



Folkhälsomyndigheten

How can we involve ethics in the management of a pandemic?

Anders Tegnell, MD, Senior Advisor, former state epidemiologist at The Public Health Agency of Sweden





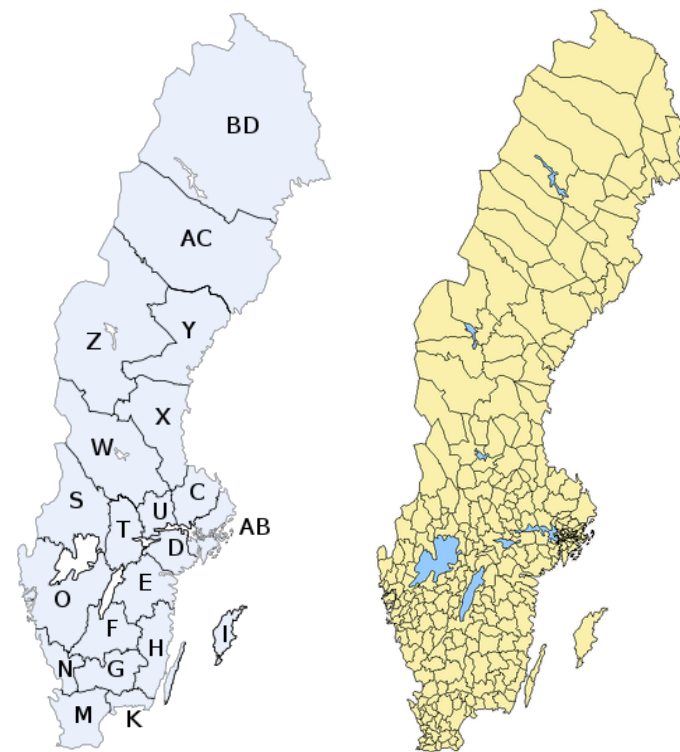
Folkhälsomyndigheten

CONTEXT



Health and health care in Sweden

- Population approximately 10 million
 - Demographic distribution: 20% > 65 years¹
 - Life expectancy: Male 81.3; Female: 84.7 years¹
 - Low maternal- and child mortality
- Universal health care; publically financed and subsidized
- Decentralized health care system
 - 21 regions and 280 municipalities
 - High level of autonomy for Sweden 's 21 regions
 - Regional County medical officers
 - Implement necessary measures to prevent the spread of communicable diseases within their region
 - Municipalities run schools, long term care facilities, social services etc.



Risk of pandemics

- Spanish flu
 - Extensive and mainly on the young but also happened during times when society was vulnerable
- Asian and Hong Kong
 - Largely not well documented but limited
- Swine flu
 - Low but mainly young
- Covid-19
 - Longterm effects partly unknown so far but effects of measures extensive



Folkhälsomyndigheten



GLOBALA MÅLEN
för hållbar utveckling

Folkhälsomyndigheten bidrar till globala målen för hållbar utveckling.

Precautionary principle

- Wikipedia
 - The **precautionary principle** (or **precautionary approach**) is a broad [epistemological](#), philosophical and legal approach to innovations with potential for causing harm when extensive scientific knowledge on the matter is lacking. It emphasizes caution, pausing and review before leaping into new innovations that may prove disastrous.^[1] Critics argue that it is vague, self-cancelling, [unscientific](#) and an obstacle to progress.



Folkhälsomyndigheten



GLOBALA MÅLEN
för hållbar utveckling

Folkhälsomyndigheten bidrar till globala målen för hållbar utveckling.

Precautionary principle

- In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.

— Rio Declaration, 1992

- When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically. In this context the proponent of an activity, rather than the public, should bear the burden of proof.



Folkhälsomyndigheten



GLOBALA MÅLEN
för hållbar utveckling

Folkhälsomyndigheten bidrar till globala målen för hållbar utveckling.

Propotionality

- The concept of proportionality is used as a criterion of fairness and justice in statutory interpretation processes, especially in constitutional law, as a logical method intended to assist in discerning the correct balance between the restriction imposed by a corrective measure and the severity of the nature of the prohibited act.
- Coercive measures on individuals can only be taken if no other less restrictive possibility is available.



Folkhälsomyndigheten

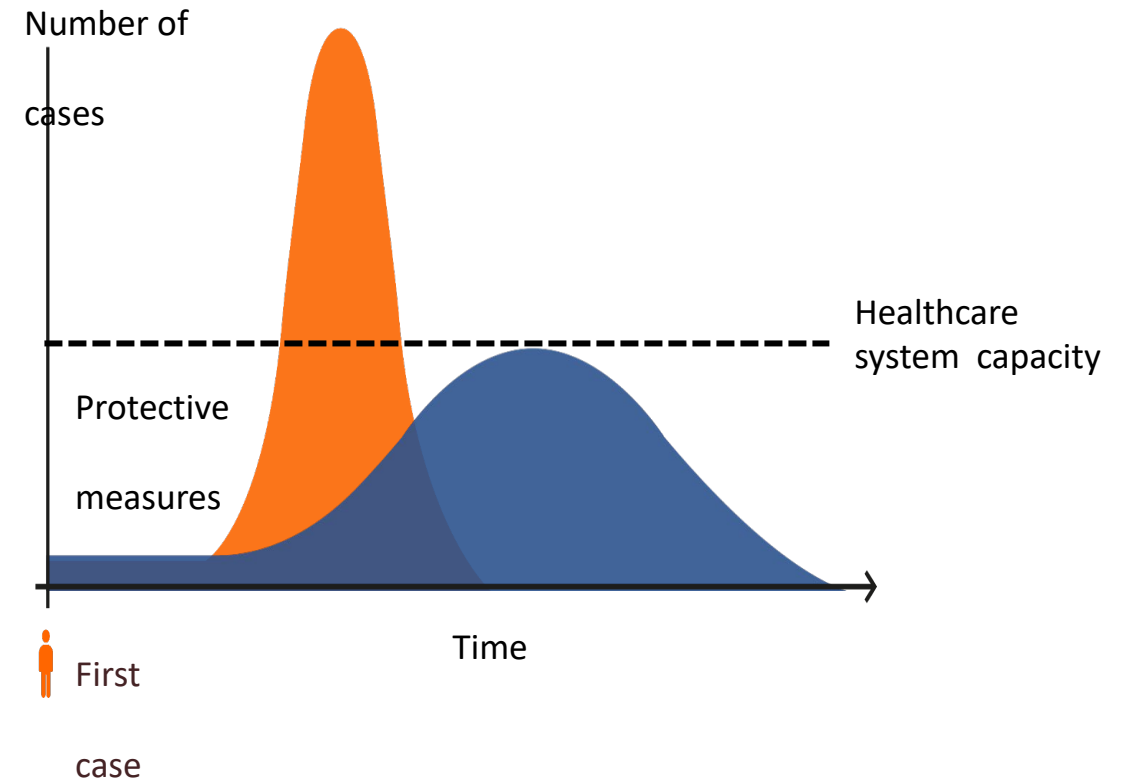


GLOBALA MÅLEN
för hållbar utveckling

Folkhälsomyndigheten bidrar till globala målen för hållbar utveckling.

Overall Swedish COVID-19 strategy

- Minimize mortality and morbidity in the entire population
- Minimize other negative consequences for individuals and society – difficult trade-offs
- Protection of risk groups
- Tailored measures and interventions
- Sustainable over time
- Virtual lock down – but with more voluntary elements



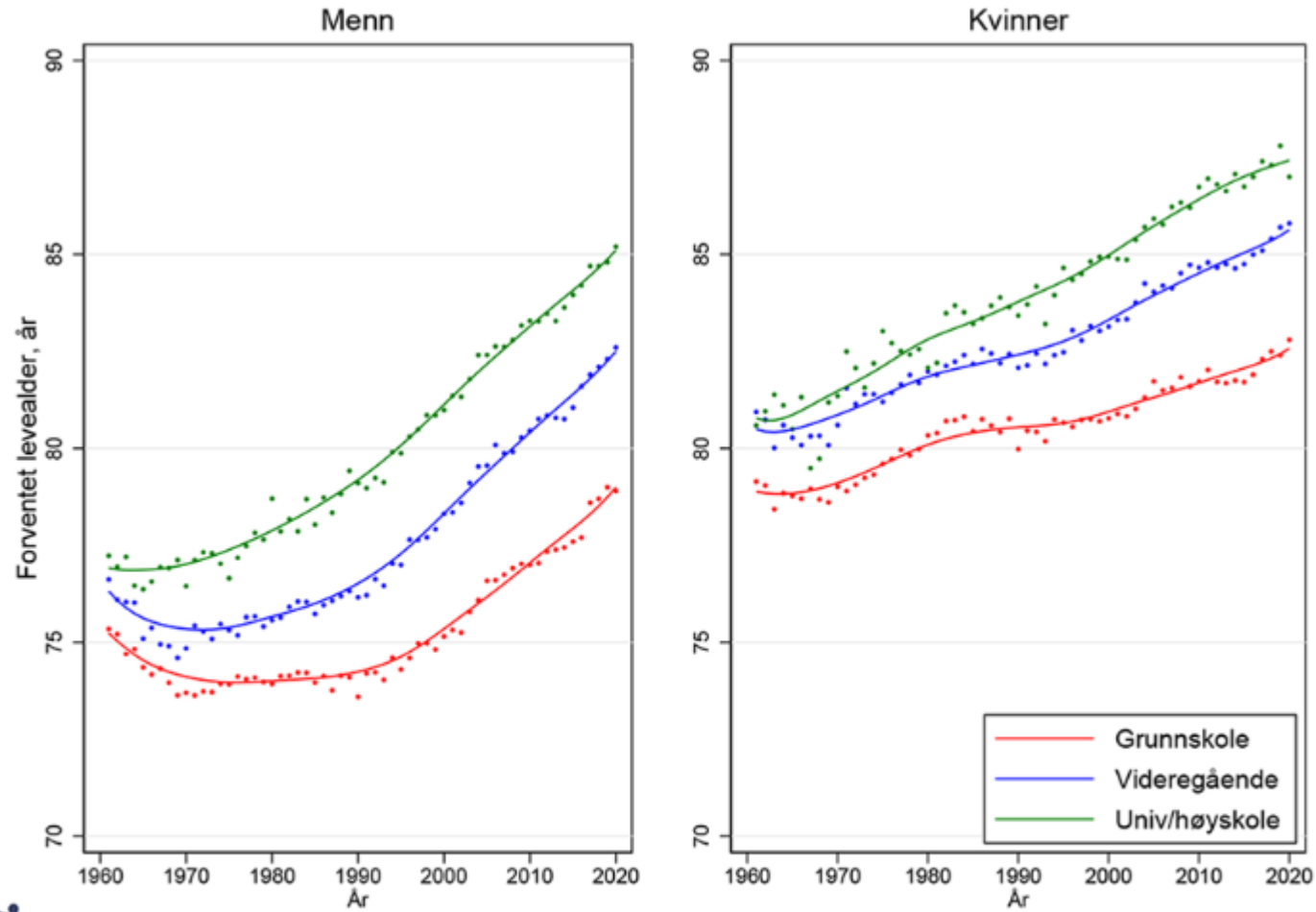
<https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/the-public-health-agency-of-sweden/communicable-disease-control/covid-19--the-swedish-strategy/>



Folkhälsomyndigheten

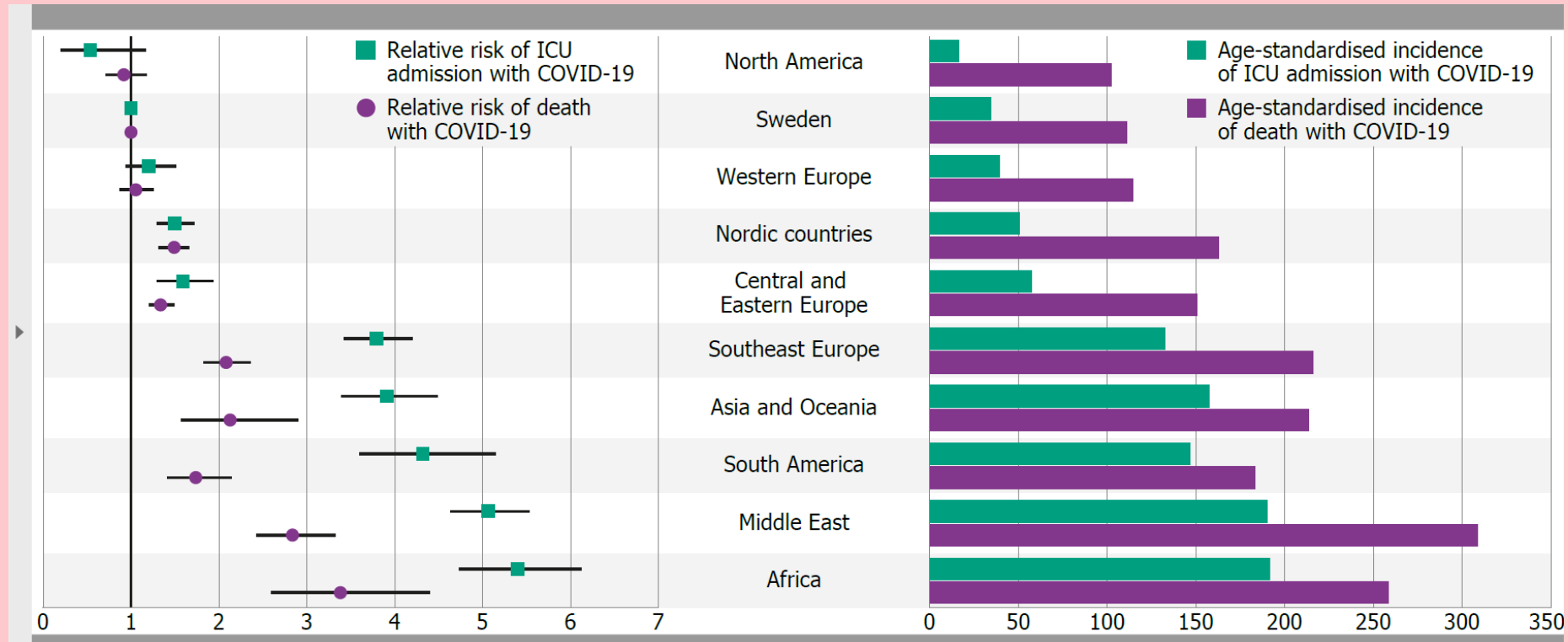


Folkhälsomyndigheten bidrar till globala målen för hållbar utveckling.



Figur 5. Forventet levealder (ved 35 år) i Norge etter utdanningsnivå, 1961-2020. Kilde: 1961-1989: Steingrimsdottir mfl. (2012), lett modifisert. 1990-2020: FHI (2022b).

Risk of covid



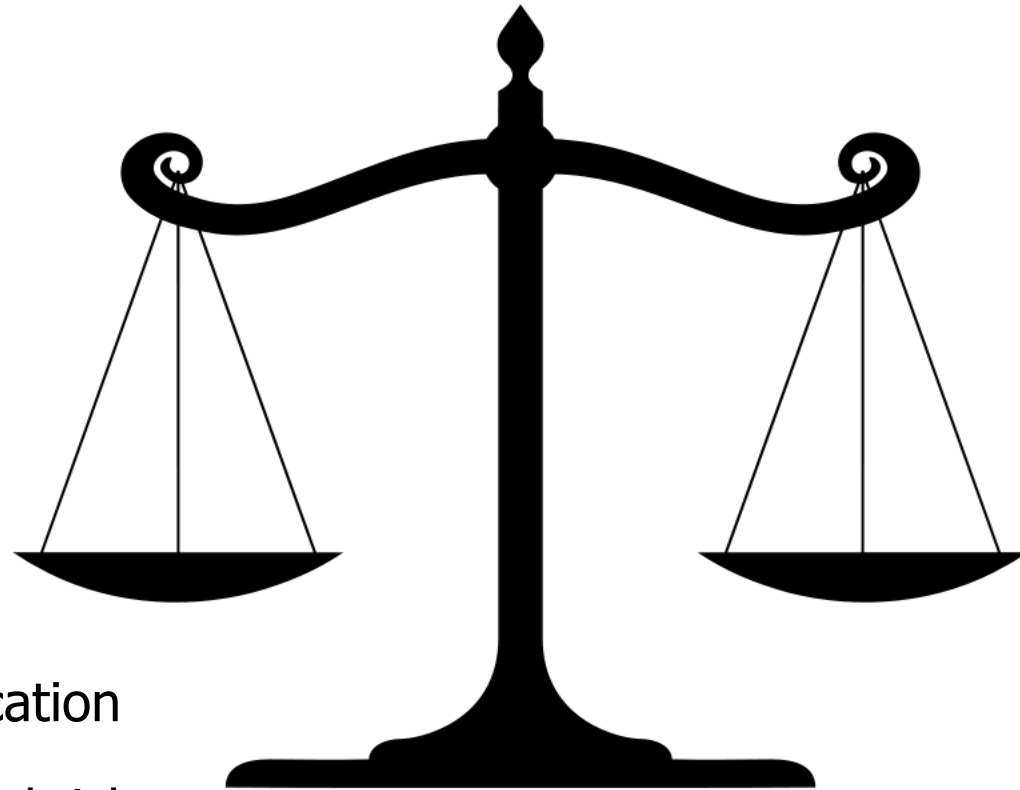
Individual re population

- Decisions related to health care
 - Testing
 - Contact tracing
 - Treatment
 - Quarantine
 - isolation

Non pharmaceutical measures

- Lock downs
- Apps
- Travel restrictions
- Schools

Schools



- Loss of education
 - Increased risk in many areas
- Mental health etc

- Lower risk for individuals?
- Less transmission in society?

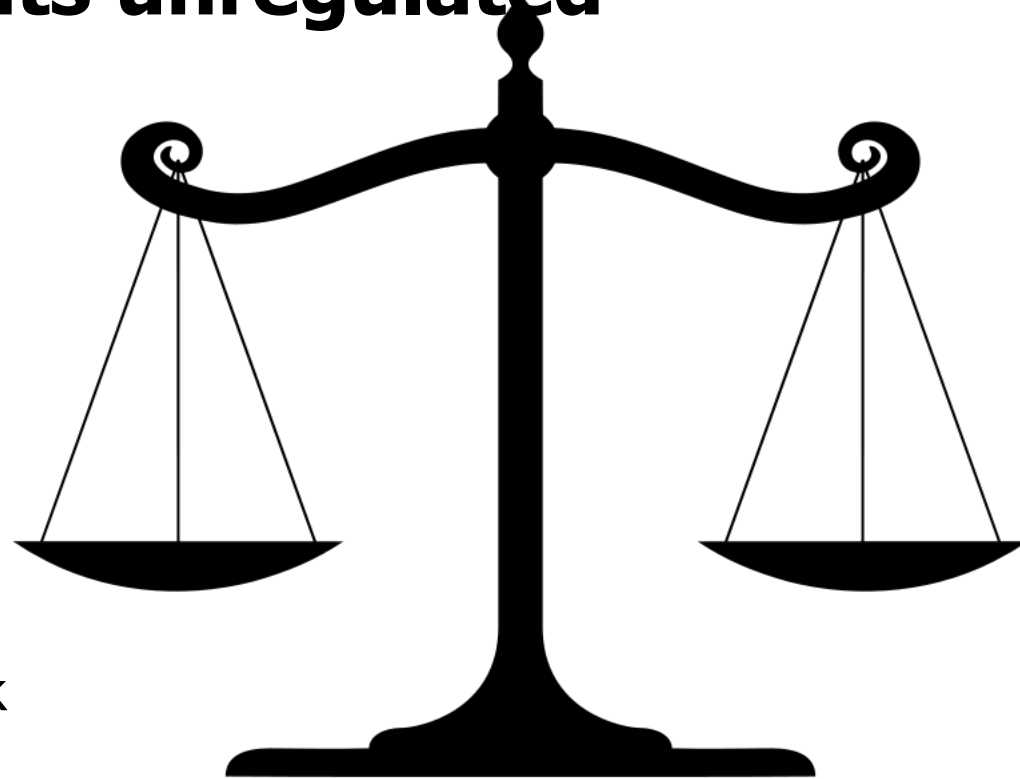


Folkhälsomyndigheten



GLOBALA MÅLEN
för hållbar utveckling

Restaurants unregulated



- Loss of work
- Bad for economy

- Lower risk for individuals?
- Less transmission in society?



Folkhälsomyndigheten



GLOBALA MÅLEN
för hållbar utveckling

Folkhälsomyndigheten bidrar till globala målen för hållbar utveckling.

Restaurants regulated



- Economy

- Lower risk for individuals?
- Less transmission in society?



Folkhälsomyndigheten



GLOBALA MÅLEN
för hållbar utveckling

Folkhälsomyndigheten bidrar till globala målen för hållbar utveckling.

Big events unregulated



- Economy
- Mental wellbeing

- Lower risk for individuals
- Less transmission in society



Folkhälsomyndigheten



GLOBALA MÅLEN
för hållbar utveckling

Folkhälsomyndigheten bidrar till globala målen för hållbar utveckling.

Big events regulated



- Economy

- Lower risk for individuals ?
- Less transmission in society ?



Folkhälsomyndigheten



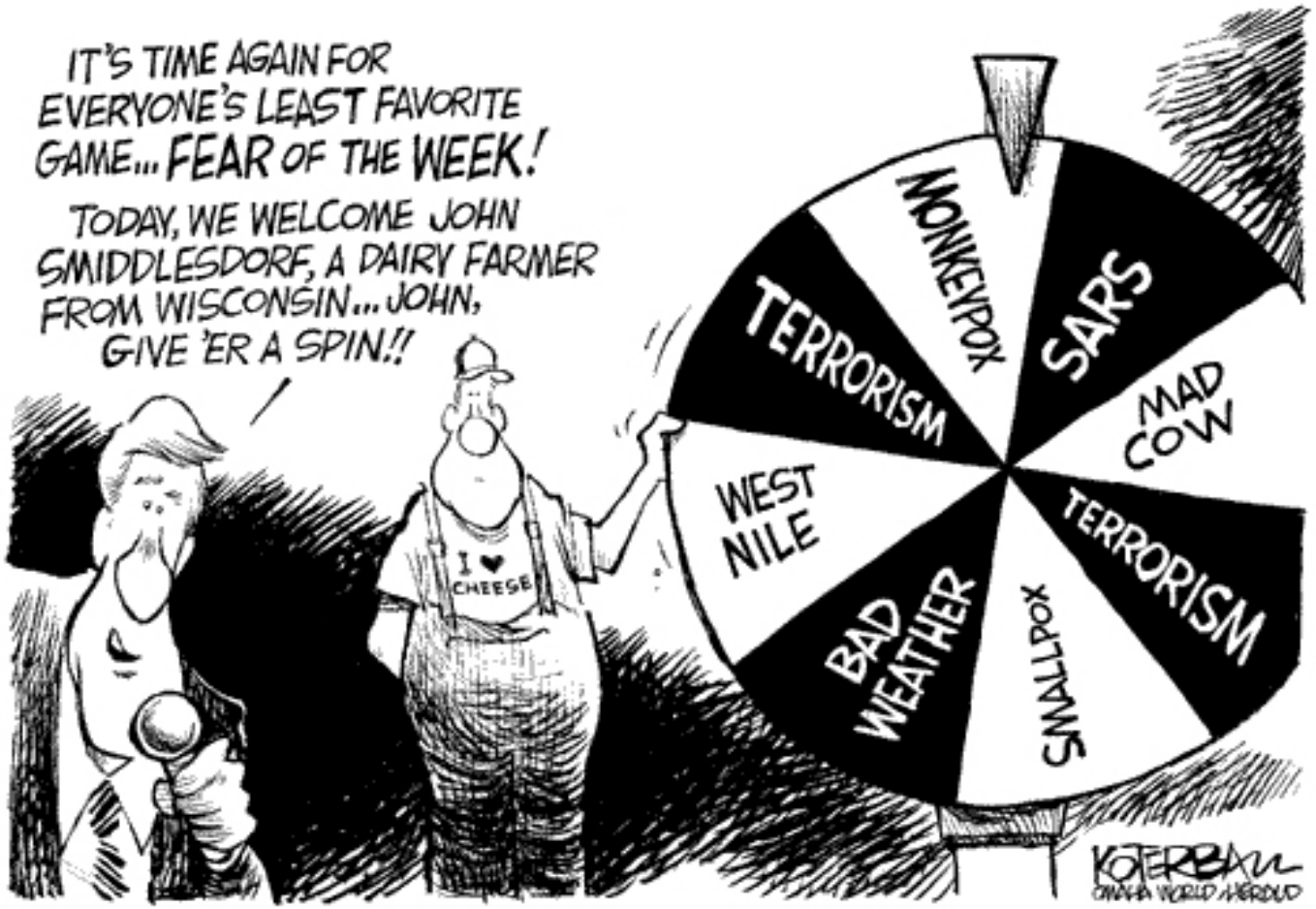
GLOBALA MÅLEN
för hållbar utveckling

Folkhälsomyndigheten bidrar till globala målen för hållbar utveckling.

Summary of challenges for ethics in pandemic

- Weigh individual re population
- Integrity of individual
- Decision based on knowledge that will change
- Speed
- equity

What happens next time??



Folkhälsomyndigheten



GLOBALA MÅLEN
för hållbar utveckling

Folkhälsomyndigheten bidrar till globala målen för hållbar utveckling.