



**Government Offices of Sweden**

**Memorandum**

1 June 2024  
A2024/00791

**Ministry of Employment**  
Division for Gender Equality

Sweden's national report on the implementation of the Beijing  
Declaration and Platform for Action 2020-2024

## CONTENTS

Section One: Highlights.....	6
Section Two: Priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks.....	8
1. Over the past five years, what have been the most important achievements, challenges and setbacks in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women?.....	8
2. Over the past five years, what have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in Sweden through laws, policies and/or programmes? .....	15
3. Over the past five years, what specific actions has Sweden taken to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of marginalized groups of women and girls? .....	16
4. Over the past five years how has the confluence of different crises affected the implementation of the BPfA in Sweden, and what measures have Sweden taken to prevent their negative impact on progress for women and girls? .....	18
5. Over the next five years, what are the priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in Sweden through laws, policies and/or programmes? .....	19
Section Three: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action.....	22
6. Over the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to advance gender equality in the world of work (including informal and non-standard employment as well as entrepreneurship)? .....	22
7. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work, promote work-life and family balance and strengthen the rights of paid care workers? .....	24
8. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to reduce the gender digital divide? .....	26
9. In the past five years, how has the macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment affected the implementation of the BPfA in Sweden, and what macroeconomic policies has Sweden implemented in support of a more gender-equal economy? .....	29
10. In the last five years, what actions has Sweden taken to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls? .....	31
11. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to improve access to social protection for women and girls?.....	34
12. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country? .....	35

13. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls, including in sectors where they are underrepresented? .....	37
14. What actions has Sweden taken to ensure that economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic closes gender gaps in poverty, employment, social protection, education, and/or health that the pandemic has exacerbated? .....	41
15. Over the past five years, which forms of gender-based violence, and in which specific contexts or settings, has Sweden prioritized for action? .....	43
16. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden prioritized to address gender-based violence? .....	58
17. In the past five years, what strategies has Sweden used to prevent gender-based violence? .....	62
18. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to prevent and respond to technology-facilitated gender-based violence (e.g. online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?.....	67
19. In the past five years, what measures has Sweden taken to resource women’s organizations working to prevent and respond to GBV? .....	72
20. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media, including social media?.....	74
21. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken specifically tailored to address violence against marginalized groups of women and girls?.....	76
22. In the past five years, what actions and measures has Sweden taken to promote women’s participation in public life and decision-making?.....	79
23. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to increase women’s access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)? .....	83
24. Please describe Sweden’s current national women’s machinery (government entity exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women) and describe the measures that Sweden has taken over the past five years to establish and/or strengthen it. ....	85
25. In the past five years, what other mechanisms and tools has Sweden used to mainstream gender equality across sectors? (e.g. gender focal points in the Executive, Legislature or Judiciary; inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms; gender audits, consultations with women’s organizations) .....	88
26. If there is a national human rights institution in Sweden, what measures has it taken to address violations of women’s rights and promote gender equality? .....	91

27. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace, and security agenda?..	93
28. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings? .....	95
29. In the last five years, what actions has Sweden taken to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?.....	97
30. In the last five years, what actions has Sweden taken to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child, including adolescent girls? .....	99
31. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies, including climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and land degradation? .....	105
32. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction and building environmental and climate resilience? .....	107
Section Four: National institutions and processes.....	109
33. Please describe Sweden’s national strategy or action plan for gender equality, including its name, the period it covers, its priority, funding and alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the targets under SDG 5.....	109
34. Please describe Sweden’s system for tracking the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting), including the approximate proportion of the national budget that is invested in this area.....	113
35. What formal mechanisms are in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? .....	116
36. Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report .....	117
37. Please describe Sweden’s action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women. ....	118

Section Five: Data and statistics .....	119
38. What are the most important areas in which Sweden has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level? .....	119
39. Over the next five years, what are Sweden’s priorities for strengthening national gender statistics? .....	122
40. What gender-specific indicators has Sweden prioritized for monitoring progress on the SDGs? .....	123
41. Which data disaggregations are routinely provided by major surveys in Sweden?.....	124
Section Six: Conclusion and next steps .....	126
Conclusion and next steps.....	126

## **Section One: Highlights**

The review process behind Sweden's national report has encompassed a whole-of-government approach, covering reports and studies from all line-ministries, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, Statistics Sweden (SCB) as well as other governmental agencies. In addition, Minister for Gender Equality, Paulina Brandberg, invited civil society organisations to an expert council to discuss Sweden's compliance with the Beijing Platform for Action over the past five years as well as the future actions needed to accelerate progress towards gender equality.

Some of the major features of Sweden's progress on gender equality in the past five years include in particular the areas of combatting men's violence against women, investments in women's health, gender mainstreaming and gender equality in foreign policy.

The Government of Sweden will continue to promote gender equality in all policy areas to strive towards the overarching objective of Sweden's gender equality policy, that women and men are to have the same power to shape society and their own lives. In order to achieve this overarching objective, the Government operates in accordance with the following sub-goals:

- equal distribution of power and influence,
- economic gender equality,
- gender equality in education,
- an equal distribution of unpaid housework and provision of care work
- gender equality in health, care, and social services, and
- men's violence against women must come to an end.

The sub-goals provide a more detailed breakdown of the overarching gender equality objective, thus creating a political focus, and clearly setting out priorities. While the gender equality policy sub-goals are ambitious and central to the organisation of the national gender equality policy, there is a need to specify in more concrete terms how they are to be achieved.

Ending men's violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and honour-based violence and oppression will continue to be of high political priority as these forms of violence constitute serious obstacles to gender equality and to women's and girls' full enjoyment of their human rights and are the ultimate expressions of gender inequality between women and men.

The next step in the Swedish Government's work to ensure coordinated, long-term, and effective efforts to prevent and combat men's violence against women is to present a new action plan for 2024–2026, which covers the remaining period of a ten-year national strategy. Furthermore, the Government has commissioned the Swedish Gender Equality Agency with compiling a status report on vulnerability among national minorities and promoting efforts to combat men's violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and honour-based violence and oppression among children and young people who belong to national minorities. Vulnerability to honour-based violence and oppression will be particularly highlighted, as will the vulnerability of LGBTIQ people.

In terms of health, the Government will continue its work to promote gender equal health – for women and men, girls and boys to have the same opportunities and conditions for good health and to be offered care and healthcare on equal terms.

Progress towards economic gender equality between women and men has been too slow. The Government has therefore commissioned several government agencies to work towards accelerating economic gender equality, for instance in the areas of supporting foreign-born women to enter the labour market.

The fact that less than 30 percent of Swedish entrepreneurs are women is a concern that must be addressed. The Government has therefore commissioned the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (*Tillväxtverket*) to analyse and promote women's entrepreneurship, ownership, and participation in business life.

Fewer women than men have a career in Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM). This year, the Government will present a new STEM-strategy to increase the number of women that apply to, and to be examined in STEM subjects.

During a time when women's and girls' rights are increasingly questioned around the world, Sweden will continue to be a strong voice and defender of gender equality, SRHR, and women's and girl's empowerment. The Government will strategically promote gender equality in multilateral fora such as the EU, the UN, NATO, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

## **Section Two: Priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks**

1. Over the past five years, what have been the most important achievements, challenges and setbacks in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women?

The overarching objective of Sweden's gender equality policy is that women and men are to have the same power to shape society and their own lives (Govt Bill 2008/09:1, Report 2008/09:AU1, Riksdag Comm. 2008/09:115). The Government of Sweden has been operating according to the following sub-goals of gender equality policy since November 2016:

- equal distribution of power and influence,
- economic gender equality,
- gender equality in education,
- equal distribution of unpaid housework and provision of care work
- gender equality in health, care, and social services, and
- men's violence against women must come to an end.

The sub-goals serve to provide a more detailed breakdown of the overarching gender equality objective adopted by the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag), thus creating a political focus, and clearly setting out the Government's priorities. It is worth acknowledging that the subgoals relate to one another. For example, the subgoal on financial freedom not only means empowering women to take charge of their finances, but also enabling women to leave destructive relationships. Likewise, economy and finance, education, unpaid housework and care work and exposure to violence are all factors that might affect physical and mental health. Therefore, a holistic approach is necessary.

The analysis of different power structures based on categories such as socio-economic background, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation in relation to sex and gender are of great importance for the impact and accuracy of gender equality policy. Such an intersectional analysis contributes to better priorities and greater accuracy in the design of initiatives and implementation.

The sub-goals of Swedish gender equality policy are also goals for what the Government is seeking to achieve within foreign policy and the EU. The aim of the Government is for a gender equality perspective to be incorporated in all relevant EU processes, in line with the relevant provision in the Treaty of



the Functioning of the European Union. The Government's gender equality work seeks to implement the 2030 Agenda, and thus the SDG 5, Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

### **Important achievements towards gender equality and the empowerment of women**

Some of the major features of developments in the past five years are set out below. These include efforts in the areas of men's violence against women, gender-equal health, gender mainstreaming and gender equality in foreign policy.

Positive developments can be noted in two of the focus areas in the Swedish Government's gender equality policy: 1) preventing and combating men's violence against women, and 2) investments in women's health (Swedish Gender Equality Agency's progress report, ALLM 2022/382, 2023:18 [Ojämna insatser för jämställdheten | Jämställdhetsmyndigheten \(jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se\)](https://jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se)).

In the past five years, several initiatives have been carried out to prevent and combat men's violence against women, including commissioning several relevant government agencies to increase skills, identify violence, and develop initiatives and methods. The Government is working in line with a ten-year national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women during the period of 2017–2026. The national strategy includes honour-based violence and oppression, as well as prostitution and trafficking in human beings. In total more than SEK 2.7 billion has been earmarked for efforts to combat men's violence against women during 2020–2024.

Some of the investments have led to significant developments in knowledge production and methods, which have contributed to more accurate measures for various actors. For example, law enforcement government agencies have taken several measures to improve investigation and clarification of, among other things, sexual crimes, violence in intimate relationships, and violence against children. Resources have focused on shortening processing times, on developing standardized working methods, and on promoting equal support for victims of crime across the country.

The single largest publicly funded investment during the period in women's health was on maternity care. The investment started in 2015 and until 2022, roughly SEK 8,6 billion was distributed to the regions through agreements

between the Swedish Government and The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Region (SALAR). The multi-year investment in maternity care and women's health has produced positive results for recipients of maternity care. In 2023, an additional approximately 1.6 billion SEK were allocated as part of similar agreements between the Government and SALAR. The ongoing investment mainly covers the maternity care chain, but it also targets women-specific diseases and diseases in which women are overrepresented [Överenskommelse mellan staten och Sveriges Kommuner och Regioner inom området förlossningsvård och kvinnors hälsa. - Regeringen.se](#). The proportion of women who suffered from serious birth injury has decreased, and the proportion of women screened for risk of use of alcohol and for exposure to violence when enrolling in maternity care have reached set target levels. Despite these positive results, there is still a need for further measures in the area of health care. The goal of increasing the number of staff in maternity care has not been reached, even though it has been a priority objective.

In addition, the work with gender mainstreaming in the Swedish Government Offices (ministerial level) as well as in the government agencies has shown results. The Government's decision on gender mainstreaming in the Swedish Government Offices (A2021/01442) identifies four central processes for work on gender mainstreaming: the legislative process, the budget process, in the governance of government agencies, and in EU matters and international work.

<https://www.regeringen.se/regeringsuppdrag/2021/08/jamstalldhetsintegrering-i-regeringskansliet-20212025/>

Integrating gender equality in the budget process, known as gender-responsive budgeting, is carried out in the Government Offices. Work on gender-responsive budgeting includes, among other things, a requirement to include a gender equality analysis of all proposals in the budget process. This means taking consequences for gender equality into account when designing proposals and reforms, and when making decisions on the direction of policy and the allocation of resources. These efforts have improved the Government's capability to produce a national budget that promotes gender equality.

Statistics Sweden's quantitative follow-up of the Government Offices' work on gender mainstreaming in 2023 showed positive developments in several

areas. Regarding the legislative process, the follow-up showed, for example, that 100 percent of relevant Swedish Government Official Reports (SOU) and government bills incorporated a gender equality perspective. In EU matters, in 2023 there was a presence of a gender equality analysis in 89 percent of cases where a gender equality perspective was relevant. However, the follow-up also revealed that gender mainstreaming is not fully implemented, and gender equality is not always considered in relevant decision-making documents.

Since the establishment of the Swedish Gender Equality Agency in 2018, the national machinery for gender equality and the follow-up, analysis, coordination, knowledge, and support to achieve the gender equality policy goals has been strengthened. The agency contributes to a more strategic, coherent, and sustainable governance and to an effective implementation of the gender equality policy.

Since 2013, the Government has been running a development programme for gender mainstreaming in government agencies, *Jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter* (JiM). The current development programme runs 2020–2025

[Jämställdhetsintegrering i statliga myndigheter - JiM - Regeringen.se](https://jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se/aktuellt/publikationer/jamstalldhetsintegrering-i-myndigheter-jim-2024-2024-8/). Over time, JiM has been expanded, and covers more than 50 government agencies. Reports from the Swedish Gender Equality Agency on the JiM programme show that participating agencies have continuously achieved and improved their results over the five past years, and that the programme has contributed to more equal conditions between women and men.

<https://jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se/aktuellt/publikationer/jamstalldhetsintegrering-i-myndigheter-jim-2024-2024-8/>

Since 2016, there has been a parallel development programme for universities and higher education institutions [Delredovisning JiHU 2024](https://jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se/aktuellt/publikationer/delredovisning-jihu-2024-2024-8/) | [Jämställdhetsmyndigheten \(jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se\)](https://jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se/). The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has been tasked with supporting the work of the agencies and the Higher Education Institutions on gender mainstreaming.

Gender equality has been a core priority in Swedish foreign policy over the past five years. Between the years 2019–2022, Sweden had a government that pursued a feminist foreign policy, with the aim of fostering gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls. The current Government, which came into office in October 2022, has announced that Sweden will remain a strong voice and actor for gender

equality and women's and girls' empowerment and their full enjoyment of all human rights and freedoms.

In the first half of 2023, Sweden held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. During this period, Sweden arranged a conference on gender-based violence, two high level meetings, and presented draft council conclusions regarding mainstreaming a gender equality perspective in policies, programmes, and budgets. The conclusions were adopted by the Council in June. Furthermore, the Swedish Presidency made the completion of the EU's accession to the so-called Istanbul Convention a priority which resulted in the deposition of the accession instrument with the Council of Europe on 26 June 2023. The Presidency also put significant efforts into and achieved great success on advancing the EU negotiations on a new directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence as well as a revised directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims.

### **Challenges and setbacks in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women**

Alongside the positive results from the gender equality work, there are several challenges and obstacles that must be addressed, which are set out below. In some areas, the development towards gender equality has stagnated. While the gender equality policy subgoals are ambitious and central to the organisation of gender equality policy, there is clearly a need to specify how they are to be achieved.

In Sweden, power in society is not evenly distributed between women and men. Men are still over-represented in leadership positions in politics and business. Men are also over-represented in high-ranking posts in higher education and in some organisations, such as the sporting community. There is thus a lack of gender equality in several important areas and arenas in both the private and the public sector.

After the 2018 and 2022 elections, the proportion of women in the Swedish Parliament was 46 per cent. That corresponds to 161 female members and 188 male members. It was an increase compared to the two previous parliamentary elections, but it has not again reached the peak in 2006, when 47 percent of the Swedish parliamentarians were women. Moreover, a stagnant development can be noted when it comes to political representation

at municipal level. After the 2018 and 2022 elections, 68 per cent of the country's 240 municipal board chairmen were men and 32 percent were women. In the country's 21 regional councils, women made up 49 percent of elected representatives after the 2018 and 2022 elections.

The Government's highest post, the prime minister's office, has only been held by a woman (Magdalena Andersson) once, in 2021. This was a consequence of the Social Democratic party choosing her as party chairman. Sweden has not yet had a female prime minister who has taken office after a democratic election. This can be compared with Norway, having its first female prime minister in 1981, Finland in 2003, Iceland in 2009 and Denmark in 2011. Also, developments in the business world have stagnated in terms of women's representation in boards and in management teams. During 2023, however, the proportion of women in companies management teams has started to increase again and reached 28 percent (Allbright, [Alarmet som väckte börsen](#)). Furthermore, in 2023 the share of women in boards of state-owned companies reached 50 percent, while the share of women in CEO position reached 45 percent.

Much work remains before women and men have the same opportunities and conditions in terms of paid work that provides financial independence from a lifecycle perspective. The income gap between women and men and gender balance in use of parental insurance has not improved whereas the pay gap increased with 0.1 percentage points between 2020–2021. Furthermore, women still have a lower employment rate, shorter working hours, and higher absence from the workforce, compared with men.

For as long as it has been possible to measure grades with national statistics, boys have shown to have lower grades than girls, both in primary and secondary school. However, the differences in grades at group level between girls and boys in compulsory school have decreased to the lowest differences in 20 years, just under 8 per cent in 2023. In addition, girls and boys, women and men, still make normative and gender-stereotypical educational choices at group level.

<https://jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se/aktuellt/publikationer/ojamna-insatser-for-jamstalldheten/>

Women in Sweden take greater responsibility than men for the unpaid household and care work, and poor working conditions within female

dominated job sectors contribute towards a higher risk of ill-health among women. The consequences for women of shortcomings in economic and financial gender equality lead to a lower degree of financial autonomy and independence, especially for women in low-income households.

Despite large investments within the area of men's violence against women, several challenges and obstacles remain to be resolved. According to a recent study on intimate partner violence by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*), such violence is wide spread in society although women are exposed to such violence to a larger extent than men ([Brott i nära relation - Brottsförebyggande rådet \(bra.se\)](#), Brå 2024:4). Victimization is particularly high among women aged 20 – 24 years old. The results also show that although psychological violence appears to be the most widespread type of violence among both women and men, it is significantly more common for women to state that they have been subjected to sexual violence by a current or former partner compared to men. Furthermore, more women than men state that they have been exposed to sexual crimes in general ([Swedish Crime Survey 2023 - Brottsförebyggande rådet \(bra.se\)](#), Swedish Crime Survey 2023).

During the period 2017–2023, the number of women and girls who fell victim to fatal violence by a former or current intimate partner has varied between 10 and 22 deaths per year, with an annual average of 14 women and girls killed during the period. The number of male victims of fatal intimate partner violence has varied between 0 and 4 deaths, with an annual average of 2 deaths ([Konstaterade fall av dödligt våld - Brottsförebyggande rådet \(bra.se\)](#)).

Although challenges remain, Sweden still ranks 1st in the EU on the Gender Equality Index. Since 2020, the biggest improvement in Sweden's score has been in the domain of work, in which Sweden maintained its ranking of 1st place. Sweden's highest ranking (1st among all EU Member States) is still in the domain of power, even though Sweden's progress in this domain has stalled since 2020. Since 2020, Sweden's score in the domain of time has decreased considerably. As a result, its ranking for the domain has also fallen by two places, moving down to 3rd. Sweden's lowest ranking (8th in the EU) is in the domain of money. Since 2020, Sweden's score in this domain has increased slightly, maintaining the same rank ([Sweden | 2023 | Gender Equality Index | European Institute for Gender Equality \(europa.eu\)](#)).

2. Over the past five years, what have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in Sweden through laws, policies and/or programmes?

During the past five years, the Swedish Government has prioritised ending men's violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and honour-based violence (see questions 15–21).

In order to promote economic gender equality, the Government has focused on the gender pay gap, women and men's different access to resources, as well as access to public welfare services (see questions 6 and 10).

The Government has also made significant investments in women's health (see question 12).

Work on gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting has been essential to support progress in the field of gender equality. During the reporting period a strategy for gender mainstreaming in the Government Offices was developed and adopted by a government decision. In addition, the development program for Gender Mainstreaming in Government Agencies *Jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter*, JIM was prolonged (see questions 33 and 34).

Since the establishment of the Swedish Gender Equality Agency in 2018, the national machinery for gender equality and the follow-up, analysis, coordination, knowledge, and support to achieve the gender equality policy goals has been strengthened, contributing to a more strategic, coherent, and sustainable governance and effective implementation of gender equality policies (see question 24).

Work for gender equality is a shared commitment on the part of women and men, and men's engagement and participation is therefore essential to attaining a gender equal society. Gender norms are upheld by both women and men and affect everyone irrespective of their gender identity and gender expression. Therefore, men and masculinity has been an integral perspective in the gender equality work, and has been carried out among government agencies, in local government, and in civil society.

3. Over the past five years, what specific actions has Sweden taken to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of marginalized groups of women and girls?

The last five years, i.e., during the present Swedish Government as well as the previous Swedish Government, several initiatives and reforms have been taken to increase the establishment of foreign-born women on the labor market. Examples of this include an [assignment to The Swedish National Mediation Institute](#) (*Medlingsinstitutet, MI*) to carry out gender equality analyses of salary income and other income that affect individuals' disposable income over a long term perspective. The analysis has confirmed that foreign-born women have significantly lower incomes than both domestically born women and corresponding groups of men.

Foreign-born women and men are more often outside of the labor market or more often unemployed than domestic born women and men. It is also more common that foreign-born women and men are employed for a limited time than it is for domestic-born women and men. There is no difference between domestic and foreign-born women in terms of part-time work. For women born in Sweden, the number of women working part-time has decreased somewhat in recent years, but for those born abroad, the number of women working part-time is increasing. The difference between women's and men's level of education, however, is slightly smaller among the foreign-born women and men than among the domestic-born women and men.

The Government has also contributed with resources to strengthen the situation of foreign-born women through assignments to [different agencies and organizations](#). Furthermore, the Government has together with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, (SALAR), financed an initiative to organize free and open [pre-school for foreign born women](#) who have small children, where they can study Swedish and get information about the Swedish society. These initiatives are all long-term commitments which run for several years. The total budget amounts to appr. 23 million SEK.

In January 2019, the Swedish Government strengthened the legislation to support all five national minorities (Jews, Roma, Sami people, Sweden Finns, and Tornedalians). One important improvement is the requirement that all municipalities and regions must adopt goals and guidelines for their minority policy work. One of the three key areas of the minority policy is participation and influence.



Other examples of assignments that promote the rights of marginalized groups of women and girls during the last five years include:

- [Statistics Sweden \(SCB\)](#) has been assigned to develop and increase knowledge about economic equality among women and men with disabilities. Total budget 1,5 million SEK.
- The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has received an assignment relating to financial gender equality and ownership in the housing market. The assignment covers especially young women's and men's financial conditions to establish themselves in the housing market, both owned and rented properties, from a gender equality perspective. Total budget 1 million SEK.
- The Swedish Agency for Work Environment Expertise (*Mynak*) has received a government assignment to analyze and report on how increased remote work after the covid-19 pandemic continues to affect equality between women and men in the labor market (see link above). Total budget 1 million SEK.
- For many years, the challenges with integration in socioeconomic challenged areas have been tackled with measures, including [strengthening the position of women and girls](#). In the budget for 2023, the Government made a permanent reinforcement (of SEK 20 million) to increase support for women's and girls' organizations in vulnerable areas. Total budget 48 million SEK/year.

4. Over the past five years how has the confluence of different crises affected the implementation of the BPfA in Sweden, and what measures have Sweden taken to prevent their negative impact on progress for women and girls?

As soon as pandemic started, the Swedish Government assigned the Gender Equality Agency to develop knowledge on the effects of the covid-19 pandemic on economic gender equality in Sweden. The study shows that the pandemic has had a negative impact on economic equality between men and women. For example, more women than men left the labor market. Furthermore, the entire work force within the healthcare sector, which is heavily dominated by women, was under severe stress.

The Swedish government took action to strengthen and improve its welfare system in a gender-sensitive manner. A wide variety of financial measures and assignments were implemented to mitigate the effects of the pandemic. For example, women's and girls' shelters were provided with extra grants to adjust to the extraordinary situation, and pregnant women who were formally considered being a risk group were compensated if unable to work. For more information, see question 14.

5. Over the next five years, what are the priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in Sweden through laws, policies and/or programmes?

The Swedish Government's goal to end men's violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and honour-based violence and oppression is a top priority as it is a serious obstacle to gender equality and to women's and girls' full enjoyment of their human rights and one of the ultimate expressions of gender inequality between women and men. The work towards this goal also includes prostitution and trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes. The work of the Government in this regard is based on a ten-year strategy (2017–2026) and its action programmes for 2017–2020 and 2021–2023.

The next step in the Government's work to ensure coordinated, long-term, and effective efforts to prevent and combat men's violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and honour-based violence and oppression is to develop a new action plan for 2024–2026, which covers the remaining period of the ten-year strategy. Honour-based violence and oppression will consistently have high priority in the action plan. Furthermore, the Government has commissioned the Swedish Gender Equality Agency with compiling a status report on vulnerability among national minorities and promoting efforts to combat men's violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and honour-based violence and oppression among children and young people who belong to national minorities. Vulnerability to honour-based violence and oppression will be particularly highlighted, as will the vulnerability of LGBTIQ people [Time to step up efforts to combat violence and promote gender equality - Government.se](#). In addition, there are women and girls who, because of their finances, or rather because they lack financial conditions, cannot break away from violent relationships. Questions on so called economic violence were therefore highlighted at the first conference during Sweden's EU presidency in the spring of 2023, i.e. *Economic perspectives on gender-based violence – paving paths to prevention*. Further steps towards combatting economic violence will be taken in the upcoming action program.

In August 2023, the Government appointed an inquiry ([Dir. 2023:117](#)) to help strengthen the long-term governance of efforts to combat men's violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and

honour-related violence and oppression. The final report will be submitted on 28 February 2025.

While the gender equality policy subgoals are ambitious and central to the organisation of gender equality policy, there is clearly a need to specify in more concrete terms how they are to be achieved [Ojämna insatser för jämställdheten | Jämställdhetsmyndigheten \(jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se\)](#).

Gender equal health – for women and men, girls and boys, to have the same opportunities and conditions for good health and to be offered care and healthcare on equal terms – is one of the sub-goals of the national gender equality policy. Gender equal health is a goal in its own right, but good health for women and men and girls and boys respectively also contributes towards gender equal and active participation in society. There are significant differences between women and men and between girls and boys when it comes to physical and mental health. Women generally experience their health as worse than men do. The Government will continue measures for women’s health during 2024 and 2025, partly through new investments in maternity care. SEK 1.6 billion has been earmarked per year for 2024–2025. <https://www.regeringen.se/artiklar/2024/03/nationell-forlossningsplan-en-viktig-satsning-pa-kvinnors-halsa/>

The Government deems the pace of progress made towards attaining economic gender equality between women and men to be too slow. The Government has therefore tasked several governmental agencies, through new assignments, to accelerate the economic gender equality, for instance in the areas of the housing market and remote work, and in supporting foreign-born women to enter the labour market.

[Nya steg för att öka den ekonomiska jämställdheten - Regeringen.se](#)

The fact that women’s share of entrepreneurship in Sweden is under 30 percent must be addressed. The Government has therefore tasked The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (*Tillväxtverket*) to analyze and promote women’s entrepreneurship, ownership, and business. It is a comprehensive and long-term (three-year) assignment, which aims at strengthening women’s position as entrepreneurs and their role in business life. The Government has allocated SEK 8 million per year 2024–2026 to the Swedish Growth Agency to promote women’s entrepreneurship. [Nytt uppdrag ska stärka kvinnors företagande - Regeringen.se](#)

Fewer women than men have a career in Science Technology Engineering and Math. This year, the government will present a new STEM-strategy targeting the entire education system, higher education included. The intention is to enable more women to apply to, and to be examined in, STEM subjects, like engineering and science but also vocational training.  
[Rundabordssamtal om regeringens STEM-strategi - Regeringen.se](#)

In a time when women's and girls' rights are increasingly being put into question around the world, Sweden will continue to be a strong voice and defender of gender equality, SRHR, and women's and girls' empowerment. The Government will strategically promote gender equality in multilateral fora such as the EU, the UN, NATO, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

### **Section Three: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

6. Over the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to advance gender equality in the world of work (including informal and non-standard employment as well as entrepreneurship)?

The gender equality gap in the world of work has decreased but remains. The differences in pay between women and men has decreased from just over 16 percent ten years ago to just under 10 percent in 2022. The average gap in disposable income has remained unchanged in recent years of around 20 percent. This is primarily because the share of capital income in total income has increased. The average gap in capital income is significantly larger than in earned income between men and women. On average, women's capital income accounted for 55 per cent of men's.

Another contributing factor to the differences in disposable income between women and men is linked to entrepreneurship income and the fact that more men than women are entrepreneurs (appr. 30 vs 70 per cent). Entrepreneurs in Sweden can choose to withdraw salary through dividends and profits from small companies instead of work and can thus benefit from favourable tax rules (the so-called 3:12 rules for shareholders in small companies).

Several measures have been taken by the present and former government with the aim of promoting a good and sustainable situation in the labour market for women and men. The former government appointed a Commission for gender-equal lifetime earnings in 2020. The aim for the Commission was to submit proposals for measures that contribute to equal pay, equal living income, equal distribution of public support measures, and equal workplaces. The assignment was [reported in February 2022](#) (*Minska gapet* SOU2022:4) and has led to a number of new assignments in the area of economic gender equality.

The present Swedish Government has continued the focus on increasing economic equality between women and men in the long term. Some examples of recent reforms (2022–2024) that aim to promote gender equality in the world of work, including entrepreneurship are:

- An assignment to the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (*Tillväxtverket*), who together with the Gender Equality

Agency and the Procurement Agency, among others, will analyse and promote women's entrepreneurship and ownership. It is a comprehensive and long-term (three-year) assignment, which aims to strengthen women's position as entrepreneurs and their role in business life.

- The Swedish National Mediation Institute (*Medlingsinstitutet, MI*) has a government mandate to carry out gender equality analyses of salary income and other incomes that affects individuals' disposable income over a long-term perspective.
- Statistics Sweden (*SCB*) has been assigned to develop and increase knowledge about economic equality among women and men with disabilities.
- The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has received an assignment relating to financial gender equality and ownership in the housing market. The assignment covers especially young women's and men's financial conditions to establish themselves in the housing market, both owned and rented, from a gender equality perspective.
- The Swedish Agency for Work Environment Expertise (*Mynak*) has received a government assignment to analyse and report on how increased remote work after the covid-19 pandemic continues to affect equality between women and men in the labour market.

The government has also contributed resources to strengthen the situation of foreign-born women through assignments to different agencies and organizations.

7. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work, promote work-life and family balance and strengthen the rights of paid care workers?

### **Parental insurance**

Since the 2nd of August 2022, in line with the EU's work-life-balance directive, 90 days of parental benefit at the basic level are reserved for each parent and cannot be transferred. Parental benefit at the basic level is paid out to parents that do not fulfil the required conditions for an income-related benefit, who have a very low income or none. The measure aims at increasing fathers' uptake of parental benefit and promote a more equal distribution of parental responsibilities regardless of the parents' income. Priorly, the reserved days only applied to parents that had parental benefit based on their income.

The rules for parental benefit have also been amended to further increase flexibility in parental insurance and promote gender equality. From July 2024 the possibilities to use parental benefit simultaneously for two parents will be strengthened, so that both parents can be on leave together for a longer period. At the same time, a possibility to transfer the right to parental benefit to another insured person who stays home from work to care for the child will be introduced. This will facilitate, for example, parents with sole custody to receive help with the care of the child. The recipient could for example be a close relative, such as the child's grandparent.

The Swedish Social Insurance Agency has during 2020–2024 been assigned to, by way of information, support a more equal share of parental benefit and temporary parental benefit between parents. In 2024 the agency's information shall strengthen parents' knowledge of the parental insurance system and the long-term effects of how parental leave is distributed.

### **Paid care workers**

The Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare has been tasked to propose a national plan to improve the competence supply of the health and medical services. The national competence supply plan must, among other things, outline needs to train and improve skills for existing and new healthcare staff. The assignment must be reported by 31 May 2024.



A large state grant for increased quality in preschools was introduced in 2022. It is calculated based on a socio-economic index; most resources are allocated to preschools with the greatest needs. This grant amounts to 2,8 billion SEK (approx. 250 million euros). The funding can for example be used for trainings and skills development for staff. Funds can also be used to recruit additional staff, which can improve the quality of care.

The Elderly Care Initiative is a government funded initiative, which supports municipalities with additional, earmarked funds, to strengthen skills in municipally funded health and social care for the elderly by giving new and existing staff the opportunity to undergo training during paid working hours. Ensuring that staff have the right skills to perform their duties is central to the quality and safety of care for the elderly. The elderly care initiative has given thousands of employees, mostly women as they constitute 90% of the workforce in elderly care, the opportunity to undergo training during paid working hours. The municipalities state that the government funding has contributed to strengthening the skills of employees in elderly care. The grant was launched in 2020. The grant amounts to 1,7 billion SEK 2024.

In 2022 new regulations were introduced with the aim of increasing the number of children attending preschool. Municipalities must now contact guardians with children who do not attend preschool and inform them about the benefits of preschool and the right to attend. Municipalities must also provide a reserved preschool place for children who need language development activities, for example children who have lived in Sweden for a short period of time. Such an offer must be made even if the parents have not applied for a preschool place.

## 8. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to reduce the gender digital divide?

Digital participation in Sweden remains high in an international comparison. According to Eurostat, internet usage in 2023 in Sweden amounted to 97.6 percent, compared to the EU average of 91.4 percent.

Surveys indicate that both women and men use the internet to a large extent in Sweden. Statistics Sweden (SCB) shows in a survey that there is only a marginal difference between women and men who use internet several times a day. This is also reflected in the aforementioned survey showing that the proportion of women who have never used the internet is 3 percent, which is the same for men, i.e. there are also 3 percent of men who have never used the internet <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/statistik-efter-amne/levnadsforhallanden/levnadsforhallanden/befolkningens-it-anvandning/>.

On January 25, 2024, the Swedish Government tasked the Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (PTS) to propose actions to increase the proportion of individuals who are digitally included, i.e. individuals using digital services. The digital transition in society has meant that today there is a risk of digital exclusion among the elderly above all, people with certain disabilities and those living in households with low incomes. It is important that the digital divide is reduced and that everyone is given the opportunity to participate in the digital society. Several different stakeholders have carried out activities to increase digital inclusion. At the same time, statistics show that the proportion of the population that does not use the internet has only changed to a limited extent in recent years (according to the Internet Foundation, Swedes and the Internet 2023). There is therefore a need to strengthen the conditions for digital inclusion in Sweden. The assignment is to be reported to the Government Offices on 21 December 2024.

During the years 2019–2022, Sweden has signed two declarations with the focus on diminishing the gender digital divide:

"Women in Digital" is a declaration from the European Commission which aims to increase women's participation in the digital sector. All EU Member States plus Norway signed the declaration in 2019. The declaration aims to create national strategies for women's digital participation, encourage a positive public image of women in the digital sector and establish an event

for women in ICT (European Girls and Women in ICT day). Furthermore, the declaration aims to encourage companies to combat gender discrimination in the workplace, strengthen a gender-balanced composition of boards, committees and organizations that work with digital issues and to develop monitoring mechanisms and collection of data to establish new strengthening targets.

France followed up on the declaration during its presidency with the "Declaration for Women in Entrepreneurship and Innovation" (2022). The declaration has three main points: 1) Ensure equal access to investment and funding in the ICT sector regardless of gender, 2) Develop new ways to measure and monitor the gender gap in funding and thus raise awareness in the investment community, and 3) Develop targeted actions in the ICT sector and other cutting-edge sectors to reduce the gender gap in technology and innovation.

There are investigations concerning among other things the use of social media among boys and girls. These show differences in the use of digital devices. A general difference is that boys tend to play online games more than girls, and girls tend to use social media to a larger extent. Ex. *Skolbarns hälsövanor i Sverige 2021–2022 Nationella resultat*  
<http://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se>

In 2017 the Government commissioned The National Agency for Education to digitise the national tests given yearly to pupils in third, sixth and ninth grade as well as in upper secondary education. The Digital National Tests are supposed to be introduced step by step. Due to the risks connected to young children's use of digital devices, this task was changed in 2024. Pupils in third grade will not be a target for Digital National Tests. For the same reason the National Agency for Education was assigned to propose changes in the preschool curriculum amid at removing the requirement for the use of digital devices with the children in the preschool activities.

The National Agency for Education has the responsibility to support the school providers in their efforts to use digital learning devices in schools. There are several efforts for this. Among others there are in-service education in programming for teachers.

In the digital sector, issues linked to gender bias and socio-cultural constructions are prominent and discourage girls and young women from

taking up studies and careers in Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM), both in the corporate and entrepreneurship sectors. During 2024 the Government of Sweden will present a STEM-strategy targeting the whole education system, higher education included. One aim of the strategy is to enable more women to apply to and to be examined in STEM subjects.

9. In the past five years, how has the macroeconomic and fiscal policy environment affected the implementation of the BPfA in Sweden, and what macroeconomic policies has Sweden implemented in support of a more gender-equal economy?

During the present term in office, the Swedish Government has increased spending on individual welfare services significantly. In 2023 and 2024, spending on individual welfare services increased by almost SEK 35 billion. This increase has added financial resources to women to a greater extent than men (approximately 19 billion are added to women and 15 billion are added to men). That a greater share of the increase has accrued to women than to men mainly depends on the fact that women use these services at higher rates than men do. In addition, more women than men work in the welfare services.

Furthermore, during the previous term in office, the Swedish Government increased spending on individual welfare services significantly. In 2019–2022, spending on individual welfare services increased by approximately SEK 53 billion. Similarly, to the more recent increase in spending, this increase in individual welfare services added financial resources to women to a greater extent than men.

The government's reforms within the tax and transfer systems also have an impact on economic gender equality. Individual disposable incomes are estimated to increase by nearly SEK 12 billion in total as a result of the government's reforms in 2023 and 2024. The reforms are assessed to increase women's disposable income more than men's. The government's reforms in 2019–2022 are estimated to increase the disposable income by approximately SEK 62 billion. These reforms also benefited women to a greater extent than men in total.

For gender equality policy, in this five-year period (2020–2024) there has been a specific appropriation for special gender equality measures in the national budget amounting to approximately SEK 600 million per year (3 000 million in total). The level of this appropriation varies each year depending on the Government's proposal and the Riksdag's budget decision (see question 34).

Funding to attain gender equality has also been set aside in other policy areas during the period, e.g. within the appropriation for health and medical care

for women's health and also for combating and preventing men's violence against women, including honour related violence and oppression.

In accordance with the Swedish Government's decision to apply gender-responsive budgeting, a gender equality perspective is to be included in the budget bill, throughout the entire process (see question 34).

10. In the last five years, what actions has Sweden taken to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?

The proportion of individuals with a low-income standard has decreased continuously since 2011 but stabilized around 5 percent during 2016–2020. In 2022, the percentage is estimated to be unchanged compared to 2021 and make up 4.6 percent of the population. It is more common to have a low-income standard in single-person households with children, and especially single women with children, for those born abroad, and those among the population who are not gainfully employed. In 2022, the proportion of individuals with a low-income standard for the household type single women with children was 11.7 percent, which can be compared to 6.3 percent for single men with children.

That the present Government prioritizes increased gender equality is shown not least by the investments made in the budget bill for 2024. The analysis of the effect of the budget bill on economic gender equality is that it increases economic equality, by increasing women's individual disposable income more than men's (increase by 0.3 percentage points). Furthermore, the state grants to municipalities and regions have been strengthened with a total of almost SEK 16 billion for the budget year 2024, which is also an initiative that favours gender equality.

There are women and girls who, because of their finances, or rather because they lack financial conditions, cannot break away from destructive and violent relationships. Questions on so called economic violence were therefore highlighted at the first conference during the Swedish presidency in the EU in the spring of 2023, entitled *Economic perspectives on gender-based violence – paving paths to prevention*. The Swedish Government will continue to prioritize efforts combatting economic violence.

Several specific measures have been taken by the Governments during recent years with the aim of promoting economic gender equality. Examples of recent reforms and initiatives include:

**1) Assignment to make gender equality analyses of salary income and other income**

The Swedish National Mediation Institute (*Medlingsinstitutet, MI*) has received a [government mandate](#) to carry out gender equality analyses of salary income and other income that affects individuals' disposable income over a long-

term perspective (A2022/00945). In a first step, the Swedish National Mediation Institute has carried out a gender equality analysis of salary income and other income. The authority has also submitted a proposal on how gender equality analyses of wage income and other income can be carried out regularly. The assignment is financed with 1,2 million SEK/year.

## **2) Assignments to increase the labour market participation of foreign-born women and girls**

In March 2023, the Government decided on a [three-year investment in open preschool](#) to increase foreign-born women's entry into the labour market together with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, SALAR (A2023/00122). The agreement covers approximately SEK 23 million, and the aim is to strengthen the establishment of foreign-born women in the labour market with a focus on parents with young children aged 0–6. Within the framework of the agreement, SALAR implements targeted process support for a selection of municipalities and local actors and will then disseminate the experiences gained to other municipalities, so that similar initiatives can be taken.

The Government has also given a [three-year assignment in June 2023](#), that implies a cooperation between several government agencies: the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, the Swedish Migration Agency, the National Board of Health and Welfare and the County Administrative Board of Västernorrland. The involved agencies have proposed a joint agency plan to increase the entry of foreign-born women into the labour market. Appr. 10 million SEK have been invested in the project so far.

Furthermore, a Government Committee has recently given [proposals for improved labour market establishment for foreign-born women](#) (Ju 2022:05). These proposals are currently under preparation within the Government Offices.

## **3) Assignments to strengthen women's and girls' ownership and entrepreneurship**

An [assignment](#) has been given to the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (*Tillväxtverket*), which together with the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, among other agencies, will analyze and promote women's entrepreneurship and ownership. It is a comprehensive and long-term



(three-year) assignment, which aims to strengthen women's position as entrepreneurs and their role in business life. At the same time, the assignment contributes to increased investments in Swedish companies, which in turn strengthens Sweden's economy and competitiveness. The assignment is financed with appr. 9 million SEK/year until 2027.

**11. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to improve access to social protection for women and girls?**

Since 2020, the Swedish Government has carried out several reforms to foster greater equality between women and men in terms of social protection.

Firstly, the housing allowance for households with children was temporarily raised the second half of the year of 2020 and 2021 as a Covid-19 measure. Due to the increased cost of living the temporary supplementary allowance was reintroduced in July 2022. In July 2023 this temporary allowance was also raised. The temporary allowance will be paid out until the end of June 2024, but the Government has proposed that the temporary supplement will be extended further until the end of December 2024. The housing allowance is means-tested, and therefore a well targeted benefit for reaching households with weaker financial situations.

Secondly, single parents often have a more financially constrained situation compared to parents who live together, and many children with a low economic standard live in households that are recipients of maintenance support. The maintenance support has been raised several times in recent years. Most recently, in August 2022, the maintenance support for children aged between 7 and 10 was raised. An increase in maintenance support strengthens single parents' incomes, and particularly benefits single women with children.

Thirdly, single older women have seen the poverty rate decrease from 30 per cent in 2021 to an estimated poverty rate at 18 per cent in 2023, and it will continue to decrease in 2024. The decrease of poverty rates among single older women is due to increases in the guarantee pension and housing supplement, as well as significant raises in 2023 and 2024 due to the guarantee pension being price indexed.

12. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?

The regions have the main responsibility for providing healthcare in accordance with the Health and Medical Care Act. The Swedish Government's ability to directly control how the regions carry out their work is limited due to the constitutional principle of local self-government. However, the Government can take initiatives to stimulate the regions to work with certain areas in the field of healthcare, and in some cases special funds are paid out to support the regions' work within these areas. In addition, government agencies can be given both supportive and supervisory tasks towards the regions.

Since 2015, the Government has carried out a major initiative to improve maternity care and to strengthen women's health in general. In total, approx. SEK 10 billion has been invested during the period 2015–2023. Within the framework of this initiative, the Government has entered into several agreements with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) on enhanced efforts for women's health and maternity care. The target areas of the agreements have varied throughout the last five years. Some examples of target areas that have been included in some of the agreements are:

- development of the pregnancy care chain,
- development of aftercare,
- early detection of cancer which affects women,
- strengthening skills provision,
- development of health care concerning girls' and women's health and diseases, including sexual and reproductive health,
- high quality care for person's who have been exposed to sexual violence and female genital mutilation.

The goal of the current agreements is to achieve safer, more accessible, person-centered, knowledge-based, and equal care within healthcare, which contributes to promoting women's health [Överenskommelse mellan staten och Sveriges Kommuner och Regioner inom området förlossningsvård och kvinnors hälsa. - Regeringen.se](#).

In 2020 The Public Health Agency of Sweden, on behalf of the Swedish Government, developed a national strategy for sexual and reproductive health and rights. The overall objective of the strategy is to achieve good,

fair, and equal sexual and reproductive health in the entire population. The strategy also contains four long-term sub-targets and seven areas of action. The Swedish Government also tasked the Public Health Agency of Sweden with developing an action plan in order to implement the strategy which was presented in 2023. [National Strategy for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights \(SRHR\)](#)

In addition, targeted initiatives to eradicate cervical cancer and to improve cancer care for cancer types that predominately affect women have been included in the yearly agreements with SALAR about national cancer care. Actions include, amongst others, improving pelvic rehabilitation after cancer, catch-up vaccinations against HPV for women born 94-99 and the implementation of better methods for invitations to screening [Jämlik och effektiv cancervård med kortare väntetider 2024 \(skr.se\)](#).

During the past five years, several public agencies have been commissioned tasks to carry out different initiatives within the field of women's health and maternity care. For example, The National Board of Health and Welfare has been commissioned to develop a national plan for maternity care, to develop national guidelines for maternity care, to carry out initiatives for equal healthcare with a focus on diseases that mainly affect women and girls and to carry out initiatives to support an equal and knowledge based healthcare for people who have been exposed to sexual violence. The Public Health Agency of Sweden has also been commissioned to carry out in-depth knowledge studies on women's health, and the Swedish Agency for Health Technology Assessment and Assessment of Social Services has been commissioned to produce a knowledge base in the field of women's health [Nationell förlossningsplan en viktig satsning på kvinnors hälsa - Regeringen.se](#).

13. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls, including in sectors where they are underrepresented?

The Government's objective to ensure gender equal education aims at safeguarding that boys and girls, men and women have the same opportunities and conditions regarding education. The Swedish national curriculum defines goals and guidelines based on fundamental values, including gender equality and the prevention of degrading treatment and harassment.

For as long as it has been possible to measure grades with national statistics, boys have shown to have lower grades than girls, both in compulsory and upper secondary school. However, the differences in grades at group level between girls and boys in compulsory school have decreased to the lowest differences in 20 years, just under 8 per cent in 2023 [Ogiltig frånvaro för jämställdheten | Jämställdhetsmyndigheten \(jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se\)](#). The Swedish Government has taken actions to improve the knowledge results for all pupils, both boys and girls. The Government's school policy aims to go back to the basics and re-establish a strong knowledge-based school where the focus in the earlier grades is on basic skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic. The Government's measures in the area include, among other things, clearer legal requirements and extra government funds for textbooks, strengthening school libraries, and an inquiry that will propose changes in the curricula [Regeringens prioritering: Skola - Regeringen.se](#).

When it comes to pupils' welfare, many school children have recurring psychological and somatic problems. The problem occurs more often among girls than boys (School children's health habits in Sweden 2021/22: National results, Public Health Agency 2023). The Government has taken actions to strengthen and improve pupil health services. A special state grant for recruitment of student health service personnel, including psychologists, counsellors, school nurses and school doctors, as well as state grants for special needs teachers, are available for school organisers. To support the recruitment of student health service personnel, the Swedish Government invests 150 million SEK every year. In March 2024, the Government also appointed an inquiry, tasked to submit proposals on how to improve and strengthen student health services and the support for pupils with special educational needs. The inquiry is due to submit a report in 2025.

While more women than men attend and graduate from higher education in Sweden, only 32 percent of the professors are women (2022). Therefore, the Government is setting goals (almost every year) to ensure that a certain percentage of all newly appointed professors shall be women. The percentage goal varies across the higher education institutions.

The National Agency for Education supports providers of compulsory and upper-secondary education by offering material and professional development in the area of equal treatment and non-discrimination. Starting at the level of pre-school, efforts are made to counteract gender stereotypes and gender roles that limit girls and boys in exploring their abilities.

The Swedish Government has in 2020 tasked the National Agency for Education to develop digital tools for study and career guidance so that more pupils and students will have the opportunity to make well-founded educational and career choices. By avoiding that study and career choices are limited by gender norms, social factors or cultural background, guidance can play a key role in reducing segregation and skewed recruitment.

Science and technology for all (NTA) is a school development programme that aims to develop and support teachers' learning and competence development in science, technology, and mathematics. With the aim to develop the activity and its materials and increase interest in the science subjects and technology subjects, not least among girls, the Government is investing in continued contribution to the NTA programme of SEK 3.5 million per year until 2026.

To meet the great need for technical competence, more young people need to choose an engineering education. The *Tekniksprånget* initiative means that young people with an upper secondary school degree from the Natural Sciences programme or the Technology programme get a four-month paid internship at a technology company. The Government is prioritizing an increase in previously announced funds for 2024 to a total of SEK 18 million, as well as an extension at that level through 2026.

The National Agency for Education has studied the outcomes of *Tekniksprånget* through a register study. In the report, the Agency states that the study shows that women in particular benefit from *Tekniksprånget*. Women's inclination to progress towards technical and natural sciences

university education are higher if they participated than if they did not participate in the effort.

The Government is also increasing its investment in the state grant for upper secondary schools that want to organize “a fourth technical year” for students with an upper secondary degree from the Technology programme, by SEK 25 million per year in 2024 and 2025. The supplement means that more students will be able to attend the nationally recruiting education that leads to an upper secondary school engineering degree.

Higher Vocational Education in Sweden (HVE) is tasked with raising the awareness of education providers about the importance of a more even gender distribution in education. With gender-disaggregated statistics, for example in quality reviews, biased recruitment among those admitted to courses and differences in study results can be made clear. Prior to the quality review of training courses, the training providers can also prepare by using a self-assessment tool that clarifies which aspects the training providers and management teams should follow up on, analyze, and remedy in order to, among other things, get closer to the goal of contributing to breaking traditions in terms of gender-based educational and professional choices.

Since 2016, all state universities, as well as Chalmers University of Technology and Jönköping University, have been tasked with working on gender mainstreaming. The Gender Mainstreaming in Universities development programme (*Jämställdhetsintegrering i högskolor och universitet JiHU*) aims to strengthen agencies’ work so that activities contribute more to achieving the Swedish Government’s gender equality policy goals. Priority areas are equal career paths within academia, the need to counteract gender-stereotypical career paths, and improving the throughput of women and men in education. The Gender Equality Agency coordinates the programme and supports Swedish Higher Education Institutions (HEI) during the planning and implementation phases of their gender mainstreaming work. [Utveckla jämställdhetsarbetet i akademien | Jämställdhetsmyndigheten \(jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se\)](https://www.jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se/)

At the end of 2024, the Swedish Government is planning to present a new STEM strategy. The strategy will cover the whole spectrum of education, from early childhood education to postgraduate higher education. The overarching purpose of the strategy will be to recruit more students to

STEM education in higher education, higher vocational education, and upper secondary education as well as to postgraduate studies and research careers. A particular focus of the strategy will be to increase the number of girls and women studying in the STEM fields. [Rundabordssamtal om regeringens STEM-strategi - Regeringen.se](#)



14. What actions has Sweden taken to ensure that economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic closes gender gaps in poverty, employment, social protection, education, and/or health that the pandemic has exacerbated?

As soon as pandemic started, the Swedish Government took action to strengthen and improve its welfare system in a gender-sensitive manner. A wide variety of financial measures and assignments were implemented to mitigate the effects of the pandemic. For example:

- The Government policy was that schools should remain open to the extent possible. This has served both to protect children's right to education and to avoid an unfair additional care burden falling on women. Where schools nevertheless had to close, temporary parental benefits have limited the negative economic effects for parents, which otherwise also often fall on women.
- Furthermore, pregnant women were formally considered being a risk group and were compensated if unable to work, limiting the economic disadvantages in taking safety precautions during the pandemic. If needed, the pregnant woman's employer made a risk assessment of the work environment. If the employer could not relocate its employee or adapt the work tasks, for example to work from home, the employer could prohibit the employee from working. If that happened, the pregnant woman was entitled to pregnancy benefit up to 100 percent of her salary from the state.
- In February 2022 a government mandated [Corona Commission](#) presented an evaluation report on how the Swedish Government handled the pandemic. Regarding fiscal stimulus, the [Swedish government put forward large fiscal stimulus packages](#) to counter the effects of the pandemic throughout 2020–2022. Since the start of the pandemic, the economic measures amount to almost USD 46 billion (SEK 400 billion) for 2020 and 2021. This corresponds to around USD 4 600 (SEK 40 000) per inhabitant. In addition, around USD 115 billion (SEK 1 000 billion) has been made available in various forms of loans and guarantees. Such large fiscal stimulus packages have served partly to off-set rising inequality, for example through Sweden's gender-sensitive budgeting process.

## Decisions on discretionary fiscal measures during Covid-19 crisis since January 2020

Percent of GDP

	Denmark	Finland	Norway	Sweden
Additional spending or foregone revenue	3.4	4.8	7.4	4.2
Accel. Spending, deferred revenue	13.7	0.2		6.7
Equity, loans, asset purchase	12.1	0.5	2.0	0.2
Guarantees	3.5	5.2	2.6	5.0
Quasi-fiscal operations		1.7		

Notes: For Denmark the uptake of tax deferrals is 8.9 and of loans to firms and guarantees 0.74. For Sweden the uptake of deferred revenue is 0.94. Norwegian data groups together additional spending groups and tax deferrals. Actual uptake is also lower in Norway, but exact information is not available. Source: IMF Covid-19 measures data base (2021).

- During the COVID-19 pandemic women's and girls' shelters were provided with extra government grants. The purpose of the grants was to give the shelters a possibility to adjust their work to the extraordinary situation.
- The Government assigned the Gender Equality Agency to develop knowledge on the effects of the covid-19 pandemic on economic gender equality in Sweden. The results of the study show that the pandemic has had a negative impact on economic equality between men and women. For example, more women than men left the labor market, and the female dominated healthcare sector was under severe stress.
- For 2024 the Swedish Agency for Work Environment Expertise (Mynak) has received a government assignment to analyse and report on how increased remote work after the covid-19 pandemic continues to affect equality between women and men in the labour market (see link above). Total budget amounts to 1 million SEK.

15. Over the past five years, which forms of gender-based violence, and in which specific contexts or settings, has Sweden prioritized for action?

Since 2020, the Swedish Government has carried out multiple reforms to end gender-based violence. Below, some of the most prioritized areas and actions implemented by the government are outlined.

**Intimate partner violence, including sexual violence and marital rape**

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is included in all actions taken to prevent and combat men's violence against women. Being exposed to violence from someone you live with, or have a relationship with, puts the victim in a very vulnerable situation. Within the scope of IPV, the Swedish Government has focused on violence in young persons' relationships. Some actions to address the matter are as follows:

- The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has been commissioned by the Government to identify knowledge gaps and map needs for enhanced knowledge regarding men's violence against women. The Agency has been tasked with identifying potential knowledge gaps concerning men's violence against women and intimate partner violence among professional groups that interact with victims of violence. The task encompassed all target groups and types of victimisations outlined in the National Strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women. The task particularly focused on shedding light on knowledge gaps among professions that encounter individuals in vulnerable situations (A2022/00986).
- In 2020, the Government commissioned the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*) to study what measures can be taken to prevent violence in intimate partner relationships amongst young persons (Ju 2020/03036). Based on the recommendations of this study, the Government commissioned the Swedish Gender Equality Agency (in 2023) to map how different public agencies work with awareness raising, disseminate knowledge on violence amongst young people in intimate partner relationships, and develop guidance material for professional groups as well as further recommend preventive measures (A2023/01276).
- In June 2023, the Government commissioned the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*) to conduct an in-depth follow-up

on the new consent law that was enacted in 2018. An initial follow-up with preliminary results was published in 2020; [The new consent law in practice - Brottsförebyggande rådet \(bra.se\)](#). The results of the newly commissioned study shall be presented to the Government no later than February 14, 2025.

- In 2022, the Government commissioned the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*) to follow up the crime gross violation of integrity (*grov fridskränkning*), including the judiciary's handling of such cases from registration to conviction, why so few cases lead to conviction and what could increase the conviction rate. The results were published in 2023.
- The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*) has conducted an extra survey within the annual Swedish Crime Survey (SCS – population-based survey on fear of crime, trust in the criminal justice system, and crime victims' contact with the criminal justice system), with questions related to the pandemic, in order to gain a greater understanding of the pandemic's effects on crime. The results were published in 2022. Questions related to crimes in the home have been included, which *Brå* considers to be the best way to measure crimes in a close relationship during the pandemic.
- In 2022, the Government commissioned the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*) to implement a special module to measure crimes in close relationships in the annual Swedish Crime Survey (SCS). The results were published in May 2024 <https://bra.se/publikationer/arkiv/publikationer/2024-05-06-brott-i-nara-relation.html>
- In 2021, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*) was commissioned to develop in-depth support for how general mapping of crime in an area could be supplemented with information on prevalence of violence in close relationships along with conditions for violence prevention. A methodological support was published in 2022 together with the Swedish Gender Equality Agency.
- In 2023, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*) was commissioned to evaluate the strengthening of the penalty for homicide that came into force on 1 January 2020. The evaluation

investigates whether the strengthened penalty has had an effect in cases concerning homicide in the context of men's violence against women and homicide cases in criminal networks. *Brå* will publish the study 14 March 2026.

- As of 2022, there is a new ordinance for government grants to municipalities, regions as well as civil society organisations for prevention of certain forms of violence (Ordinance (2022:722)). The forms of violence include men's violence against women, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, honour-based violence and oppression, as well as prostitution and trafficking in humans for sexual purposes.
- "Jealousy is not romantic" (*Svartsjuka är inte romantiskt*) is an annual campaign as well as a website, which targets young persons subjected to intimate partner violence or young persons who are worried about friends and family. The site provides information for persons who want to increase their knowledge of intimate partner violence amongst youth and boys' violence against girls.
- The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) has developed a platform for introduction and capacity building for professionals within the social services. Five additional platforms will be developed within areas prioritised by the municipalities. Knowledge on intimate partner violence is included.
- Intimate Partner Violence Intervention (IPVI) is run as a project in the Malmö Police Area in collaboration with the City of Malmö and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. The method is based on the Group Violence Intervention strategy developed in the United States. The purpose is to increase safety for the victim through an increased focus on the suspect perpetrator. The project is evaluated by Malmö University.
- The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has commissioned research at Stockholm University on support offered by non-governmental actors to victims and perpetrators of violence in intimate partner violence among youth. The study highlighted that shelters for young women, transgender persons and youth play an important role in providing low-threshold support and expert knowledge to these

groups. The study also emphasised the value of online support, and the possibility to seek help anonymously.

- The Government has commissioned the National Board of Health and Welfare to take measures to support equal and knowledge-based care for people who have been exposed to sexual violence (S2023/00970). The task includes an in-depth survey and analysis of health care services provided for victims of sexual abuse and sexual violence and proposing appropriate and cost-effective measures to develop and enhance care offered to victims. This also includes analysing the need for a national support function as well as analysing the need for and developing knowledge support and training initiatives for the health and medical care. The work aims to contribute to strengthened and uniform work throughout the country. The National Board of Health and Welfare will submit a final report to the Government by 15 December 2024.
- In an agreement between the Government and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) in 2023, funding of over 1,6 billion SEK has been earmarked for strengthened maternity care and work on women's health. Funds may be used to stimulate strengthened and long-term sustainable competence and equivalent care across the country for women and girls who have been exposed to sexual violence or genital mutilation. Patients, including those with complex problems, must be offered professional care of high quality. Work includes efforts to increase care professionals' knowledge of sexual violence and genital mutilation, its consequences as well as increase detection, especially in cases where the girl or woman seeks care for other symptoms.
- To better reflect the seriousness of the crime, the penalties for violations in a domestic context have been strengthened. For example, the minimum penalty for gross violation of integrity and gross violation of a woman's integrity was increased from imprisonment for at least nine months to imprisonment for at least one year. Additional measures to prevent and combat violence and other violations in a domestic setting and protect victims have also been introduced. Defamation is now included as part of the crimes gross violation of integrity, gross violation of a woman's integrity,

and unlawful harassment (Tougher Penalties for Violence and Other Violations in Close Relationships, Govt. Bill 2020/21:217).

- The government inquiry on the protection of children against sexual abuse and certain questions on crimes against women and the elderly presented its proposals in November 2023 (Strengthened protection against sexual violations, fraud in certain cases and hate crimes with regard to gender, SOU 2023:80). The Inquiry proposes, among other things, that motives relating to sex/gender should be added to the aggravating circumstances in the Swedish Criminal Code that concerns hate crimes. The proposal has been referred for consideration to relevant agencies and stakeholders; and the consultation comments are currently being analysed.
- To ensure that the legal framework governing non-contact orders as far as possible meets the interest of providing protection, primarily to women and children who are exposed to domestic violence, the Government appointed a new Inquiry to review the legal framework regarding non-contact orders and evaluate whether the possibilities for issuing non-contact orders should be extended. The Inquiry was also tasked with examining the scale of penalties for violation of a child's integrity, gross violation of integrity and gross violation of a woman's integrity. The report was submitted to the Government in February 2024 (A more effective non-contact orders legislation – increased protection for exposed persons, SOU 2024:13). The Inquiry has carried out a major review of the legislation regarding non-contact orders and its application. The proposals put forward by the Inquiry aim to facilitate issuing non-contact orders in more cases, to ensure that non-contact orders constitute real protection, and to strengthen the crime prevention function. The aim is also to increase the opportunities for a more uniform application across the country. The proposals have been referred for consideration to relevant bodies, the referral period ends in June 2024.

### **Sexual harassment and violence in public places, educational settings, and workplaces**

Sexual harassment in public places is an obstacle for women to thrive in working life, academia, politics, and other parts of society. It is therefore a priority to stop such harassment. During the years following #metoo, several

initiatives where made, but the work has also continued in the past five years.

- In 2019, the Government instructed the Swedish Work Environment Authority to raise awareness of active measures and victimisation, including work against sexual harassment. The assignment included, together with the Equality Ombudsman (DO), developing the digital platform that had been developed in previous assignments, where information is gathered about the requirements of the Discrimination Act (2008:567) and the Work Environment Act (1977:1160), as well as disseminating information about the platform.
- The Swedish Crime Survey annually measures self-reported exposure to crime in the population (i.a. assault, threats, sexual offences, online harassment and harassment), fear of crime, confidence in the criminal justice system, and crime victims' contact with the criminal justice system ([Swedish Crime Survey 2023 - Brottsförebyggande rådet \(bra.se\)](#)). The follow-up interviews include questions regarding where the crime took place (public place, workplace/school, private house or other). Every other year, self-reported work-related crime victimization (i.e. threats and harassment) among politicians is measured in The Politician's Safety Survey (the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*)). Every other year, crime victimization among students in grade nine (15–16 years old) including sexual crimes is measured in the School Survey on Crime ([The Politician's Safety Survey 2023 - Brottsförebyggande rådet \(bra.se\)](#)).

#### **Violence against women and girls facilitated by technology**

Violence against women and girls facilitated by technology is a growing issue, that has been more prioritized in the later years (see question 18).

#### **Femicide/Feminicide/gender-related killings of women and girls**

Fatal violence is the most extreme form of men's violence against women. To learn more about the cases of violence and to use that knowledge to prevent more killings is a priority.

- The National Board of Health and Welfare regularly performs reviews of deaths and fatality cases under a special legal act



(2007:606) concerning inquiries to prevent certain injuries and fatalities. As of 1 January 2019, the scope of these reviews has been expanded to include some forms of serious non-deadly violence as well as data on the alleged offender. A new provision enables inspections of the authorities concerned, for instance of the social services by the Health and Social Care Inspectorate, in case such inspections have not already been carried out.

- The Swedish Gender Equality Agency, within the framework of the agency's Government commission to work against violence in young couple relationships (15-25 years old) (A2021/01443, A2021/01397), has funded a research project that aims to investigate how common fatal violence is in young couple relationships and how it has evolved over time, looking at the years 1990–2017. Inter alia, the researchers found that in the case of lethal intimate partner violence against young people, the victims are almost exclusively girls and young women; 97% are girls and young women killed by a male partner. The most common method of lethal intimate partner violence against girls and young women is a knife (42%), followed by strangulation (32%). Girls and young women are twice as likely to be killed by strangulation compared to other women.
- The Government has commissioned the National Board of Forensic Medicine to strengthen knowledge about strangulation violence. Enhanced knowledge about strangulation violence is expected to contribute to increased quality in preliminary investigations and, in the long run, contribute to the judicial system's work to prevent violence in close relationships.

### **Child, early and forced marriages, and female genital mutilation**

Combatting honour-based violence and oppression is a top priority for the Swedish Government, and the Prime Minister has addressed this in Statements of Government Policy in both 2022 and 2023. Therefore, several measures that are taken to combat men's violence against women includes a special focus on honour-based violence and oppression, including FGM. Further, a large number of measures have been taken that focuses solely on honour-based violence and oppression. Below some examples of such measures:

- Since 2019, the Swedish Migration Agency has had a government commission to increase detection of violence among migrants that they meet. Since 2021 the Agency has also been one of the recipients of a government commission to combat and prevent female genital mutilation. As part of the assignments, action plans have been put in place that include large investments in training and support to employees. Various key groups have been trained, including employees in housing, reception, asylum case officers and different service staff. Filmed lectures on honour-based violence and genital mutilation are available for all employees, as well as various online training courses for employees both in Sweden and abroad.
- The National Centre on Violence against Children (Barnafrid) together with the Swedish Prosecution Authority are conducting joint work to promote the implementation of provisions against honour-based crimes that came into effect on July 1, 2020 (A2020/02649).
- In 2021, the Government commissioned the County Administrative Board of Östergötland to set up a structure for the provision of general counselling and guidance to children and adults who are victims of honour-based violence and oppression, or at risk of exposure to such violence. The National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence against Women at Uppsala University will provide a helpline, in collaboration with the National Centre against Honor-based Violence and Oppression at the County Administrative Board of Östergötland.
- The National Board of Health and Welfare has in 2021 investigated the care provided to girls and women subjected to female genital mutilation and found that the number of women within the health care system who have been diagnosed as having been subjected to female genital mutilation has increased. Out of 21 regions, six have regional guidelines on care for these women and girls, nine have local policy documents and one region has both.
- In October 2021, the Swedish Agency for Participation was commissioned to compile knowledge about violence against persons with disabilities and identifying knowledge gaps (A2021/02052). In particular, the Agency for Participation was tasked to look at

knowledge of exposure to honour-based violence and oppression. The results of the assignments were presented in 2023 and the Agency for Participation has carried out many different dissemination and communication efforts to change mentalities and attitudes as well as raise awareness of the heightened exposure to violence among persons with disabilities. In June 2023, the Agency for Participation was commissioned by the Government to chart and develop support material on violence against children and young persons with disabilities. In addition, the Agency will do in-depth mapping of honour-based violence and oppression against persons with disabilities. The Agency will identify the target group's particular vulnerability, conditions and needs (S2023/02178).

- The Swedish Family Law and Parental Support Authority has carried out an assignment (A2021/02053) promoting the development of violence prevention work through support directed at parents, focused on families in an honour-based context.
- In 2022, the National Centre against Honour-based violence and oppression was established with the mission to support and contribute to a strategic, preventive, and knowledge-based work against honour-based violence and oppression on a national, regional, and local level.
- In June 2023, a government appointed inquiry submitted a report on i.e., measures against control of girls' and women's sexuality (SOU 2023:37). The Inquiry proposes to introduce a new penalty provision in the Swedish Criminal Code regarding virginity testing. The inquiry also proposes criminalisation of hymen reconstruction surgery through new provisions in the Swedish Act (1982:316) prohibiting female genital mutilation. Furthermore, the inquiry proposes expanding the possibility of ordering a travel ban in cases where there is a substantial risk that someone under 18 years of age will be taken abroad in order to undergo hymen reconstruction surgery or virginity testing. The Inquiry also proposes criminalisation of failure to disclose coercion to marry and child marriage offences. The proposal has been referred for consideration to relevant bodies; the referral period ended in November 2023.

- In an agreement that the Government has entered with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) 2023 in the area of maternity care and women's health, funds may be used to stimulate strengthened and long-term sustainable competence and equivalent care across the country for people who have been exposed to sexual violence or genital mutilation. This includes ensuring quality care for people who have been exposed to sexual violence or genital mutilation. Patients, including those with complex problems, must be offered professional, knowledge-based care of high quality. Work includes efforts to increase care professionals' knowledge of sexual violence and genital mutilation, its consequences as well as increase detection, especially in cases where the girl or woman seeks care for other symptoms.
- In recent years, the National Centre on Violence against Children has been commissioned by the Government to strengthen the capacities of Children's Houses when it comes to investigating cases of honour-based violence and oppression, child marriage, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. The centre now has an assignment to support capacity building on honour-based violence and oppression, including child marriage, forced marriage and female genital mutilation for the Children's houses (A2023/00924). This task is carried out in cooperation with the National Centre for Honour-based Violence and in liaison with relevant government agencies working on prevention of female genital mutilation (A2021/01029).
- In January 2024, the Government appointed an inquiry that will – among other things – analyse the regulation on and propose stricter punishments for child marriage offence, deception for the purpose of marriage abroad and honour-based oppression and analyse whether additional categories of people should be held liable for child marriage offence and deception for the purpose of marriage abroad. The inquiry will also analyse if the prohibition concerning recognition of foreign polygamous marriages should apply without exception and if the rules regarding recognition of foreign proxy marriages should be stricter. The inquiry will present its proposals no later than April 2025 (ToR 2024:8).

- The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society is commissioned to carry out information efforts regarding honour-based violence and oppression, including child marriage, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, as well as health and equality, including prostitution and human trafficking, aimed at professionals and other adults including in civil society organisations, who meet young newly arrived migrants and young asylum seekers in their work.
- In July 2020, a new offence, child marriage offence (Chapter 4, Section 4 c of the Criminal Code), was introduced, which can lead to a sentence of imprisonment for up to four years. According to this provision, it is a criminal offence to induce or allow a child to enter a marriage or a marriagelike relationship.
- At the same time, whether a motive for an offence was to preserve or restore the honour of a person or of an immediate or wider family or some other similar group, was introduced in the Criminal Code (Chapter 29, Section 2) as a new aggravating circumstance that shall be given consideration when assessing penalty value, in addition to what applies for each specific type of offence. The aggravating circumstance is applicable when assessing penalty value of all offences (Increased Protection Against Honour-based Crimes, Govt. Bill 2019/20:131).
- In May 2021, two new criminal offences were introduced, the offences to encourage suicide and to negligently encourage suicide. A phenomenon that has attracted attention in recent years in Sweden is young women jumping from balconies or windows to commit suicide. In many cases, police suspect these women have been driven to the act by families and police deem these acts are often in fact disguised criminal acts in the name of honour, where the families previously could escape punishment (A Special Penal Provision for Incitement to Suicide, Govt. Bill 2020/21:74).
- In June 2022, a new offence was introduced into the Criminal Code, honour-based oppression (Chapter 4, Section 4 e). Thereby, a special stricter penalty scale was introduced for those who repeatedly commit certain criminal acts against a person with a motive to preserve or restore the honour of a person or of an immediate or

wider family or some other similar group, if each of the acts was part of a repeated violation of the person's integrity and were liable to severely damage the person's self-esteem (A Special Crime for Honour Oppression, Govt. Bill 2021/22:138). A travel ban has been introduced through several amendments in the Care of Young Persons Act (1990:52), which is intended to protect children from being taken abroad for the purpose of i.a. child marriage or genital mutilation. The travel ban is partly an obstacle to issuing passports, and partly grounds for revoking passports. It is punishable to take a child out of Sweden in violation of a travel ban. (Increased Protection Against Honour-based Crimes, Govt. Bill. 2019/20:131). In May 2024, the Parliament decided, on a proposal from the Government (An extended exit ban for children, Govt. Bill 2023/24:72), to extend the legislation regarding travel bans. It will be possible to impose a travel ban if there is a significant risk that a child will be taken abroad or leave Sweden and the child's health, or development will be harmed during the stay abroad due to circumstances that may constitute grounds to initiate care under the Care of Young Persons Act. Such harm may be in the form of physical or mental abuse, honour-related violence and oppression, improper exploitation, shortcomings in care or some other condition in the living environment. It can also be about the young person's abuse of addictive substances, criminal activity or other socially destructive behaviour. Also, the criminal liability for child abduction will be extended to also include acts where a child under the age of 15 is abducted or is kept hidden away, if the act is likely to prevent care under the Care of Young Persons Act (1990:52). The amendments will enter into force on 1 June 2024.

### **Trafficking in women and girls**

- The Swedish Gender Equality Agency shall, in accordance with its ordinance, coordinate work against human trafficking for all purposes at national level, develop cooperation between authorities and other actors, as well as with international actors, and assist authorities with methodological support and skills development. Since June of 2021, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency has further been commissioned by the Government to strengthen its work to combat the sexual exploitation of children, prostitution, and human trafficking. The assignment includes measures to strengthen the

Agency's preventive work and efforts to ensure that those who are exposed to sexual exploitation, prostitution and human trafficking have access to protection and support. This includes increased capacity building-support and further reinforcement of the regional coordinators against prostitution and human trafficking who as of 2023 are 16 in total, present across all seven police regions. The regional coordinators offer practical, hands-on consultation and guidance to individuals seeking help as well as to professionals. This work is carried out within the framework of Sweden's National coordination against prostitution and human trafficking (NSPM), based in the GEA, which also leads the National Task Force in this field, consisting of a large number of relevant public authorities.

- As part of the work of the National coordination against prostitution and human trafficking (NSPM), the Swedish Gender Equality Agency develops and conducts trainings for professionals regarding child sexual exploitation, prostitution, and trafficking in human beings for all purposes.
- As part of the Government's commission to the Swedish Gender Equality Agency to strengthen its work to combat sexual exploitation of children, prostitution and human trafficking, the Agency is assigned to distribute funds to the National Support Program (NSP) which is managed by the Swedish Platform Civil Society against Human Trafficking and offers support to persons subjected to prostitution and human trafficking in accordance with Sweden's international undertakings. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency is also assigned to distribute funds to the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Program for victims of human trafficking.
- A temporary residence permit for recovery and reflection may under certain conditions be granted a foreigner victim of trafficking or human exploitation (Chapter 5, Section 15, Second paragraph Aliens Act). In 2022, amendments to the Aliens Act were made allowing the municipal social service to, besides the person in charge of a preliminary investigation, apply for such a residence permit on behalf of victims of trafficking or human exploitation. In addition to the permit for recovery and reflection a victim may also, after application made by the person in charge of a preliminary investigation, under

certain conditions be granted a temporary residence permit for the purpose of their co-operation in preliminary investigation or criminal proceedings (Chapter 5, Section 15, First paragraph Aliens Act).

- As part of the national action plan to combat prostitution and trafficking in human beings for all forms of exploitation, which was decided on in 2018, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency was tasked to map the prevalence of prostitution in Sweden, this report was submitted on 1 October 2021. The report shows, inter alia, that children are at greater risk of being exploited in prostitution and trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes when perpetrators find new ways and arenas to reach them online via various websites, dating sites, social media and even gaming apps.
- In 2020, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*) was commissioned to follow up how the criminal justice system applies the prohibition on the purchase of sexual services (Chapter 6, Section 11 of the Swedish Criminal Code) and the prohibition on the exploitation of a child through the purchase of a sexual act (Chapter 6, Section 9 of the Swedish Criminal Code). The results were published in 2022 ([Exploitation of a child through the purchase of a sexual act - Brottsförebyggande rådet \(bra.se\)](#) and [Purchase of sexual services - Brottsförebyggande rådet \(bra.se\)](#)).
- The Government has appointed an inquiry to investigate the possibility to incorporate an EXIT-programme for adults subjected to prostitution and victims of human trafficking for sexual purposes, and another programme for children subjected to sexual exploitation and human trafficking for sexual purposes (A 2022:04, ToR 2022:115). The Inquiry presented its report at the end of 2023. The report is undergoing public consultation. See also, the Inquiry on Protection, Support and Care for Victims of Abuses in the Production or Distribution of Pornography, mentioned above.
- Preventell, a national helpline to prevent sexual violence, has been made permanent to strengthen preventive measures, and support long-term stable conditions for increased knowledge on sexual violence. The target group for the help line is persons with self-perceived risk behaviour, compulsive behaviour, sexual interest in



children and impulsive sexual behaviour. Buyers of sexual services or people with other obsessive sexual behaviours, who wish to reduce or stop behaviours that risk impacting others and themselves negatively, are offered counselling at specialised centres (“KAST clinics”).

- Subject to annual budget availability, a five-year assessment study (2021–2025) is conducted by the KAST-centres as part of a collaboration between the Swedish Gender Equality Agency and several County Administrative Boards. The study which will both assess the self-perceived effects on the clients and to document the working methods of the centres, is conducted by researchers at the Gothenburg Region (GR) unit for Research and Development. The objective is to increase knowledge of risk factors and actionable methods to achieve behavioural change amongst men who exploit women in prostitution.

**16. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden prioritized to address gender-based violence?**

Sweden's Government has addressed gender-based violence in several aspects. This is evident by for example strengthening of legal frameworks on violence against women and enhancement of services provided to victims. The following provides a more thorough account of the government's investments to address this pressing issue.

**Introduced or strengthened violence against women laws**

Several penalties have been strengthened during the past five years.

- To better reflect the seriousness of the crime, the penalties for violations in a domestic context have been strengthened. For example, the minimum penalty for gross violation of integrity and gross violation of a woman's integrity was increased from imprisonment for at least nine months to imprisonment for at least one year. Additional measures to prevent and combat violence and other violations and to protect victims have also been introduced. Defamation is now included as part of the crime's gross violation of integrity, gross violation of a woman's integrity, and unlawful harassment (Tougher Penalties for Violence and Other Violations in Close Relationships, Govt. Bill 2020/21:217).
- The government inquiry on the protection of children against sexual abuse and certain questions on crimes against women and the elderly presented its proposals in November 2023 (Strengthened protection against sexual violations, fraud in certain cases and hate crimes with regard to gender, SOU 2023:80). The inquiry proposes, among other things, that motives relating to gender should be added to the aggravating circumstances in the Swedish Criminal Code that concerns hate crimes. The proposal has been referred for consideration to the relevant bodies and the consultation comments are currently being analysed.
- To ensure that the legal framework governing non-contact orders meets the interest of providing protection, primarily to women and children who are exposed to domestic violence, the Government appointed a new inquiry to review the legal framework regarding non-contact orders and evaluate whether the possibilities for issuing

non-contact orders should be extended. The inquiry was also tasked with examining the scale of penalties for violation of a child's integrity, gross violation of integrity and gross violation of a woman's integrity. The report was submitted to the Swedish Government in February 2024 (A more effective non-contact orders legislation – increased protection for exposed persons, SOU 2024:13). The inquiry has carried out a major review of the legislation regarding non-contact orders and its application. The proposals put forward by the inquiry aim to make it possible to issue non-contact orders in more cases, to ensure that non-contact orders provide genuine protection, and to strengthen crime prevention function. The aim is also to increase the opportunities for a more uniform application of the regulation across the country. Against this background, the inquiry proposes, among other things, that it should be possible to issue a non-contact order as a protection against “undue surveillance”, for example when there is a risk that a person will monitor the protected person through GPS equipment or apps. Furthermore, the Inquiry proposes that a presumption of a non-contact order should be introduced for certain offences that are such that there are typically grounds for a non-contact order (crimes threatening life, health, freedom of a person whom the perpetrator has or previously has been in a close relationship with). The proposal has been referred for consideration to the relevant bodies, the referral period ends in June 2024.

#### **Introduced, updated or expanded national action plans on ending violence against women and girls**

In 2021, the Swedish Government decided on an action plan (2021–2023) to implement Sweden's ten-year national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women. The strategy stresses the need for cooperation and coordination on a national, regional, and local level. The strategy has emphasised the role of the County Administrative Boards in coordinating the work at the regional and local levels. As mentioned above, the Swedish Agency for Public Management, upon commission by the Government, identified a need for further development when it comes to the County Administrative Boards' co-operation with schools and the health care sector, as well as involving leaders within municipalities and regions. The action plan consists of 99 actions, divided into the four objectives of the national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women. The

measures include both efforts to prevent violence and to provide support and protection to victims. It also includes efforts to improve legislation. The four objectives of the action plan, following the national ten-year strategy (2017-2026) and the Istanbul Convention, are:

- Increased and effective preventive work against violence
- Improved detection of violence and stronger protection and support for abused women and children
- More effective law enforcement
- Improved knowledge and method development

The Government has now initiated the drafting of a new action plan for the period 2024–2026. The process was launched through five dedicated round tables with civil society organisations, academia and public authorities for feedback and inputs in the spring of 2023.

Further, in August 2023, the Government decided to appoint an inquiry on A Strengthened Long-term Governance of the Work against Gender-based Violence and Honour-based Violence and Oppression. The Inquiry is to submit a final report in February of 2025 (A 2023:04, ToR 2023:117)., the Committee is tasked with, inter alia: assessing whether a specific sub-goal to prevent and combat honour-based violence and oppression should be introduced as part of the gender equality policy; analysing and proposing a new, more inclusive wording of the sixth sub-goal of the gender equality policy that men’s violence against women must end and developing a proposal for one or two long term strategies to achieve the sixth sub-goal and a possible new sub-goal on honour-based violence and oppression (ToR 2023:117). The Inquiry presented a first report in March 2024. The Inquiry has proposed that honour-related violence and oppression should be included in a new and more inclusive formulation of the sixth gender equality policy sub-goal, which concerns men's violence against women. The report is currently considered by the Government Offices.

#### **Introduced or strengthened services for survivors of violence**

One way to strengthen services for survivors is to ensure quality at sheltered accommodation. In accordance with a Government Bill on strengthened rights for children and adults in shelters (2023/24:31, the Parliament adopted a new legal framework for shelters entering into force on the 1st of April 2024. The new legal framework includes several measures aiming to improve the situation of children accompanying an adult guardian in

shelters. Today, the needs for support and care of these children are usually not assessed and catered for by the public social services as the guardian is responsible for the child. Furthermore, many children accompanying a guardian in shelters have two guardians and interventions for the child by the authorities may require the consent of both guardians. According to the new framework, sheltered accommodation is to be regulated as a specific measure of the social services. Furthermore, operating a shelter will require a license from the Health and Social Care Inspectorate. Children accompanying an adult guardian in shelters will have their needs assessed and attended to by the social services. These children will also be offered a health check and their right to education is clarified. The Social Welfare Committee is to appoint a specific social worker to deal with matters concerning the child. Moreover, the Social Welfare Committee will have the powers to restrict contact with the child by a violent guardian and to keep the location of the child secret for a violent guardian during the stay in the shelter. The new legal framework allows for more detailed regulations of staff competence and specialisation of shelters and is therefore likely to imply better adaption to the needs of different target groups in general such as victims with disabilities.

The local authorities/municipalities are responsible for funding sheltered accommodation and associated services for victims of violence. However, the Government is financially compensating the municipalities for costs of new legal requirements. Outside of the budget for special gender equality measures, a compensation of 336 million SEK per year is allocated to the municipalities and regions for the reform on sheltered accommodation.

Furthermore, public funding for women's and young women's shelters as well as similar non-governmental organisations have been strengthened and made permanent. For more information, see question 19.

### **Actions against honour-based violence and oppression**

For information on this issue, see question 15.

**17. In the past five years, what strategies has Sweden used to prevent gender-based violence?**

In the past five years Sweden has adopted various strategies to prevent gender-based violence. This include strengthening the parental responsibility and raising awareness and capacity of school and preschool staff on detecting and preventing honour-based violence and oppression. This is a highly prioritized issue in Sweden and the following will provide an exposition of strategies that Sweden uses to prevent gender-based violence.

**Promoting non-violent family relationships and positive parenting practices**

- The Swedish Family Law and Parental Support Authority has been tasked with promoting the development of violence prevention work through support directed at parents, focused on families in an honour-based context (A2021/02053). The Government has allocated 10 000 000 SEK annually for the task, which will be reported in 2025.
- Strengthening parental responsibility is an important priority for the Government and central to crime prevention work. In 2023, the Government tasked the Swedish Agency for Family Law and Parental Support with disbursing and following up on an investment in government grants totalling SEK 375 000 000 to municipalities and regions for enhanced parenting support measures in 2023. The same amount has been allocated for 2024. The funds will contribute to increased and equal access to parental support throughout the country and to the prevention of crime among children and young persons.
- The National Board of Health and Welfare has been tasked with providing support to municipalities and regions in the work of establishing and organising so called family centres, as well as creating good conditions for the collaboration conducted at family centres. (Family centre is a co-location of maternal health care, child health care, open preschool and social services with preventive activities) The National Board of Health and Welfare shall particularly contribute to support in areas where there is great exclusion and where the benefits of the preventive, health-promoting and trust-building work that takes place at family centres are urgent.

- According to the Swedish Parental Code, a child has a right not to be subjected to violence, abuse, or other abusive treatment. The child's best interest is the decisive consideration for the court, when deciding on custody, residence, or contact. When determining what is in the child's best interest, particular attention shall be paid to the risk of harm to the child or another family member.
- The Inquiry Regarding the Importance of Security and Continuity for Children in Vulnerable Situations presented its report More secure homes for children (*Tryggare hem för barn*, SOU 2022:71), in 2023. The remit for the inquiry included how protection of children can be strengthened concerning contact with a parent who has committed violent actions or other serious violations. The Inquiry proposes, inter alia a new wording of the section on the best interests of the child in the Parental Code, specifically stating that the assessment of the best interests of the child is a holistic assessment. In order to further clarify the focus on the risk of harm to the child and the importance of the risk assessment, the inquiry proposes that it shall be explicitly stated in the section that the risk of harm to the child must be part of that assessment. The proposals presented in the report are currently being processed in the Government Offices and the plan is to submit a government bill to the parliament in September 2024.
- In 2021, a new offence – violation of a child's integrity – was introduced in the Swedish Criminal Code. Violation of a child's integrity means that it is a punishable offence to expose a child to witnessing certain criminal acts, such as violence and sexual offences in a domestic context.

**Promoting positive gender-equitable attitudes, beliefs, values and norms, especially among men and boys and raising public awareness to change attitudes and behaviours**

- In 2022, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency was commissioned by the Government to translate and adapt to the Swedish context, two evidence-based prevention programmes, Safe Dates and Dating Matters (A2022/01653). The assignment is to be finalised by 1 October 2025 and follows the priorities identified in Sweden's ten-

year national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women.

- The Swedish Crime Victim Authority has been tasked by the Government to produce a web-based training and an accompanying teacher's guide on the legislation on sexual offences. The task was given in 2018 and in 2022 the authority was tasked to continue disseminating information. The assignment includes to produce and disseminate information about the legislation to other relevant target groups. Target groups were mainly young people aged 13–25 and adults who meet young people in their everyday lives within, inter alia, schools, civil society organisations, the judiciary, social services, and healthcare. Within the scope of the assignment, the authority has produced a web-based training and teacher's guide on the legislation for teachers. Also, parents have received a leaflet with information about the legislation and how to talk to their children about the issue.
- In 2021, the Swedish Crime Victim Authority conducted an awareness raising campaign on online hate speech and democratic participation which reached some three million people in accordance with an assignment from the Swedish Government (Ju2021/03329). Informed by needs assessments, the campaign both aimed to raise awareness to counter online hate speech in the democratic debate, and to inform individuals exposed to hate speech where they can turn to for information and assistance.
- In 2022, the Government tasked the Swedish Crime Victim Authority to carry out targeted information efforts for people in particularly vulnerable situations, such as children and young people and people exposed to honour-based violence and oppression. The authority is tasked to collect information and experience from the National Centre against Honour-based Violence and Oppression when planning the information efforts.
- In 2021, a provision was introduced in the Social Services Act (2001:453) stating that the social welfare board's tasks include working to ensure that people that have subjected relatives to violence or other abuse change their behaviour.



**Promoting gender-egalitarian values in primary and secondary education, including through comprehensive sexuality education**

- The Swedish Government has over the past five years taken a range of measures to prevent violence, one area of action is schools.
- The Swedish national curriculum defines goals and guidelines based on fundamental values, including gender equality and the prevention of degrading treatment and harassment. Schools have an important role to play in helping to create a culture of consent, where sex is based on mutual consent and sexual harassment is not normalised.
- Curricula have been amended in 2021 to include reinforced wording on sexuality, consent and relationships and honour-based violence and oppression. The reinforced wording emphasises that teaching in this area must be recurrent and contribute to promoting pupils' health and well-being, and also strengthen their ability to make informed and independent choices. The amendments came into effect in autumn 2022.
- The National Agency for Education supports providers of compulsory and upper-secondary education by offering material and professional development in the area of equal treatment and non-discrimination. Starting at the level of pre-school, efforts are made to counteract gender stereotypes and gender roles that limit girls and boys in exploring their abilities.
- Between 2021–2025, the National Agency for Education is commissioned by the Government to raise the awareness and capacity of school and preschool personnel on detecting and preventing honour-based violence and oppression (U2021/04517, U2021/04946). This includes child marriage, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Funding has varied over the years, but for 2024, the Government has allocated 5 million SEK for this task.
- Between 2024 and 2026, National Agency for Education is also commissioned by the Swedish Government to prevent, detect, and take active measures against men's violence against women, including violence in young person's relationships. The National Agency for Education is to suggest a systematic structure in order for schools to

make the work long term and sustainable. For this task, the Government has allocated 2 million SEK yearly.

- In addition, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate has been commissioned to review the schools' preventive work on honour-based violence and other forms of violence and oppression (U2023/02766). The Government has allocated 12 million in total for the task 2023–2025.
- In 2023, the Government has decided on a Commission of Inquiry on How to improve the Education of Early Childhood and Primary School Teaching in which a special focus is violence and sexual abuse against children (U 2023:03, ToR 2023:11).

18. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to prevent and respond to technology-facilitated gender-based violence (e.g. online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?

The Swedish Government has made significant investments in addressing technology-facilitated gender-based violence. These initiatives aim to understand and prevent this issue. This is made through data collecting, strengthening current laws, and facilitating government actors work with combating this issue.

**Collected data to better understand the magnitude of technology-facilitated violence, drivers and consequences**

The Swedish Defence Research Agency has carried out a study on “Hate and threats against women in Swedish digital environments”. The professional groups the Agency has studied are journalists, politicians, influencers, comedians and musicians. Of the women included in the survey, 55 percent were subjected to hatred, while the corresponding figure for men was 41 percent. The study also shows that the group where the largest proportion of people are exposed to hate is female journalists, where 67 percent of the people are exposed to hate, followed by female influencers at 63 percent. Women are subjected to more sexual harassment and appearance-related insults compared to men. In addition, the hatred to which women are subjected contains more graphic insults and descriptions than the hatred directed at men. Men are more likely to be exposed to hate comments related to professional practice and performance. Men were also more exposed to the category that includes everything from slander, nasty rumours, insults and the like, i.e. unclassified hatred. The study will be used as a knowledge base to form further tasks to authorities on the issue.

**Implemented awareness raising initiatives targeting the general public and education settings to sensitize young people, caregivers and educators to ethical and responsible online behaviour**

The Media Institute Fojo, through Linnaeus University, has been commissioned by the Government to strengthen the preventive work against hatred and threats against journalists, with a particular focus on reaching smaller editorial offices and freelancers. They arrange workshops, lectures, and training courses, both within the framework of journalistic education and also to educate special investigators of democracy and hate crimes at the Police Academy. Fojo also provides a digital knowledge bank with information and tools for journalists and editors and has organised

opportunities for experience and knowledge sharing and provided support and advice for exposed journalists and newsroom editors.

The Government has commissioned the Swedish Crime Victim Authority to carry out information efforts about the internet as a crime scene as well as the scope and mechanisms of online expressions of hate. The assignment also includes efforts to prevent violence in young people's intimate partner relationships and reduce the vulnerability to sexual exploitation in digital environments. The Crime Victim Authority will report the assignment to the Swedish Government 5 June 2026.

**Strengthen the capacity of government actors for the development of policy and legislation, and their enforcement and implementation**

During the past five years, the capacity of the Swedish Police to investigate cybercrime such as gender-based crimes, including unlawful threats against public persons, has developed considerably. In addition to the Cybercrime Centre, the SC3, at the national level, regional cybercrime centres (RC3) have been established. The powers to access evidence has been developed, for instance by revisions of the Electronic Communications Act in 2019, and the cooperation with major tech companies has increased in volume and intensity over the past decade.

An important legal development in the Member States of the European Union (EU) and at the level of the EU is the entry into force of the Digital Services Act (the DSA) in late 2022 and February 2024. The DSA lays down new obligations on the part of the service providers such as on notice and action mechanisms and on transparency reporting. Furthermore, the ongoing supervision of the European Commission of the systemic risks posed by the designated very large online platforms and search engines includes “any actual and foreseeable negative effects in relation to gender-based violence”.

In the letter of appropriation of 2023, the Government tasked the Police Authority to report on how the Authority as improved their work against online child sexual abuse. The Police Authority reported that they have introduced a national IT support system and that the police regions have organised their activities according to national guidelines, enabling better flows in the investigative processed, follow-up and quality control. The

Police Authority has also given higher priority to crime prevention related to CSA, for example by outreach activities online.

The Government has appointed an Inquiry on Protection, Support and Care for Victims of Abuses in the Production or Distribution of Pornography. The Inquiry presented its report in December 2023. Proposals targets those who have participated or have been exploited in any kind of pornography, including children and adults who are victims of non-consensual sharing of intimate images. The report is undergoing public consultation and is thereafter to be considered by the Government Offices.

### **Actions in international organisations**

Sweden has, since its launch in 2022, been a member of the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Violence Online Harassment and Abuse (GP). The GP gathers countries that together have committed to prioritize, understand, prevent, and address the growing scourge of technology-facilitated gender-based violence. It works with a multistakeholder Advisory Group composed of survivors, leaders, and experts from civil society, research and academia, the private sector, and international organizations. The GP focuses its work on three strategic objectives, based on shared commitments to advance national, regional, and multilateral policies; scale programming and resources; and strengthen the evidence base for preventing and responding to technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

The Swedish Presidency selected “the Digital Dimension of Gender-Based Violence” as the theme of the traditional EU ministerial breakfast organised in the margins of the annual meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women. Together with the European Commission, the Swedish Presidency also organised a High-Level Side Event on the theme “A gender equal world with technologies, digitalisation and artificial intelligence – what is our roadmap?” The event aimed to inform the preparation of a Global Digital Compact to be adopted at the Summit of the Future in September 2024. The event which filled the room to capacity (over 750 people) and involved key stakeholders for the development of the compact, underscored that it is crucial to ensure a strong and integrated gender dimension throughout the Global Digital Compact and addressed issues of gender-based violence as key to this debate. Furthermore, the Swedish EU Presidency organised a High-level Political Meeting on Gender Equality in Stockholm focused on

innovative and award-winning methods to prevent and combat gender-based violence as well as honour-based violence and oppression. Under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice, the Swedish Presidency organised conference on prevention models to address the demand that fosters trafficking for sexual purposes in March 2023.

### **Strengthened legislation**

In order to adapt the criminal law protection of personal integrity to technological and societal developments, a major reform was carried out in 2018–2019 to strengthen and modernise the legislation. Among other things, a new graded penal provision, *unlawful breach of privacy*, was introduced into the Criminal Code and the penal provisions on unlawful threats, molestation and defamation were clarified, modernised, and expanded in certain respects. Unlawful threats and defamation are also punishable as crimes against freedom of the press and freedom of expression; thus, corresponding amendments were made to the Freedom of the Press Act (part of the Constitution). In addition, the obligation on the provider of an electronic bulletin board to remove certain messages from the service was extended to also apply to messages whose content is clearly as referred to in the provisions on unlawful threats and unlawful breach of privacy. Finally, the right to criminal injuries compensation for violation was also extended to include compensation in the event of serious violation through gross defamation. (Stronger criminal law protection for personal integrity, Government Bill 2016/17:222). As a starting point, the Swedish criminal law is technology neutral. Thus, for example, harassment and threats, are punishable regardless of whether they are committed through physical or digital means. This also include sexual offences and it has for several years been possible to convict someone of rape committed remotely under certain circumstances. In order to further strengthen the protection against serious sexual offences committed from a distance, for example over the internet, the provisions on rape and sexual assault and similar offences against children were extended in August 2022.

In November 2023, the Government received an Inquiry report (Stronger criminal protection – against sexual abuse, fraud in some cases and gender-motivated hate crimes) SOU 2023:80 that, among other matters, reviewed the protection against sexual violations provided by criminal law. The inquiry has for example proposed a new ground for aggravating circumstances for hate crimes with regard to gender. In addition, it has suggested that the

punishable scope of purchase of sexual services and procuring should be extended so that also sexual services provided remotely are covered by criminal liability, without any requirement of physical contact between the persons involved or them even being in the same room. The inquiry report has been sent for consultation and the consultation comments are currently being analysed.

### **Strengthened media and information literacy**

The Swedish Agency for the Media, together with the children's rights organizations BRIS and ECPAT, runs Sweden's Safer Internet Centre 2023–2024, funded by the European Commission's DIGITAL programme. The Safer Internet Centers (SIC) work around Europe to increase children's safety online by providing knowledge and support to children and young people, guardians, and professionals. SIC Sweden consists of three parts:

1. A knowledge center run by the Swedish Agency for the Media, which produces reports and educational tools, collaborates with national and international actors, develops methods to increase children's participation and influence, and organizes events and campaigns.
2. A support line for children run by Bris. Via chat, email and telephone, children can receive information and support from BRIS counselors every day, around the clock. In Sweden, the EU's harmonized telephone number for children's helplines, 116 111, goes to Bris. Adults who have questions or concerns can contact the support line for adults.
3. A reporting function (hotline) run by the children's rights organization ECPAT. They have a web-based hotline where the public can report all forms of suspected sexual exploitation or abuse of children (e.g. documented sexual abuse of children, grooming, sexual abuse of children in connection with tourism or travel, trafficking of children for sexual purposes).

The Swedish Agency for the Media works on behalf of the government to strengthen children and young people as conscious media users, to be able to handle source criticism and know their rights online. They are also tasked with strengthening collaboration for MIL in Sweden, which includes the MIL Sweden Network that currently includes 24 authorities and organizations. The purpose of the network is to use collaboration to develop knowledge, strengthen quality and streamline work in the field of MIL – and thereby strengthen the media and information literacy of all citizens.

**19. In the past five years, what measures has Sweden taken to resource women's organizations working to prevent and respond to GBV?**

The Swedish Government has addressed and invested to resource women's organisations working to prevent GBV. This is made through for example allocation of resources and newly adapted ordinances. Below is a summary of the government's investments regarding measures taken to resource women's organizations working to prevent and respond to GBV.

As of 2022, 150 million SEK were permanently allocated for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Empowerment Centres, their national organisations and other organisations that work with similar support for victims of violence (ordinance 2022:257). It should here be noted that these funds are to support activities of the organisations running the shelters and centres but are not meant to fund the actual shelter running costs as this responsibility by law falls on the municipalities. The Government has the possibility to increase this level of funding and occasionally does so. In 2023, an additional sum of 50 million was allocated to complement the funding available for women's and girls' shelters to apply for. The Gender Equality Agency, which is distributing funds in accordance with the ordinance, has reported that the organisations have used the funds mainly to provide individual or group counselling and counselling. Several organisations have also worked to disseminate information about their activities, which is an important effort to reach out to the target group. It also makes knowledge about violence and violence prevention available to different actors who encounter victims of violence.

In 2022, a new ordinance on government grants for certain types of violence prevention measures (2022:722) was introduced, administered by the Gender Equality Agency and available to civil society organisations, municipalities, and regions. The aim of the ordinance is to strengthen, develop and evaluate violence prevention measures concerning men's violence against women, violence in intimate partner relationships, sexual violence, honour-based violence and oppression as well as prostitution and trafficking for sexual purposes. It also aims to further the development of evidence-based measures. While the ordinance is permanent, the allocated budget from the budget on special gender equality measures is determined on a bi-annual basis. So far it has been close to 43 million SEK for 2023–2024.



As a temporary measure to enable meeting the anticipated minimum standards on shelters which the Health and Social Care Inspectorate (IVO) will require to issue licenses in accordance with the new law on shelters for victims of violence (for information on the law, see question 16), the Government has allocated additional funds for government grants which shelters can apply for. On an exceptional basis, these funds are allowed to be used for the direct running costs of the shelters to, for example, undertake security improvements. In 2022 and 2023, 50 million SEK a year was granted for this temporary measure and for in 2024, 20 million SEK has been proposed. The temporary grant has so far been used to strengthen the staff's skills and employ staff with required skills, to strengthen the organisation's ability to comply with and apply current regulations in the work with systematic quality work, other kinds of quality development and for adapting premises, both for security reasons and for the premises to be better suited for children.

20. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media, including social media?

The Swedish Government is unable to directly or indirectly influence editorial material in the media due to provisions in the Swedish fundamental laws protecting freedom of the press and freedom of expression. Any initiative by the Government regarding questions about how a group is portrayed in the media could be perceived as a restriction of the freedom of the media. For this reason, the Government has refrained from regulation or other governance in such a direction in this area.

The information and media landscape is more complex and multifaceted than ever before. For many people, it has become almost impossible to assess the source of information, to sort through sources and messages, and to know who to trust. To meet this development, knowledge about source criticism and source trust needs to increase.

The Swedish Agency for the Media works on behalf of the government to strengthen children and young people as conscious media users, to be able to handle source criticism and know their rights online. They are also tasked with strengthening collaboration for media and information literacy (MIL) in Sweden, which includes the MIL Sweden Network that currently includes 24 authorities and organizations. The purpose of the network is to use collaboration to develop knowledge, strengthen quality and streamline work in the field of MIL - and thereby strengthen the media and information literacy of all citizens.

The Government has recently commissioned the Swedish Agency for the Media to strengthen MIL in an era of artificial intelligence and disinformation. The initiative will help to increase the basic ability to understand and evaluate different types of information, as well as trust in credible sources. The assignment requires knowledge from, and cooperation with, several stakeholders and the authority will therefore cooperate with the authorities and organizations within the MIL Sweden network when carrying out the commission.

The Swedish Agency for the Media, together with the children's rights organizations BRIS and ECPAT, runs Sweden's Safer Internet Centre 2023-2024, funded by the European Commission's DIGITAL programme. The

Safer Internet Centers work around Europe to increase children's safety online by providing knowledge and support to children and young people, guardians and professionals. (See also question 18.)

21. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken specifically tailored to address violence against marginalized groups of women and girls?

Measures and work in the field of the sixth-sub goal of the gender equality policy are extensive and are continuously evolving based on assessments and evaluations of policy and measures. In addition to a range of new legislation, recent years have also seen a number of commissions to public authorities to strengthen the intersectional knowledge and approaches to both preventing and combating men's violence against women and domestic violence, inter alia, commissions with a focus on young persons, children, elderly, persons with disabilities, LGBTQI-persons and men as well as victims of honour-based violence and oppression. Some examples are presented in this section.

### **Indigenous women**

In 2019, the Government commissioned the Sami Parliament to map out and analyse Sami society from a gender equality perspective (KU2019/00469/CSM, KU2019/01249/CSM). In its report presented in 2021 (Dnr. 1.3.8-2019-821, Ku2021/01191), the Sami Parliament suggested new measures to increase gender equality in the Sami community, preventive work, and increased research on gender equality and to combat and prevent violence against Sami women and girls. One of the proposed measures in the study was to establish a support structure for Sami women and girls who are victims of violence and to identify gaps in the support and protection provided by authorities and women's shelters. During 2021–2024 the Government has commissioned the Sami Parliament to promote gender equality in the Sami society and to prevent and combat men's violence against Sami women and girls (Ku2020/00767 Ku2021/01191 Ku2021/02210). The Government has allocated 1,8 million SEK annually for this measure.

Commissioned by the Government, the Sami Parliament and the Stockholm County Administrative Board share the responsibility for the follow-up of the implementation of the Act on National Minorities and Minority Languages (2009:724) which includes to assist other administrative authorities in the application of the Act through information, advice and similar activities. The Sami Parliament is responsible for follow-up of the Act when it comes to the Sami people and the Sami languages, and the Stockholm County Administrative Board is responsible for the follow-up of

the Act when it comes to the Jews, Roma, Swedish Finns and Tornedalians and their respective minority language.

In March 2024, the Government commissioned the Gender Equality Agency to give a status report on men's violence against women, other forms of domestic violence, honour-based violence and oppression of children and adults belonging to the national minorities in Sweden. As part of the assignment the Gender Equality Agency is to promote measures to combat the abovementioned forms of violence. It shall furthermore focus on the exposure of the national minorities to honour-based violence and the exposure to violence of lgbtqi-people belonging to the national minorities. The assignment is to be carried out in close dialogue with representatives of the national minorities. The Gender Equality Agency shall report the results to the Government on 31 March 2027. The Government has allocated 2 million SEK for this measure in 2024.

#### **Women with disabilities**

In October 2021, the Swedish Agency for Participation was commissioned to compile knowledge about the exposure to violence among persons with disabilities and identifying knowledge gaps (A2021/02052). In particular, the Agency was to consider knowledge of exposure to honour-based violence and oppression. The assignment included carrying out a survey of the measures taken to prevent and detect violence in the target group including on the knowledge about violence against persons with disabilities by employees who interact with persons with disabilities that have been or might have been subjected to violence, and how this knowledge is disseminated and utilised in relevant activities. It also included proposing measures that can be taken at national, regional, or local level. The results of the assignments were presented in 2023 and the Agency for Participation has carried out many different dissemination and communication efforts to change mentalities and attitudes as well as raise awareness of the heightened exposure to violence of the target group. The Government allocated in total 3,5 million SEK for this measure.

In 2023, the Swedish Agency for Participation was tasked with developing methodological support for government agencies and municipalities for their systematic work to prevent, detect and draw attention to exposure to violence and the perpetration of violence among people with disabilities. The assignment covered all types of violence included in the national strategy to

prevent and combat men's violence against women. The Government allocated 300 000 SEK for this measure.

In June 2023, the Agency for Participation was commissioned by the Government to chart and develop support material on violence against children and young persons with disabilities. In addition, the Agency will do in-depth charting of honour-based violence and oppression against persons with disabilities. The Agency will identify the target group's particular vulnerability, conditions and needs (S2023/02178). The task will be reported in 2025. The Government has allocated 2 million SEK annually, 2023 and 2024, for this measure.

**People with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions, or sex characteristics**

In 2023, the Government commissioned the Gender Equality Agency in cooperation with the National Board of Health and Welfare, the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women at Uppsala University and the Public Health Agency of Sweden to map violence and the risk of violence in close relationships against LGBTIQ-persons. The commission includes to propose measures targeting relevant professionals (A2023/01065). The Government has plans to allocate in total 7,3 million SEK for this measure.

The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society have been tasked to develop and disseminate information initiatives and knowledge support in order to prevent young LGBTIQI people from being exploited for sexual or pornographic purposes, subjected to sexual violence, abuse or violations both digitally and physically. The assignment shall be reported no later than 31 March 2027. The Government has so far, for 2024, allocated 2 million SEK for this measure.

**22. In the past five years, what actions and measures has Sweden taken to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?**

Sweden is among the countries in the world that have the highest turnout in general elections and a slightly larger proportion of women than men choose to exercise their right to vote. Women and men participate to about the same extent in democracy between elections, both in terms of acting in different ways to advance their views on various societal issues and in terms of membership and activities in civil society organizations, including the political parties.

The Government continued its work to strengthen democracy based on the challenges identified within the framework of the Government's democracy strategy. In 2020 and 2021, the Government implemented a national democracy initiative aiming at strengthening the conditions for groups in society who are less able to put forward their views and participate in decision-making processes, such as young people, foreign-born people, people with disabilities and people living in areas with socio-economic challenges.

Within the national democracy initiative, e.g. The Gender Equality Agency has been commissioned to carry out a study on the conditions for women and men in areas with socio-economic challenges to participate in democratic processes locally. The Swedish Participation Authority has also been commissioned to implement initiatives that increase knowledge of how the conditions for people with disabilities to participate in democratic processes have changed during the 20th century until today.

Women and men in Sweden are relatively proportionally represented in political assemblies. An exception is the municipalities where women are underrepresented by seven percentage points. There is also an underrepresentation of women among the municipal board chairmen and among members of the municipal boards. The responsibility for a gender-equal representation in the country's political assemblies lies primarily with the political parties and the government should keep an arm's length distance from the parties' internal processes.

In the run-up to general elections, the government regularly implement initiatives to increase awareness of voting rights and to increase the turnout. Efforts are particularly directed at groups of voters with comparatively low

turnout in previous elections, such as young people, foreign-born people, people with disabilities and people living in areas with socio-economic challenges. The Government intends to implement efforts for a high and equal turnout also in the run-up to the general elections in 2022. The initiative for a high turnout in 2022 includes e.g. a new assignment for the Swedish Agency for Accessible Media to run the website 'All voters' with easy-to-read news information particularly aiming at reaching persons with disabilities and foreign born people.

In 2017–2021, the Government implemented several initiatives to prevent and to deal with threats and hatred in the democratic discourse, based on a special action plan. The work within the framework of the action plan continues, e.g. in September 2021, the Swedish Crime Victim Authority was tasked a renewed assignment to carry out an information campaign against cyber-hatred.

Overall, a slightly larger proportion of female than male elected representatives state that they were exposed to harassment, threats or violence (32 and 30 per cent, respectively). Female representatives are to a somewhat greater extent subjected to harassment with sexist elements. This was shown by the 2019 survey of politicians' safety carried out by the National Council for Crime Prevention on behalf of the Government. The results from the survey on politicians' safety conducted in 2020 was presented in November 2021.

Some examples of measures given to government agencies include:

- The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has an assignment to carry out an in-depth study between 2022-2024 on participation and participation in local democracy as well as carrying out activities for the dissemination of knowledge and the exchange of experience. The activities are directed at individual municipalities and local civil society. The assignment is carried out on the basis of a preliminary study that was conducted by the Agency in 2021. The total budget is 8 million SEK. The first report shows that many residents in municipalities are active in associations and that there are differences based on gender, age and educational background, different spheres of interest for women and men and to some extent a gendered organization and social and local commitment.



- In 2021 the Government assigned the Sami Parliament to work with measures aimed at promoting gender equality in the Sami society including the prevention and combatting of men's violence against Sami women and girls. When carrying out the assignment, the Sami Parliament shall use the Sami Parliament's mapping of gender equality in Sami society (Ku2021/01191) and promote an even gender distribution between women and men in terms of representation in reindeer husbandry, Sami civil society organizations and within the Sami Parliament. The assignment ends in 2024 and the budget is 5,4 million SEK in total. [Uppdrag till Sametinget avseende jämställdhet samt mäns våld mot samiska kvinnor och flickor - Regeringen.se](#)

- The Government decided on a new ordinance on state grants for women's and girls' organisation on March 30, 2023 <https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-och-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/forordning-2023168-om-statsbidrag-for-kvinnors-sfs-2023-168/>. The purpose of the state grant is to support women and girls in their own associations, promote their participation in democratic processes and in community life, and enable women and girls to protect their rights and pursue their demands. The new ordinance provides improved conditions for women and girls' organization in areas with socio-economic challenges. The budget for the new ordinance is 48 million SEK per year which is an increase with 20 million SEK. State grants to women's organizations have existed in various forms since the early 1980s. The results show that many of the associations assess that the state grant to a very high extent has been crucial for their opportunities to participate in the democratic process and in community life and to support women's organization in their own associations. [Kvinnors organisering 2023 \(jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se\)](#)

- The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) has since 2016 been granted funds from the government for initiatives to support and develop systematic work to prevent and deal with threats and hatred against elected officials among municipalities and regions. The budget for the assignment has been 2 million SEK per year. Results from the project shows that awareness of the vulnerability of elected representatives to threats and hatred has increased, and the issue is now on the agenda in more and more of the country's municipalities and regions. Many municipalities and regions have today developed routines to give advice and

support to elected representatives who are affected, but that the systemic implementation of the preventive work is still at a lower level. [Hot och hat mot förtroendevalda \(skr.se\)](#),

23. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to increase women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?

The Swedish Government is unable to directly or indirectly influence editorial material in the media due to provisions in the Swedish fundamental laws protecting freedom of the press and freedom of expression. Any initiative by the government regarding questions about how a group is portrayed in the media could be perceived as a restriction of the freedom of the media. For this reason, the government has refrained from regulation or other governance in such a direction in this area.

According to the Swedish Radio and Television Act, all providers of audiovisual media services and providers of public service radio broadcasts must however ensure that their overall programme operation is characterised by the fundamental ideas of democracy, the principle of equal value of all people and the freedom and dignity of the individual. Since 1 December 2020 the same applies for public service radio on demand.

Public service broadcasters specifically must also – according to their broadcasting licences for the period 1 January 2020–31 December 2025 – ensure that their overall programme operation is conducted from an equality and diversity perspective (the same requirement was included in the broadcasting licences for the period 1 January 2014–31 December 2019). This additional requirement is placed on the public service broadcasters due to their unique position, allowing them to have a greater opportunity than other media companies to influence attitudes and events in society. It is therefore considered only natural that higher demands are placed on their program activities and operations. The offering of programmes must furthermore reflect the conditions throughout the country as a whole and the variation that exists in the population. Public service broadcasters must also comply with conditions of impartiality.

In addition to the above, the Swedish Media Subsidies rules were replaced with a new aid scheme on 1 January 2024. The general news media will now have to meet a set of requirements, including a new democracy criterion allowing only general news media whose publishing activities substantially act in accordance with the foundations of democratic governance and are

not substantially in conflict with the equal value of all people and the freedom, dignity, and personal integrity of the individual to receive aid.

The Swedish Government's digital policy concerns utilising and promoting the opportunities offered by digitalisation, and includes regulation of digital and electronic communications, network and information security frequency policy and issues concerning broadband access and digital infrastructure. This policy area also covers eGovernment issues, i.e. using digital policy to make the activities of government agencies more efficient and simplify the general public's contacts with them – for example through electronic identification, electronic signatures and open data. [Digital policy - Government.se](#) In the vision it is stated that “The user must similarly be confident that the connection works for the broadband services for which it is used. It contributes to a democratic, equal and egalitarian society equipped for the future.”

In the budget bill for 2024, the Swedish Government proposed several different investments in education and research that will strengthen meet the great skills needs, including an expansion of civil engineering education and an increase in compensation amounts for education in science and technology. This includes strengthening the mathematics subject in school and efforts promoting children's and students' interest in technology and science are needed to get more women to start a STEM education. By the end of 2024, the Government intends to present a STEM strategy that spans the entire education system from pre-school to postgraduate education. A particular focus of the strategy will be to increase the number of girls and women studying in the STEM fields.

24. Please describe Sweden's current national women's machinery (government entity exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women) and describe the measures that Sweden has taken over the past five years to establish and/or strengthen it.

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency is the administrative authority (government agency) for issues relating to gender equality policy in Sweden. The agency shall work with follow-up, analysis, coordination, knowledge and support in order to achieve the gender equality policy goals, and also contribute to a strategic, coherent and sustainable governance and an effective implementation of the gender equality policy. The agency shall continuously assist the government in gender equality policy issues.

During the last six years, since the establishment of the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, it has grown from just over 50 employees to about 120, and the number of government assignments have more than doubled.

The agency has an appropriation of around SEK 73–75 million SEK per year. In addition, many of the agency's assignments are financed through time-limited special assignments which amount to around 80 million SEK per year.

In 2021, the agency implemented a new organisational structure to ensure effective leadership and to be able to better strive towards the agency's mission and meet current and future challenges. The Gender Equality Agency has developed their digitalisation and data and statistics capacity. For instance, a policy for secure data management has been developed.

Each year, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency analyses and reports the results of measures taken by relevant authorities and other actors during the previous year, with regards to the Swedish gender equality policy goals. Every second year, the report includes an in-dept follow up of the policy goal Men's violence against women must end.

The Agency cooperates with many government agencies and actors at national, regional, and local levels. In their work with implementing the Government's national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women, the Agency cooperates on a regular basis with the county administrative boards in order to better reach the regions. In this work, the Agency also cooperates with the National Board of Health and Welfare, the Swedish Police Authority, the Swedish Prosecution Authority, the National

Council for Crime Prevention, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women at Uppsala University, *Barnafriad* at Linköping University and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. Since 2021, the Gender Equality Agency manages a council consisting of the director generals of all the agencies involved in the work to implement the Government's national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women.

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has established a scientific council, consisting of seven researchers from different academic disciplines. The council contributes to quality assurance and scientific anchoring in the agency's activities. Through knowledge and experience of current research, the council members contribute with research-based perspectives on the agency's activities and development.

The county administrative boards, with their regional gender equality responsibilities, and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions are central cooperation partners of the Agency. Other authorities, as well as civil society and the private sector, are needed in the work to increase the impact of gender equality policies. One of the Agency's aims is to create useful platforms for meetings and transfer of knowledge between different parts of society.

Some examples of collaborations between the Swedish Gender Equality Agency and other actors include:

- An assignment on economic gender equality within the housing market including a follow-up and analysis of distribution between women and men in regards to ownership and value of properties including dissemination of information to decrease economic in-equality. The Agency shall cooperate with the Tax Agency, The Land Survey and Statistics Sweden. The assignment was allocated in December 2023 and will be reported on December 11, 2024, and 31 May 2025.
- An essay competition for students at Swedish universities and university colleges, launched in 2021. The essays should contribute with knowledge on gender equality and be relevant to the perspectives and aims of Sweden's gender equality policies.
- Within the Agency's: work to prevent men's violence against women, a campaign aimed at managers and information material aimed at

employers has been produced and disseminated to highlight violence as part of the work environment.

25. In the past five years, what other mechanisms and tools has Sweden used to mainstream gender equality across sectors? (e.g. gender focal points in the Executive, Legislature or Judiciary; inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms; gender audits, consultations with women's organizations)

The Swedish Government Offices uses the Council of Europe's definition of gender mainstreaming "The (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making."

To ensure full and effective implementation of the Swedish gender equality policy, all ministers are responsible for promoting a gender equality perspective in decisions and actions in their respective policy area. The Minister for Gender Equality and Working Life is responsible for the overall coordination, development, and follow-up of gender mainstreaming and the gender equality policy goals. Yet, the everyday practical implementation is managed at the level of Heads of Division and civil servants in all line-ministries. Gender mainstreaming actions are guided by the strategy on gender mainstreaming in the government offices (see question 33) and the objectives set out in the policy on gender equality as well as policy specific objectives (see question 1) that have been formulated based on the gender needs assessment of each Ministry.

The Division for Gender Equality, currently placed in the Ministry of Employment, is the leading service on the development of the gender equality policy, in accordance with the Government's priorities, and is providing support and follow-up on gender mainstreaming across line-ministries. The Division for Gender Equality is coordinating an intra-ministerial working group on gender mainstreaming, called IDA/JÄM. This group consists of appointed gender mainstreaming coordinator representatives from each line-ministry. This group exchanges good practices, experiences, and lessons learned on how to improve the implementation and follow-up on gender mainstreaming within their respective ministry. Also, this intra-ministerial working group on gender mainstreaming is an arena for coordination of the gender mainstreaming work within the Government Offices. The Division for Gender equality also provides trainings, methods and tools on gender equality policy and gender



analysis. One of these tools are [BUDGe for Gender Equality - A Swedish tool for gender budgeting - Government.se](https://www.government.se/press-releases/2017/04/budgeting-for-gender-equality).

For more information on how gender equality policy is implemented by governmental agencies and at regional level see question 33.

The Minister for Gender Equality regularly invites civil society for consultations in order to learn from their expertise on how to address gender inequalities and accelerate the efforts to achieve the Swedish gender equality policy goals.

### **Success factors and lessons learned**

Lessons learned from, and success factors for successfully integrating a gender perspective across all policy areas include:

- strong political commitment,
- a strong civil society and women’s movement,
- longstanding policy goals,
- indicators, regular follow-ups,
- directives and formal decisions on gender mainstreaming (policy & operational level),
- organisational structure for coordination & support, and
- trainings & capacity building.

In addition, the process of joint preparation, including interservice consultations among line ministries in the Swedish Government Offices is an effective tool for mainstreaming gender equality across policy areas. When a government decision involves the areas of responsibility of several ministers, they must be prepared jointly with these ministries/services. Joint preparation takes place between line ministries at expert/civil servant level and, when necessary, at a political level. All ministers, the Minister for Gender Equality included, must agree on the decision before it is taken up at the government meeting, as the Government of Sweden decisions are collective, meaning that they must be unanimous among cabinet members. In practice this means that an item of business is circulated to all ministries for their views. This procedure is used for government bills, statutes, responses to written questions and terms of reference for committees. Circulation for comment / interservice consultations among line ministries involves a proposal being sent to ministers, state secretaries and other relevant Government Offices employees for review and comments. Usually

one week (5 working days) must be allocated for consultation and comments from other ministries/services. This implies that gender equality considerations raised by the Division for Gender Equality need to be either accepted by the lead Ministry or negotiated between the Division for Gender Equality and other units or ministries.

26. If there is a national human rights institution in Sweden, what measures has it taken to address violations of women's rights and promote gender equality?

The Swedish Institute for Human Rights is a Swedish national agency which was established in January 2022 in accordance with the Act on the Institute for Human Rights (2021:642).

According to the legislative act, the purpose of the Institute is, to promote the safeguarding of human rights in Sweden, based on the Swedish Instrument of Government, the Freedom of the Press Act, and the Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR), the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and other obligations in the field of human rights, which Sweden is bound by under public international law.

The Institute's tasks and responsibilities are to: monitor, investigate, and report on how human rights are respected and implemented in Sweden, present proposals to the Government on measures needed to ensure human rights; liaise with international organisations and engage in international cooperation in this field; and promote education, research, development of expertise, dissemination of information and consciousness raising in the field of human rights.

One of the responsibilities of the Institute is, as required of the States acceding to the Convention, to fulfil the role of an independent national mechanism as set out in Article 33 (2) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the Convention.

The Institute may propose to the Government of Sweden that Sweden's obligations under international law within the field of human rights should be expanded.

The Institute does not review complaints from individuals concerning violations of human rights.

Pursuant to the legislation establishing the Institute, one of the tasks of the Institute for Human Rights is to submit a report to the Government of

Sweden by 1 April each year on its activities and observations relating to developments in the field of human rights during the previous calendar year.

In its yearly report 2024, the Institute specifically addresses i.a. violence against women, and women's rights in working life.

An important task for the Institute is to respond to government consultations regarding reports and proposals. Since its establishment, the Institute has responded to several consultations related to women's rights.

27. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace, and security agenda?

Despite a deterioration with regards to the global situation, Swedish authorities have undertaken extensive efforts to promote women's participation in peace- and security work at international, regional, national, and local levels. Partners at a national level have strengthened their capacity to analyse the root causes of conflict and violence from a gender perspective, while Sweden has supported the UN, EU, OSCE, and NATO in institutionalizing a gender perspective at both strategic and operational levels.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) have supported partners in developing and implementing national and local action plans for Women, Peace, and Security (WPS), thus promoting women's participation and influence in peacebuilding and political processes. For example, the FBA has contributed to enhancing the conditions for Sudanese women's participation in political negotiations for the peace process in Sudan.

Sida's global support to UN Women in developing WPS National Action Plans (NAPs) remains crucial for promoting more inclusive and gender-equal peace and state-building processes with strong national ownership in countries such as Colombia, the DRC, and Somalia. Moreover, in collaboration with UN Women and responsible ministries, FBA has helped facilitate Somalia's adoption of its first NAP for WPS in 2022.

Since 2019, FBA and the Swedish Police Authority have been collaborating with the Somali police to ensure that both women's and men's security needs are considered in the planning of the national election. As part of this effort, the UN and FBA have developed a concept for Women's Situation Desks (WSDs) where women can report election-related security needs.

A key aspect of the authorities' contribution to the implementation of the women, peace, and security action plan is the deployment of personnel in the form of gender equality experts to international peacebuilding efforts.

According to the annual WPS-reports of Swedish authorities, the demand for gender equality expertise has continued to increase at both strategic and operational levels. The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency's secondments

of experts in gender equality and gender-related violence have gradually increased over the past two years, and FBA seconded 13 gender equality experts to the EU, OSCE, and UN in 2022 compared to 8 in 2021. Additionally, the Swedish Police Authority and the Swedish Armed Forces contribute by deploying uniformed personnel with this expertise. All authorities provide training to the seconded personnel before deployment in gender mainstreaming and on the UN's women, peace, and security agenda. This has contributed to the improvement of peacekeeping operations and receiving organizations' ability to integrate a gender perspective both internally and in their external activities. For instance, the Swedish Coast Guard ensures that all personnel deployed in international missions receive this training and understand how they can contribute to Sweden's WPS NAP. The training in 2022 was conducted with the support of the Swedish umbrella organization Operation 1325.

28. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings?

A broad effort is underway to institutionalize a gender perspective in all activities, both within Swedish authorities and within the international partner organizations of these authorities. Several authorities are actively working towards a more gender-balanced workforce both domestically and in secondments/foreign postings. The Swedish Prison and Probation Service reports that the agency seconded 58 percent women in 2022 to UN- and EU-led peace operations, which is an increase from previous years. Another significant contribution is the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida's) support to the UN's Rapid Response Window on Women's Participation in Peace Processes (RRW), which promotes women's participation in peace and negotiation processes in 18 countries through a system where international women and peace organizations distribute funds to female peacebuilders at the national level.

The Swedish Civil Contingency Agency (MSB) has implemented an action plan for gender balance in recruiting emergency response personnel. However, despite this development, the proportion of women in the resource base decreased slightly in 2022, from 36 to 34.7 percent. MSB also advocates for partners to integrate a gender perspective into their work on crisis prevention and management. An example is MSB's project Prevention, Preparedness, and Response to natural and man-made disasters in the Eastern Partnership Countries (PPRD East), which aims to strengthen Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine's ability to consider both men's and women's different needs in crises to and to enhance the resilience of the entire population. Another example is MSB's support to the Iraqi government's crisis coordination authority in integrating a gender perspective into risk and vulnerability assessments.

The Swedish Police Authority has long struggled to attract women to foreign assignments and has therefore continuously worked to improve the authority's advertising. In 2022, the proportion of women in the Swedish Police Authority's foreign deployments was in parity with the overall proportion of women in the police force, which has been a goal in the government's strategy for international civilian crisis management and

peacebuilding 2020–2023. The Swedish Armed Forces are working on inclusive communication and collaborating with Voluntary Defence Organizations (VDOs) to increase women's participation in defence activities. The Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations (NCGM) enhances knowledge about women's participation in peace processes, peacebuilding, and state-building, especially within NATO.



29. In the last five years, what actions has Sweden taken to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?

In light of the growing number of conflicts worldwide, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Swedish Civil Contingency Agency (MSB), and the Swedish Police Authority, as well as the Swedish National Courts Administration, have increasingly focused on preventing, managing, and investigating conflict-related violence against women. This support has included the development of physical and institutional protection mechanisms against sexual and gender-based violence, as well as measures to combat impunity for these types of abuses.

Sida works broadly to strengthen protection for women and girls from all forms of violence during and after armed conflict. Such efforts aim to combat impunity, develop new legislation, and create a more comprehensive institutional safety net. For example, support to UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has contributed to normative and institutional changes as well as improved access to services and legal aid for affected women in several countries including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, the DRC, Iraq, Liberia, Palestine, Somalia, and Ukraine.

Another type of intervention has contributed to investigating and documenting conflict-related sexual violence against women and children. In June 2022, through support from Sida, the organization MADRE and their local partner Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq (OWFI) documented a total of 477 cases of abuse against women and girls in Syria since 2014. In Ukraine, Sida has, through UNFPA, established a number of crisis centres for individuals who have been subjected to gender-based violence, and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sida's partners in the legal sector are working to support survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

Three gender equality advisors seconded by the MSB to the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) in 2022 have contributed to establishing an internal and external reporting mechanism for sexual harassment and exploitation. Another important contribution is Sida's support for the protection of female human rights defenders in countries such as Palestine, Afghanistan, Colombia, and Liberia.

The Swedish Police Authority contributed in 2022 to strengthening the protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict contexts both through its foreign deployment in the DRC, Somalia, and South Sudan and through international development cooperation. The Swedish Police Authority's work aims to improve the mapping and follow-up of incidents, assistance to victims, and support to local partners working preventively against impunity. In Colombia and Somalia (Puntland), the Swedish Police Authority and the Folke Bernadotte Academy have contributed to developing the local police's capacity to prevent and investigate crimes in close relationships.

30. In the last five years, what actions has Sweden taken to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child, including adolescent girls?

**The Swedish government's policy on the rights of the child**

The goal of the child rights policy is that children and young people must be respected and given opportunities for development and security, and for participation and influence. This is based i.a. on Sweden's obligations due to its ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and aims to promote and protect children's rights and interests within society. The goal means that all children – regardless of factors such as age, gender, origin and disability – shall have their rights met. The overall purpose of the Government's policy on the rights of the child is to ensure that the CRC is implemented equally throughout the country and address disparities in the implementation and provide support to children who are particularly vulnerable. The majority of actions initiated by the Government in the field of children's rights seek to protect and promote the rights of all children and young people irrespective of their gender. The rights of girls are not specifically mentioned in all actions, although girls are naturally encompassed by them, and in relevant contexts, agencies and other actors are encouraged to observe a gender perspective when designing actions.

On 1 January 2020, Sweden took an important step towards strengthening the promotion and protection of the rights of the child by incorporating the Convention into Swedish legislation. The incorporation of the CRC into Swedish law is one of the Government's key actions to ensure an equal access without discrimination of the law. This reform has already contributed to raised awareness of the rights of the child throughout the public sector and has put greater emphasis on the Convention in both policymaking and in practice. In addition, the Swedish National Institute for Human Rights was established on 1 January 2022, further strengthening our capacity to safeguard human rights.

The Government has taken several initiatives to improve the implementation of the CRC at national, regional, and local levels. For example, the Government has commissioned the Ombudsman for Children and the County Administrative Boards to provide support to authorities and municipalities on implementation and integration of the CRC and on how to carry out assessments in the best interest of the child. Also, the Government

has developed a guidance aimed to support law enforcement professionals and decision makers about how the CRC could be interpreted and applied.

In 2023 the Swedish Agency for Public Management reported on the assignment to carry out an analysis and follow-up of the assignments to strengthen the rights of the child in government agencies, regions and municipalities. The report indicates that the assignments have been successful in some respects but there is still a need for support and especially from municipalities and regions.

Furthermore, the Swedish National Audit Office reported an audit of the State's efforts to strengthen compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the child rights perspective. The audit was presented in March 2024 and is currently being analysed by the Government Offices.

To ensure that the expertise and experience of civil society is taken into consideration, Sweden established a Child Rights Delegation composed of civil society organisations in 2016. Together with the previously established Disability Delegation representing the disability movement, the Child Rights Delegations plays a central role in ensuring the realisation of all children's rights.

In order for children to assert their rights, they must be aware of them in the first place. The Government has initiated a number of measures aimed at increasing children's and young people's awareness of their rights and how they should act to assert their rights.

In August 2023, the Inquiry on children's opportunities to claim their rights submitted its report to the Government (SOU 2023:40). The report contains proposals that Sweden should ratify the third optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on a complaints mechanism, a number of proposals that strengthen children's procedural opportunities to complain and claim their rights under the CRC in the Swedish legal and administrative system, and that the State should contribute to the establishment of independent child advocacy in civil society organisations. The report is currently being analysed by the Government Offices

The Ombudsman for Children has been tasked with producing initiatives for children and young people on their rights under the CRC and what they

mean in practice, both in schools and in other areas. The work has resulted in the website [minarattigheter.se](http://minarattigheter.se) ('my rights').

MUCF runs the website [youmo.se](http://youmo.se) [Språkvalsida - Youmo](#) with information about bodies, sexuality, health and relationships for 13–20-year-olds in different languages. All the content is in simple Swedish and in Arabic, Dari, Somali and Tigrinya. The background to this is that many young newly arrived immigrants lack knowledge of where they can find information about health, sex, gender equality, relationships and the rights they have in Sweden.

Statistics Sweden (SCB) has collected data disaggregated by sex on the living conditions of children 12–18 since 2001. The [Living Conditions Survey of Children \(scb.se\)](#) is a survey to describe everyday experiences of young people. In the survey we ask questions about school, what they do in their spare time, about their well-being and relations. The survey targets about 30 000 randomly chosen children in Sweden. The survey has been conducted since 2001 and is one of few surveys where young people themselves can express their views.

### **Prevent and combat violence against children**

The Swedish Ombudsman for children (BO) published a report in 2021 which describes the work that Sweden has done in the last 50 years to combat violence against children.

In January 2023, the official report A childhood free from violence – A national strategy to prevent and combat violence against children (SOU 2022:70) was submitted to the Government. The report contains proposals for a national strategy to prevent and combat violence against children. The strategy covers all forms of violence to which children may be exposed, regardless of where or by whom the violence is inflicted. The strategy sets out an overall goal and five long-term objectives that indicate the focus for the work over the next ten years. In the report the investigator also proposes an organisation for the strategy's implementation, the development of knowledge in this area, and follow-up. Within the strategy's five long-term objectives, a number of horizontal priority areas are identified where the investigator assess that bringing about change is particularly urgent. Linked to these priority areas, the investigator provides 23 assessments and 59 proposals for measures that should be implemented in order to drive progress forward. All in all, the proposal of the strategy and its associated

action plan entail a powerful strengthening of work to prevent and combat violence against children in Sweden. The starting points for all the proposals in the report are the views that the investigation have received from children who have been victims of violence themselves, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The official report was sent out to a large number of referral bodies and the responses have been reviewed and the proposals are now being prepared, within the Government Offices.

The proposal for a ten-year National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Violence against Children (SOU 2022:70) contains measures aimed at increasing children's access to Children's Houses as well as managing these multi-agency entities at national level including through the development of a common quality standard.

A draft proposal for a ban on leaving the country for children who are at risk of being taken abroad to enter into marriage or – for girls – at risk of being subjected to female genital mutilation entered into force on the 1st of June 2020, such a ban has been introduced through a provision in the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act (1990:52). A new draft proposal for an extended ban to cover the risk of being subjected to all the conditions under which a child could have been considered for care according to the same act in Sweden is proposed to enter into force on the 1st of June 2024. In practice, this means that the proposal is matching the scope of application of the Istanbul Convention better than the current ban.

There is also a national strategy for combating and preventing Men's Violence against Women 2017–2026 which includes many forms of violence against children, and especially girls (roughly corresponding to the scope of application of the CoE Istanbul Convention). Domestic violence against children is also targeted by the integrated national strategy for alcohol, drugs, doping and tobacco and gambling 2022–2025.

### **Girls in SiS special residential youth homes**

In 2022 the Swedish Agency for Public Management released a report on the conditions in the special residential youth homes of the Swedish National Board of Institutional Care (SiS). The conclusions of the report were that there is still a lot to be done in order to guarantee children's rights in SiS-residential youth homes. Both The Parliamentary Ombudsmen (JO) and The Health and Social Care Inspectorate (IVO) have expressed serious criticism

towards the operations at SiS. Among other things, the criticism concerns the staff's use of coercive measures which lack support in law and that the staff use more force than is justifiable and proportional. The report also, among other things, states that there is a difference in quality between the care for girls and boys. According to the Swedish Agency for Public Management SiS-need to improve the care for girls - girls feel unsafe to a greater extent than boys, they are more often secluded and there are more reports of abuse that concern girls than boys at the residential youth homes. The Swedish Agency for Public Management concludes that although measures have been taken more has to be done and it must be done rapidly. For example, SiS must make sure that the staff has the right qualifications and knowledge. Reorganization of the special homes must be done in order to provide care more adapted to the target group.

In 2021 the Government tasked the Health and Social Care Inspectorate (IVO) to strengthen supervision and analysis of the residential homes that care for young girls in accordance with the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act (1990:52) (LVU) at the National Board of Institutional Care (SiS). IVO notes that children and young people, particularly young girls, are systematically and repeatedly subjected to coercive and restrictive measures without legal support. A large proportion of the young girls in these homes have various types of disabilities and they are also subjected to seclusion. The girls express that they rarely feel safe in the special residential youth homes.

SiS has taken several measures to improve its operations, including the introduction in 2022 of a basic training programme that all new employees must attend. The basic training is ten weeks long and will provide in-depth knowledge of, among other things, safety and security in care and treatment, professional approach, norm-critical thinking, psychiatry and neuropsychiatry, suicide prevention and motivational counselling. The aim is to increase the conditions for employees to be able to carry out qualitative, differentiated, and safe care and treatment of children, young people and clients and to provide employees with a safe and secure working environment. SiS has implemented a competence initiative, a safety initiative, reorganisation, the establishment of a supervisory function, a complaints body, close collaboration with children's rights organisations, etc.

In the budget bill 2024 the Government presented a proposal to increase the grant to the authority by SEK 145 million in 2024, SEK 153 million in 2025 and SEK 156 million in 2026. The funds aim, inter alia, to strengthen the conditions for developing differentiation and the quality of care at SiS, to ensure the supply of competence and to raise the level of the competence of the employees. The investment is also about securing the care and work environment and adapting premises. In the amending spring budget bill the government presented further funds for SiS in order to, inter alia, accommodate the influx of young people sentenced to sanction institutional youth care (*sluten ungdomsvård*).

In February 2024 the Swedish Government appointed an inquiry looking into the mission, role, and organization of SiS. The inquiry will deliver its report 25 April 2025.

There are large gaps in knowledge about gender differences in the crime prevention work, in particular about how girls are exploited in criminal activities. It is important to have early and coordinated preventive efforts to protect children and young people who are at risk of harm. The Children's Ombudsman is tasked with specifically collecting girls' opinions and own experiences about how they can be protected from being influenced and exploited in criminal activities. The assignment must be submitted by 1 March 2025.



31. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies, including climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and land degradation?

In 2021 the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, together with the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute (SMHI), The Swedish Gender Equality Agency, the Swedish Energy Agency and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency issued a [report](#) (*Förslag till strategi för att beakta och integrera jämställdhetsaspekter vid Sveriges genomförande av Parisavtalet*) to follow up on their government mission to take stock of possibilities and conditions for gender mainstreaming in Sweden's implementation of the Paris Agreement. The report informed the Government's [Climate Action Policy Plan](#), which was presented in December 2023. The new Climate Policy Action Plan stipulates that Sweden will continue to ensure that a gender perspective underpins the implementation of the Paris Agreement, for example by actively working for gender balanced participation in decision-making processes, as well as by working for a strengthened gender-based approach within all parts of the international climate negotiations. For instance, Sweden works to ensure gender parity in its delegation to UNFCCC meetings. The Swedish UNFCCC delegation has been made up by at least 50% women since 2016. Furthermore, one of the main principles in the new Climate Policy Action Plan is that the green transition must be conducted in a socially sustainable manner. This means taking people's pre-conditions and economy into consideration and making opportunities to influence the transition. For instance, there is a national law Act (2022:66) on consultation on matters concerning the Sami people that stipulate a legal obligation for governments and state agencies to consult the Sami people on matters that concern them. Moreover, the plan also describes [the Government's forthcoming STEM strategy](#) that aims to contribute to an increased representation of women within these areas of education that are particularly important for addressing climate change.

In accordance with the COP25 decision on the Gender Action Plan of the UNFCCC (GAP), Sweden has appointed **two national gender and climate change focal points**, one from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and one from the Swedish Gender Equality Agency. The focal points are the contact persons and representatives for Sweden's work on gender equality and climate. The aim is to strengthen gender mainstreaming

in Sweden's implementation of the Paris Agreement and the national implementation of the GAP.

The Government has appointed a [programme to strengthen and further develop gender mainstreaming within government agencies](#), including agencies related to environment and climate change, for example the National environmental Protection Agency, the Swedish Forest Agency and the Swedish Energy Agency. In addition, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency works with the Swedish National Financial Management Agency on a government assignment providing advisory support to government agencies on gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting. This includes agencies in environment and climate change. The Agency provides an [introductory training course on gender responsive budgeting](#).

In March 2024, the Swedish Government presented an updated version of the [National Strategy for Climate Adaptation](#). A major amendment compared to the previous version is the inclusion of an action plan for climate adaptation formulating what the Government intends to do within the next five years. A section in the strategy is dedicated to the importance of inclusive climate adaptation that takes the different pre-conditions of various groups, including men and women, into consideration when developing and implementing climate adaptation measures. The latest evaluation report by the Swedish National Expert Council for Climate includes recommendations regarding opportunities for the Sami people to maintain and develop their own cultural and community life based on sustainable reindeer husbandry and other Sami livelihoods. As part of the process to draft the new National Climate Adaptation Strategy, the government has sent parts of the strategy to the Sami Parliament for consultation. This is a step to ensure Sami participation when shaping policy of certain concern to them, such as national policies for climate change adaptation.

32. In the past five years, what actions has Sweden taken to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction and building environmental and climate resilience?

The [National Strategy for Climate Adaptation](#) stipulates that a gender equality perspective should be included in climate adaptation measures. Moreover, the Government intends to work to ensure that a climate adaptation perspective is included in the work on civil defence and crisis preparedness and towards enhanced coordination between climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction. This can be done through joint processes on coordination, governance, and follow-up as well as planning and implementation of joint measures.

According to the National Expert Council for Climate Adaptation, few municipalities have the capacity to analyze aspects of justice and equality in their work on climate adaptation and that there is a lack of clear guidelines to facilitate this work. The Government thus intends to strengthen the work of government agencies on guidance on how to ensure more inclusive adaptation efforts.

The National Knowledge Centre for Climate Adaptation has given special focus to just adaptation, completing a mapping study in 2020 and working to increase knowledge and understanding. The activity aims to integrate justice, including a gender equality perspective, into climate adaptation work in Sweden. Previous research has shown that women are especially vulnerable to climate change and that a special focus should thus be put on gender.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) offers an International Training Programme in Disaster Risk Management (ITP DRM) to create opportunities for long-term and sustainable positive change in the disaster risk reduction and management sector by supporting participants and their organisations in managing change processes. The programme puts special emphasis on networking, mentorship and the integration of gender and environmental perspectives. Sida also includes gender equality as a standing issue in the dialogue with all its programmes. Moreover, Sida participates in the Technical Advisory Group for inclusion and gender equality of the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR). Sida also supported the development of a [United Nations joint study on the status of gender equality and women's leadership in DRR, resulting in a report](#) launched in 2021. Furthermore,

through funding to Huairou Commission, Sida supports women's grassroots organisations working on DRR and strengthened resilience on the local level in developing countries.

As the national focal point to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency actively participated in the development of framework's recently launched Gender Action Plan.

## **Section Four: National institutions and processes**

33. Please describe Sweden's national strategy or action plan for gender equality, including its name, the period it covers, its priority, funding and alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the targets under SDG 5.

The overarching goal of Sweden's gender equality policy, decided by the Parliament (Riksdag) is: Women and men must have the same power to shape society and their own lives. In order to achieve this overarching objective, the Government of Sweden has been operating according to the following sub-goals of gender equality policy since November 2016:

- Equal distribution of power and influence
- Economic gender equality
- Gender equality in education
- An equal distribution of unpaid housework and provision of care work
- Gender equality in health, care and social services
- Men's violence against women must come to an end

To achieve these goals, the Government works extensively on gender mainstreaming, in combination with so called special (or: targeted) measures. The system for implementing gender equality policy, including the gender equality policy goals, thus covers all the targets under SDG 5 in Agenda 2030.

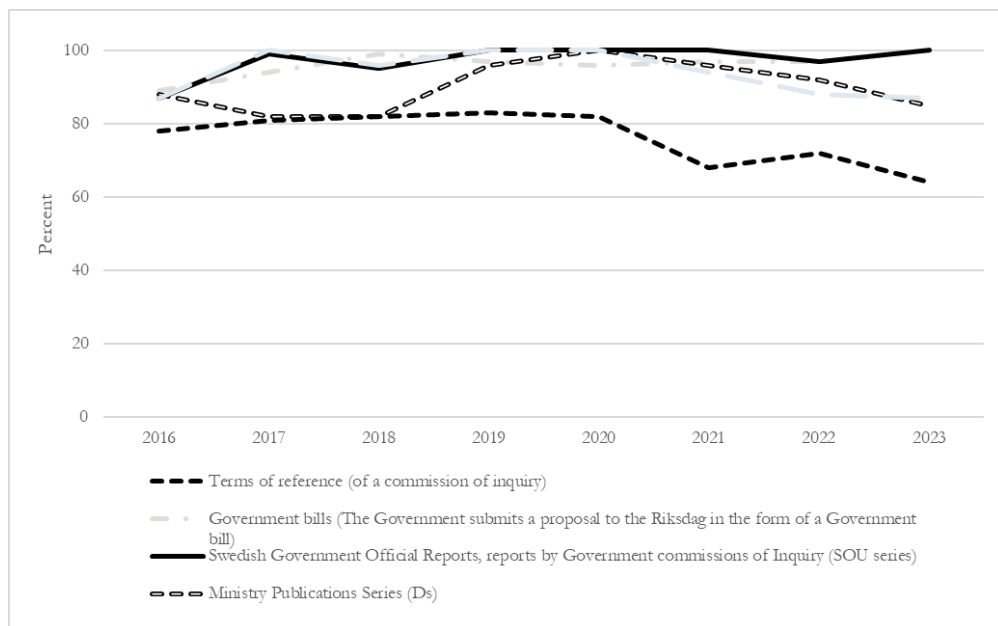
Funding for special measures under gender equality policy is allocated under a specific appropriation in the national budget. Measures in other policy areas are funded from appropriations in these areas, in line with the principle of gender mainstreaming (see question 34).

### **Gender Mainstreaming in the Government Offices**

The current national strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in the Government Offices covers the period 2021-2025 and aims to reach the gender equality policy goals [Jämställdhetsintegrering i Regeringskansliet 2021–2025 - Regeringen.se](https://www.regeringen.se/491000/2021/04/jamstalldhetsintegrering-i-regeringskansliet-2021-2025). The strategy points out the importance of a gender equality perspective in four main processes: legislation, the budgetary process, governance, and EU-matters, across all policy areas in the Government Offices (in all line ministries).

Statistics Sweden is tasked with carrying out a yearly quantitative follow-up of the strategy. Statistics Sweden's quantitative follow-up of the Government Offices' work on gender mainstreaming in 2023 showed positive developments in several areas. Regarding the legislative process, the proportion of a gender equality analysis in relevant Government bills as well as the Swedish Government Official Reports (SOU) increased to 100 percent compliance, see figure below. However, the follow-up also revealed that gender mainstreaming is not fully implemented, and gender equality is not always considered in relevant decision-making documents. For example, the proportion of inclusion of gender equality perspectives in relevant terms of references and in the Ministry Publication Series decreased compared to 2022.

**Publications in the legislative process that meets the requirements on gender equality 2016-2023**



Comment: Share of the total number of publications in the legislative process where a gender perspective are relevant to report. Source: Statistics Sweden.

Moreover, Statistics Sweden's follow-up shows that 70 percent of relevant tables and figures in the Budget Bill for 2022 displayed data disaggregated and commented by sex. This is an increase of 2 percentage points compared to 2023. For more information on the government's work on gender-responsive budgeting, see question 34.

In EU matters, there was a presence of a gender equality analysis in 89 percent of cases where a gender equality perspective was relevant in 2023.

It should be noted that the follow up by Statistics Sweden in regards to implementation of a gender perspective in Government processes is purely quantitative, i.e., it measures quantitative prevalence of relevant wording of gender equality in government decisions. Hence, the follow up indicates to what extent gender aspects are included in government documents / decisions but it does not indicate what quality, or type of reasoning around gender equality is included. With this said, the follow up still shows that attention to gender equality in these processes is relatively high.

### **Gender mainstreaming in government agencies**

Many government agencies continue to gender mainstream their core activities. The government has continued the special development programme for gender mainstreaming, *Jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter* (JiM) in more than 50 government agencies. The current programme runs 2020–2025. The purpose of the development programme is that the agencies' core activities to contribute to the gender equality policy goals.

<https://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/jamstalldhet/jamstalldhetsintegrering-i-statliga-myndigheter---jim/>

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency is tasked with providing support and expertise so that other government agencies can gender mainstream their core activities. As an example, The Swedish Gender Equality Agency have conducted courses on gender-responsive budgeting in collaboration with the Swedish National Financial Management Authority. These trainings have improved authorities' ability to make more accurate gender equality analyses.

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency's latest follow-up

[Jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter \(JiM\) 2024 \(2024:8\) |](#)

[Jämställdhetsmyndigheten \(jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se\)](https://jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se) shows that a high proportion of agencies in the program state that they have achieved results in their work (92%). Seminars, new knowledge and research reports, new routines, and new ways of working to promote gender equality are some examples of results reported by the agencies. Results that have led to a direct impact on the agency's target groups can primarily be linked to the national gender equality policy sub-goals on economic gender equality, gender equality in education, gender equal health and men's violence against women must end. In 2023, The Swedish National Financial Management Authority presented an investigation of how agencies participating in the programme on

gender mainstreaming include a gender equality perspective in their annual reports and budget documentation, compared to other agencies. To a large extent, the agencies participating in the JiM programme meet the gender-related requirements for annual reports. Almost two-thirds relate to the gender equality policy goals, and almost all of them disaggregated their individual-based statistics by sex – with some exceptions [Jämställdhetsperspektivet i årsredovisningar och budgetunderlag - Ekonomistyrningsverket \(esv.se\)](#).

Since 2016, there has been a parallel development programme for universities and higher education institutions [Delredovisning JiHU 2024 | Jämställdhetsmyndigheten \(jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se\)](#). For more information see question 13.

### **Regional level**

At regional level, the county administrative boards are tasked with working to ensure that the policy goals of gender equality policy have an impact in the county, as well as with integrating a gender equality perspective in their operations and core tasks. To promote gender mainstreaming and attain the goals of Sweden's national gender equality policy, all county administrative boards are tasked with producing, reporting, and implementing county gender mainstreaming strategies.

### **Local level**

With the aim of supporting gender mainstreaming efforts at local level, the Government has drawn up an agreement with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) to strengthen work for gender equality and protecting women from violence at local level in 2020–2023. The agreement supported enhanced development towards all the sub-goals of gender equality policy. The agreement also included the initiative 'Model municipalities – equal services and welfare', which aims to safeguard equal welfare services for different groups of women and men, girls and boys.

### **Ten-year national strategy to prevent and counter men's violence against women**

Besides the systematic work on gender mainstreaming, there are several actions taken for specific sub-goals and areas. The most extensive of these actions is the national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women, for more information see questions 15–21.



34. Please describe Sweden's system for tracking the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting), including the approximate proportion of the national budget that is invested in this area.

For gender equality policy, in this five-year period (2020–2024) there has been a specific appropriation for special gender equality measures in the national budget amounting to approximately SEK 600 million per year (SEK 3 000 million in total). The budget allocation for the specific appropriation for gender equality varies each year depending on the Government's proposal and the Parliament's (Riksdag's) budget decision. Funding for gender equality measures is intended to be used for specific gender equality initiatives to attain the goals of the gender equality policy. In the period 2020–2024, most of the resources under the gender equality appropriation, more than 90 per cent, have been used to combat and prevent men's violence against women, including honour related violence and oppression. In total more than SEK 2 700 million has been earmarked for actions to combat men's violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and honour-based violence during 2020–2024.

Funding to progress on gender equality has also been allocated in other policy areas during the period, e.g. within the appropriation for health and medical care for women's health and also for combatting and preventing men's violence against women, including honour related violence and oppression.

In accordance with the Government's decision to apply gender-responsive budgeting, a gender equality perspective is to be included in work on the budget bill, throughout the entire process.

Instructions in the budget circular requires that gender equality aspects must be analysed and taken into account at the drafting stage of new proposals, so that decisions on new reforms and initiatives include a gender equality perspective from the start. Gender equality analyses must also be made when results and outcomes of policy are presented and when a new policy direction is presented to the Parliament (in the budget bill). There are clear guidelines in the budget circular for how a gender equality perspective is to

be included into the budget process within the Government Offices, and a clear demand for use of sex-disaggregated data.

To support application of gender responsive budgeting within the Government Offices, a specific methodological tool has been developed [BUDGe for Gender Equality - A Swedish tool for gender budgeting - Government.se](#), and trainings on gender-responsive budgeting and gender mainstreaming are held for civil servants in the line ministries.

An appendix to the Swedish budget bill is published each year, entitled Economic Equality between Women and Men (“Ekonomisk jämställdhet mellan kvinnor och män”), the appendix shows the distribution of economic resources between the sexes. The appendix on economic equality between women and men has been published since 1988, and since 2003 the appendix has been placed adjacent to the Budget Statement to emphasise its overarching importance. For some years, the appendix on economic gender equality has had a thematic focus. The appendix shows how gender inequalities between women and men are expressed in economic terms, but also how welfare systems reduce the gender pay gap. In analysing the economic situation of women and men respectively, it examines the distribution of education, gainful employment, wages, household work and capital income. Finally, it describes disposable income by combining the various types of income and social insurance benefits and deducting taxes.

In 2023, The Swedish National Financial Management Authority presented an investigation of how agencies in the JiM programme include a gender equality perspective in their annual reports and budget documentation, compared to other agencies. To a large extent, the JiM agencies meet the gender-related requirements for annual reports. Almost two-thirds relate to the gender equality policy goals, and almost all of them disaggregated their individual-based statistics by sex – with some exceptions [Jämställdhetsperspektivet i årsredovisningar och budgetunderlag - Ekonomistyrningsverket \(esv.se\)](#).

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency in collaboration with the Swedish National Financial Management Authority, conducts trainings on gender-responsive budgeting for Government Agencies in Sweden, as commissioned by the Government. The Government has commissioned the

Swedish National Financial Management Authority to “offer support in the work with gender mainstreaming”.

The Swedish Government tracks the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. In 2023, 74 percent of all (ODA) provided by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) had gender equality as a principle or a significant objective in accordance with the OECD DAC policy marker. 12 percent had gender equality as the principal objective.

**35. What formal mechanisms are in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?**

There are no separate mechanisms for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Sweden has published two Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) that describe the status of the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda to the United Nations. Sweden's latest VNR was published in 2021 and was based on a wide array of existing reports stemming from, for example, the Swedish Central Bureau of Statistics, Statistics Sweden, different civil society organisations, The Swedish Agency for Public Management, and others. Different dialogue meetings were also held with national stakeholders such as civil society organisations, youth, regional representatives, and others before, during and after, when the VNR was finalised and ready to be presented.

The aim of the report is to give an honest and transparent view of how the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is proceeding on a national level. There is therefore a need to bring together many different stakeholders before, during and after the process, in order to get a broad and accurate picture of the implementation status, including on existing challenges.

In addition to the stakeholder mechanisms mentioned above, fruitful consultations, peer reviews and exchanges were held with actors on the national level and also on the international level with Colombia, Spain and our Nordic neighbours. This setup also followed the recommended UN guidelines for how to conduct a VNR report.

36. Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report

The national-level reviews have encompassed a whole-of-government approach, covering reports and studies from all line-ministries and relevant national agencies. The overall leadership and coordination of the national-level reviews has been placed at the Ministry of Labour, Division for Gender Equality.

High quality, up-to-date and disaggregated data from the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, Statistics Sweden (*SCB*) as well as the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*) and other government agencies has informed the comprehensive national-level review.

**Consultation with civil society on Sweden's compliance with the Beijing Platform for Action**

An all-of-society approach has complemented the all-of-government approach in order to achieve comprehensive national-level reviews. On 16 April 2024, Minister for Gender Equality and Deputy Minister for Employment, Paulina Brandberg, invited about 15 civil society organisations to an expert council on the occasion of Sweden's reporting to the UN in accordance with the Beijing Platform for Action. During the council, each CSO had the opportunity to share their views on Sweden's compliance with the Beijing Platform for Action over the past five years. CSO representatives were also asked to highlight future actions that they believe should be of priority to accelerate progress towards gender equality.



News article: <https://www.regeringen.se/artiklar/2024/04/sakrad-infor-rapportering-om-sverige-och-pekingsplattformen/>

37. Please describe Sweden's action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women.

There are no separate action plans for the above-mentioned recommendations.

However, Sweden has submitted written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 24 (a), (e) and (f) and 26 (d) of the CEDAW-committee's Concluding observations on the tenth periodic report of Sweden. Sweden submitted its tenth report to the CEDAW Committee in 2020.

In the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), Sweden submitted its report to the UN in October 2019. Sweden has since then submitted its UPR mid-term report on a voluntary basis in August 2022.

## **Section Five: Data and statistics**

38. What are the most important areas in which Sweden has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?

In Sweden, the production of national statistics is decentralised, and statistics that reflects gender equality issues are produced by a number of different actors in their respective area of responsibility.

### **Statistics Sweden – gender equality a theme area on their website**

Statistics that reflect gender equality issues is compiled and published within the remit of Statistics Sweden's work on gender equality statistics. Since 2012 Statistics Sweden presents gender equality as a theme area on its website <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/temaomraden/jamstalldhet>. On the website, [+ 170] indicators linked to Sweden's six national sub-goals on gender equality policy are presented. Most of the statistics in the themed area is updated once a year.

Statistics Sweden reports on the development of gender equality in Sweden every two years in the publication *Women and men in Sweden. Facts and figures*. This publication contains easily accessible statistics on women and men in several areas (population, health and social care, education, time use, parental insurance, gainful employment, wages/salaries, income, crime and influence and power). During the past five years, two publications have been published, in 2020 and 2022. Similar statistics have been produced at regional and local level when commissioned.

In addition, Statistics Sweden plays an active role in bilateral and multilateral development cooperation on gender equality statistics.

### **Individual-based official statistics must be divided by sex**

In Sweden it is mandatory by law that individual-based official statistics must be divided by sex unless there are special reasons against this. The Official Statistics Ordinance (2001:100), a law that regulates Sweden's official statistics, states that official statistics related to individuals must be disaggregated by sex. Exceptions are only accepted when there are special reasons for not doing so, such as when the data covers very small populations, and disaggregation by sex could expose individuals.

Statistics Sweden monitors 28 agencies' compliance to this ordinance every other year and reports back to the Government. Statistics Sweden also gives feedback to these 28 government agencies, to support further development of sex disaggregated data.

#### **Ordinance on annual reports and budget proposals from agencies**

As of 2017, the Swedish Government has made it mandatory for agencies to present statistics disaggregated by sex in their annual reports. This is governed under Chapter 3, Section 1 of the Ordinance on annual reporting and budget documentation (FÅB). In principle, this means that all individual-based statistics received by the Government from the government agencies in annual reports and budget data is divided by sex, which is important both in terms of the Government's capacity to introduce targeted reforms and for the agencies' efforts in gender mainstreaming their core activities.

#### **Progress has been made in the following areas in the last five years:**

1. In line with the Government Decision that governs gender mainstreaming work in the Government Offices, statistics disaggregated by sex is mandatory in the preparation of Government decisions such as the Annual Budget Bill, legislation, governance, and EU- and international matters.

Statistics Sweden is commissioned by the Government to annually monitor the work on gender mainstreaming performed by line ministries in the Government Offices. This monitoring exercise is based on the requirements regulated by the Government's decision on Gender Mainstreaming in the Government Offices.

The analysis of the Budget Bill for 2024 revealed that the proportion of tables and figures in the Budget Bill that met the requirements was 70 percent. This is an improvement compared to 2020 when the result was 68 percent. Among tables and figures in Government Bills (proposals for new or amended legislation) presented for the *Riksdag* in 2023, 45 percent met the requirement – an increase compared to 2020 when the corresponding figure was 38 percent.



2. Statistics Sweden has recently (2024) developed an online tool for how to best present statistics disaggregated by sex and other grounds of discrimination. The tutorial is primarily aimed at supporting agencies or other organizations, who will undertake intersectional analysis in their work with gender mainstreaming.  
<https://konsuppdeladstatistik.scb.se/>
3. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency is tasked to regularly monitor the progress to the six national sub-goals on gender equality policy in Sweden. [Resultatrapporten 2024 \(2024:10\) | Jämställdhetsmyndigheten \(jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se\)](#) In 2023, the Agency was commissioned to perform an in-depth follow-up of the sub-goal 6 (men's violence against women must end).
4. In August 2023, the Government appointed an inquiry (Dir. 2023:117) [En stärkt långsiktig styrning av arbetet mot könsrelaterat våld och hedersrelaterat våld och förtryck \(regeringen.se\)](#) to help strengthen the long-term governance of efforts to combat men's violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and honour-related violence and oppression. The assignment includes a review of current indicators and possible development of new indicators under the gender equality policy sub-goal 6. Men's violence against women must stop.
5. In March 2021, Statistics Sweden was commissioned by the government to implement TID – a study in time use among women and men. The main purpose was to measure women's and men's time use with a focus on the unpaid domestic and care work. [En fråga om tid. En studie av tidsanvändningen bland kvinnor och män 2021 \(scb.se\)](#)

39. Over the next five years, what are Sweden's priorities for strengthening national gender statistics?

The Swedish Government will continue to improve the use of national gender statistics in the formulation of policy and implementation of strategies and programmes (see question 38).

**40. What gender-specific indicators has Sweden prioritized for monitoring progress on the SDGs?**

In previous years, Statistics Sweden was assigned to coordinate the national monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. Out of the 231 global indicators, 118 were produced and published on Statistics Sweden's website in 2022. To obtain better coverage an additional 45 unique national indicators were developed. Several reports, including an in-dept report on the concept of leaving no one behind, were published in the years between 2017 and 2022. Since 2023 Statistics Sweden is no longer assigned to coordinate and conduct monitoring of the 2030 Agenda on a national level. This means that national indicators are no longer produced, and the work of Statistics Sweden solely comprises of facilitating the reporting of global indicators to international organisations.

#### 41. Which data disaggregations are routinely provided by major surveys in Sweden?

According to section 14 in the Ordinance (2001:100) on official statistics; official statistics based on individuals should be disaggregated by sex unless there are special reasons for not doing so. A similar requirement was first inserted in the Ordinance on official statistics in 1994. Requirements for statistics to be broken down by sex are also included in; Ordinance (2000:605) concerning annual reports and budget documentation (section 3 article 1) (unofficial translation), in the instructions for some authorities (for example Ordinance (2017:868) with instruction for county administrative boards (section 5 article 2).

Any processing of data on; disability, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, and religious or philosophical beliefs, (and gender identity depending on the context), for statistical purposes is regulated in the Act (2001:99) on official statistics and in the Ordinance (2001:100) on official statistics. The Appendix to the Ordinance entails a listing of all areas for which official statistics are to be produced, and of all national agencies responsible for official statistics. It also regulates for which purposes the special categories of personal data (including the above stated) may be processed in the production of Swedish official statistics. Permissions to process personal data also need to comply with the second chapter in the Instrument of Government in the Swedish constitution. In the production of non-official statistics, decisions on whether such data can be processed are based on regulations in the GDPR and the Act and Ordinance on official statistics.

Swedish official statistics is to a large extent register-based. This means that data on sex, age, education, and migratory status (domestic born/foreign born) are usually derived from registers and usually provided in major surveys, such as The Living Conditions survey, The Labour Force Survey, The Public Health Survey and The Swedish Crime Survey. Furthermore, data on income and geographical location are relatively often provided in surveys. Questions on disability are included in several surveys such as the Labour Force Survey, the Living Conditions Survey, the Survey on the Labour market situation for people with disability, the Work Environment Survey, the Public Health Survey, and the Survey on ICT usage in households and by individuals. Survey questions on gender identity have been included in Work

Environment Survey and the Public Health Survey. The latter also includes survey questions on sexual identity. The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society also produces non-official statistics on several grounds of discrimination. There is no established way to collect survey data on racial or ethnic origin in Sweden nor data on religion.

Which variables, other than sex, that are relevant to include in gender statistics depend on the context. Statistics Sweden was commissioned to develop a guidance on producing sex disaggregated statistics within gender mainstreaming, including an intersectional approach. The guidance was published in 2024.

In 2019 Statistics Sweden was commissioned to further develop statistics on living conditions for people with disabilities. Since then, a national survey question on disability has been developed and implemented in the Living Conditions Survey and in the Survey on the Labour market situation for people with disability. To broaden the possibilities to produce statistics on living conditions for women and men with disabilities Statistics Sweden recently also developed a preliminary version of a register-based variable on people receiving measures or interventions related to disability. The potential use of the variable in statistics on economic equality is currently being evaluated by Statistics Sweden.

## **Section Six: Conclusion and next steps**

### **Conclusion and next steps**

#### **Lessons learned from the review process**

One of the main takeaways from the review process is the value of consultations with civil society organizations and other representative organizations such as the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR). To learn from the civil society organizations' expertise and views on progress made in the national implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and how to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls has been vital to the review process. The Minister for Gender Equality will continue to regularly invite civil society for consultations and learn from their expertise on how to address gender inequalities and achieve the Swedish gender equality policy goals. Likewise, the intra-ministerial working group on gender mainstreaming, called IDA/JÄM (consisting of appointed gender mainstreaming coordinators representatives from each line-ministry) has been an important arena for coordinating the review process. Finally, high quality, up-to-date and data disaggregated by sex, reports and studies from the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, Statistics Sweden and other relevant Agencies have been crucial for delivering this national report.

#### **Priority actions to accelerate the implementation of the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda**

The Government of Sweden will continue to promote gender equality in all policy areas. In practice, this means a commitment to building a society in which women and men, girls and boys can live their lives to their full potential. This is a human right and a matter of democracy and justice. Gender equality is also part of the solution to society's challenges and a given part of a modern welfare state - for justice and economic development. The Government's goal to end men's violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and honour-based violence and oppression will continue to be a priority as it is a serious obstacle to gender equality and to women's and girls' full enjoyment of their human rights and one of the ultimate expressions of gender inequality between women and men. The next step in the Government's work to ensure coordinated, long-term, and effective efforts to prevent and combat men's violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and honour-based violence

and oppression is to develop a new action plan for 2024–2026, which covers the remaining period of the ten-year strategy. Honour-based violence and oppression will consistently have high priority in the plan. Also, the Government has tasked the Swedish Gender Equality Agency with compiling a status report on vulnerability among national minorities and promoting efforts to combat men’s violence against women, other types of intimate partner violence, and honour-based violence and oppression among children and young people who belong to national minorities. Vulnerability to honour-based violence and oppression will be particularly highlighted, as will the vulnerability of LGBTIQ people.

The Government also continues its work to promote gender equal health – for women and men, girls and boys to have the same opportunities and conditions for good health and to be offered care and healthcare on equal terms.

The pace of progress made towards attaining economic gender equality between women and men has been too slow. The Government has therefore tasked several governmental agencies, through new assignments, to accelerate economic gender equality, for instance in the areas of the housing market and remote work, and in supporting foreign-born women to enter the labour market.

The fact that women's share of entrepreneurship in Sweden is under 30 percent must be addressed. The Government has therefore tasked The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (*Tillväxtverket*) to analyze and promote women's entrepreneurship, ownership, and participation in business life. The Government has allocated SEK 8 million per year 2024–2026 to the Swedish Growth Agency to promote women's entrepreneurship.

Fewer women than men have a career in Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM). This year, the Swedish Government will present a new STEM-strategy targeting the entire education system, higher education included. The intention is to enable more women to apply to, and to be examined in, STEM subjects, like engineering and science but also vocational training.

While the gender equality policy subgoals are ambitious and central to the organisation of gender equality policy, there is clearly a need to specify in

more concrete terms how they are to be achieved, for instance by setting measurable goals and by pinpointing by what means and by whom these goals are to be fulfilled.

In a time when women's and girls' rights are increasingly being put into question around the world, Sweden will continue to be a strong voice and defender of gender equality, SRHR, and women's and girl's empowerment. The Government will strategically promote gender equality in multilateral fora such as the EU, the UN, NATO, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.