

# **Women in Sweden 2021.**

**A review of Sweden's  
compliance with the  
Convention on the  
Elimination of All Forms  
of Discrimination  
Against Women (CEDAW)**

# Foreword

**SWEDEN IS A TRAILBLAZER** on women's rights and gender equality. In the second half of the twentieth century, Sweden broke new ground in terms of greater equality between women and men and invented reformist gender equality policy. No structures seemed too difficult to challenge and broad-based reforms tackled some of the major gender equality problems of the day. The introduction of separate taxation, parental insurance and expanded childcare provision are examples of large-scale reforms that enabled women to enter the labour market and earn their own living.

Today we find that the pace of reform has ground to a halt. Progress for women has come to a standstill or, in a few key areas, gone backwards. The life expectancy of women with lower levels of education is falling, income differences between women and men have not diminished in 25 years and girls are subjected to increasing amounts of sexual violence and abuse.

In this report, we have examined developments in the lives of women based on the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The report has been produced by the Swedish Women's Lobby with the Swedish CEDAW network and will form the basis of the UN's monitoring of Sweden's compliance with CEDAW in autumn 2021.

One of the aims of this report is to serve as a reminder of Sweden's commitments to improve the lives of women and girls. We urge the Government to accelerate its work and in the report we set out 120 demands that the women's movement see as being most urgent to implement if we are to live up to our CEDAW commitments. It is our hope that the report will reinvigorate a debate on the need for political initiative and for a bold, forward-thinking reform agenda for women's rights and gender equality.

Stockholm, 8 March 2021,  
ANNA GIOTAS SANDQUIST,  
*Chair, the Swedish Women's Lobby*

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## About the report

**THE CONVENTION** on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979. The purpose of the Convention is to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and achieve women's full human rights on the same terms as men. Sweden was the first country in the world to ratify the Convention in 1980.

CEDAW represents a commitment by the States parties that have ratified it. Therefore, there is a supervisory body within the UN, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, which examines whether states are keeping their promises. Every four years, States parties have to submit a report on how they have complied with the articles of the Convention and report on the measures taken to implement it.

Sweden's Government will be examined by the CEDAW Committee in autumn 2021. As in previous reviews, before this review takes place, the organisations of the women's movement have produced a shadow report to stand alongside the Government's official report. This report examines women's lives and gender equality policy based on the 16 articles of CEDAW. Areas covered include the labour market, education, health, migration and violence against women. The organisations that form part of the CEDAW network and are behind the report are:

The Swedish Women's Lobby  
Birth Rights Sweden  
Dea-föreningen  
The Fredrika Bremer Association  
Gröna Kvinnor  
Internationella Kvinnoförbundet  
Kvinnlig prioritet  
KvinnorKan  
Kvinnors Nätverk  
Lönelotsarna  
The National Organisation for  
Women's Shelters and Young  
Women's Shelters in Sweden, Roks  
Operation 1325  
Riksförbundet Internationella  
Föreningen Fem-Inclusion, RIFFI

Riksorganisationen Glöm Aldrig Pela  
och Fadime, GAPF  
Swedish Medical Women's Association  
Tantpatrullen  
Tjejers Rätt i Samhället, TRIS  
UN Women Sverige  
United Nations Association of Stockholm  
Unizon  
Varken Hora Eller Kuvad, VHEK  
WINNET Sverige  
World of no sexual abuse, Wonsa  
Östersjöfred

# Article 1. Definition of discrimination

## **CEDAW states:**

Discrimination against women shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

## **The current situation:**

In recent years, wording about women and gender equality has disappeared from several laws, ordinances and other steering documents that apply to government agencies. This is a worrying trend that contravenes both CEDAW and the principles of gender mainstreaming. One example is that the terms “boys” and “girls” have been replaced with the gender-neutral wording “children and students” in school curricula, rendering the perspective of girls and gender equality problems in schools invisible.<sup>1</sup>

Laws on hate crime and terrorist crime do not include sex in the grounds on which such crimes are committed. This is a serious omission at a time when hate and threats against women are a growing problem. The Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI) states that Sweden may be the country in the world with the highest number of “incels” per head of population.<sup>2</sup>

The Government is working to produce amendments to the Gender Recognition Act (könstillhörighetslagen) such that a person’s legal gender is based on their experienced gender identity, in other words the gender that each individual feels that they are.<sup>3</sup> This is a definition of sex that differs from the starting point of CEDAW of biological sex and the role of women in reproduction. The changes also include making gender affirming medical and surgical interventions easier. The proposals and the underlying inquiries have been strongly criticised by the Council on Legislation, among others.<sup>4</sup> The inquiries on which the legal proposal rests lack an analysis of how the changes may affect work on gender equality and statistics divided by sex. Nor have the consequences of changing the way society defines sex been explored.

CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action make it clear that certain groups of women are particularly vulnerable to discrimination. In Sweden there is generally great interest in working with different grounds for discrimination and perspectives in gender equality work. However, the intersectional ambitions of many agencies and organisations tend to go no further than

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1. Sveriges Kvinnolobby (2018) Yttrande över Skolverkets förslag till ändringar i läroplaner vad gäller jämställdhet

2. FOI (2020) Kvinnohat och våldshyllningar i digitala incelmiljöer

3. Regeringen (2018) Förslag till en modernare könstillhörighetslagstiftning, Pressmeddelande 2018-05-19

4. Lagrådet (2018) Vissa kirurgiska ingrepp i könsorganen och ändring av det kön som framgår av folkbokföringen

stacking different perspectives on top of each other instead of analysing and tackling the most relevant problems for different women and girls in each situation. In its gender policy document, the Government itself states that there is a need for “a more systematic approach when working with (...) intersectional analyses in implementing and monitoring gender equality policy”.<sup>5</sup>

Many agencies are also failing to produce sex-disaggregated statistics. Despite the fact that the Official Statistics Ordinance and the Ordinance concerning annual reports and budget documentation (2000:605) require statistics based on individuals to be disaggregated by sex, this does not always happen and when it does, there is often no analysis of the differences between the sexes.

Another problem is that increasing numbers of government agencies have started to replace questions that ask which sex a respondent is (kön) with questions about their gender identity (könsidentitet), i.e. the gender they feels that they are, when gathering data. This damages the validity of sex-disaggregated statistics, making them misleading. One example is the Public Health Agency of Sweden’s youth survey on sexuality and health, in which the response options provided on sex/gender make it impossible to draw any conclusions regarding differences between girls and boys.<sup>6</sup>

#### **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Make it clear that the visibility of sex is essential to work on gender equality.** Task the Swedish Gender Equality Agency with making it clear in its supportive work that gender mainstreaming requires women and men to be visible.
- **Introduce sex as grounds for hate and terrorist crime** and make it clear that when the motivation is sex-based, it is mainly women and girls who are the victims of these crimes.
- **Halt amendments to the Gender Recognition Act** until the consequences for the rights of women and girls and for gender equality work have been investigated.

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5. Regeringskansliet (2016) Feministisk politik för ett jämställt samhälle, Skr. 2016/17:10

6. Folkhälsomyndigheten (2017) Sexualitet och hälsa bland unga i Sverige – UngKAB15

## Article 2. Legislation prohibiting discrimination

### **CEDAW states:**

States Parties are obliged to eliminate the discrimination against women. Laws to forbid discrimination against women must be introduced into national legislation. States must ensure that everyone follows the law and that those who violate anti-discrimination laws are punished. States must ensure that the courts and other agencies protect the rights of women to the same extent as those of men. States must ensure that any legislation that discriminates against women is changed or repealed.

### **The current situation:**

The Instrument of Government (regeringsformen) prescribes that “no act of law or other provision may imply the unfavourable treatment of anyone on grounds of gender, unless the provision forms part of efforts to promote equality between men and women”.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, Sweden, as described in Article 1, has a Discrimination Act which seeks “to combat discrimination and in other ways promote equal rights and opportunities regardless of sex” and six other grounds for discrimination.

Under the Discrimination Act, employers and education providers are obliged to combat discrimination through “active measures”, which means that risks of discrimination are to be investigated, analysed, tackled and followed up. The Act also requires surveys of pay differences between women and men to be conducted each year and that guidelines and procedures are in place to prevent sexual harassment, etc.<sup>8</sup>

In practice, however, actors have free rein to breach the requirement for active measures as the limited supervision exercised by the Equality Ombudsman (DO) is weak. When DO identifies shortcomings in the workplace or in education settings, this merely leads to the employer in question being informed that they have broken the rules. In general there is no follow-up to ensure that the shortcomings have been rectified, as was the case when this was the responsibility of the former JämO (the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman). DO has the opportunity of applying to the Board against Discrimination for a fine to be imposed, which can lead to a financial penalty being imposed where shortcomings in preventive work have not been rectified. However, DO has not used this tool in the past 10 years.<sup>9</sup>

DO also receives reports of discrimination from individuals but failings have been found here too. In 2019 DO received 2,661 reports of discrimination, 401 of which concerned discrimination due to sex. Applications for a sum-

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7. Riksdagen (1974) Kungörelse (1974:152) om beslutad ny regeringsform

8. Riksdagen (2008) Diskrimineringslag (2008:567)

9. Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet (2020) Effektivare tillsyn över diskrimineringslagen – aktiva åtgärder och det skollagsreglerade området, SOU 2020:79

mons were only made in six cases, one of which concerned discrimination based on sex. In total less than one percent of the reports produced a result.<sup>10</sup> The chance of women who have been discriminated against of gaining justice via DO is thus largely non-existent. The view of DO itself is that the agency concentrates on cases of major significance that will have an impact on case law and is not a “public law firm” for everyone who has experienced discrimination.<sup>11</sup>

Instead of exercising supervision and investigating and pursuing individual cases, in recent years DO has focused increasingly on information campaigns and promotion work that is not supported by research. An examination of DO’s annual reports from the period 2009 to 2019 shows that protection against discrimination has deteriorated, that respect for the Discrimination Act has been damaged and that Sweden is moving even further away from its goal of being a society free from discrimination.<sup>12</sup>

Since 1 January 2018, Sweden has had a Gender Equality Agency responsible for coordinating, monitoring and helping to implement gender equality policy. One of the agency’s mandates is to support the work of other agencies on gender mainstreaming. About 60 government agencies have been instructed in their appropriation letters to apply gender mainstreaming,<sup>13</sup> but in practice far from all are living up to their undertakings in this regard. The shortcomings are particularly great in terms of gender budgeting, in other words taking the perspective of gender equality into account in financial governance and budgeting.

A survey conducted by the Swedish Government Commission on equal incomes (Kommissionen för jämställda livsinkomster) consistently shows an uneven distribution of government support measures, such as business support, labour market measures and support for people with disabilities. The agencies are also failing to produce sex-disaggregated statistics. Despite the fact that the Official Statistics Ordinance and the Ordinance concerning annual reports and budget documentation (2000:605) require statistics based on individuals to be disaggregated by sex, this does not always happen and when it does, there is often no analysis of the differences between the sexes. Read more under Article 1.

The Commission considers that the shortcomings in analysis may be due to unclear governance of agencies and to agencies not needing to evaluate the impacts of their operations from a gender equality perspective.<sup>14</sup> This conclusion is also shared by the Swedish Agency for Public Management, which has evaluated the Government programme on gender mainstreaming in government agencies (JiM). The Swedish Agency for Public Management asserts that much has been achieved, but that better results could have been attained with clearer and more effective governance, closer to operations, on the part of the Government.<sup>15</sup>

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10. DO (2020) Årsredovisning 2020

11. DO (2012) Bättre möjligheter att driva diskrimineringsmål

12. Svenaeus och Pelling (2020) DO har misslyckats med uppdraget att ge upprättelse till diskriminerade, Göteborgs-Posten, 2020-11-09

13. Regeringen.se (2019) JiM-myndigheter

14. Kommissionen för jämställda livsinkomster (2021) Kartläggning av hur offentliga stödåtgärder fördelas mellan kvinnor och män, samt översyn av myndigheters information och vägledning ur ett jämställdhetsperspektiv

15. Statskontoret (2019) Utvärdering av regeringens utvecklingsprogram för jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter, 2019:14

There are major differences in the impact of gender mainstreaming between different municipalities and regions. 109 of Sweden's 290 municipalities and all 21 regions have signed the Council of European Municipalities and Regions' (CEMR) European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, which includes undertakings on gender mainstreaming. Few municipalities and regions possess updated action plans describing how the undertakings of the declaration are to be attained.<sup>16</sup>

#### **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Make the role and mandate of the Equality Ombudsman (DO) clear.** DO's mandate should primarily be to exercise supervision in the sense of checking compliance with the Discrimination Act both in terms of active prevention work and breaches of the ban on discrimination. More actors should be examined, shortcomings identified should be followed up and a system of sanctions should be applied. Reports of discrimination should be investigated and pursued to a far greater extent than is currently the case. DO's mandate in the form of rights and obligations needs to be made clear in law in line with the UN Paris Principles.<sup>17</sup>
- **Remove the voluntary rule in the Discrimination Act.** The Discrimination Act states that in the first instance DO is to make those covered by the Act comply with it voluntarily, which undermines both the act and the role of the ombudsman. The Discrimination Act should be complied with in the same way as other legislation.
- **Exercise stricter governance and improve monitoring of gender mainstreaming in government agencies.** Supplement gender mainstreaming with special mandates to divide support measures equally between men and women or carry out gender equality initiatives where necessary. Require that agencies report the effects of their gender equality work.
- **Legislate that the operations of public organisations must be gender equal.** Introduce a requirement in the Local Government Act stating that municipalities and regions must provide a gender equal service to their citizens.

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<sup>16</sup> CEMR charter of signatories, [charter-equality.eu](http://charter-equality.eu), uppgifter hämtade 2021-02-08

<sup>17</sup> FN:s Generalförsamling (1993) Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (The Paris Principles)

# Violence against women (CEDAW Committee recommendation No. 35)

## **CEDAW states:**

The CEDAW committee address violence against women in General Recommendations No. 19 and 35. Recommendation No. 35 clarify that the responsibility of States to establish policies against discrimination of women (as stated in CEDAW art. 2) include gender-based violence against women.

## **The current situation:**

Men's violence against women in Sweden is prevalent. In 2019 38,200 cases of abuse of women and 23,200 sexual crimes were reported, and the unreported figure is judged to be high.<sup>18</sup> In 2019, 16 women were killed by a person who they were in a relationship with or had ended a relationship with.<sup>19</sup> Reports of violence against women have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>20</sup>

Work to combat male violence against women has been a priority area for the Government for several years now. Many inquiries have been appointed, proposals submitted and resources allocated to efforts at local, regional and national level. Previous reviews by the Swedish National Audit Office, however, have shown that the major interventions carried out have often been characterised by poor management and coordination, with insufficient measures put in place to ensure lasting results.<sup>21</sup>

In 2017, a national strategy was adopted to prevent and combat men's violence against women. The Government earmarked SEK 600 million for a programme of measures and SEK 300 million for development funding for municipalities and regions.<sup>22</sup> An evaluation of the agencies' implementation of the Strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women is to be presented in March 2021.<sup>23</sup>

The number of girls stating that they have been forced into sex is increasing. A survey from the City of Stockholm from 2020 showed that 5 percent of girls in year 9 (the last year of compulsory education) and 7 percent of the girls in year 2 of upper secondary school had been raped. This is twice the numbers in 2016 and the highest totals measured since the survey began in 2002.<sup>24</sup>

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18. BRÅ.se (2019) Mörkertal och dold brottslighet

19. BRÅ (2020) Sammanfattning konstaterade fall av dödligt våld 2019

20. BRÅ.se (2020) Anmälda brott: Fortsatta indikationer på konsekvenser av pandemin i november

21. Riksrevisionen 2016:5 Bilaga 2. Riksrevisionens fallstudier av fyra nationella samordnare

Se även Riksrevisionen (2015) Regeringens jämställdhetsåtgärder – tillfälligheter eller långsiktiga förbättringar? (RiR 2015:13)

22. Regeringen.se (2016) Fakta om den nationella strategin för att förebygga och bekämpa mäns våld mot kvinnor

23. Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet, Strategin för att förebygga och bekämpa mäns våld mot kvinnor ska följas upp, pressmeddelande 2020-02-13

24. Länsstyrelsen Stockholm (2020) Stockholmsenkäten Stockholms län 2020

Since the new Sexual Crimes Act entered into force in 2018, the number of reports has increased, as has the number of convictions. However, the number of convictions remains low,<sup>25</sup> which the CEDAW Committee criticised particularly sharply in the review of Sweden in 2016.

The majority of reported rape cases are never prosecuted and brought to trial, instead being abandoned at the investigation stage by police officers and prosecutors. A study by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) shows serious shortcomings in the way rape cases are handled, including the suspected perpetrator only being questioned in half of cases.<sup>26</sup> In recent years, only 5 percent of reported rapes have led to convictions.<sup>27</sup>

The low conviction rate for sexual crime cases affects women's willingness to report crimes. According to women's refuges, trust in the judicial system is low among young women and only a fraction feels able to cope with the process that reporting will involve. This is particularly true for young women with poor mental health, who these cases often involve.<sup>28</sup>

There is a lack of sheltered accommodation in many parts of Sweden. In half of Sweden's municipalities, there is no access to sheltered accommodation in the municipality at all.<sup>29</sup> There is a particular shortage of accommodation that takes women who have been the victims of violence with substance abuse and addiction problems and women with disabilities. According to the National Board of Health and Welfare, there is a great risk of women who have been the victims of violence with substance abuse and addiction problems failing to access support and help, as social services often do not pick up or offer interventions to these women.<sup>30</sup>

The law on violation of integrity and restraining orders does not work properly. Women who report violence often find it difficult to get a restraining order partly because the criteria are very high.<sup>31</sup> Only 30 percent of applications for a restraining order were granted in 2018.<sup>32</sup>

The prevalence of sexual exploitation online and grooming is growing.<sup>33</sup> A survey from 2018 shows that half of all 15 year-old girls have been contacted for sexual purposes by someone they think is an adult.<sup>34</sup> The police have warned that increasing numbers of girls are lured into prostitution via "sugar dating" sites and that this phenomenon increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>35</sup> Women's organisations warn that girls are increasingly suffering sexual exploitation and abuse on platforms such as om Only fans, where mainly young women are paid for sharing nude pictures of themselves.<sup>36</sup>

Since the Act on unlawful intrusion (lagen om olaga integritetsintrång)

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25. BRÅ (2020) Den nya samtyckeslagen i praktiken, Rapport 2020:6

26. BRÅ (2019) Våldtäkt från anmälan till dom – En studie av rättsväsendets arbete med våldtäktsärenden, Rapport 2019:9

se även; Kudo, P. Utredningar om våld stängs utan förhör med utpekade, SvD 2019-03-31

27. BRÅ (2019) Våldtäkt från anmälan till dom – En studie av rättsväsendets arbete med våldtäktsärenden, Rapport 2019:9

28. By, U. Jurist: "Bara en bråkdel orkar polisanmäla", DN 2020-09-24

29. Socialstyrelsen (2020) Kartläggning av skyddade boenden i Sverige

30. Ibid.

31. GREVIO (2019) Baseline Evaluation Report Sweden se bl. a. punkt 222 och 223

32. Åklagarmyndigheten (2020) Tillsynsrapport 2020:1 – Kontaktförbud

33. NetClean (2018) Ny rapport: Grooming, sexuell utpressning av barn och bilder som barn frivilligt producerar ökar

Se även: Polisen (2020) Övergrepp mot barn på nätet ökar

34. Childhood (2018) Varannan tjej under femton år sexkontaktad på nätet

35. Erlandsson, Å. Polisen: "Ny grupp unga säljer sex under corona", SvD 2020-05-19

36. Nyhetsmorgon, Riskerna när yngre tjejer viker ut sig på nätet, TV4 2020-09-07

was introduced in 2018, reports of “revenge porn” and illegal dissemination of pictures online have increased and police judge that the number of unreported cases is very high.<sup>37</sup> In 2019 1,437 crimes of unlawful intrusion were reported, with proceedings brought in only 16 cases.<sup>38</sup>

The proportion of men and boys who consume pornography has increased. A survey conducted by the Public Health Agency of Sweden in 2017 shows that 70 percent of men consume pornography and of these, 41 percent of all boys and men aged 16–29 consume porn every day or several times a week.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, studies show that pornography has become more explicit and that almost all pornography today contains humiliation, abuse and violence against women.<sup>40</sup>

Women born outside Sweden are subjected to threats and violence to a higher extent than women born in Sweden (7.9 percent compared with 6.7 percent).<sup>41</sup> Regarding threats and violence in the home, women born outside Sweden suffer to twice the extent of women born in Sweden.<sup>42</sup> Women with a temporary residence permit under the two-year rule who are also the victims of violence are a very vulnerable group. Read more under Article 9.

The number of people seeking help in cases of honour-related violence and oppression is increasing.<sup>43</sup> In 2019 just over 1,000 cases came into the national helpline on honour-related violence, 81 percent of which concerned girls or women.<sup>44</sup> A survey on the prevalence of honour-related violence and oppression among young people has shown that 66 percent of girls with parents born abroad are required to be virgins when they marry.<sup>45</sup> Read more under Article 16.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a widespread problem. In 2015 the National Board of Health and Welfare estimated that around 38,000 women and girls in Sweden had suffered FGM.<sup>46</sup> No new survey into the extent of the problem has been carried out in six years. There is a major need for knowledge-boosting initiatives in the healthcare sector to improve investigation skills and treatment of women who have suffered FGM<sup>47</sup> (See also Article 12 on healthcare). Similarly, the municipalities need to improve their procedures in cases where children risk being removed taken out of Sweden for the purpose of FGM. Read more under Article 16 on marriage and family relations.

Women with disabilities are a particularly vulnerable group in terms of violence and abuse. Work to combat men’s violence against women with disabilities is made more difficult by the lack of systematic data collection, and a

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37. SVT, Allt fler anmäler hämndporn, 2020-02-05

38. BRÅ, Lagföringsbeslut efter huvudbrott 2019, Personer lagförda för brott samt; BRÅ, Anmälda brott årsvis 2019, Anmälda brott

39. Folkhälsomyndigheten (2017) Sexuell och reproduktiv hälsa och rättigheter (SRHR) i Sverige 2017

40. Unizon (2017) 10 punkter från forskningen om porr och porrindustrin

41. Egna uttag ur databasen. SCB: Trygghet efter indikator, utländsk/svensk bakgrund och kön. Andelar i procent och skattat antal i tusental (2017), i: Sveriges Kvinnolobby (2019) Jämställdhet mot segregation! Utrikes födda kvinnors livsvillkor, makt och inflytande

42. Ibid. (2,5 procent, jämfört med 1,1 procent av kvinnor med svensk bakgrund, men viktigt att notera att mörkertalet när det gäller våld i hemmet är stort)

43. Länsstyrelsen Östergötland (2019) Samtalen till stödtelefonen fortsätter att öka samt; Länsstyrelsen Östergötland (2019) Årsrapport 2019

44. Länsstyrelsen Östergötland (2019) Årsrapport 2019

45. TRIS – tjejers rätt i samhället (2019) UNG 018 – En kartläggning av hedersrelaterat våld och förtryck bland unga i Uppsala

46. Socialstyrelsen (2015) Flickor och kvinnor i Sverige som kan ha varit utsatta för könsstympning

47. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2020) Förebyggande arbete mot könsstympning av kvinnor och flickor, Rapport 2020:10

lack of procedures for how to take disabilities into consideration in work on the national strategy to combat violence against women.<sup>48</sup>

Women with disabilities who are the victims of violence find it more difficult to obtain information on where they can turn to obtain help and support, and professions that encounter people with disabilities are often lacking skills in how to identify and tackle violence.<sup>49</sup>

### THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:

- **Introduce a judicial guarantee for sexual crimes.** All reported crimes must be investigated within a reasonable time and with the resources they require.
- **Earmark resources for the police's work to combat sexual crimes.** Set up special units to work on sexual crimes in every police region.
- **Raise awareness of sexual crimes and male violence against women in the judicial system.** Judges should undergo regular training on questions concerning sexual crimes and male violence against women in order to make the correct assessments.
- **Increase the penalty for gross violation of a woman's integrity to one year's imprisonment.** A crime for which the penalty is one year's imprisonment involves the opportunity to use rules that waive confidentiality to obtain important information from social services and the healthcare system and raises the status of the crime in the entire judicial chain.
- **Tighten up the law on restraining orders.** Remove fines from the range of penalties and abolish the materiality requirement on restraining orders. Authorise agencies to apply emergency protective measures in combination with electronic supervision and remove the opportunity to obtain an exemption from a restraining order.
- **Put a stop to procurement of women's shelters.** Allow charitable and non-profit women's shelters to be exempt from procurement under the Public Procurement Act. Promote partnership between non-profit organisations and the public sector (IOP).
- **Give permanent government grants to women's shelters.** Earmark resources for women's shelters to help women in prostitution, women subjected to honour-related violence, women with disabilities and ethnic minority groups.
- **Safeguard access to sheltered accommodation and trauma treatment nationwide.** Ensure that women with substance abuse or addiction problems gain access to sheltered housing with staff who have knowledge of the mechanisms of violence and abuse.
- **Safeguard support and protection for women with disabilities who have been victims of violence.** Municipalities are to be responsible for ensuring that information about sheltered housing reaches all women and that accommodation is accessible to women with disabilities. The agencies concerned should ensure that trends in violence against women and girls with disabilities can be monitored through statistics and indicators.
- **Limit the spread of pornography.** An inquiry should be appointed to investigate how the Act on illegal depictions of violence (Lagen om olaga våldsskildring) can be applied to online pornography and propose new legislation where necessary. The inquiry should also investigate the harmful effects for girls and women who are exploited in pornography and how their protection can be increased.

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48. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2018) System för uppföljning och analys av jämställdhetspolitiken, Rapport 2018:5  
se även Myndigheten för delaktighet (2017) Mäns våld mot kvinnor med funktionsnedsättning, 2017:29 och SCB (2020) Lämna ingen utanför

49. Myndigheten för delaktighet (2017) Mäns våld mot kvinnor med funktionsnedsättning, 2017:29

## Article 3. Development and advancement

### **CEDAW states:**

States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

### **The current situation:**

Developments in technology and the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) are bringing far-reaching social change worldwide. AI is being used to a greater extent in everything from recruitment and healthcare to translation and image analysis and bringing about changed working methods in almost all areas of society. As AI bases its knowledge and understanding on pattern recognition based on real-world data, however, there is a great risk of AI systems learning and reproducing negative and restricting stereotypes about women and men. As an example, the Swedish national insurance agency Försäkringskassan has identified risks of discrimination in the use of AI applications and is reviewing measures to tackle the risks.<sup>50</sup>

Although Sweden is one of the countries in the world that has come the furthest in digital transformation of society,<sup>51</sup> we lag behind in adapting legislation to protect women from discrimination, harassment and violence online. This may involve measures against everything from the prevalence of hate crime and degradation of women and pornographic content to the growing prevalence of grooming and sexual abuse online.<sup>52</sup> The Government's digitisation strategy lacks analysis and measures regarding protection for women and children from different forms of harassment and sexual exploitation online, for example. Read more under Article 2b on violence against women.

### **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Ensure that data does not reproduce negative stereotypes.** All data used as a basis for machine learning must be gender equality assured and disaggregated by sex to render women's experiences visible.
- **Earmark resources for research on how AI can be used to survey and tackle unequal structures.** Introduce requirements on a gender equality perspective in appropriations for developing AI technology.

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50. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2020) Artificiell intelligens är med och skapar jämställdhet

51. Infrastrukturdepartementet, Sverige etta i världen på digital samhällsomvandling, pressmeddelande 2020-10-19

52. Polisen (2020) Övergripp mot barn på nätet ökar

## Article 4. Temporary measures

### **CEDAW states:**

To accelerate the progress of gender equality States may make use of temporary laws such as affirmative actions and quotas. These temporary laws should be repealed once gender equality has been achieved.

### **The current situation:**

The Swedish Corporate Governance Code contains requirements that listed companies must strive for equal gender representation. However, the Code does not apply to all companies and compliance with it is not compulsory, although deviations from the Code are to be reported in the annual report.

In 2016 the Government proposed that penalty charges be imposed on listed companies that have an uneven gender representation. However, a majority of the parties in the Riksdag opposed the proposal, which resulted in it never being implemented. Sweden is also one of the countries that has blocked the directive on quotas for female board members of large listed companies drawn up by the European Commission.<sup>53</sup>

Once it was clear that quotas were not going to be introduced, the trend towards a more gender equal distribution of power in the business sector tailed off. In 2019, 65 percent of the elected board members of listed companies were men, an increase of 0.2 percent on the previous year. It is particularly serious that the proportion of women among new Board members is shrinking. In 2019, 35 percent of the newly elected members were women, compared with 37 percent in 2018 and 50 percent in 2015.<sup>54</sup> Only 10 percent of chair of the board posts are held by a woman.<sup>55</sup> In the senior management teams of listed companies, the proportion of women was 25 percent in 2020, up only 1 percent on the previous year.<sup>56</sup> 90 percent of the managing directors of companies are men.<sup>57</sup>

The same trend is seen in large non-listed companies, where the proportion of women on Boards of Directors was 19 percent in 2020. Almi state that in principle progress has stood still since they began carrying out measurements in 2013.<sup>58</sup> People with a non-Swedish background are also under-represented. A quarter of the population have a foreign background but make up only 8 percent of directors of major companies.<sup>59</sup> Information on the proportion of women and men within this group is unavailable.

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53. Riksdagen (2016) Civilutskottets Betänkande 2016/17:CU6

54. Kollegiet för svensk bolagsstyrning (2020) Kvinnoandelar i börsföretagens styrelser

55. SCB (2020) På tal om kvinnor och män 2020

56. Allbright (2020) Pandemin backar bandet

57. SCB (2020) På tal om kvinnor och män 2020

58. Almi (2020) Utvecklingen står stilla – långt till jämställda styrelser

59. Almi (2020) Styrelser – outnyttjad resurs i företags utveckling

## **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Introduce gender quotas in business.** A sanction charge should be imposed on listed companies with more than 60 percent men on their boards. Sweden should support the EU Directive on gender balance among non-executive directors.
- **Introduce active measures for more women in high positions in the business community.** The business community should work more actively to get more women into CEO and chair of the board posts, for example by developing their recruitment and nomination processes.
- **Ensure compliance with the Corporate Governance Code.** The Swedish Corporate Governance Board should set up a new target of gender equal company boards and expand its work on monitoring and supporting companies' gender equality efforts. The same requirements should apply to large, non-listed companies.

## Article 5. Stereotypical gender roles

### **CEDAW states:**

States shall take measures to combat prejudices, stereotyped gender roles and all practices based on women's subordination or inferiority to men. States shall ensure that women and men have equal responsibility for caring for and raising children.

### **The current situation:**

Stereotypical gender roles have a major impact on the lives of women and girls and are expressed, among other things, in choice of education and career. Women make up about one percent of workers in the ten most male-dominated occupations, all in the construction sector. Conversely, only a few percent of nurses and preschool teachers are men.<sup>60</sup> Read more under Articles 10 and 11 on education and employment respectively.

Another area characterised by stereotypical gender roles is the use of parental insurance. According to Försäkringskassan's calculations, fathers on average are only at home with the child for 20 percent of the time.<sup>61</sup> Read more under Article 11 on employment and the labour market.

Stereotypical gender roles are also upheld by sexualisation and objectification of women in the media. In recent years, a major change has taken place in this respect due to the increased use of social media. Several studies show a link between use of social media and mental illness. In a survey run by insurance company Länsförsäkringar, almost half of young women stated that social media had led to them feeling dissatisfied with their bodies.<sup>62</sup> Another survey conducted by Lund University shows that the self-confidence of girls is record high at mellanstadiet (years 4–6) but that it then plummets, and one explanation is stated to be the use of social media and the constant flood of images of unattainable physical ideals.<sup>63</sup>

Furthermore, stereotypical gender roles are widespread in advertising and marketing. An examination of the prevalence of gender stereotypical advertising conducted by the Equality Ombudsman shows that the current system of self-regulation by the advertising industry's own regulatory body the Advertising Ombudsman is not working well enough. The examination also shows that marketing has become more refined in and using social media.<sup>64</sup> Despite promises for legislation to prevent sex discrimination in advertising being made by the parties in government in the 2014 election, no new legislation has yet been passed.<sup>65</sup>

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60. SCB (2020) Yrkesregistret med yrkesstatistik

61. Sveriges Radio (2019) Föräldraledigheten mer ojämlig än statistiken, Ekot 2019-02-10

62. Länsförsäkringar (2018) STUDIE: Unga känner sig misslyckade av sociala medier, 2018-02-13

63. Lunds Universitet (2020) Mellanstadie flickor har gott självförtroende, forskning.se 2021-01-21

se även; Sveriges radio (2021) Ökat självförtroende hos tjejer på mellanstadiet, Studio Ett 2021-01-19

64. Käll, Sundström och Zare (2019) på uppdrag av Diskrimineringsombudsmannen, Kartläggning av förekomsten av könsstereotyp och sexistisk reklam – slutredovisning

65. Sveriges Radio (2016) Ingen lag mot sexistisk reklam trots vallöfte, Ekot 2016-10-13

The opinions of men are more frequently in focus in news streams. Men make up almost 70 percent of the people interviewed in the news media.<sup>66</sup> Although Sweden is one of the countries with the highest proportion of female politicians in the world, only 32 percent of the people who express an opinion on politics in the news are women.<sup>67</sup>

#### **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Ensure that the educational mandate to combat gender stereotypes in preschools and schools is fulfilled.** School staff should be given constant skills development training to develop active and systematic gender equality work.
- **Clarify the mandate of careers officers to encourage study and career choices that break stereotypical gender patterns.** Ensure that careers officers are aware of gender equality so that they help to overturn gender stereotypical choices rather than entrenching them. This applies both to careers officers advising on upper secondary school choices and in higher education.
- **Introduce legislation to combat sex discrimination in advertising and sexualisation of public space.** Ensure compliance with legislation through supervision and provide clear information to the general public on the ability to report advertising. The law should also cover advertising published in digital channels.

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66. Rättviseförmedlingen (2018) Rättvisaren 2018 del 2

67. Ibid.

## Article 6. Prostitution and human trafficking

### **CEDAW states:**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.

### **The current situation:**

In 1999 Sweden was the first country in the world to introduce an act banning the purchasing of sexual services. 20 years later results show that the act has been a success. Prostitution has fallen in Sweden and the act is still the most important tool that the police have for tackling trafficking for sexual exploitation. Above all the Act has had a normative effect and has been highly supported by the population.<sup>68</sup> However, despite successful legislation on buying sex, there remain major challenges in this area.

Few cases of human trafficking and buying sex lead to prosecution and a conviction. 94 cases of human trafficking for sexual purposes were reported in 2019. Proceedings were only brought against three of these crimes<sup>69</sup> and none of the preliminary investigations resulted in a conviction.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, few cases of procuring and buying sex lead to prosecution and a conviction. In several counties, not one single person was convicted of buying sexual services in 2019, despite 764 cases being reported in Sweden overall.<sup>71</sup> No-one has been given a custodial sentence for buying sex since the law was introduced.<sup>72</sup>

There is a major shortage of sheltered housing and treatment centres that take in people who have been exploited for prostitution, especially outside the city regions. The opportunities for protection and support in a treatment centre or sheltered housing are even more limited for people who also have problems with substance abuse or are suffering mental illness as a result of the abuse.<sup>73</sup>

Many municipalities' social services departments are poorly informed of how human trafficking cases are to be treated, which delays the work of the police and makes it more difficult.<sup>74</sup> According to an examination by the National Board of Health and Welfare, only 20 percent of the municipalities have procedures to identify people with experience of being exploited for prostitution.<sup>75</sup>

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68. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2019) Sexköpslagen – från kontroversiell lag till internationell modell. Se även Regeringen (2010) Förbud mot köp av sexuell tjänst – En utvärdering 1999-2008 SOU 2010:49

69. Polisen (2020) Människohandel för sexuella och andra ändamål Lägesrapport 21

70. Ibid.

71. Sveriges Radio (2020) Polisen: Vi prioriterar inte sexköp, Ekot 2020-02-19

72. Sveriges Radio (2020) Åklagare: Dags för HD att ompröva straffet för sexköp, Ekot 2020-02-21

73. Polisen (2019) Människohandel för sexuella och andra ändamål Lägesrapport 20

74. Ibid.

75. Socialstyrelsen (2019) Redovisning av regeringsuppdrag att kartlägga behov av kompetensinsatser inom socialtjänst och hälso- och sjukvård – prostitution

samt; Polisen (2019) Människohandel för sexuella och andra ändamål Lägesrapport 20

In recent years, the police have gained increased information about prostitution taking place in Thai massage salons.<sup>76</sup> In 2019 there were about 300 Thai massage salons in the Stockholm region, about 100 of which are suspected to offer sexual services.<sup>77</sup>

The existence of “sugar dating” is growing, i.e. mainly young girls being tricked into prostitution on the assumption that they will be given money or expensive gifts in exchange for accompanying older men who contact them via specialised online services. Women’s organisations have evidence that young girls with experience of sexual violence and mental illness being drawn into prostitution via sites such as Onlyfans, where they are encouraged to upload images with sexual content in return for payment.<sup>78</sup>

Another worrying development is the increase in the number of young people buying sex. A survey by Sveriges Radio from 2019 showed that a third of all convicted buyers of sex were born in the 1990s.<sup>79</sup> According to the police, high porn consumption is a common denominator among younger buyers of sex.<sup>80</sup>

The National Board of Health and Welfare continues to use the term “transactional sex” to describe prostitution, which runs counter to the wording of the Government remit, which takes the view that prostitution and trade in humans for sexual purposes is violence and not “sex”.<sup>81</sup>

80 percent of sex purchases by Swedes takes place abroad, either on holiday or when travelling for business.<sup>82</sup> Although in the Government policy statement of 2014 the Prime Minister declared that buying sex abroad is to be criminalised, no legislation has yet been put in place.

The Government has laid down that Sweden is to work to spread the Swedish Sex Purchase Act (sexköpslagen) and work internationally to combat the view of prostitution as a type of work. At the same time, Sweden is one of the foremost financiers of international organisations that work to decriminalise the sex trade, including sex purchase, pimping and brothels.<sup>83</sup> Sweden’s high ambitions in terms of international aid are positive but funding should be made conditional such that money does not go to support trade in women in the sex industry.

Swedes’ trade in surrogate mothers, mainly in poor countries, has increased dramatically since the first surrogate company was established in Sweden in 2017. A Government inquiry in 2016 found that commercial surrogacy contravenes international conventions on the rights of children and women and should be prohibited.<sup>84</sup> Despite this, in 2020 the Government appointed an official inquiry that seeks to make it easier for Swedes to order surrogacy abroad.<sup>85</sup>

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76. Polisen (2019) Människohandel för sexuella och andra ändamål Lägesrapport 20

77. Polisen (2020) Människohandel för sexuella och andra ändamål Lägesrapport 21

78. Lindström, R. Sajten Only fans trendar utanför porrindustrin – men omgärdas av kontoffel och moms-bråk, DN.se 2020-09-07

Se även; Talita (2019) Syns man inte, finns man inte – en inblick i den svenska porrindustrin

79. Sveriges Radio (2020) Var tredje dömd sexköpare är 90-talist, SR Granskar 2020-02-19

80. MÅN (2020) “Prostitution och pornografi hänger ihop” – intervju med polisen och författaren Simon Häggström

81. Polisen (2019) Människohandel för sexuella och andra ändamål Lägesrapport 20

82. Folkhälsomyndigheten (2017) Sexuell och reproduktiv hälsa och rättigheter (SRHR) i Sverige 2017, s. 183

83. Advancing Human Rights (2017) Population – Sex Workers, 2017, humanrightsfund.org

84. Justitiedepartementet, Olika vägar till föräldraskap, SOU 2016:11

85. Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet och Justitiedepartementet, Utredning tillsätts för att överväga utökade möjligheter att göra utländska föräldraskap gällande i Sverige, pressmeddelande 2020-02-28

## THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:

- **Establish prostitution groups in every police region and earmark resources for the police to combat prostitution.** At least two people should work to trace and investigate sex purchasing crime in every police region.
- **Introduce compulsory skills boosting interventions in the judicial system.** The Prosecution Authority and the courts must increase their skills and prioritise work to combat these crimes.
- **Earmark resources for operations that provide protection and support to victims of human trafficking, trauma treatment and exit programmes.** Earmark resources for municipal prostitution teams to stabilise and develop their operations in the long term. Ensure long-term and sustainable financing for the national support programme (NSP) to guarantee the rights of crime victims to support and protection for at least 30 days.
- **Give women who have been the victims of human trafficking time-limited residence permits.** Social services should be given the right to apply for time-limited residence permits for victims of human trafficking. More actors than merely heads of preliminary investigations should be given the right to apply for a period of reflection.
- **Remove fines from the range of penalties for buying sex.** It must not be possible to buy your way out of buying sex.
- **Criminalise buying sex abroad.** Swedes must not infringe the human rights of women in Sweden, nor in other parts of the world.
- **Make the link between pornography and prostitution clear.** It should be prohibited to earn money from commercial sexual exploitation whether this takes place offline or online. An inquiry should investigate how posing sexually in front of webcams for payment and pornography for payment are covered by the Sex Purchase Act.
- **Ensure that no aid funding is going towards work to legalise or decriminalise the sex industry.** Place conditions on funding to UN organisations and organisations that receive aid through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.
- **Ban commercial trade in surrogacy.** Swedes must not be permitted to exploit financially vulnerable women in other countries to bear and give birth to children.

## Article 7. Political and public life

### **CEDAW states:**

States must ensure that women do not face discrimination in politics. Women must have the same opportunities as men to vote, to be elected to political office, to work politically, to work in public institutions and authorities and to join non-profit and political organisations.

### **The current situation:**

Since the 2018 election, the Swedish Government comprises 12 women and 11 men as ministers. 46 percent of Members of the Riksdag are women, which is slightly more than the 2010 and 2014 elections.

At local level, the gender representation is generally equal. In the 2018 election, 43 percent of all members elected to municipal councils were women. However, there are major differences between and within municipalities.<sup>86</sup>

The highest management positions at local and regional level tend to be held by men despite the organisations that they head being dominated by women. 57 percent of all chief executive officers of municipalities, 68 percent of mayors<sup>87</sup> and 71 percent of chief executive officers of regions are men.<sup>88</sup> Gender representation is most unequal in the highest positions at all political levels. 100 years after the introduction of female suffrage, Sweden has never had a female prime minister.

The fact that representation is so even in elected assemblies at all political levels is largely due to the principle of alternately male and female candidate lists (“varannan damernas”) introduced in 1994. Today, however, several parties have abandoned this principle. Before the Riksdag election in 2018, three out of seven parties had completely equal lists, while four parties had between 30 and 45 percent women on their candidate lists.<sup>89</sup>

Threats and hate against politicians is a serious and growing problem in democracy. 32 percent of elected women at municipal, regional and Riksdag level, and almost as many men, stated that they received threats and were the victims of harassment in the 2018 election year in Brå’s Politicians’ Safety Survey. The survey also shows that the prevalence of threats and harassment is growing, especially on social media.<sup>90</sup> According to The Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), elected women tend to receive harsher and more sexist comments than elected men.<sup>91</sup>

Many women and girls are also engaged in the women’s movement and the fight for gender equality and women’s rights. Despite their important mandate, many women’s organisations are under-funded. The Government appro-

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86. SCB (2020) Valda av folket. En studie av social representativitet i folkvalda församlingar, Demokratistatistisk rapport 25

87. SCB (2019) Det tog 75 år till en jämn könsfördelning bland kommunpolitikerna

88. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2021) Ett sekel av rösträtt och valbarhet, Rapport 2021-1

89. Ibid.

90. BRÅ (2019) Politikernas trygghetsundersökning (PTU)

91. SKR (2018) Digitalt hat – hat och hot mot kommunpolitiker

priation to women's organisations and gender equality projects amounts to SEK 34.6 million and has not been increased since 2006, despite an increasing number of organisations sharing this funding and their expenditure having increased. Women's organisations also receive considerably smaller grants than other types of organisations.<sup>92</sup>

#### **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Take hate and threats against elected women seriously.** Ensure that the tougher penalties for crimes against elected representatives are applied. Reinforce the tracing and investigation work of the police in cases of hate against elected representatives on social media.
- **Strengthen the position of women born abroad within the political parties.** The parties should work actively to recruit women from under-represented groups as members and to boards, operational committees and nomination committees.
- **Increase funding to women's organisations.** The Government funding to women's organisations should be doubled.

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92. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2020) Styrning ger resultat, Rapport 2020:4

## Article 8. International work and representation

### **CEDAW states:**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

### **The current situation:**

The Government has laid down that the foreign service is to strive for gender equality in appointing Swedes to international posts.<sup>93</sup> An examination of Swedish embassies at foreign missions shows an even gender representation.<sup>94</sup> An examination of the gender representation of posted staff from 8 Swedish agencies in 2019 and 2020 shows that there is predominantly a major lack of gender equality in the Swedish Armed Forces (136 women and 1,247 men were posted on an international mission in 2019).

Since 2015 Sweden has been coordinating a female mediation network with the aim of increasing the number of Swedish women and women from war-torn countries participating in international peace processes. Although the initiative is welcome and appropriate, the work so far has not resulted in any of the participants being given the mandate to participate as a negotiator in a peace process.

In 2016 the Government presented the Third national action plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, in line with CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30. The action plan has created a valuable forum for dialogue and exchanging experiences between different agencies and civil society. However, it is a major shortcoming that the action plan does not specify activities or indicators, which makes it difficult to follow up and evaluate the work. According to an evaluation by Sweco, the lack of expected outcomes and activities means that it is difficult to attribute any results to the action plan.<sup>95</sup>

An examination of Sida's work on gender mainstreaming shows that, despite high ambitions, the work is not systematic nor cohesive, and that there are shortcomings in staff knowledge of gender mainstreaming.<sup>96</sup>

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93. Utrikesdepartementet (2020) Utrikesförvaltningens handlingsplan för feministisk utrikespolitik 2019–2022 med inriktning och åtgärder för 2020

se även Regeringskansliet (2016) Att arbeta internationellt, regeringskansliet.se

94. Sammanställning av tjänstgörande svenska ambassadörer vid utlandsmyndigheter 2020, information från Utrikesdepartementet 09-09-2020.

95. Sweco (2020) Utvärdering av Sveriges tredje nationella handlingsplan för kvinnor, fred och säkerhet 2016-2020, s. 33ff.

96. Bjarnegård och Ugglå (2018) Putting Priority into Practice: Sida's Implementation of its Plan for Gender Integration, EBA Rapport 2018:07

## **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Conduct regular knowledge-building interventions on gender mainstreaming** to ensure that all staff in the foreign service and agencies that work internationally have knowledge in this area.
- **Ensure women's representation and active participation in peacekeeping initiatives.** Integrate a gender equality perspective in initiatives and work to increase transparency in appointments in peace negotiations.

## Article 9. Nationality

### **CEDAW states:**

Women shall have the same right as men to become a citizen of a country and to retain or change their citizenship. Women shall have the same right as men to influence the citizenship of their children.

### **The current situation:**

The majority of asylum seekers who come to Sweden are men. In the period 2010–2019, 65 percent of all asylum seekers were men and 35 percent were women.<sup>97</sup> In 2020 4,901 women and 5,508 men were granted residence permits as refugees or for reasons of protection.<sup>98</sup> In the same year, 500 unaccompanied children came to Sweden, 31 percent of whom were girls.<sup>99</sup>

In recent years the Swedish Migration Agency has conducted several initiatives to increase awareness of women's grounds for asylum as part of the asylum process.<sup>100</sup> Despite these measures, women's and civil society organisations receive information from asylum seekers and officials aiding them that there are failings in the examination of women's grounds for asylum.

Above all, major demands are made of an asylum seeker being able to provide an account of their situation and their need for protection. The Swedish Migration Agency rarely takes into account the fact that women may find it difficult to provide an account of their need for protection if they come from countries where women's rights are highly restricted and where women are not traditionally used to asserting their rights. It is also difficult for women to provide an account of their need for protection if they are unaware that their experience may constitute grounds for asylum, or if they come from an honour context that means that talking about experiences of sexual violence, for example, can be felt to be especially shameful. At the same time, poor information and shortcomings in procedures to draw attention to women's grounds for asylum mean that women often do not have their needs for protection met.

It is still the case that women are denied asylum with reference to their having a "male network" in their country of origin. Telling women that male relatives can protect them in their country of origin is problematic when the country in question is one in which women's rights are highly restricted and the threat against the woman may in fact come from this male network itself.<sup>101</sup>

The Temporary Asylum Act introduced in 2016 has had a severe impact on women and children. Under the Act, the opportunity for family reunification has been restricted for everyone who has been granted a temporary residence permit. As women are in the majority among people who come to Sweden

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97. Justitiedepartementet, En långsiktigt hållbar migrationspolitik, SOU 2020:54, s. 434

98. Migrationsverket (2021) Beviljade uppehållstillstånd 2020

99. Migrationsverket (2021) Inkomna ansökningar om asyl 2020

100. Migrationsverket (2020) Årsredovisning 2019

101. Asplund, E. och Sjöqvist, S. (2019) Manligt nätverk, Uppsala universitets människorättsklinik samt; Asylrättscentrum, Kvinnors asylskäl och manligt nätverk, [www.sweref.org](http://www.sweref.org)

through family immigration, women and children have been prevented from coming to Sweden and being reunited with their families.<sup>102</sup>

Restrictions to the opportunity to obtain a residence permit in Sweden introduced in 2016 also mean stricter income requirements for family migration. The Act takes no account of the different circumstances of women and men or the fact that it takes longer for women to become established on the labour market than for men.<sup>103</sup> The Migration Committee which presented proposals for new migration legislation in 2020 actually judged that the income requirement for family migration constitutes a risk of a lock-in effect for women but nevertheless presented such a legislative proposal.<sup>104</sup>

The new proposed migration legislation also means that the “2-year rule” will be extended to at least 3 years, which means that women who have come to Sweden due to a relationship with a Swedish citizen and have been the victim of violence risk further being locked into violent and destructive relationships.<sup>105</sup>

Women who live in the Swedish Migration Agency’s accommodation for asylum seekers have stated that they have been the victim of harassment and feel unsafe and watched by the men when they leave their rooms. This has led to many women and girls isolating themselves in their rooms.<sup>106</sup>

#### **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Make it possible for women and girls to come to Sweden by safe routes.** Give women and accompanying children special priority among quota refugees.
- **Safeguard women’s rights to asylum.** Conduct regular quality follow-up of inquiries and decisions concerning women’s grounds for asylum and produce an action plan to quality assure the process of examining women’s grounds for asylum.
- **Increase awareness of women’s grounds for asylum at the Swedish Migration Agency and the migration courts.** Conduct compulsory and regular training on women’s grounds for asylum.
- **Give women their own permanent residence permits.** Women must obtain their own permanent residence permits that are not linked to a man’s. Remove the 2-year rule in the Aliens Act.
- **Safeguard the right to family reunification.** Women must have the opportunity to come to Sweden on equal terms as men and be reunited with their families.
- **Offer separate asylum accommodation for women.** If this is not possible, separate women-only zones should be offered in mixed accommodation. Introduce compulsory training on gender equality and women’s rights for staff in accommodation for asylum seekers. Employ female staff in accommodation which encompasses women.

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102. Migrationsinfo.se (2021) Den tillfälliga lagen i korthet samt; Rådgivningsbyrån för asylsökande och flyktingar (2018) Migrationsrättens framtid – en redogörelse för de juridiska riskerna med att förlänga lagen (2016:752) om tillfälliga begränsningar av möjligheten att få uppehållstillstånd i Sverige

103. Röda korset (2018) Humanitära konsekvenser av den tillfälliga utlänningslagen se även; Justitiedepartementet, En långsiktigt hållbar migrationspolitik, SOU 2020:54, s. 429

104. Justitiedepartementet, En långsiktigt hållbar migrationspolitik, SOU 2020:54, s. 433

105. Terrafem (2020) Remissvar 2020-12-07 Justitiedepartementet, Betänkandet en långsiktigt hållbar migrationspolitik (SOU 2020:54)

106. SVT, Kvinnor vittnar om utsatthet på asylboenden, 2016-05-30

se även; BRÅ.se, Utsatthet för brott på asylboenden

samt; Sveriges Kvinnolobby (2016) Säkra tryggheten för asylsökande kvinnor och flickor i Sverige

## Article 10. Education

### **CEDAW states:**

Women shall have the same rights as men to education and the same opportunities to have an academic career. This applies to both urban and rural areas and to all levels of education from preschool to university and vocational training. States shall ensure that women do not end their education too early. Curricula and textbooks must be free from sex role stereotyping. States shall ensure that women and men have the same access to grants, scholarships and research funding. Women shall have the same opportunities as men to participate in sports and physical education in schools.

### **The current situation:**

There is a need for a deliberate gender equality perspective in school management in order to understand and put in place measures for greater gender equality. However, instead, the Government has pushed through changes in the curricula of preschools, compulsory schools and upper secondary schools that involve a return to gender neutral language that renders the situation of girls and boys invisible.<sup>107</sup>

### ***Compulsory and upper secondary school***

Under the Education Act, the education provided in Swedish schools must be equal, but in reality there are major and growing differences between schools. Between 2000 and 2016 the differences between the average results of schools have almost doubled, which is largely due to changes in the student composition.<sup>108</sup> Children whose parents have low and high levels of education respectively and children with Swedish and foreign backgrounds respectively are increasingly attending different schools. Free choice of education and the right to freely set up schools have contributed to this negative trend.<sup>109</sup>

Besides segregation, the results in compulsory and upper secondary education are characterised by major and lasting gender differences. The latest PISA survey shows that 15 year-old girls perform 34 points better than boys in literacy and 8 points better in science, while the results in mathematics are equal.<sup>110</sup> The teachers' magazine *Läraren's* survey of the grades in year 9 show that girls perform better than boys in all subjects and that the differences have increased in several subjects.<sup>111</sup>

The education debate often focuses on the poor results of boys, while ill-health and other problems that are common among girls tend to be over-

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107. Utbildningsdepartementet, Förtydligad läroplan ska öka jämställdheten i skolan, pressmeddelande 2018-04-27

108. Skolverket (2018) Analyser av familjebakgrundens betydelse för skolresultaten och skillnader mellan skolor, Rapport 467

109. Utbildningsdepartementet, En mer likvärdig skola – minskad skolsegregation och förbättrad resurstilldelning, SOU 2020:28

110. Skolverket (2019) Pisa 2018

111. Nejman, F. Flickorna har gått om pojkar i alla ämnen, *Läraren*, 2020-12-02

looked. 21 percent of 11 year-old girls, 47 percent of 13 year-old girls and 73 percent of 15 year-old girls state that schoolwork makes them feel quite stressed or very stressed.<sup>112</sup> Read more about the health of girls and women under Article 12 on healthcare.

In addition to pressure to succeed at school, girls' health is affected by sexual harassments. More than twice as many girls (14 percent) as boys (6 percent) at secondary school state that they have been the victim of sexual harassment at school.<sup>113</sup> In 2017 thousands of girls described their experiences in the Swedish #Metoo appeals #Räckupphanden and #Tystiklassen. Since then, several projects and interventions have been carried out with a focus on consent culture and development of sexuality education.

The examination conducted by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate on sexuality education shows that three out of four headteachers do not follow up teachers' skills in sexuality education and that the majority of teachers are not given training in this area.<sup>114</sup> In 2020 the Government decided that student teachers are to pass an examination in sexuality education,<sup>115</sup> but there are no guidelines on which knowledge is to be required or interventions to ensure that teachers already in post receive the same skills boost.

Girls who live in an honour context are sometimes prevented by their families from participating in sexuality education and sports lessons. Schools are obliged to report concerns to social services when there is a suspicion that a student is being restricted by norms of honour. Far too often, teachers or other staff fail to report concerns and on other occasions, social services do not act on reports rapidly or forcefully enough. For example, only 70 of the almost 32,000 concerns reported in Stockholm in 2019 concerned problems with honour.<sup>116</sup> Read more under Article 16 on marriage and family relations.

Many students make gender stereotypical choices when choosing upper secondary education. Of 18 national upper secondary programmes, only four programmes have an even gender distribution. For example, 82 percent of the students on the humanities programme are girls, while 83 percent of the students on the technology programme are boys. Vocational upper secondary courses are often dominated by boys, such as the construction programme in which 91 percent of the students are boys. However, this does not apply to the handicraft programme and the health and social care programme which have 94 and 76 percent students who are girls respectively.<sup>117</sup>

### **Preschool**

Everyone who works at preschool must work actively for gender equality between girls and boys. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate's examination of the work of 36 preschools showed that 97 percent needed to develop their work with gender equality.<sup>118</sup>

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112. Folkhälsomyndigheten (2018) Skolbarns hälsovanor i Sverige 2017-2018

113. Friends (2019) Friendsrapporten 2019 | Ensamma elever är mer utsatta

114. Skolinspektionen (2018) Sex- och samlevnadsundervisning, Tematisk kvalitetsgranskning 2018

115. Utbildningsdepartementet, Unga ska få sexualundervisning i skolan, inte av porrindustrin, debattartikel 2020-09-14

116. SVT, Socialtjänsten i Stockholm rapporterar misstanketyper i orosanmälningar, 2020-06-02

117. Skolverket (2019) Uppföljning av gymnasieskolan, Rapport 480

118. Skolinspektionen (2018) Förskolans kvalitet och måluppfyllelse – ett treårigt regeringsuppdrag att granska förskolan

The group sizes at preschool often exceed Swedish National Agency for Education recommendations, affecting both the children and staff, the majority of the latter being women. According to the Swedish National Agency for Education, girls are particularly harmed by large group sizes as their needs tend to be at a greater risk of being ignored. Girls in large groups, in particular girls with neurological vulnerabilities, tend to have complex linguistic difficulties.<sup>119</sup>

Access to and the use of childcare varies between municipalities. 95 percent of all children aged 3–5 attended preschool or participated in other educational activities in 2018, but in certain groups, attendance is considerably lower. Children of parents with low levels of education and a foreign background often attend preschool less than other children.<sup>120</sup> Lower registration at preschool often covaries with lower labour force participation figures for women in socially disadvantaged areas. Three out of ten municipalities do not offer childcare outside office hours and where night-time childcare is provided, requirements are often made that make it difficult for mothers with temporary jobs, hourly paid contracts and other jobs with flexible working hours to benefit from childcare provision.<sup>121</sup>

### **Higher education**

Women dominate education at bachelor's degree level and advanced level and posts at a lower level in academia while the proportion of men increases higher up the academic hierarchy.<sup>122</sup> In the academic year 2019/2020 61 percent of all students at bachelor's and advanced level are women<sup>123</sup> but only 30 percent of professors.

The Government has set a target of half of all newly recruited professors being women by 2030. In 2019 39 percent were women, which is lower than the previous year. Nor have the universities and colleges of higher education succeeded in attaining the recruitment goals of their specific seats of learning,<sup>124</sup> although there are major differences between the universities. At Sweden's technology institutions women are under-represented from bachelor's to postgraduate level, where only 38 percent of the students and 18 percent of the professors are women.<sup>125</sup>

### **Research**

Public appropriations for research are still not allocated on a gender equal basis, although the situation has improved in recent years. Since 2018 State-run educational establishments have been tasked with taking into account gender equality in the allocation of research funding through their appropriation letters. Different educational establishments have made varying amounts of progress in this respect.<sup>126</sup>

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119. Skolverket (2016) Barngruppers storlek i förskolan, Rapport 433, 2016

120. Skolverket (2018) Deltagande i förskola, Dnr: 2018:12

121. Skolinspektionen (2016) Omsorg på obekvämtid

122. Forskning, frihet, framtid – kunskap och innovation för Sverige, Prop. 2020/21:60

123. SCB, Statistiksamling högskolan, Uppgifter hämtade 2020-05-24

124. Forskning, frihet, framtid – kunskap och innovation för Sverige Prop. 2020/21:60

125. SCB, Statistiksamling högskolan, Uppgifter hämtade 2020-05-24.

126. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2020) Jämställdhet i akademien – slutredovisning av jämställdhetsintegration i högskolor och universitet programperioden 2016–2019, Rapport 2020:6

### **Students with disabilities**

The gender equality problems described also affect girls and women with disabilities. Often their ill-health and vulnerability, for example, to violence at school is even greater than that of other girls and women.<sup>127</sup> However, it is difficult to state how girls and boys attending ordinary schools are performing as statistics on how girls and boys perform at school are not broken down in this regard.<sup>128</sup>

### **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Render girls and boys visible in the school's steering documents.** Gender mainstream and include the sex of students in the curricula for preschool, compulsory and upper secondary school to render the conditions and needs of girls visible.
- **Strengthen the work of schools to combat honour-related violence and oppression.** Ensure that all staff who work in schools are informed about honour-related violence and oppression, make sure that all schools comply with the law that states that schools have an obligation to report concerns when vulnerabilities are suspected and that reports lead to measures.
- **Modernise sexuality education.** Make sexuality education a separate subject that is compulsory and ensure a consistent gender equality perspective and a critical approach to pornography.
- **Tighten up the recruitment targets for universities and colleges of higher education** to increase the proportion of women who gain professorships.
- **Gender-equal allocation of research funding.** Task external funding bodies who distribute public research funding with increasing the proportion of applications from women, retain and make clear the mandate to educational institutions to allocate research funding more equally and require that private research funding bodies report statistics by gender in their annual reports.
- **Ensure better support for girls with special educational needs.** Conduct a knowledge boost in schools and teacher training with follow-up support to identify and meet the needs for girls with disabilities.

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127. Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten, SPSM (2020) Resultat av SPSM arbete med jämställdhetsintegrering 2017-2019

128. Ekman Aldén, M. och Malmberg, F. "Det behövs statistik om elever med funktionsnedsättning", Dagens samhälle, 2020-11-05

## Article 11. Employment and the labour market

### **CEDAW states:**

States must ensure that women are not discriminated in the labour market. Businesses and organisations that are employers must use the same basis for evaluating women and men. Women and men shall have the same right to choose their own job and to be promoted. Women shall have the same wage as men when carrying out the same type of work. Women shall have the same rights to social benefits as men in the event of unemployment, illness or injury at work. They shall also enjoy the same pension rights as men. Women shall have the same right as men to work in a good working environment and under safe employment conditions.

Pregnant women shall be given extra protection, for example to take time off if the job is physically demanding, to take sick leave or change job. It shall be prohibited to dismiss women because they marry, become pregnant or take parental leave. Women shall be able to take time off work with economic support from the State when giving birth. They shall not lose their job, suffer any sanctions at work or lose benefits because they have a child. States shall guarantee childcare, for example preschool, so that parents can combine family obligations with paid work.

### **The current situation:**

#### ***The pay gap***

Women continue to be lower paid than men for equal work of equal value. Although women have higher education than men, women's pay was on average 9.9 percent lower than that of men in 2019. This is a reduction of 0.8 percentage points compared with the year before.<sup>129</sup>

A comparison between the rates of pay in women-dominated occupations and equivalent occupations shows, however, that the difference is considerably greater (15 percent). Recalculated in monetary terms, this means that employees in female-dominated occupations earn SEK 5,400 less than employees in equivalent occupations every month. Pay differences between women and men largely depend on the fact that occupations that gather more women are valued lower by society than occupations that gather more men. Nothing indicates that the structural pay gap is shrinking; on the other hand the gulfs between several major women-dominated occupations and comparable male-dominated occupations have grown in the past three years.<sup>130</sup>

The Swedish model for setting pay involves negotiations between the employer and employee organisations in the industry setting the framework

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129. Medlingsinstitutet (2020) Löneskillnaden mellan kvinnor och män 2019

130. Lönelotsarna (2020) Strukturella löneskillnader 2019 – På hela arbetsmarknaden och i välfärdens bristyrken

for pay rises across the entire labour market. This means that it is difficult for pay levels in women-dominated occupations to catch up with pay levels in equivalent male-dominated occupations, because increases higher than the negotiated level are not permitted.

In addition to sex segregation, the labour market is characterised by ethnic segregation which means that women and men born abroad tend to work in low-paid, women-dominated occupations.<sup>131</sup>

The Discrimination Act sets out that employers must carry out annual pay surveys to identify, tackle and prevent unreasonable pay differences between women and men. However, it is a shortcoming that this only addresses pay differences at the same employer, which means that it is often almost impossible to identify differences between careers and industries.<sup>132</sup>

Supervision of the Discrimination Act has in principle ceased since responsibility moved to the Equality Ombudsman (DO) when the ombudsman was formed in 2009. In the time of the previous agency (JämO), the agency examined the pay of a million people in its “Miljongranskningen”, which led to pay adjustments for at least 5,246 people, 90 percent of whom were women. The combined pay adjustment amounted to at least SEK 70.3 million and meant an average of SEK 1,120 a month.<sup>133</sup> Since DO took over responsibility, no equivalent examination has been carried out.

Opportunities for women who have been the victim of pay discrimination, or other discrimination due to sex, to obtain restitution with the help of DO are in principle non-existent. During its ten-year history, DO has not yet pursued a single case on equal pay for work of equal value.<sup>134</sup> Read more under Article 2.

### **Part-time work and parental leave**

If it is taken into account that many women work part-time, the differences in wage income are even greater. In 2020, 26 percent of women and 12 percent of men worked part-time.<sup>135</sup> Part-time work is common in municipalities and regions where four out of five employees are women. Therefore, since 2017, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) and the Swedish Municipal Workers' Union have been working to ensure that more municipalities and regions produce action plans for full-time working as the norm. Since this measure was introduced, the proportion of employees who work full-time has increased, albeit slowly. Many municipalities and regions have not yet started to produce action plans.<sup>136</sup>

It is more and more common for women with children to work part-time, although a lack of full-time work continues to be the most common reason for both women and men working part-time. Women take greater responsibility than men for unpaid domestic and caring work, which affects their career and pay trajectories. Earmarked months of parental insurance have led to more men being at home with their children, but the distribution is still far from equal. In 2019 women took 70 percent of parental benefit and 61 percent of

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131. Katalys (2018) Klassamhällets rasifiering i arbetslivet

132. Riksrevisionen (2019) Diskrimineringslagens krav på lönekartläggning – ett trubbigt verktyg för att minska löneskillnader mellan könen (RiR 2019:16)

133. JämO (2008) Miljongranskningen – resultat av etapp 2 och slutrapport

134. Svenaeus, L. (2020) Tio år med Diskrimineringsombudsmannen, Arena Idé

135. SCB (2020) Arbetskraftsdeltagande och sysselsättning

136. SKR, Heltidsarbete som norm

the temporary parental benefit which includes payments when caring for ill children.<sup>137</sup> Many women also spread out their parental leave, which means that they are at home from work looking after children entirely unpaid.<sup>138</sup>

Parental benefit uptake is more gender unequal among parents who have immigrated to Sweden than among the population as a whole. A large proportion of newly arrived migrants who have children after arriving in Sweden do not use any parental benefit at all. 33 percent of newly arrived fathers from the EU/Nordic countries and 37 percent of fathers from other countries did not take any parental leave at all in the first four years of the child's life compared with seven percent of fathers born in Sweden.<sup>139</sup>

### **Work environment and working conditions**

Female-dominated occupations are often characterised by heavy physical and emotional strain, high stress and limited opportunities to influence their situation at work.<sup>140</sup>

A poor work environment and a high workload at work and at home is making women ill. Today women are on sick leave almost twice as much as men<sup>141</sup> and 70 percent of those who are signed off sick for mental illness are women. Women who work in care of the elderly are the group with the highest sickness absence rate on the entire labour market. The second highest rate of sickness absence is that of preschool teachers, another area where cuts have been made with large class sizes, a high workload and staff stress as a result.<sup>142</sup>

### **Participation in the workforce and employment**

In comparison with other countries, women's participation in the workforce is high, but still lower than that of men<sup>143</sup> and the differences between the sexes are greater among those born outside Sweden. Among those born in Sweden, 84 percent of women and 86 percent of men are employed. For those born outside Sweden, the equivalent figures are 62 percent of women and 74 percent of men.<sup>144</sup>

A whole 45 percent of women born outside Sweden with low levels of education were unemployed in 2020.<sup>145</sup> Approximately one in four women born outside Sweden neither works nor is seeking work. Causes of this include traditional family patterns, discrimination and low levels of education.<sup>146</sup>

Women born outside Sweden need support and help from society to enter the job market. However, several examinations show that newly arrived migrant women get to participate in fewer, later and poorer interventions to encourage labour market participation than newly arrived men. Attention

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137. SCB (2020) Omsorg om barn 1974-2019

138. Delegationen för jämställdhet i arbetslivet (2015) Hela lönen, hela tiden Utmaningar för ett jämställt arbetsliv SOU 2015:50

139. Socialdepartementet, Begränsningar i föräldrapenningen för föräldrar som kommer till Sverige med barn (SOU 2016:73)

140. Arbetsmiljöverket (2017) En vitbok om kvinnors arbetsmiljö (2017:6)

141. Unionen (2019) Hur sjuka är tjänstemännen?

142. Tankesmedjan Balans, Förskolan får ta smällen när regeringen prioriterar grundskolan, samt Persson och Tallberg Broman (2019) Hög sjukfrånvaro och ökad psykisk ohälsa – Om dilemman i förskollärares uppdrag, Malmö högskola

143. SCB (2020) Tidsbegränsade anställningar blir vanligare bland äldre

144. SCB (2021) Arbetskraftsundersökningarna (AKU)

145. SCB (2021) Arbetskraftsundersökningarna (AKU). Avser åldersgruppen 15-74 år.

146. Statskontoret (2018) Sammanställning av kunskap om utomeuropeiskt födda kvinnor som står utanför arbetskraften, Slutrapport 2018:3

was drawn to this back in 2012 by the “Akka” Inquiry on active measures to reduce discrimination.<sup>147</sup> Nine years later, there is much to indicate that this unfair pattern remains in place.<sup>148</sup>

Another vulnerable group is women with disabilities, where 40 percent feel discriminated against in the labour market. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency and the Swedish Agency for Participation state in a survey that women with disabilities tend to be long-term unemployed more often than other groups and that the measures of the Swedish Public Employment Service rarely lead to work.<sup>149</sup>

### **Pensions**

The fact that more women are working shorter hours and are lower paid has a major impact on women’s pensions. The result is that the pensions of women are on average 31 percent lower than those of men.<sup>150</sup>

Besides income-related pensions there is also basic protection in the form of guaranteed pensions and housing supplement for those who have had very low paid incomes during their lives. This applies, for example, to people who have immigrated to Sweden as adults and have not managed to earn sufficient pension points. Many women who have spent their entire working lives working in the care sector have had such low-paid incomes that they need to use the basic protection provided despite it originally being intended for people who have not worked at all or only very little.<sup>151</sup> Almost 80 percent of the pensioners who receive a guaranteed pension and 76 percent of those who receive housing supplement are women.<sup>152</sup>

Many older women have such low pensions that they are at risk of poverty. 245,000 people aged over 65 live in or are at risk of finding themselves in poverty, 162,000 of whom are women. Single older women have the lowest pensions of all.<sup>153</sup> In recent years, hostels, churches and voluntary organisations have sounded the alarm on increasing numbers of homeless older women.<sup>154</sup>

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147. Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet, Med rätt att delta – Nyanlända kvinnor och anhöriginvandrare på arbetsmarknaden SOU 2012:69

148. Kommissionen för jämställda livsinkomster (2021) Brister i Arbetsförmedlingens arbete med jämställd arbetsmarknadsetablering – analys och bedömning av möjliga åtgärder, A 2020:01

149. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten och Myndigheten för delaktighet (2019) Ekonomisk jämställdhet för kvinnor med funktionsnedsättning, Rapport 2019:5

150. SCB (2020) På tal om kvinnor och män 2020

151. Kommunal och SKPF (2015) Pensionen är en kvinnofälla

152. Socialdepartementet, Översyn av grundskyddet för pensionärer Inriktning för ett nytt grundskydd, Ds 2018:8

153. Pensionsmyndigheten (2018) Äldre med låga inkomster

154. Sundbeck, J. Fler kvinnliga fattigpensionärer söker hjälp på Stadsmissionen, DN 2020-02-27

## THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:

- **Produce statistics on differences in pay between equivalent occupations.** Task the Swedish National Mediation Office with conducting annual surveys of pay differences between equivalent jobs.
- **Introduce pay transparency.** Make information about pay levels accessible to all employees in line with the EU Commission's Pay Transparency Directive.
- **Tighten up the requirements on pay surveys.** Pay surveys should compare the pay for female-dominated occupations with the pay of other occupations. At workplaces that only have female-dominated occupations it should be possible to make pay comparisons outside the organisation itself. Examples of how such legislation can be designed can be found in the UK and Canada.
- **Conduct a new "Miljongranskning" to identify and tackle pay discrimination.** Tighten up and expand DO's supervision of the pay survey requirement. Task DO with implementing a new extensive examination of the employer's work on pay surveys inspired by JämO's "Miljongranskning"
- **Legislate on the right to work full-time.** Unless 75 percent of all municipalities and regions have introduced full-time working as the norm by 2025, the Government ought to legislate to reduce women's involuntary part-time work. The requirement of full-time working as the norm should also cover private providers in the health and care sector.
- **Individualise all parts of parental insurance.** Share parental benefit and parental leave equally between parents. Exceptions must be made in special cases, for example, for single mothers and for women who are the victims of violence.
- **Strengthen governance of the Swedish Public Employment Service.** Make sure that women share half of all labour market and establishment measures, for example by earmarking places for women in initiatives.
- **Reform the pension system.** Raise women's pensions by increasing contributions to the pension system, reallocate the pension pot that is currently not being used and even out the differences in work-related pension pots. The pension system should even out rather than reinforce financial inequality.
- **Invest in higher pay and better welfare conditions.** Cuts in education, healthcare and the care sector must stop. Permanent government investment is needed to increase pay and create a better work environment and working conditions.

## Article 12. Health care

### **CEDAW states:**

States shall ensure that women have the same access to healthcare and that women are not discriminated against. Women shall be given information about and access to birth control. States shall guarantee women high quality, cost-free healthcare during pregnancy, childbirth and breast-feeding.

### **The current situation:**

Life expectancy in Sweden is constantly increasing in the entire population, apart from for women with low levels of education. For this group, life expectancy is falling for the first time in 200 years.<sup>155</sup> Women with low levels of education leave the world of work earlier than other groups, often for health reasons.<sup>156</sup>

### **Women's sickness absence and mental illness**

Women are signed off sick to almost twice as high an extent as men, and the most common reason is mental illness.<sup>157</sup> When women are on long-term sick leave for psychological reasons, more than half of cases are reactions to severe stress.<sup>158</sup> Examinations by the Swedish National Audit Office, among others, have shown that it is difficult to be granted compensation for psychological syndromes and that there are major variations in how decision-making support is interpreted.<sup>159</sup>

In the national public health survey of 2018, 46 percent of the women and 32 percent of the men stated that they had had problems with worry or anxiety.<sup>160</sup> There has especially been a major increase in mental illness among girls and young women. Almost twice as many 15 year-old girls suffer from psychosomatic problems such as worry, sleep problems, depression and anxiety (62 percent), compared with boys of the same age (35 percent).<sup>161</sup> Suicide is more common among men than women, but the number of suicides among women aged 25–44 is growing.<sup>162</sup>

### **Maternity care**

Maternity care continues to be under-staffed. According to the National Board of Health and Welfare, 18 out of 21 regions have a shortage of midwives in

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155. SCB (2018) Rapport: Skilda världar? – Det demografiskt delade Sverige

156. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten, Kvinnor med funktionsnedsättning missgynnas ekonomiskt 2020:1

157. Riksrevisionen, Jämställd sjukfrånvaro – bedöms män och kvinnor likvärdigt i sjukskrivningsprocessen? (RiR 2019:19) samt; AFA Försäkring (2019) Psykisk ohälsa i olika län

158. AFA Försäkring (2019) Psykisk ohälsa i olika län

Se även; Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2021) Psykisk ohälsa och andra aspekter av hälsa, Rapport 2021:2

159. Riksrevisionen, Försäkringsmedicinskt beslutsstöd – ett stöd för Försäkringskassan vid psykisk ohälsa? (RiR 2018:22)

160. SKR (2019) (O)jämställdhet i hälsa och vård – en genusmedicinsk kunskapsöversikt

161. Folkhälsomyndigheten (2018) Skolbarns hälsovanor i Sverige 2017/18

162. Karolinska Institutet, Självmod i Sverige, KI.se

2020,<sup>163</sup> and this shortfall is expected to continue until 2035.<sup>164</sup> It is important to note, however, that sufficiently high numbers of midwives are being trained but that many midwives later apply to work in other parts of the healthcare system due to poor working conditions.<sup>165</sup> According to a report by the Health and Social Care Inspectorate from 2020, high workload is a recurring cause of injury in childbirth.<sup>166</sup>

It is likely that the lack of beds in labour wards and the stressed conditions in maternity care are also a cause of fear of childbirth, especially in the County of Stockholm.<sup>167</sup> Over 30 percent of women have stated that they do not feel confident that there will be a bed for them on the labour ward when they go into labour.<sup>168</sup> An increasing number of women are choosing to have a home birth instead of a hospital birth.<sup>169</sup> The Swedish Association of Midwives judges that the latest increase is partly a consequence of the pandemic.<sup>170</sup> An increasing number of women are also choosing to give birth by caesarean section instead of vaginally.

There are major differences between regions in terms of childbirth injury.<sup>171</sup> According to the National Board of Health and Welfare there are also unjustified differences in practice in terms of post-natal care, both in and between the regions. There is a need for better support for vulnerable groups, such as women with poor Swedish skills, and women with mental illness.<sup>172</sup>

Women in rural areas have been hard hit by maternity clinics being shut down in several parts of the country. In six countries women have a journey of up to 300 km to the nearest maternity clinic to give birth.<sup>173</sup> Read more under article 14 on rural women.

### **Access to healthcare for women born outside Sweden**

Women born outside Sweden access healthcare and care to a lower extent than women with a Swedish background. For example, it is more common for women born outside Sweden not to come in for health checks such as cervical smear tests and mammograms. Although a considerably higher proportion of women born outside Sweden have mental health problems, more women born in Sweden receive care and treatment.<sup>174</sup>

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163. Socialstyrelsen (2020) Bedömning av tillgång och efterfrågan på legitimerad personal i hälso- och sjukvård samt tandvård

164. Vårdanalys (2020) "Förlösande för kvinnohälsan: En uppföljning av satsningen på kvinnohälsan", Rapport 2020:11, s. 158

165. Vårdförbundet (2020) Erfarna barnmorskor lämnar förlossningsvården, visar ny Novusundersökning

166. IVO (2020) Iakttagelser i korthet 5/2020 Utvecklade arbetssätt och metoder kan minska risken för förlossningsskador

167. Sveriges radio, Förlossningsrådslan ökar bland länets kvinnor, P4 Stockholm 2017-10-02

Sveriges Kvinnolobby (2020) Debatt: Förlossningsvården måste vara rustad för kris

168. Vårdanalys (2020) "Förlösande för kvinnohälsan: En uppföljning av satsningen på kvinnohälsan", Rapport 2020:11, s. 182

169. Födelsehuset (2019) Mistreatment and violence against women during reproductive health care with a focus on childbirth: The case of Sweden

170. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2021) Psykisk ohälsa och andra aspekter av hälsa, Rapport 2021:2

171. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2020) Styrning ger resultat, Rapport 2020:4, s. 76

172. Socialstyrelsen (2019) Stärk förlossningsvården och kvinnors hälsa

173. Sveriges Kvinnolobby (2017) Med rätt att föda – En granskning av satsningar på förlossningsvården i budgetpropositionen för 2018

174. Region Skåne (2017) Migration och hälsa: En omvärldsanalys utifrån Kunskapscentrum migration och hälsas uppdrag.

### **Healthcare and trauma treatment following sexual violence**

Girls who have been the victims of sexual abuse seek healthcare for suicide attempts 26 times more often compared with other girls of the same age. Besides the risk of suicide attempts, substance abuse problems, eating disorders and other psychological problems are also ten times more common among these girls.<sup>175</sup> Primary care and psychiatry lack sufficient knowledge and access to in-service training on how to identify and treat psychological symptoms following sexual abuse.<sup>176</sup> There is a lack of specialist clinics offering trauma treatment for women who have been the victim of sexual abuse in Sweden.

### **Female diseases**

There are still great shortcomings in terms of knowledge about female diseases.<sup>177</sup> In 2019 the Government announced an investment in evaluating diagnosis and treatment of “hidden female diseases” such as vestibulitis, lipoedema and diastasis recti.<sup>178</sup> Other illnesses that are far more common among women than men, such as osteoporosis, have not received special attention or resources.

### **Major increase in gender dysphoria among girls**

Between 2008 and 2018 new cases of the diagnosis gender dysphoria among children registered female at birth in the age group 13–17 increased by 1,500 percent.<sup>179</sup> The increase among boys was considerably lower.<sup>180</sup> In many ways, this is a vulnerable group; they often also have other psychiatric diagnoses, and a greater risk of suicide compared with the rest of the population. There is a need for more research and interventions to help this group and to investigate what this major increase is due to and why it affects more girls than boys.

### **Female genital mutilation (FGM)**

The number of women and girls who have suffered FGM and have received a diagnosis has increased steadily between 2012 and 2018. About 5,000 women sought care due to genital mutilation between 2012 and 2018. The National Board of Health and Welfare’s examination of the regions’ steering documents and guidelines on care of girls and women who have suffered genital mutilation shows that several regions do not have any guidelines in place.<sup>181</sup>

### **The healthcare reimbursement system**

The financial reimbursement system used by the Swedish health service, DRG, is designed in a way that discriminates against women. The system means that hospitals receive lower payments for treating women’s illnesses. This applies

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175. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2021) Psykisk ohälsa och andra aspekter av hälsa, Rapport 2021:2

176. SKR (2020) Vården vid sexuellt våld – Nuläge och vägar framåt

177. Socialstyrelsen, Utvärdering visar att vård vid endometrios behöver förbättras, pressmeddelande 2019-09-19. Socialstyrelsen, Ny kartläggning visar på bristande kunskap om vestibulit inom vården, pressmeddelande 2018-06-05. Sveriges Kvinnolobby (2017) Med rätt att föda – En granskning av satsningar på förlossningsvården i budgetpropositionen för 2018

Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2020) Styrning ger resultat, Rapport 2020:4

178. Socialdepartementet, Regeringen satsar för kvinnors hälsa, pressmeddelande 2019-12-18

179. Socialstyrelsen (2020) Vanligt med flera psykiatriska diagnoser hos personer med könsdysfori

180. Ibid. Enligt Socialstyrelsen handlar det om en 400% ökning i åldern 18–24 år.

181. Socialstyrelsen (2020) Inventering av vård för kvinnor och flickor som har varit utsatta för könsstympning, s. 48–49

both to specific “female diseases” and when women and men are given the same diagnosis, e.g. urinary tract infection.<sup>182</sup>

### **Care and healthcare of the elderly**

Care and healthcare of the elderly suffers from long-term underfunding and staff shortages. In a survey conducted by the Swedish Municipal Workers’ Union, four out of ten people employed in care of the elderly responded that staffing levels are so low as to constitute a risk to the elderly at least one day a week.<sup>183</sup> The failings in care of the elderly mainly affect women as they constitute 70 percent of those who receive publicly funded care of the elderly. Although the healthcare of elderly people has been under the spotlight during the coronavirus pandemic, it looks as though the municipalities will continue to be making savings cuts. An examination of the budgets of 155 municipalities shows that 96 percent made savings on care of the elderly in 2020.<sup>184</sup>

Women’s health is affected by the fact that they bear greater responsibility for taking care of the home and children, and also older relatives. With the cuts in care of the elderly, it has become increasingly common for relatives to cut their working hours, resign early or take earlier retirement due to their caring responsibilities.<sup>185</sup> Older women who are caring for a partner who is suffering from dementia or a stroke often find that providing this care in the family is a mental and physical strain and that there is a lack of support.<sup>186</sup>

### **Women with disabilities and the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (LSS)**

Women with disabilities estimate their health as good to a lower extent than men with disabilities and other women and men in the population. Women with disabilities also state that they are more vulnerable to violence and mental illness than the rest of the population.<sup>187</sup>

In recent years major cuts have been made in personal assistance for people with disabilities. Since 2015 about 2,000 people have lost their assistance. This has led to higher mental stress for people who have been rejected despite being in great need of personal assistance. The cuts under LSS have also led to responsibility for looking after people in need of assistance falling on family members, often women, many of whom have been forced to cut their working hours.<sup>188</sup> According to investigations by Försäkringskassan and the National Board of Health and Welfare men are often granted more hours of assistance than women.<sup>189</sup>

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182. Nordin, E. Lägre DRG-poäng för kvinnors sjukdomar, sjukhusläkaren.se 2014-06-16

183. Kommunal (2018) Så mycket bättre? 2018 – En jämförelse av anställningsvillkor och löner i privat och kommunalt driven äldreomsorg

184. Plesner, Å. och Arena Idé (2020) Budget ur balans – en granskning av äldreomsorgens ekonomi och arbetsmiljö

185. Szebehely, Ulmanen och Sand (2014) Att ge omsorg mitt i livet: hur påverkar det arbete och försörjning?, Arbetsrapport Institutionen för socialt arbete, 2014:1, Socialhögskolan Stockholms Universitet

186. Se t.ex. Socialstyrelsen (2020) Anhöriga som vårdar eller stödjer närstående äldre personer

187. Jämställdhetsmyndigheten (2021) Psykisk ohälsa och andra aspekter av hälsa, Rapport 2021:2

188. Se exempelvis; FoU i Väst/GR (2014) Riktat föräldrastöd – RiFS-projektets slutrapport

189. Försäkringskassan, Assistansersättningens utveckling (Socialförsäkringsrapport 2017:4)

se även Socialstyrelsen (2020) Statistik om insatser enligt lagen om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade 2019

While ADHD in boys is diagnosed when they are aged five to ten, ADHD in girls is diagnosed on average when they are 13.<sup>190</sup> Paediatric health and paediatric psychiatry often missing girls with autism and ADHD means that girls are not given any explanation for their difficulties, nor access to medication, the right educational interventions or other support.

### **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Improve care for women's mental illness.** Primary care should take over the responsibility for mental illness and be given sufficient resources.
- **Reduce the number of women off on sick leave** by improving women's work environment and working for gender equal distribution of unpaid work. Increase resources and ensure more secure employment in the welfare sector. Individualise parental insurance.
- **Increase resources for maternity care.** Earmark resources to employ midwives, increase pay and ensure that investments are long-term and lasting through permanent financing with clear governance. Introduce a target of one midwife per woman in childbirth. Healthcare in pregnancy and childbirth is to build on continuity and permanent contact with a midwife responsible for the patient throughout the whole care chain.
- **Ensure gender equal, high quality and evidence-based maternity care, care in childbirth and post-natal care.** Conduct a Government review of the entire care chain, before, during and after birth and introduce national key figures and guidelines.
- **Examine the consequences of the healthcare reimbursement system DRG from a gender equality perspective.** Women's illness must be prioritised as highly as men's when calculating care and treatment costs.
- **Improve healthcare for women and girls who are the victims of sexual abuse.** There must be specialist clinics throughout Sweden. All healthcare staff must be aware of comorbidities in conjunction with sexual abuse and routinely ask questions about violence even when women turn to the healthcare service for other reasons.
- **Safeguard gender equality in care and treatment.** All healthcare qualifications should include gender equality as an examination criterion.
- **Ensure gender equality in medical research.** Steer government research funding such that medical research is based on sex-disaggregated statistics and an analysis of the different biology and physiology of women and men.

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190. Autism- och Aspergerförbundet, Flickor med autism får vänta längre på diagnos, Pressmeddelande 2019-06-27

## Article 13. Economic and social rights

### **CEDAW states:**

Women and men shall have the same economic and social rights. Women shall have the same right as men to earn money and obtain family benefits, to obtain bank loans, mortgages and other forms of credit. Women shall have the same right as men to participate in sport and all aspects of cultural life and to join associations.

### **The current situation:**

The gap between women's and men's individual disposable incomes, in other words what is left in the bank after contributions and tax, is 23 percent and has remained at about the same level since 1995.<sup>191</sup> The fact that the difference between women's and men's total income has not shrunk in 25 years can only be seen as a failure, and something that the Government's own Commission of Inquiry states is due to "a lack of political will and courage".<sup>192</sup>

The difference in disposable income remaining in place despite the pay gap shrinking (see Article 11 on the labour market) is due, among other things, to an increase in the concentration of capital and capital income as a proportion of people's incomes. Capital refers, for example, to shares, companies, saved money, property and land. Because men own twice as much capital as women, this has meant an increase in the differences between women's and men's capital income. For example, only four percent of privately owned share value is owned by women.<sup>193</sup>

Furthermore, the 3:12 rules have made it easier for people who own and work in companies where four or fewer shareholders own shares equivalent to more than half of the votes in the company (*fåmansbolag*), 80 percent of whom are men, to take out income as profits subject to lower tax instead of wages subject to a higher tax rate.<sup>194</sup> In 2018 dividends from *fåmansbolag* amounted to SEK 93 billion.<sup>195</sup>

Previously, taxes and public transfers have evened out differences in income between those who have and do not have financial resources to a greater extent. In recent years, however, several tax reforms have been implemented that increase financial inequality. For example, a new earned income tax credit (*jobbskatteavdrag*) was introduced in 2019, despite the fact that previous such tax credits have gone to men more than to women.<sup>196</sup>

Furthermore, the 2020 budget abolished the special austerity tax (*värn-skatt*) paid on higher incomes. Because almost everyone who paid this tax

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191. Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet (2020) Kommittédirektiv En kommission för jämställda livsinkomster. Dir. 2020:22. (Siffran avser 2017)

192. Bergh, L. Kommission: Nu haveriutredar vi ojämställda inkomster, debattartikel SvD 2020-07-04

193. Ownershift (2019) Vem äger Sverige? En nollmätning av ägandet i Sverige

194. Långtidsutredningen 2019. Huvudbetänkande, SOU 2019:65

195. Tankesmedjan Tiden (2020) 3:12 Arbete eller kapital? En rättvisare beskattning för arbetande företagare

196. Prop. 2012/13:1 Bilaga 4 Ekonomisk jämställdhet mellan kvinnor och män

was male (93 percent), the change meant tax relief for men and a reduction in financial redistribution between the sexes.<sup>197</sup>

The evening out effects of transfers have also tailed off. This is because the levels paid out through pensions, contributions and social insurance have not been stepped up at the same rate as pay and capital incomes have increased.<sup>198</sup> This particularly affects women because women, apart from pensioners, receive transfers to a greater extent than men.

The fact that women receive transfers to a greater extent than men is a consequence of inequalities in society. Women, for example, receive parental benefit and maintenance allowance because they take greater responsibility for children, more sickness compensation because they are ill more often and more housing allowance because their income is lower. Today's economic policy both reflects and reinforces financial inequality. The type of support measures that women receive to a greater extent compensate for loss of income while the types of public support measures that men receive to a greater extent consist of interventions and support that bring them closer to the labour market or otherwise better enable them to accumulate income from work or capital.<sup>199</sup>

### **Loans and debts**

Statistics from the comparison service Lendo show that banks often offer women higher interest than men on private loans. The differences in the average interest rate on loans are up to 0.78 percentage points in men's favour.<sup>200</sup>

When it comes to contributions, loans and investments in companies there are major differences between women and men. About one in three business owners are women but only 17 percent of the loans granted by state-owned Almi go to companies run by women.<sup>201</sup> Nor do women's companies have the same access to risk capital as companies run by men. A review by the magazine Digital shows for example that only 4 percent of investments and 1 percent of the risk capital in the technology industry goes to companies started by women.<sup>202</sup>

### **Sport**

In addition to economic rights, Article 13 states that women must also be allowed to participate equally in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life. The Swedish sporting movement strives to give women and men equal opportunities and conditions to practise sport.<sup>203</sup> But despite good ambitions, major differences remain between women and men.

Sex segregation is common in sport. For example, 91 percent of the Swedish Equestrian Federation's members are women while 87 percent of the members of the Swedish Ice Hockey Association are men.<sup>204</sup> Women and girls who

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197. Finansdepartementet, Avskaffad övre skiktgräns för statlig inkomstskatt (sk. värnsskatt) Fi2019/02421/S1

198. Långtidsutredningen 2019. Huvudbetänkande, SOU 2019:65

199. Arbetsmarknadsdepartementet, Kommission för jämställda livsinkomster 2021, delbetänkande Kom-2021/00077/A 2020:01-1

200. Lendo (2019) Ny statistik över svenskars privatlån och räntor 2019, pressmeddelande 2019-06-12

201. Riksrevisionen (2019) Jämställdhet i Almis låneverksamhet – otydlig styrning och åiterrapportering (RiR 2019:7)

202. Olsson Jeffery, M. Bolag grundade av kvinnor får 1 procent av riskkapitalet DI Digital, 2019-03-31

203. Riksidrottsförbundet (2020) "Jämställdhet är en självklarhet", FOU-rapport 2020:1

204. idrottsstatistik.se, Jämställdhet förbund

have immigrated to Sweden are under-represented in the sporting movement and teenage girls with a non-European background engage in sport less than other young people. Organisations including TRIS (Rights of Girls in Society) have drawn attention to women and girls who are the victim of honour-related violence and oppression are often prevented from doing sport.<sup>205</sup>

#### **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Make sure that the future tax reform increases gender equality.** Future tax reform must increase women's lifetime incomes and reduce income differences between women and men, for example through higher taxes on capital.
- **Increase the levels of transfers that have lagged behind.** People who are working and become parents or are ill must have greater security. The same applies to people retiring at the end of their working life.
- **Support women's enterprise.** Make clearer demands of the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth and Almi to allocate grants and loans to companies on a more gender equal basis.
- **Public grants to sport are to be allocated gender equally at all levels.** The responsibility rests both on grant providers and on the Swedish Sports Confederation and also concerns the extra investments made during the coronavirus pandemic.

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205. idrottsstatistik.se, Idrott utan heder

## Article 14. Rural women

### **CEDAW states:**

Women in rural areas shall have the same rights as women in cities. Women in rural areas shall be able to participate in benefit from rural development and have access to healthcare, education, employment, credit and loans.

Women in rural areas shall have access to good living conditions, particularly housing, electricity, water, infrastructure, transport and communications, on the same terms as men and women in cities.

### **The current situation:**

Women in rural areas have higher levels of education than men and move from their home municipalities to a greater extent. Girls from rural areas attain the same levels of education as girls in general, in other words to a considerably higher extent than boys. Historically, girls and young women have left rural areas and in the post-war period this meant a major upswing for women's paid labour in the cities.<sup>206</sup> Numbers of women returning to rural areas are low, partly as there are insufficient labour opportunities.<sup>207</sup>

There is a lack of initiatives to increase the participation of women born outside Sweden in the workforce in rural areas. Projects with a focus on integration and rural areas have been implemented in several parts of Sweden but have rarely focused on newly arrived migrant women.<sup>208</sup>

### **Maternity care**

One very important area for women guaranteed in CEDAW is safe maternity and post-natal care. Women in rural areas have suffered from maternity units being shut down in several parts of the country. In six countries women have a journey of up to 300 km to the nearest maternity clinic to give birth.<sup>209</sup>

### **Ownership and enterprise**

There is a need for greater knowledge about women's enterprise in rural areas in order to evaluate and support enterprise and stimulate rural development.<sup>210</sup> The research conducted is often based on male enterprise and support to companies in rural areas is also targeted at sectors in which men own businesses.<sup>211</sup> Regional business support is paid out to men to a higher extent. For example, an examination of the allocation of funding in Region Västernorr

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206. Lovén, Hammarlund och Nordin, AgriFood Economics Centre (2016) Vem stannar kvar? – närhet till högskola och val av bostadsort Rapport 2016:3

207. LRFs jämställdhetsakademi (2020) Ung och lovande

208. Landsbygdsnätverket (2020) Så skapas möjligheter för utrikesfödda kvinnor på landsbygden

209. Sveriges Kvinnolobby (2017) Med rätt att föda – En granskning av satsningar på förlossningsvården i budgetpropositionen för 2018

210. Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet, Kvinnors entreprenörskap: För en levande landsbygd?, sl.u.se 2020-09-14

211. Ibid.

land shows that only 7 percent of business support went to female enterprise.<sup>212</sup>

The majority of companies are sole traders with a man as the sole owner.<sup>213</sup> Women work full-time like men but women tend to work more often than men on both paid labour part-time and unpaid part-time work on the farms. Women's paid labour may be the only secure income, but as this work is part-time, it provides low compensation for illness, parental leave and retirement. These factors also create poorer incentives to launch one's own business.<sup>214</sup>

Getting young women to want to stay and work in rural areas on equal terms in businesses is an important development issue. In Sweden, 16,751 people aged between 20 and 35 own agricultural land. Of these, women make up 44 percent and men 56 percent.<sup>215</sup> If a survey is conducted of the allocation of land, the differences are found to be very large. Young men own the large areas of land. Men own 98 percent of units spanning more than 30 hectares. Only the very smallest areas up to two hectares have an almost even distribution.

The pattern is similar for forest land. 40 percent of young forest owners are women and 60 percent are men.<sup>216</sup> Here too, distribution of the land area is uneven as the largest holdings are owned by men and ownership is only gender equal for the smallest holdings.<sup>217</sup> Agriculture and forestry is often run as a private business with a single owner, who is often a man, despite in practice it being a family business in which women are also involved. Women's share in these companies is thus rendered invisible in the statistics.

One effect of ownership and operational structures is that single women in rural areas have not been able to benefit from the development that has led to a general reduction in rural poverty. In 2018 more than one in four women farmers without a partner suffered poverty.<sup>218</sup>

### **Transport**

The transport system does not meet the needs of rural women. Women use public transport more than men and it is roughly half as common for women to own a car.<sup>219</sup> Older women in particular who live alone in rural areas often lack their own car. Investments in public transport in line with the regional enlargement targets has failed groups with poorer opportunities for flexible working hours and groups that live far from densely populated areas who lack access to a car.<sup>220</sup>

Women who live in rural areas, do not have a car and work in the health and care sector suffer from public transport priorities being to boost routes

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212. Malmström och Wincent, Luleå tekniska universitet på uppdrag av Region Västernorrland (2017) Fördelning i Västernorrland & Fördelning av offentlig finansiering.

213. Statens Jordbruksverk (2016) Jordbruksföretag och företagare 2016, JO 34 SM 1701, SCB

214. LRFs Jämställdhetsakademi (2010) Trygghet ger balans

215. Jordbruksverket (2015) Statistikrapport 2015:03

216. Skogsstyrelsen (2018) Strukturstatistik, Statistik om skogsägande 2017, rapport 2018/12

217. LRFs jämställdhetsakademi (2020) Ung och lovande

Samt; LRFs Jämställdhetsakademi, Från vem och till vem? De gröna näringarnas ekonomiska flöden ur ett genusperspektiv.

218. Höjgård och Nordin, AgriFood (2018) Ojämlighet och fattigdom i svenskt jordbruk, Policy Brief 2018:2

219. Carlsson-Kanyama och Åkerström, FOI (2011) Genusaspekter på transporter – litteraturstudie och bearbetning av statistik om kvinnligt och manligt bilägande och bilanvändning

220. Sandra Jönsson och Christina Lindkvist Scholten (2010) Påbjuden valfrihet?: om långpendlars och arbetsgivares förhållningssätt till regionförstoringens effekter. Linnéuniversitetet, Institutionen för samhällsvetenskaper.

with high numbers of passengers wanting to travel to the same destination.<sup>221</sup> Women born outside Sweden in rural areas state that poorly developed public transport is an obstacle to work, study, contact with government agencies and opportunities to engage in leisure activities.<sup>222</sup>

### **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Women and men in rural areas must have the same opportunities for paid work that provides financial independence throughout their lives.** This should be a goal for policy on land-based industries, rural areas and food.
- **Gender mainstream and earmark funding for women in the Rural Development Programme.** Rural development must be carried out on equal terms for women and men. The labour market for women and men in rural areas should have its own programme. Sex-disaggregated statistics and measurable goals should be developed based on regional conditions.
- **Ensure gender equal citizens' services across Sweden.** Girls and women in rural areas must have the same access as men and urban dwellers to healthcare, education, land ownership and administration, agricultural support and financial independence.
- **Improve maternity care for women in rural areas.** To increase security and reduce the risks, women who live a long way away from a maternity clinic should always be offered a place in a patient hotel nearby when their delivery date draws nearer. Women who cannot get themselves to the hospital must always be provided with appropriate, safe transport.
- **Increase support to women for innovation, processing and market logistics.** Practical interventions based on the interests of women and men and their life situation are required to boost profitability and stimulate innovative companies.
- **Develop a housing policy programme for rural areas.** A programme for modern housing in rural areas must be drawn up and based on a gender equality perspective.
- **Develop rural transport systems.** The development of the transport system must respond to the transport needs of women and men across the whole country equally.

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221. Malin Henriksson (2019) Utsatt på arbetsmarknaden och beroende av kollektivtrafiken. Transportfattigdom i ett svenskt sammanhang

222. Sveriges Kvinnolobby (2019) Jämställdhet mot segregation! Utrikes födda kvinnors livsvillkor, makt och inflytande

## Article 15. Equality before the law

### **CEDAW states:**

Women and men shall be equal before the law and treated equally in all in courts and tribunals. Women and men shall have the same right to conclude contracts, administer property, travel and to choose where to live. Any contract or other legal document written in a way that restricts women's rights shall be deemed invalid.

### **The current situation:**

In formal terms, women and men in Sweden are equal before the law. One exception is the Reindeer Husbandry Act of 1971. This act contains discriminatory wording regarding "husfolk" which means that Sami women and children can be regarded as the property of the male "husbonden". The law regarding the reindeer herding association (sameby) has a major impact on the conditions of Sami women regarding self-employment and financial independence.<sup>223</sup>

### **THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:**

- **Remove the term "husfolk" in the Reindeer Husbandry Act.** Ensure a gender equality perspective is adopted throughout the inquiry into and proposals for new reindeer husbandry legislation announced in 2020.<sup>224</sup>
- **Ratify the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (No. 169).** The Convention includes land rights, property rights and the right to be consulted and participate in decision-making processes.

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223. Svenska Samernas Riksförbund (2012) Rennäringslagen och jämställdhet

224. Näringsdepartementet, Utredning kommer tillsättas för en översyn av rennäringslagstiftningen, Pressmeddelande 2020-06-23

## Article 16. Marriage and family relations

### **CEDAW states:**

Women shall have the same right as men to marry and to choose whom they wish to marry. Women shall not be forced to marry and have children against their will. Women and men have the same rights and responsibilities during marriage and divorce. Women and men have the same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of marital status, on all issues regarding their children. Women shall have the right to choose how many children they wish to have and the time between births. They also have the right to education and information to allow them to exercise this right. Women have the same right as men to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation. Children shall not be allowed to marry or become engaged to be married.

### **The current situation:**

Many girls and young women in Sweden are subject to restrictions on who they are allowed to marry. In a survey conducted by the foundation for vulnerable children (Allmänna barnhuset), 7 percent of girls born outside Sweden responded that they were not allowed to choose who they married.<sup>225</sup>

Protection against forced marriage and child marriage has been strengthened with the addition of several new criminal offences and legislative amendments. In July 2020, the legislation against child marriage offences was tightened up, making it a criminal offence to induce or allow a child to enter into a marriage. Furthermore, a ban on travel outside Sweden was introduced to protect children from being taken abroad for the purposes of marriage or FGM.<sup>226</sup>

A survey of municipalities' awareness of people taken out of Sweden and children stated to be married showed that 43 municipalities were aware of people living in an honour context who were taken out of the country in 2019, a total of 199 people. 27 municipalities stated that they were aware of a total of 36 married children and it is estimated that the unknown number of cases is much higher.<sup>227</sup> Many municipalities lack special procedures for dealing with these cases and admit themselves that their handling of cases in which people are taken out of the country could be improved.<sup>228</sup>

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225. Stiftelsen allmänna barnhuset, Våld mot barn 2016 – En nationell kartläggning  
Socialstyrelsen fick i uppdrag av regeringen att kartlägga omfattningen av hedersrelaterat våld och förtryck men menade att en sådan kartläggning inte var möjlig att genomföra, se Socialstyrelsen (2019) Ett liv utan våld och förtryck, nr. 2019-3-17

226. Socialstyrelsen (2020) Utreseförbud och barnnäktenskapsbrott m.m. – Ökat skydd mot hedersrelaterad brottslighet

227. Länsstyrelsen Östergötland (2020) Nationell kartläggning, Bortförda personer i en hederskontext samt barn som uppges vara gifta – under 2019

228. Ibid.

Girls and women with intellectual disabilities are a particularly vulnerable group with regard to honour-related violence and forced marriage. A survey from 2020 showed that more than one in four people working in the sector (LSS case officers and staff in day centres) were aware of or suspected that clients were at risk of being married against their will.<sup>229</sup> Almost 18 percent stated that they were aware of a client who had become engaged or married against their will.<sup>230</sup>

Although polygamy is illegal in Sweden, 292 polygamous marriages are registered with the Swedish Tax Agency with reference to international law and the marriage having been entered into abroad before there was any link to Sweden.<sup>231</sup>

By law, women in Sweden have the right to decide when they have children and how big a gap there is between babies. At the same time, women who have babies close together benefit from what is termed the “speed premium” (snabbhetspremiem) in the parental insurance system whereby women are able to retain the same level of parental benefit as before if they have a baby within 30 months or become pregnant again within 1 year and 9 months of the previous birth. This rule has led to women giving birth at shorter intervals than they used to and compared with women in other countries. Women being encouraged to have babies close together for financial reasons contravenes CEDAW. An examination by the Institute for Evaluation of Labour Market and Education Policy (IFAU) also shows that in practice the benefit premium led to parental benefit being taken on a less gender equal basis.<sup>232</sup>

Women’s opportunity to separate or divorce is affected by their financial situation. A survey by Danske Bank shows that 21 percent of the women questioned did not think they could afford to separate.<sup>233</sup> The housing shortage is an additional contributory factor making it difficult for women to leave a relationship that they do not wish to remain in.<sup>234</sup>

It is not unusual for the financially better off party to exploit the opportunity to go to court to settle property division and custody disputes, resulting in high costs from the use of property division experts. This leads to many women giving up their rights in the property division process due to their poorer financial position. The risk of being the victim of violence means that women who have lived in a violent relationship may lose the shared home despite rules on the right to remain in the home (kvarsittanderätt), whereby the party with the greatest need of the joint home is the one who should remain in it.

A review of all custody disputes from all district courts in 2019 shows that fathers gained custody or visitation with the children despite having been convicted of abusing the children’s mother.<sup>235</sup>

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229. TRIS – tjevers rätt i samhället (2020) Gömd & Glömd – Hedersrelaterat våld och förtryck mot vuxna med intellektuell funktionsnedsättning

230. Ibid.

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## THE CEDAW NETWORK DEMAND:

- **Increase expertise in the Swedish Police Authority and the Swedish Prosecution Authority.** Have preliminary investigations in which an honour motive may be suspected handled by specialised groups in the police and specialist prosecutors.
- **Increase the resources and knowledge levels of social services.** Ensure that social services have procedures for handling and following up cases and that they factor in risks of forced marriage and honour-related violence.
- **Increase cooperation between schools, healthcare, social services and the police** to better identify and tackle honour-related violence and oppression. Increase collaboration between social services and the police on assessing risk in cases involving honour-related violence.
- **Improve procedures where there is a risk of children being taken out of the country.** All municipalities must keep records of the number of children taken out of the country and at risk of being taken out of the country or kept in another country against their will. Introduce a travel ban and make it possible to seize passports in cases where children risk being taken out of the country against their will. Make it impossible for parents or guardians to remove their child's Swedish citizenship in cases where children risk being taken out of the country against their will or are at risk of forced marriage or genital mutilation.
- **Ensure access to support and treatment for trauma and accommodation with special expertise on honour-related violence and oppression.** Provide long-term resources to women's organisations and shelters that work with honour-related violence and girls at risk of forced marriage.
- **Increase awareness of honour-related violence and oppression in the judicial system.** Courts should draw up lists of and use experts in cases regarding honour-related violence and oppression.
- **Improve data collection, surveys and statistics.** Conduct regular surveys of the prevalence of child and forced marriage and other forms of honour-related violence and oppression and include these issues in other recurring citizen surveys of young people.
- **Increase opportunities for financial support and introduce a time limit on division of property.** Anyone who intentionally delays the process of dividing an estate must be able to be fined.
- **Remove the speed premium in the parental insurance system.** Decisions on how close together women have children must be free from financial pressure.
- **Ensure faster interim decisions on custody, accommodation and visitation when violence against the mother is suspected.** Fathers are to lose custody of the children if they are convicted of violent crimes against the mother. Children are not to need to see a violent father if they do not wish to. In cases where they wish to see their father, the safety of the mother and the child must be ensured at meetings.

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