the OECD will present its report 'Education at a Glance'. Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Aida Hadzialic will give her comments in connection with this.

'Education at a Glance' is the result of a collaboration between the OECD countries' governments, experts and authorities. The aim of the report is to analyse and compare education systems using indicators. A special overview of how Sweden's education system compares internationally will be published in the form of a Country Note.

There will be an opportunity for individual interviews and the press briefing will be webcast at [regeringen.se](http://regeringen.se). Please bring your press credentials.

Time: 11.00

Where: Lilla pressrummet, Press Centre, Rosenbad



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Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

# Aida Hadzialic to visit New York and speak at the United Nations

Published 27 May 2015 Updated 27 May 2015

Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Aida Hadzialic is travelling to New York today. On Friday she will speak on Sweden's youth policy focus in a panel in connection with the 20th anniversary of the UN World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (WPAY).

WPAY provides a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of youth around the world. It includes 15 priority areas and contains proposals for action in each one of these areas. Ms Hadzialic has been invited because of Sweden's international reputation in the area of youth policy and young people's rights.

The programme in New York also includes school visits. On Thursday morning Ms Hadzialic will visit West Side High School, known for its commitment to socially excluded young people, where the principal will host a tour and talk about the school. In the afternoon, Ms Hadzialic will visit Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation, a school with a broad approach to innovation and extensive use of digital technology.





Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

# OECD presents Swedish school review

Published 17 May 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

Today, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) presented the Government with its report ‘Improving schools in Sweden: An OECD Perspective’. The review was conducted in light of Swedish pupils’ falling performance in the OECD’s PISA survey. Work began in March 2014, the OECD presented its preliminary conclusions in Stockholm in December the same year, and the final report was presented today.

In April 2015, the Government appointed a schools commission, headed by Anna Ekström.

“We welcome the OECD’s report and will now pass it to the schools commission. Partly based on the OECD’s recommendations, the schools commission will submit proposals aimed at improving learning outcomes, teaching and equity in Swedish schools. The commission will present its proposals by January 2017,” says Aida Hadzialic, Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training.

The recommendations of the OECD report focus on three priorities: conditions that promote quality and equity across Swedish schools, a long-term human resource strategy to build capacity for improved teaching and learning, and strengthened policy steering and accountability with a focus on improvement.

“The Government is already investing in many of the measures that the

OECD recommends. For instance, the Government has announced a primary school pledge with targeted efforts for the early school years and a long-term strategy to make the teaching profession more attractive by investing in higher teachers' salaries, an educational research institute and measures to reduce teachers' administrative burden," says Gustav Fridolin, Minister for Education.



Government Offices of Sweden

Press release from Ministry of Education and Research

# Press invitation: OECD presents school review

Published 30 April 2015 Updated 17 May 2015

On 4 May, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) will present the Government and the schools commission with its report ‘Improving schools in Sweden: an OECD perspective’.

The OECD will present its results and recommendations at the press conference. The review was conducted in light of Swedish pupils’ deteriorating performance in the OECD’s PISA survey. Work began in March 2014, the OECD presented its preliminary conclusions in Stockholm in December the same year, and now the final report will be presented.

In April 2015, the Government appointed a schools commission, which among other things based on the OECD’s recommendations, is to submit proposals aimed at improving learning outcomes, teaching standards and equity in Swedish schools.

Andreas Schleicher, Director of the OECD Directorate of Education and Skills, Graham Donaldson, professor at the College of Social Sciences at Glasgow University, and Marco Kools, analyst at the OECD, will participate.

Schools commission chair Anna Ekström, Minister for Education Gustav Fridolin, and Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education and Training Aida Hadzialic will also take part in the press conference.

The report will be available on the OECD website on Monday 4 May at 09.45.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Time: 4 May at 09.45

Location: Bella Venezia, Rosenbad.



Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Ministry of Education and Research

# Speech by Minister for Upper Secondary School and Adult Education Aida Hadzialic and Training at European Trade Union Confederation's 13th Congress

Published 02 October 2015 Updated 02 October 2015

Mesdames et messieurs,

Ladies and gentlemen

First of all, let me thank you for welcoming me to your congress. I am truly honored to be here because I believe that we share the same cause.

A cause where all European citizens look to the future knowing it will be better. Where economic prosperity and growth are just as important as social equality and equal opportunities.

In many ways, our home Europe, is the symbol of this. History has taught us that peaceful ways and cooperation pave the way to stability and a better standard of living. We have chosen democracy over totalitarianism, freedom over borders and solidarity over hatred.

Yet I believe that many of us feel – where is the world and Europe heading towards?

Many people are coming to Europe – pledging for help because what they had, no longer is.

We, the current citizens and governments of Europe, are pondering – what are we going to do to solve this situation? What is going to happen to all the

people coming to our countries?

In the midst of this, I am confident that with the right set of moral values where we choose to help people combined with political policies aiming at social cohesion, our continent Europe will continue its path of post war success.

Why am I so confident about this?

Well, in all its simplicity actually, it's because I have lived it myself.

Today I am standing in front of you as a representative of the Swedish government but my life started with war, death, refugee camps and loss. Of a home, relatives and almost my life.

And please, allow me let me take you down my lane of memory for a moment.

I am a Swedish minister but I am also a person that survived the ethnical cleansing, and ultimately genocide, that Bosnia and Herzegovina was subject to.

But I survived, when so many others didn't – which probably was just a strike of chance. That very feeling – of knowing that I survived when so many others didn't - is experienced by 60 million people today.

I was born in the city of Foca. A mid-sized Bosnian – Yugoslavian – city by the river Drina, south-east of Sarajevo. Drina, with its emerald colored water, would later come to be called the river of blood.

In my memories I am five years old.

I am walking down a bridge with my uncle. It is spring and I am eating an ice-cream, like so many kids do. My uncle is holding my hand and all of a sudden we meet a man who asks my uncle: “Have you heard about what's happening in Croatia, a war seems to be coming?”

Whereupon my uncle replies: “I know, but I still can't imagine there will be a war here”.

And I remember standing there, thinking as the five-year-old me, what is a war? And what is Croatia? And what is 'here'? But then I thought, if the adults say everything is fine, then everything is fine.

But everything wasn't fine.

All of a sudden there were soldiers on the streets. My parents were talking about escaping. But we couldn't, because we were locked up in our apartment and couldn't go anywhere because moving restrictions were on.

The blinders were always shadowing the windows and we slept on the floor, in order to avoid gun shots. My parents were reading to me, book after book, and in the midst of everything I remember being afraid and happy at the same time because finally I had my parents to myself. The lawyer and the economist who'd previously been so busy working.

I don't know how long we stayed like that. But the dead-lock was broken one day when it knocked on the door and a soldier, with a long beard and weapons all over him, came in.

He shouted, pointing his gun at us, "Give me everything you have of value, pack your bags and be grateful that I won't kill you here and now".

Then he started throwing things around, searching through our drawers while my parents were packing in panic. And then we were off – for the last time passing the threshold of our home to where we would never again return.

Through a chain of circumstances Sweden literally became our safe haven when we arrived to a port in the south of Sweden a late and rainy night. I remember the rain beating against the tent walls we were placed in for shelter. But I also remember that for the first time, in a long time, I could sleep without being afraid.

As I look back at my recollections – and the history of thousands and thousands of people who have experienced related or even worse fates – I come to think about the title of the novel written by the Nigerian Nobel laureate Chinua Achebe, "As things fall apart".

Yugoslavia, the country that in 1984 hosted the Olympic Games in Sarajevo, seven years later faced war and the worst crimes against humanity in Europe since the Second World War.

That's what happens when the wrong powers get the grip of a society. It falls apart.

And when journalists now-a-days ask me, "Why did you get politically involved?", my answer is simple.

I have come eye to eye with evil – nationalism – that forced me and my family to abandon everything, which led to war and destruction, and ultimately, genocide.

I have however also seen the best of humankind ever since the day Sweden opened up its doors to me and so many others. First and foremost, by giving us a shelter. And then continuing that line of humanity by giving us a chance to a brand new life which I – and so many others - are so deeply grateful for.

But by believing in me – and my value as a human being – Sweden not only gave me essentials such as a free and universal right to education – which has been my key to a better life -but also taught me that strong and prosperous societies are created by all of us together, irrespective of our backgrounds.

In 1992 when Sweden welcomed over 82 000 refugees, many from Bosnia and other parts of Yugoslavia, it was during a time of a hardship. The unemployment rates were massive and an economic crisis was devastating the country. Despite that the Swedish people said welcome. And it's that solidarity – defying all cynic statements – that make me love my new home country. So much. It also makes me want to give back tenfold of what was once given to me.

And how is Sweden doing today? Twenty years since welcoming so many refugees during a time of crisis? Well, our country has grown into one of the richest and most competitive economies in the world. We turned a crisis into financial stability and growth while saving the lives of ten thousands of people. The two weren't mutually exclusive – since it was a matter of building a model where each and every citizen mattered. That has increased our productivity and made our economy and standard grow.

Lastly, my message to you is this. If Sweden was able to do this during some of its darkest times in the beginning of the 90s, then I'm convinced that we can do it again especially if we do it together.





Government Offices of Sweden

Speech from Ministry of Education and Research

# UNESCO World conference on Education for Sustainable development

Published 10 November 2014 Updated 17 May 2015

Nagoya Japan 10 november 2014

Madame Director-General, your excellences, distinguished ministers, ladies and gentlemen,

I would first like to thank the government of Japan for hosting this, so far successful, conference. It is an honor to be given this opportunity to introduce and share some thoughts on what actions are required to enhance the policy response to Education for Sustainable Development.

As we all know, knowledge is the key in a society where development satisfies our present needs without compromising future generations.

Moving towards sustainable development cannot be achieved by political agreements, financial incentives or technological solutions alone. To safeguard the natural environment and promote greater global equity, we need a fundamental change in the ways we think and act. This can only be achieved if all individuals and societies are equipped and empowered by knowledge, skills and values as well as heightened awareness to drive such change.

I would like to highlight some of the experiences we have gained in Sweden during the decade on Education for Sustainable Development; experiences that we think have a universal relevance when speaking about how what actions are needed at national and international levels in order to enhance the policy response to ESD.

It is often stated that many actors have a responsibility regarding education

for sustainable development; business, NGOs, academia etc., but never the less I would like to emphasize the importance of governments to take their responsibility using all available means and tools. The political engagement is vital in moving forwards in the implementation of ESD. A national action plan for ESD with reference to the Global Action Programme, based on research and proven experiences, containing clear targets and means for monitoring, is an essential tool in this respect.

Another perspective is bridging education, innovation, green technology, and entrepreneurship to promote work opportunities and solutions for the future.

During the decade, Sweden has included “sustainability” in formal institutional and curriculum guidelines for preschool as well as primary and secondary education. We have also made an amendment to the Higher Education Act, stating that all universities have to promote sustainable development. Knowledge in sustainable development is one of the objectives the students in teacher training education and engineering education should have reached by the end of their education.

At the same time, we have limited information on what is actually occurring in the schools and universities regarding the implementation of ESD.

To move ahead in the right direction, you have to know where you have been. Monitoring and evaluation are crucial components to strengthen the policy response to ESD. Observing the achievements and results of previous decisions, enables politicians and policy makers to draw conclusions in order to take further steps in the implementation of ESD at full scale.

We should remember that only a well-informed and educated public opinion can create the necessary demand for sustainable development and elect political leaders who are willing to take responsible and long-term decisions. ESD is even more important in countries with average to high income among their citizens. It is in these countries that the population leaves the biggest ecological footprints and thereby contributes most to the greatest threat to the future of humanity. If the entire world would live like Swedes, we should need the resources three times the earth!

But ESD is also about providing useful and relevant knowledge to the poorest of the poor. That’s the reason the international development aid vis-à-vis education aid, must be based on the principle of ESD.

What about the international level?

UNESCO is of course the key player with a clear mandate to lead the Global

Action Programme. Even though the primary responsibility of ensuring the rights to quality education to all rests primarily with the national governments, UNESCO has a decisive role in supporting and catalyzing national efforts; coordinating regional and sub-regional networks to enhance the implementation of ESD, especially with respect to policy improvement and enabling institutional structures in its member states. But UNESCO is not alone on the international arena. To further strengthen the implementation of ESD, it's important that the future work of the Global Action Program is done in close collaboration with existing UN-programs like for example UNEP's 10-Year Framework of Programs on Sustainable Consumption and Production, which was adopted at the Rio+20 conference.

Finally, let me conclude by stressing that activity now is needed in order to solve our most pressing problems. That's the reason sustainability has to be a key element in the post 2015 agenda. Education is central when it comes to finding ways to a sustainable development for sustainable societies. Sustainability can only come through awareness and action from us all.

Thank you for your attention!

Domo Arigato!