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Division for Gender Equality

# Sweden's report on Beijing +25

## Contents

1. What have been the most important achievements, challenges and setbacks in progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women over the past five years? .....	5
2. Which of the following have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in Sweden over the past five years through laws, policies and/or programmes? .....	13
3. Over the past five years, have you taken specific measures to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination? (Please check relevant categories) .....	14
4. Has the increasing number of humanitarian crises – caused by conflict, extreme weather or other events – affected the implementation of the BPfA in Sweden? ....	15
5. Which of the following does Sweden consider to be the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in Sweden for the coming five years through laws, policies and programmes?.....	16
6. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to advance gender equality in relation to women’s role in paid work and employment?.....	20
7. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and promote work-family conciliation?.....	23
8. Has Sweden introduced austerity/fiscal consolidation measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public-sector downsizing, over the past five years? .....	26
9. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls? .....	26
10. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to improve access to social protection for women and girls? .....	26
11. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to improve health outcomes for women and girls in Sweden?.....	27
12. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls?.....	29
13. In the last five years, which forms of violence against women and girls, and in which specific contexts or settings, have you prioritized for action? .....	33
14. What actions has Sweden prioritized in the last five years to address violence against women and girls?.....	36
15. What strategies has Sweden used in the last five years to prevent violence against women and girls?.....	39
16. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?.....	41

17. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media? .....	42
18. Has Sweden taken any action in the last five years specifically tailored to address violence against specific groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination?.....	45
19. What actions and measures has Sweden taken in the last five years to promote women’s participation in public life and decision-making?.....	48
20. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to increase women’s access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?.....	49
21. Does Sweden track the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?.....	50
22. As a donor country, does Sweden track the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?.....	51
23. Does Sweden have a valid national strategy or action plan for gender equality? .....	52
24. Does Sweden have an action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women? .....	55
25. Is there a national human rights institution in Sweden?.....	55
26. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?.....	55
27. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response, at decision-making levels in situations of armed and other conflicts, and in fragile or crisis settings? .....	56
28. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to enhance judicial and non- judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?.....	57
29. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child?.....	58
30. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies? .....	62

31. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation? .....	63
32. What is Sweden’s current national machinery for gender equality and the empowerment of women? Please name it and describe its location within Government. ....	65
33. Is the head of the national machinery a member of the institutional process for SDG implementation (e.g. inter-ministerial coordinating office, commission or committees)? .....	66
34. Are there formal mechanisms in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?.....	66
35. Is gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls included as a key priority in the national plan/strategy for SDG implementation? .....	69
36. What are the top three areas in which Sweden has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?.....	70
37. Out of the following which are Sweden’s top three priorities for strengthening national gender statistics over the next five years? .....	73
38. Have you defined a national set of indicators for monitoring progress on the SDGs? .....	74
39. Has data collection and compilation on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other SDGs begun? .....	75
40. Which of the following disaggregations is routinely provided by major surveys in Sweden?.....	76

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

The overarching objective of Sweden's gender equality policy is that women and men are to have the same power to shape society and their own lives (Govt Bill 2008/09:1, report 2008/09:AU1, Riksdag Comm. 2008/09:115).

The Government has been operating on the basis of the following sub-goals of gender equality policy since November 2016:

- equal division of power and influence,
- financial gender equality,
- gender-equitable education,
- an even division of unpaid housework and care work,
- gender-equal health, and
- men's violence against women must end.

The sub-goals of Swedish gender equality policy serve to provide a more detailed breakdown of the overarching gender equality objective adopted by the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag), thus creating a political focus and clearly setting out the Government's priorities under gender equality policy.

It is important to be aware of how different power structures based on categories such as socio-economic background, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation and gender identity and gender expression shape the environment in which women and men operate and their opportunities, an issue that has recently gained greater prominence in public debate. Analysing different power structures in relation to gender can be highly significant in ensuring that gender equality policy has an impact and is accurately targeted. There is a need to work systematically on these kinds of intersectional analyses in implementing and following up gender equality policy. For example, people with disabilities are a group that often find themselves in a particularly vulnerable situation, and this is especially true of disabled women and girls. It is therefore important to incorporate gender equality in disability policy.

The goals of Swedish gender equality policy are also goals for what the Government is seeking to achieve within EU cooperation. The Government is actively lobbying for a gender equality perspective to be incorporated in all relevant EU processes. The Government's work seeks to implement the 2030 Agenda, and thus SDG 5, Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

## **A Gender Equality Agency**

On 1 January 2018, the Government set up the Swedish Gender Equality Agency to contribute towards strategic, cohesive and sustainable governance and effective implementation of gender equality policy. The agency is to support other agencies, county councils, regions and municipalities in their efforts to achieve the goals of gender equality policy. The agency's role includes:

- encouraging the systematic, cohesive and effective implementation of gender equality policy at all levels of society, nationally, regionally as well as locally,
- supporting government agencies in their work on gender mainstreaming and in their other work to achieve the goals of gender equality policy,
- encouraging the development of initiatives to prevent men's violence against women.

In December 2018, the Riksdag decided to abolish the Gender Equality Agency and that it should cease to exist as an agency on 31 December 2019 (report 2018/19:AU1, Riksdag Comm. 2018/19:106). However, the Government considers that the Swedish Gender Equality Agency should remain, as is also proposed in the Government Bill Extra Amending Budget for 2019 (Govt Bill 2018/19:73) and in the Spring Amending Budget (Govt Bill 2018/19:99).

In some areas, gender equality has made great strides since 2015, while in others the pace of development has been slower and challenges remain. Some of the major features of developments in the past five years are set out below.

## **A feminist government**

Sweden has had a feminist government since 2014. This means that the Government views differences in opportunities and the distribution of power and resources based on gender, often to the disadvantage of girls and women and to the advantage of boys and men, as a problem of society that can and must be combatted by means of political decisions. Gender equality is fundamentally a question of human rights, justice and democracy. Gender equality is also a question of freedom because gender-stereotypical structures and conceptions limit women and men, girls and boys and prevent them from making choices that would enable them to develop to their full

potential. It is also important to draw attention to how gender equality interacts with factors other than gender, which can affect people's opportunities and circumstances, including transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation, age and class.

### **The Government pursues a feminist foreign policy**

Sweden was the first country in the world to pursue a feminist foreign policy with the aim of fostering gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls. Systematic subordination and discrimination remain part of the daily life of countless women and girls around the world, despite the fact that we know that gender equal societies are more favourable for the economy, sustainable development and peace.

Sweden's feminist foreign policy is put into action by Sweden's Foreign Service adopting a gender equality perspective throughout its operations. The Government has produced an action plan for the direction of feminist foreign policy action taken by the Swedish Foreign Service, guided by six long-term objectives. These are: women and girls' full enjoyment of human rights, freedom from physical, psychological and sexual violence, participation in preventing and resolving conflicts, and post-conflict peacebuilding, political participation and influence in all areas of society economic rights and empowerment and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Sweden's feminist foreign policy has produced results and is being developed further and in greater depth, while more countries and actors are following in Sweden's footsteps. Its breadth is one of the strengths of Sweden's feminist foreign policy, in which a gender equality perspective is enshrined in all foreign policy – from development cooperation to trade policy and security policy. Cooperation with civil society and other actors is key. Sweden is to continue to play a leading role in ensuring that the Women, Peace and Security Agenda takes a central position in the UN, EU and OSSE. The Swedish network of female mediators is being expanded and emulated. The economic empowerment and political engagement of women and girls must continue to be promoted. There can be no democracy unless women and girls enjoy the same rights, resources and representation as men and boys. Extensive support for sexual and reproductive health and rights continues, for example, by funding initiatives on contraception, sex

education and legal abortions. Work to combat human trafficking and all forms of violence against women is a priority.

### **Gender mainstreaming**

Gender mainstreaming is an important tool for feminist policy and the work to expand gender mainstreaming within the Swedish Government Offices and government agencies has been given high priority and produced excellent results.

Work to apply gender mainstreaming within the Government Offices has been developed and reinforced. The Government's decision on gender mainstreaming in the Swedish Government Offices for the period 2016–2020 (S2016/04472/JÄM) identifies four central processes for work on gender mainstreaming: the legislative process, EU matters, the budget process and governance of government agencies.

Statistics Sweden's quantitative follow-up of the Government Offices' work on gender mainstreaming in 2017 showed positive developments in most areas. However, the follow-up also revealed a need for continued development work before gender mainstreaming is fully implemented and gender equality is taken into account in all relevant decision-making documents. Regarding the legislative process, the follow-up showed, for example, that 99 per cent of relevant Government inquiries incorporated a gender equality perspective. Major progress had been made in EU matters, where the presence of a gender equality analysis had increased from 20 to 51 per cent in cases where a gender equality perspective was relevant.

Development work to integrate gender equality in work on the budget, known as gender-responsive budgeting, is being carried out at the Government Offices. Work on gender-responsive budgeting means requiring a gender equality analysis of proposals in the budget process. This ensures that consequences for gender equality can be taken into account from the very start when shaping proposals and reforms, and when making decisions on the direction of policy and the allocation of resources. These efforts have made the Government better placed to ensure that the national budget as a whole promotes gender equality.

The Government assigned the Swedish National Financial Management Authority (ESV) with producing methods during 2017 that would enable monitoring and a composed report of the effects on gender equality of



reforms carried out and proposed on the expenditure side of the national budget. A final report on this remit was submitted on 31 October 2017. The follow-up shows gender differences regarding the recipients of several reforms and that women and men and girls and boys benefit differently from the measures analysed.

The Government has developed work on gender mainstreaming in government agencies and the Swedish Gender Equality Agency has been tasked with supporting the work of the agencies on gender mainstreaming since January 2018. Since 2013, the Government has been running a development programme for gender mainstreaming in government agencies, *Jämställdhetsintegrering i myndigheter* (JIM). Over time, JIM has been expanded and in 2018 covered 58 government agencies and the Swedish National Council of Adult Education. Since 2016 there has been a parallel remit for universities and higher education institutions covering all state-run seats of learning and two foundations. These are tasked with drawing up a plan for how they intend to develop gender mainstreaming with the aim of contributing to attaining the goals of gender equality policy, e.g. regarding equal opportunities for career paths, gender-related course choices and completion rates. The plan includes development needs, targets and activities that are to be carried out in the period 2017–2019.

Reports on the JIM programme show that participating agencies have identified gender equality challenges in their respective areas of operation and, to varying extents, launched development work to integrate gender equality in planning and follow-up processes and in parts of their core operations. This involves, for example, taking gender equality and work to prevent violence into account in processing individual cases, gender equal distribution of state aid in research funding, financial support to companies and arts grants.

### **Division of power and influence**

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

Progress has been made towards an even distribution of power and influence in many respects in the last ten years, but much remains to be done. In some areas, there are worrying tendencies indicating that development has halted or gone backwards. In the Riksdag, the proportion of women members has been growing as a trend over a long period, but in the 2010 and 2014 elections this trend was reversed with a reduction in the proportion of female members of the Riksdag. After the 2014 election, 44 per cent of the members of the Riksdag were women and 56 per cent men. In the 2018 election the trend reversed again with 46 per cent women and 54 per cent men being elected.

Male dominance remains high in the management of Swedish listed companies, although the proportion of women has increased in the past five years. In 2018, the proportion of women on the board of listed companies was 34 per cent and the proportion of men 66 per cent. The proportion of women chairing companies was only 9 per cent while men accounted for 91 per cent. Only 8.4 per cent of managing directors of listed companies were women and 91.6 per cent men.

The situation is better in company boards wholly or partly owned by the state. In these, the proportion of women was 49 per cent and the proportion of men 51 per cent in 2018. The proportion of women chairing state-owned companies was 48 per cent while men accounted for 52 per cent in 2018. 36 per cent of managing directors in companies wholly or partly-owned by the state were women and 64 per cent men (as at end 2017). At this point, the senior management teams comprised 46 per cent women and 54 per cent men.

It is important that the state, the municipalities and county councils, as well as business and organisations, including the political parties and civil society organisations, work for an even distribution of power and influence between women and men.

The goal of equal gender distribution on the boards of government agencies was attained in 2016. Equal gender distribution has also been attained in management positions at Swedish embassies. The proportion of women who are heads of governmental agencies employed by the Government has gradually increased and gender distribution is now equal. The Government has also raised its ambitions in terms of equal gender distribution among

newly recruited professors, and in creating a better gender balance in terms of the proportion of women in leading positions in the film industry.

### **The labour market and financial gender equality**

The Government's policies have helped to reduce income differentials between women and men, but the goal of financial gender equality has not been met. Women still have a lower employment rate, shorter working hours, higher absence rates and lower pay and capital income than men.

In 2017, the participation in the workforce of women and men aged 16–64 was 81 per cent for women and 85 per cent for men. One explanation for the difference is lower participation in the workforce among foreign-born women. In the same year, women worked an average of 5.2 hours less a week than men, equivalent to a 15 per cent cut in working hours. Of all people employed aged 16–64, approximately 28 per cent of women worked part-time while the equivalent proportion was just under 11 per cent for men. The most common reason for part-time working, among both women and men, was that no full-time post was offered.

In 2017, women's pay was on average 11.3 per cent lower than that of men. However, the pay gap has reduced from 16.3 per cent to 11.3 per cent in the past ten years. Gender segregation in the labour market has also decreased somewhat in the past ten years. The segregation index, which measures how high a proportion of women and men respectively would have to change job in order to attain an equal occupational distribution between the gender, shows that the index fell from 57.9 to 53.2 between 2005 and 2016, indicating that the labour market has become less segregated by gender.

Although women's working hours and participation in the workforce have increased, pay differences between women and men have shrunk and the labour market is less segregated, women on average work shorter hours than men, work part-time to a greater extent than men and have higher absence rates due to parental leave and health.

Women taking greater responsibility than men for unpaid household and care work, and working conditions often being poor within female-dominated sectors contribute towards a higher risk of ill-health among women. The consequences for women of shortcomings in financial gender equality lead to a lower degree of financial autonomy and independence.

Reality is complex and many different factors such as education and region of birth affect the participation of women and men in the workforce and their incomes, particularly viewed over an entire career. One important aspect in creating a more gender equal labour market is increasing women's participation in the workforce and reducing involuntary part-time work. A modern working life also demands good working conditions and a good work environment. An expanded welfare system is currently the most important factor in women's participation in the workforce because women still take on more responsibility than men for unpaid household and care work.

The Government is working to even out the labour market conditions for women and men and to reduce the disparities in income from paid work for women and men. Extensive investments have been made in the health, education and care sectors, which benefit gender equality in the workplace because many women work in these sectors. Well-developed childcare provision and care of the elderly also promote gender equality in that this mainly reduces the female burden of unpaid care work.

### **Men's violence against women must end**

In the past five years, several initiatives have been carried out to prevent and combat men's violence against women, including commissioning several different relevant agencies to increase skills, identify the violence, and develop initiatives and methods. There are results that indicate that over time there has been a reduction in fatal violence in close relationships since the 1970s. When it comes to the number of women killed by a partner or a former partner, the number of cases has fallen to an average of 13 women a year in 2008–2014, compared with an average of 17 such cases in the first decade of the 21st century and the last decade of the twentieth century. (Lethal violence in Sweden 1990–2014, Brå 2015:24) Men's violence against women and violence in close relationships are characterised by underreporting of crimes committed and the amount of unreported crime is estimated to be high.

The Government has taken a holistic approach to improve the likelihood of attaining the sub-goal of gender equality policy of ending men's violence against women. This includes a ten-year national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women for the years 2016–2026. The strategy includes the issues of honour-related violence and oppression as well as

prostitution and trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes. The strategy particularly emphasises initiatives to prevent violence. On the basis of the strategy, since 2018 the Government has also been pursuing a dedicated, multi-year initiative to prevent honour-related violence and oppression. The initiative includes stronger mandates to the county administrative boards and other agencies, and supporting local action and preventive action. The Spring Amending Budget for 2019 earmarked additional funding for this purpose.

Changing society is a long-term process. One of the Government's aims behind the national strategy is to work for a reorientation from a reactive to a proactive approach; encouraging the development of effective measures to prevent violence being exercised or repeated. To achieve this, broader and more constructive engagement than before is required on the part of men and boys as well as confronting norms that justify violence and restrictions to women's and girls' agency and life choices. In addition, the Government estimates that tougher and more accurate measures are needed in terms of protecting victims of violence and fighting crime. According to the Government, all sectors of society which come into contact with violence and its consequences must be better at detecting violence. There needs to be greater awareness of functioning working methods, the effect of interventions and of the extent and cost of violence over time. Work to combat violence must be well coordinated between actors affected at all levels. Through the strategy, which also incorporates a long-term action plan of measures, the Government has paved the way for more goal-oriented and coordinated work on men's violence against women and hastened the development of effective preventive measures. Work to implement the strategy and the action plan is in progress but clear challenges remain in this area.

**2. Which of the following have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in Sweden over the past five years through laws, policies and/or programmes?**

To promote gender equality the Government has afforded a high priority to questions of men's violence against women, particularly focusing on preventive measures over the past five years (see questions 13–16 and 18). This includes work against honour-related violence and oppression. Work to promote gender equality in the labour market and in working life has also

been a priority (see question 6) as have initiatives to promote the even division of unpaid household and care work (see question 7).

In 2016, the Government decided that gender equal health was to be a new sub-goal of gender equality policy and the Government has made significant investments in women's health (see question 11). Work on gender mainstreaming (see question 23) is essential to developments in the field of gender equality, as is the involvement of men and boys in the gender equality arena (see questions 7 and 13).

**3. Over the past five years, have you taken specific measures to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination? (Please check relevant categories)**

Since 2009, Sweden has had a Discrimination Act which seeks to combat discrimination and promote equal rights and opportunities regardless of gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. The Discrimination Act has been made more stringent on several occasions. Since 2017, employers and education providers have been obliged to take preventive and promoting action to combat discrimination and other work for equal rights and opportunities irrespective of gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age.

Within the remit of the Government's strategy for Roma inclusion 2012–2032, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) has arranged training and exchanges of experiences between Roma and non-Roma women and their organisations. The initiatives have included a focus on how the participants' organisations can work for women and girls' rights and on the rights they have as national minorities.

Sweden has had a new national objective and direction of disability policy since 2017. The goal is to contribute to increased gender equality and to the child rights perspective being considered. The Swedish Agency for Participation and the Swedish Agency for Gender Equality have been assigned by the Government to map the challenges to achieving the Gender Equality Policy sub-goal of economic equality regarding women with disabilities. The survey will highlight areas that can contribute to fulfilment of the sub-goal.

The Swedish Migration Agency has worked for gender equality and to ensure that women and men have their asylum applications examined individually and in line with the rule of law irrespective of their gender. The aims are for women and men to have their cases examined equally and to be treated equally and receive equal service, to combat men's violence against women and honour-related violence and for operations to be characterised by a gender equality perspective.

One result of the work is greater individualised administrative processing by making payments to asylum seekers to individuals, both women and men, rather than by family, i.e. only to the man in the family. Gender equality aspects are also integrated in the annual national quality audits. Work at the Swedish Migration Agency continues in a plan for equal treatment 2019–2020.

#### **4. Has the increasing number of humanitarian crises – caused by conflict, extreme weather or other events – affected the implementation of the BPfA in Sweden?**

When many unaccompanied minors came to Sweden in 2015, there was a need to provide them with information on their sexual and reproductive rights and those of other young people. There was also a lack of tailored teaching material translated into different languages. Additionally, more awareness was needed among professionals in the field regarding how to talk about these issues to unaccompanied minors.

As a result of this, as early as 2016 the Government commissioned the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF), in consultation with UMO (youth guidance centres online), to produce and disseminate a digital platform for information on health and gender equality with a focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) geared towards unaccompanied minors and children aged 13–25. The website [youmo.se](http://youmo.se) was launched in April 2017 (see question 10).

As a result of it being discovered in the Netherlands in February 2015 that girls aged 14–17 from Syria had entered into marriage in refugee camps with men 10–20 years older, the Swedish Migration Agency decided to obtain better and more detailed information about children who were married when they sought protection in Sweden. The Swedish Migration Agency's survey 'Are you married?' led to a new assignment for the Swedish National Board

of Health and Welfare to improve guidance to municipalities receiving children who had entered into marriage abroad. In 2015–2016 the National Board of Health and Welfare also revised the handbook on unaccompanied minors as a result of the Swedish Migration Agency's survey. The National Board of Health and Welfare continued this work following the final report. The new total ban on recognising foreign child marriage which entered into force in January 2019 means that child marriages are no longer approved in Sweden.

**5. Which of the following does Sweden consider to be the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in Sweden for the coming five years through laws, policies and programmes?**

The Government's goal to end men's violence against women is a top priority as it is a serious obstacle to gender equality and to women's and girls' full enjoyment of their human rights and one of the ultimate expressions of gender inequality between women and men. The work towards this goal includes honour-related violence and oppression as well as prostitution and trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes. The work of the Government in this regard is run on the basis of a ten-year strategy (2017–2026) and an action plan for the period 2017–2020.

The Government prioritises emergency support to victims of violence and their children, preventive work, and initiatives to get people who exercise violence to change their behaviour. In the long term, the norm-changing and preventive work is crucial. Negative gender stereotypes which link masculinity to violence need to be counteracted. Universally preventive initiatives against violence, including sexual violence, with a special focus on young people, are needed. Among other things, the Government supports manual-based mentoring programmes provided in schools with the aim of changing norms to promote gender equality.

Honour-related violence and oppression restrict, harm and in the worst case kill. Violence and oppression affect individuals but also society. It is mainly women and girls who are the victims but boys and men and LGBTQ persons are affected too. Honour-related violence and oppression are unacceptable and must actively be prevented and combatted through broad-based initiatives in collaboration between several actors. The Government is therefore conducting a coherent, multi-annual initiative to prevent and combat honour-related violence and oppression. The initiative has several



different elements, including mandates to the county administrative boards and other agencies, and supporting local action and preventive action. Work against honour-related violence and oppression is a high priority for the Government. The Government intends to increase awareness of the issues and strengthen work in schools and social services. Society's readiness to take direct action in the event of a suspicion that people will be subjected to genital mutilation or married against their will must be strengthened.

The new sexual offences act, based on consent, will enable more rape convictions. In the policy statement, the Government announced that it plans to continue work to realise a culture of consent. The policy statement also states that sex education must be modernised. More centres for victims of sexual crimes must be established.

Gender equal health – for women and men, girls and boys to have the same opportunities and conditions for good health and to be offered care and healthcare on equal terms – is one of the sub-goals of gender equality policy. Gender equal health is a goal in its own right, but good health for women and men and girls and boys respectively also contributes towards gender equal and active participation in society. There are significant differences between women and men and between girls and boys when it comes to physical and mental health. Women generally experience their health as being worse than men do. The Government will continue measures for women's health, partly through new investments in maternity care. SEK 1 billion has been earmarked for 2019 and SEK 1 billion is estimated per year for 2020–2022.

Safeguarding sexual and reproductive health and rights for all women and men, boys and girls, both in Sweden and abroad, is a priority for the Government. Questions of sexual and reproductive health and rights therefore need to be included in population surveys, and information and knowledge need to be passed on to women and men, girls and boys. The Government considers it is important that the information and education initiatives geared towards newly arrived immigrants continue, partly run via the digital platform youmo.se (see question 11). The Public Health Agency of Sweden will report the results of the national population study on SRHR in 2019.

The Government also intends to strengthen psychiatric services to tackle mental illness in men and women alike. This includes investments in suicide prevention. As in other high-income countries, men are severely over-represented among people who commit suicide.

Women and men having equally good opportunities to support themselves and have power over their own lives is one of the Government's priorities during the current mandate period. A particular focus is placed on women's integration. Both women and men must encounter the same expectations from society and be given the right prerequisites to support themselves by entering the labour market. A gender equality perspective is needed in all integration measures.

The Government considers that the progress made towards attaining equal pay between women and men is too slow. The Government's gender pay gap action plan includes steps to be taken to reduce pay differences between women and men. A government inquiry will review the measures needed to ensure compliance with the provisions on active measures, including pay surveys, set out in the Discrimination Act.

The Government intends to continue working for parental leave to more equally shared between women and men as this is one of the most important factors affecting the distribution of unpaid household care work. The Government also recognises the importance of the statistical survey carried out by Statistic Sweden approximately once every ten years. The survey seeks to show how unpaid household and care work is distributed between women and men, girls and boys. The results of the survey are used to follow up the sub-goal of the Government's gender equality policy of an equal distribution of unpaid housework and care work.

The introduction of a family week will begin during the current mandate period. Many working parents can find it difficult to take vacation or take leave from work when schools and preschools are closed during school holidays and public holidays. The Government therefore wants to introduce the opportunity of paid leave for working parents – a family week. Once the reform has been fully rolled out, parents who work and have children aged between 4 and 16 will have five free days each year when the child is on holiday, on inset days etc. Three days will be introduced within this mandate period. Once it is fully complete, the reform will cover a total of 10 days'

leave per year for parents with sole custody of a child. The family week will make it easier for parents to participate in caring for their children and make it easier for both women and men to combine work with family life. The initiative is expected to contribute towards the sub-goal of an equal division distribution of unpaid housework and care work.

It is important to continue to work for an equal division of power and influence. Clear gender equality challenges remain, not least in business, but also in terms of the gender distribution in elected bodies and in leading positions in the public sector, e.g. among managers in municipal and county council services. Determined work over many years saw the Government attaining an equal distribution of women and men on the boards of government agencies and advisory councils in 2016. However, men continue to hold management posts to a greater extent than women and also dominate on the boards and senior management of listed companies. To attain the goal of an equal division of power and influence, the Government considers a more gender equal division in the boardroom and in senior management to be essential.

Another challenge regarding the sub-goal of an equal division of power and influence between women and men is that more women than men are choosing to abandon elected positions during their term of office, and resignation is particularly common among women in the age range 30 to 49. One possible explanation might be that the uneven distribution of unpaid household and care work has a negative effect on women's opportunities to hold political office. Working to ensure that both women and men can undertake elected office and that those who do so receive sufficient support to enable them to fulfil their obligations and wish to do so is therefore an important task. The opportunity to participate in democratic processes both as a voter and an elected representative is a central element in the sub-goal of an even distribution of power and influence. The opportunity to influence the content of decisions requires participation in the decision-making process. If women are to attain half of real power, irrespective of sector, it is paramount that women are able to be influential in determining which issues are tackled. This concerns decision-making processes at all political levels in society, including EU level, and in arenas that lie outside the formal democratic system.

One particular challenge is the hate and threats faced by many political elected representatives, journalists, artists and columnists, inter alia online. Women are particularly vulnerable to threats and violations of sexual nature. In July 2017, the Government therefore presented an action plan for measures to protect journalists, elected representatives and artists from exposure to threats and hatred. The action plan includes measures to reduce exposure to threats and hate partly based on a gender equality perspective.

Work for gender equality is a shared commitment on the part of women and men, and men's engagement and participation is therefore essential to attaining a gender equal society. Harmful and restricting norms of masculinity affect everyone irrespective of their gender identity and gender expression. Men's life chances are negatively affected by gender norms and norms of behaviour in terms of boys' opportunities at school, men's poor relationships with their children, men's health and illness, social disadvantage and risk behaviours as well as men's violence and vulnerability to violence, for example. The Government therefore strives to work to integrate the perspective of men and masculinity in the gender equality work being carried out among government agencies, in local government and in civil society. For example, the Government has an ongoing agreement with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) which incorporates a focus on work to prevent violence for children and young people in schools – Mentors Violence Prevention (MVP) – with the aim of challenging gender stereotypes and drawing attention to violence at an early age.

## **6. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to advance gender equality in relation to women's role in paid work and employment?**

The Government has conducted several reforms which affect the labour market and working conditions in various ways with the aim of influencing the conditions and reducing the differences between men's and women's labour income. The Government's decision to draw up an action plan for equal pay in a life cycle perspective is one example. The Government's action plan includes steps to be taken to reduce pay differentials between women and men. Another example is amendments to the Discrimination Act. From 1 January 2017, all employers have had to conduct a pay survey every year and implement measures to prevent pay discrimination. The aim is for employers to be able to discover, remedy and prevent unfair differences in pay between women and men.

The Government decided terms of reference for an inquiry on effective and appropriate oversight of the Discrimination Act (ToR. 2018:99). An Inquiry Chair will review the measures needed to ensure compliance with the provisions on active measures set out in the Discrimination Act. The Inquiry Chair will also consider whether current provisions in the Discrimination Act on supervision regarding active measures are appropriate for effective compliance with the provisions, and propose amendments that could lead to greater compliance where appropriate.

The Government has also worked to increase employment among foreign-born women. Within this remit the Government has tasked the Swedish Public Employment Service with producing an action plan for how to increase the number of women born outside Sweden who are in work or studying. The Government introduced and expanded the number of subsidised posts, which enables a greater proportion of women to access subsidised jobs. From 2018, the study associations have been allocated funding to run outreach work encouraging study among women born outside Sweden. In the period 2018–2021 the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth has been commissioned to promote enterprise by women born outside Sweden, partly by supporting initiatives that help women born abroad to start and run companies. In 2018 the Swedish Forest Agency made efforts to reach newly arrived immigrant women in the labour market project *Naturnära jobb* (Jobs close to Nature), which seeks to reach newly arrived immigrant women and long-term unemployed people. The measures seek to enable participants, including newly arrived immigrant women, to gain employment in the forest industry later on.

The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth has developed a new national strategy for business promotion on equal terms. Entitled *Öppna upp!* (Open up!) for the period 2015–2020. The strategy seeks to help to ensure that publicly funded business promotion at national, regional and local level can be offered on equal terms, irrespective of their gender, origin, age and geographical location. The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth has doubled the financial support paid out to women who run businesses from 7 per cent in 2015 to 13 per cent in 2017, and increased the proportion of applications granted to women from 9 per cent in 2015 to 16 per cent in 2017. In its follow-up of how business support is allocated, the agency has succeeded in this by gaining information on women being underrepresented in applications received and granted, for example, which

the agency then worked on to attain a more even distribution. The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth has gathered information on the basis of sex, age, young people and foreign-born.

The Government wants full-time work to be the norm in the labour market in the long term and for part-time work to be an option for both women and men. Within the remit of this priority, the Government has appointed an inquiry for sustainable working life that seeks among other things to increase opportunities for flexible working and for part-time work to be an option.

The Government has also implemented measures to make the labour market less gender-segregated. According to an amendment to the Swedish Public Employment Service's instructions in 2015, the service is to design its operations so as to promote gender equality and combat gender segregation in the labour market. In-service training initiatives for study and careers advisors to combat gender-stereotypical choices of study and career have also been run.

Investments have also been made in the working environment. The Government developed a labour market strategy for 2016–2020 that takes the challenges and opportunities of modern working life as its starting point. The strategy revolves around concrete measures addressing the psychosocial work environment, which particularly affects women's health, as a priority area. Furthermore, the Swedish Work Environment Authority produced new regulations on the organisational and social work environment, which entered into force on 31 March 2016. The regulations seek to promote a good working environment and prevent the risk of ill-health due to organisational and social circumstances at work.

In the light of the differences that exist between women's and men's pensions, the Government and the pensions review committee (Pensionsgruppen) have a special focus on gender equal pensions. An extensive analysis of pensions was conducted from a gender equality perspective, following which Pensionsgruppen decided a direction and an action plan for continuous work. One important measure in Pensionsgruppen's action plan was to review and improve the basic protection offered by the pension system. Basic protection is very important for reducing the pension gap between women and men and in January 2019

the Government referred for consultation a memorandum with proposals for improved basic protection, backed by Pensionsgruppen as a whole. The proposals, which enter into force in 2020, will especially improve the economic situation for women with low incomes. Work for more equal pensions is a long-term endeavour and continuing to monitor and analyse the factors that affect the pensions gap is an important part of the Government's and Pensionsgruppen's work.

The many initiatives in the #metoo movement have put attention on the prevalence of sexual harassment, violence and insulting treatment in several sectors and industries in society. The Government has therefore tasked the Equality Ombudsman and the Swedish Work Environment Authority with working together to produce special information initiatives on work to combat sexual harassment. It is proposed that efforts to prevent sexual harassment at work are strengthened through education and information initiatives supporting employers, and greater support to regional health and safety representatives.

#### **7. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and promote work-family conciliation?**

Several changes have been carried out within the parental leave system that are expected to have an impact on the distribution of unpaid household and care work.

A third reserved month was introduced within the parental insurance system from 1 January 2016. The first reserved month (30 days) was introduced in 1995 and the second month in 2002. The two previously reserved months have led to men claiming an increasingly higher proportion of parental benefit days but also to women reducing their proportion. The third reserved month is therefore expected to follow the same pattern.

Statistics from the introduction of the first reserved month in 1995 were used to estimate the effect of this changed pattern. At that time, men's claiming of parental benefit increased, but not to the same extent that women reduced theirs. The pattern also changed with the introduction of the second reserved month, but at that time the total amount of parental benefit was also increased by an additional month, making it difficult to compare the effects of the reforms.

Since 1995, men have on average increased their claiming of parental benefit and parental benefit has also undergone several changes. For children born from 1 January 2014, firstly the different types of compensation in parental benefit have been introduced and secondly a new age limit has been introduced whereby the majority of the parental benefit has to be claimed before the child's fourth birthday. These reforms are expected to increase the incentive for men to claim parental benefit at an early stage of the child's life.

Sweden abolished the municipal care grant in 2016. The care grant was a grant that offered parents with children aged one to three the opportunity of staying at home for longer. The grant was abolished because it cemented a family policy in which women take care of unpaid household and care work while men earn a living. The care grant was mainly claimed by foreign-born women with low incomes.

In 2017 restrictions were introduced in parental benefit for parents who come to Sweden with children. These restrictions mean that if a child becomes resident in Sweden in the child's second year of life, the parental benefit is to be provided to the parents for a maximum of 200 days in total. The restrictions in parental benefit seek to make it easier for families, especially newly arrived immigrant women, to become established in the labour market and in society.

The abolition of the municipal care grant and the introduction of a limit on parental benefit are judged to have influenced the distribution of unpaid household work in a more equal direction.

In a new piece of legislation in 2018, the Government made it possible for elected municipal and county council representatives who perform their duties full time or a significant proportion of a full-time post to take parental leave. The proposal is expected to make it easier for women and men to combine their duties as an elected representative with family life.

In 2017, an inquiry (SOU 2017:101) commissioned by the Government submitted proposals for how parental insurance could better contribute towards gender equal parenting. The three central proposals of the inquiry were: 1) new age limits and a new way of allocating the time, 2) additional reserved days (total 5 per month per parent, a third continuing to be freely



transferable) and 3), improved opportunities for different family constellations to use parental benefit.

Regarding this last proposal, the Government submitted a bill to the Riksdag, which has partly been approved by the Riksdag. The part that the Riksdag has approved enters into force in July 2019 and involves a parent's cohabitee being equivalent to a parent in terms of parental benefit. In the bill, the Government also proposed that days with a basic level of parental benefit could not be transferred to the other partner. The proposal to reserve days at basic level would lead to couples sharing parental benefit more fairly between men and women. The Riksdag did not approve this element. Other proposals from the inquiry are being prepared by the Government Offices.

In 2017 and 2018, the Government allocated more funding to welfare through major injections of funding to the municipal sector. This enabled municipalities and county councils to improve their health and care provision. Well-developed childcare and care of the elderly benefits women's opportunities to work and earn a living in that they mainly release women from previously unpaid labour.

The Government has contributed to Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)'s focus on men and gender equality through its agreement with the SALAR for 2016–2018. Initiatives have been carried out in municipalities and county councils that both challenge norms and engage men and boys, e.g. through new approaches in maternity and child healthcare which encourage expectant fathers to engage in equal parenting. Within this remit, SALAR has also run a campaign to increase men's participation in unpaid household and care work.

Several changes have taken place in the past five years in terms of the tax rules for different types of deductions. This concerns deductions that can produce a tax reduction when buying certain types of work carried out in the home. Overall the opportunities to claim deductions have increased. According to Statistics Sweden's Time Use Survey, men take greater responsibility for household work that is entitled to deduction for example renovation work, rebuilding, etc. while women in general take responsibility for household work, such as cleaning, childcare, etc. In total the changes to

the deductions are judged not to affect the distribution of unpaid household and care work to any major extent.

**8. Has Sweden introduced austerity/fiscal consolidation measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public-sector downsizing, over the past five years?**

No.

**9. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?**

The Government has taken a number of steps to ensure that more foreign-born women are given the opportunity to enter the labour market, thus gaining an opportunity for financial autonomy and to support themselves (see questions 6 and 10).

The Government has presented a number of reforms that have a direct impact on the incomes of women and men (see question 10).

Following initiatives from the Government, amendments have been made to the Employment Protection Act (1982:80) (Govt Bill 2015/16:62, report 2015/16:AU5, Riksdag Comm. 2015/16:156) with the aim of improving the situation for employees who risk becoming stuck in temporary employment for a long period.

**10. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to improve access to social protection for women and girls?**

Since 2014, the Government has carried out several reforms to foster greater equality between women and men in terms of social protection.

Firstly, the basic allowance for pensioners has been increased, which means that individual disposable income on average will increase more for women than for men. This tax cut will mainly benefit people on a low income. Secondly, the housing supplement for pensioners has been increased, which primarily benefits the oldest women.

Thirdly, maintenance support has been increased, which improves the finances of single women with children in particular. The child element of social assistance has also been increased, which helps to improve the

finances of single women with children because it is more common for women than for men to be single parents.

Furthermore, a higher basic level of parental benefit is also a reform which mainly benefits women because women claim more days of parental leave at basic level. More women are students than men, which means that increased student funding benefits women more than men. The increase in child benefit is judged to have improved the finances of women and men roughly equally.

#### **11. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to improve health outcomes for women and girls in Sweden?**

In 2016 the Government decided that gender equal health was to be a new sub-goal of gender equality policy. The sub-goal of gender equal health is based on women and men, girls and boys and people who identify in other ways having the same opportunities for good health and being offered care and healthcare on equal terms. The area of gender equal health is largely related to both the overarching goal of gender equality policy and to the other five sub-goals. Differences in health depending on gender affect opportunities to exert power and influence, education, financial independence, vulnerability to violence and the distribution of unpaid labour. At the same time, the other five sub-goals affect the degree of health equality.

The Government has made significant efforts to promote women's health. In addition to specific initiatives concerning women's health, there has been increased investment in psychiatry services, which benefits both girls and women and boys and men. The Government presented a multi-year investment in the area of mental illness to tackle increasing illness in children and young adults up to the age of 30. The aim includes a boost for youth guidance centres, front line psychiatry in primary care, children and young people's psychiatry (BUP) and specialised psychiatry for adults. A larger proportion of younger people suffer mental illness, especially women and girls.

In 2015, the Government launched an investment in maternity care and women's health with the aim of improving maternity care. In 2015–2018 women's health and maternity care has benefited from investments of just over SEK 3 billion. This level of investment will continue and the

Government has announced that it intends to allocate SEK 1 billion a year to this area in 2019–2022. The funding will go to improve skills supply, including staffing, in areas including maternity care. Since 2018, the funding has also been able to be used to improve neonatal care. The investment is rolled out to the county councils through agreements between the Government and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. The result shows that the number of severe tears suffered in childbirth generally fell by 25 per cent between 2014 and the first half of 2017. This means 850 fewer women injured per year. The National Board of Health and Welfare has also been given an extensive remit within this investment, which partly includes oversight of post-natal care, childbirth outcomes depending on socioeconomic factors, national guidelines for endometriosis, the need for knowledge support, etc. The Swedish Agency for Health and Care Services Analysis has been charged with following up and analysing the effects of the investment and will produce its final report on the results in September 2020.

Mammographs and cervical smear testing have been introduced free of charge, as has free contraception for people under the age of 21. A national care programme for cervical cancer has been drawn up and work has been carried out on the consequences of the introduction of the National Board of Health and Welfare's recommendations regarding screening.

One group that has been identified as needing a particularly high degree of support on health, gender equality, SRHR and the rights they have in Sweden is asylum seekers and newly arrived asylum seeking young immigrants. For this reason, in 2016 the Government tasked the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) with producing information on health and gender equality for this group, which resulted in the website [youmo.se](http://youmo.se). This contains information about equality, sexuality and health available in simple Swedish, English and the most common languages spoken by the target group: Dari, Tigrinya, Arabic and Somali. It also includes information on honour-related violence and oppression, including genital mutilation, sexual violence and sexual harassment, and legislation in the area, including legislation on purchase of sexual services. It also provides contact details of all Sweden's youth guidance centres.

The Public Health Agency of Sweden has been commissioned to produce a national population study on SRHR. This is intended to help the

Government create better and more effective ways of attaining the goals of public health policy on sexuality and reproductive health. The focus is to be on SRHR as a determining health factor from a public health, equality and gender equality perspective. The study will also shed light on the prevalence of sexual and other violence and its consequences for SRHR. The final report will be submitted by 1 June 2019 at the latest.

RFSU, a non-profit non-governmental organisation working to promote access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, has been granted funding since 2016 for an extensive project to improve the sexual and reproductive health of women with a migrant background by producing and disseminating information to the women and to the occupational categories with which the target group comes into contact on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

## **12. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls?**

In 2016, the Government submitted a Government Bill on upper secondary education for all (2017/18:183), which contains proposals for amendments to the Education Act seeking to ensure that all young people commence and complete upper secondary education. According to the proposals, each student should receive support based on the education as a whole. This concerns all types of education that are covered by the provisions on support, in the form of additional adjustments to the teaching or special support.

In 2015 the Swedish National Agency for Education was charged with drawing up and implementing national school development programmes geared towards education providers and schools. The aim is to contribute towards good opportunities for children to develop and learn and to improve knowledge outcomes. This includes developing work on gender equality, equal treatment and norm criticism. Furthermore, a number of investments have been made to increase the quality of education and equality in education, such as the *lågstadiesatsningen* boost for primary education and *samverkan för bästa skola* which supports schools with difficult conditions and poor results. In 2018, the Government presented a new government grant to improve equality and knowledge development in compulsory education which is to be allocated with a socioeconomic index. Initiatives that seek to

increase equality and aid weaker students have the potential to increase gender equality at school, where boys in general perform worse than girls.

In 2018, an inquiry to improve careers advice and study guidance submitted proposals aimed at reducing the significance of gender and social background in education and career choices. The proposals have been circulated for consultation. The Swedish National Agency for Education has a remit to run in-service training initiatives for study and careers advisors to combat gender-stereotypical choices of study and career among students.

The Government made the decision to clarify the gender equality mandate of schools in the curricula of compulsory forms of education. Education and teaching are not to divide children and students by gender and are to be organised and carried out so that all children and students meet each other. The Swedish National Agency for Education has reported proposals on equivalent amendments to the curricula for upper secondary schools, upper secondary schools for students with learning disabilities and adult education. The Government has also drawn up a decision on a revised preschool curriculum. Work on gender equality is to be included in systematic quality work and in many places the wording “girls and boys” has been replaced by the wording “irrespective of sex”. Active work on gender equality and a norm critical perspective in preschools and schools is expected to shed light on differences in approaches and treatment of children and help to work towards change. This can promote equal opportunities and conditions for boys and girls. The Government has also tasked the Swedish National Agency for Education with proposing amendments to the curricula for upper secondary schools, upper secondary schools for students with learning disabilities and adult education. The aim is to clearly set out the mission of schools to combat traditional gender patterns, to personify and convey values such as equality between women and men and to actively and deliberately promote the equal rights and opportunities of men and women.

In 2018, the Swedish National Agency for Education set out these proposed amendments to curricula for upper secondary schools, upper secondary schools for students with learning disabilities and adult education to clearly set out the mission of schools to combat traditional gender patterns, to personify and convey values such as equality between women and men and to actively and deliberately promote the equal rights and opportunities of men and women. The proposals include new wording clearly stating that

students must be given scope to meet and work together irrespective of gender, new wording clearly stating that the school's gender equality mandate also encompasses learning in the workplace and new wording regarding the mission of schools, education and teachers to work with students to highlight, discuss and problematise gender patterns in school, adult education and society.

If schools are to achieve success in its knowledge mission, it is essential that all students thrive at school. More girls than boys and more young women than young men experience mental illness. The Government has made important investments to strengthen and improve student health since 2016. For example, the Swedish National Agency for Education has been charged with carrying out initiatives to improve preventive and promotional work in student health.

The Government has carried out a large number of measures to combat sexual harassment and abuse. These include measures to improve sex education in schools. The Swedish National Agency for Education disbursed SEK 50 million for the purpose in 2018. Some of this funding went to the agency's own efforts to carry out activities and allocate funding to develop sex education and counter insulting behaviour in schools with the aim of strengthening work to prevent sexual harassment. Other funding has been allocated to civil society organisations that provide skills training for school staff in sex education and in work against abusive behaviour, and to unions and student council organisations for outreach skills development initiatives to improve the work environment for students with a focus on work to combat sexual harassment. In addition, the Government has charged the Swedish National Agency for Education with reviewing the need for changes to the curriculum to better support sex education. Within this remit, the Swedish National Agency for Education is to particularly ensure that sex education covers issues of honour-related violence and oppression, consent and pornography.

If women and men with a low level of education are to be able to compete in a knowledge-intensive labour market, there need to be opportunities for them to develop the skills that are demanded. This is important for newly arrived immigrant women and men, for example. Women born outside Europe are a group with a particularly weak link to the labour market. This is also of vital importance for individuals who have not completed upper

secondary education, which is more common among men. Through what is known as the Knowledge Boost, the Government is investing in regional vocational adult education, vocational higher education and folk high schools as well as universities and higher education institutions. The Knowledge Boost will improve access to education, which gives more individuals an opportunity to develop and add to their skills.

The Government has appointed an Inquiry Chair to head an inquiry into the need for changes in municipal adult education in Swedish for immigrants (sfi) and sfi in combination with other education (ToR. 2018:73). The purpose is to analyse the possibility of offering sfi student's good quality education that meets students' needs and circumstances and of improving drop-out rates for sfi and easing the transition to and combinations with other adult education. Women make up a large proportion of newly arrived immigrants with limited education, which is part of the explanation behind their lesser engagement in the job market compared with newly arrived immigrant men. The students in sfi who may need support in teaching are mainly students with limited previous education and students with some form of disability. The former group predominantly comprises women.

Universities and higher education institutions have been tasked with gender mainstreaming their operations in 2016–2019. The aim is for operations to contribute to attaining the goals of gender equality policy, e.g. regarding the question of gender-related course choices, equal opportunities to choose career paths, and completion rates. The Government has also raised its level of ambition regarding gender distribution when universities are appointing new professors. The ambition is for 50 per cent of newly recruited professors to be women by 2030. The Government also wants to attain a more equal distribution of research funding, partly through clearer governance of state-run research funding bodies. The Swedish Research Council and Vinnova are two such examples. The Swedish Research Council has produced methods that research funding bodies can use to encourage the inclusion of a sex and gender perspective in the research and innovation they finance. Vinnova has strengthened applicants' incentive to conduct gender equal research, both in terms of project design and problem formulation. Among other things, there is a requirement that all project applications must include a gender equality analysis in order to be approved. This has also led to several projects discovering new problems and perspectives, which has led researchers to expand or amend their project



structure. The analyses have resulted in the projects reporting how the results affect women and men and also shed light on the different needs and experiences of both women and men.

The Government has also decided to reactivate conscription for basic military training. This means that both women and men will be called up and complete basic military service.

**13. In the last five years, which forms of violence against women and girls, and in which specific contexts or settings, have you prioritized for action?**

Since 2016, Sweden has had a ten-year national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women. This is based on several government inquiries, the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention, 2011), and previous work carried out in this area. The area of application of the strategy is all forms of physical, psychological and sexual violence and threats of violence against women and girls, including honour-related violence and oppression, prostitution and human trafficking.

The new national strategy incorporates an action plan in which the resources in total amount to about SEK 900 million for 2017–2019. Together with previously decided appropriations to non-profit women's shelters, municipalities, county councils and regions, the Government has earmarked more than SEK 1 billion for work in this area from 2015 to 2019. This amount does not include basic funding to government agencies, e.g. in the justice system.

One focus in recent years has been to improve support for people subjected to honour-related violence and oppression.

On 1 July 2014, new provisions in criminal and civil law which strengthen protection against forced marriage and child marriage entered into force. Since then, it is no longer been possible for children to be granted dispensation in order to marry. The international rules in private law on recognition of foreign marriage were tightened up at the same time. In the field of criminal law, penal provisions on *coercion to marry* and *luring a person into travelling abroad for the purpose of a forced marriage* were introduced. The penal provisions cover both legally valid marriages and informal marriages whether

these are entered into in Sweden or abroad. Informal marriages mean such unions entered into in line with rules that apply within a group and which mean that the parties are considered to be spouses and considered to have rights or obligations in relation to each other and encompass the question of dissolving the union. In practice this refers to different religious or traditional marriages. On 1 January 2019 the rules were tightened up further in private international law. A new main rule entered into force at that time stating that no foreign child marriages would be recognised in Sweden. The ban applies irrespective of the parties' links to Sweden when the marriage was entered into or their age at the time that recognition of the marriage is examined by a government agency. Exceptions may never be made if one of the parties is still under 18.

An Inquiry has submitted its final report Increased protection against honour-related crime (SOU 2018:69). The report includes proposals that seek to further increase protection for people subjected to honour-related violence and it has been referred to consultation. To deal with perpetrators who commit crimes with an honour-related motive, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and the National Board of Health and Welfare have been tasked with identifying and developing initiatives for the group who expose their children and relatives to honour-related oppression. Östergötland County Administrative Board has a national mandate on honour-related violence and oppression – which includes running a national helpline and carrying out skills raising initiatives for people working on issues relating to honour-related violence and oppression.

A national action plan against genital mutilation of girls and women was decided by the Government in June 2018. The action plan includes a mandate to survey and disseminate methods and approaches to prevent and combat genital mutilation, a mandate to develop knowledge support and provide in-depth in-service training to people working within social services, health and medical care and student health, and a mandate to survey the care offered to vulnerable people and submit proposals for how care can become more equal across the country. The Government sees genital mutilation as an expression of honour-related violence and oppression.

On the basis of the strategy, since 2018 the Government has also been pursuing a dedicated, multi-year initiative to prevent honour-related violence and oppression. The initiative includes stronger remits to the county

administrative boards and other agencies, and supporting local action and preventive action. The Spring Amending Budget for 2019 earmarked additional funding for this purpose.

Questions of sexual harassment are included in the national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women. The Government carries out work in the area and several national government mandates have been produced in recent years. Examples of measures included tasking the Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority with running information and training initiatives with the aim of increasing awareness of the new sexual offences legislation. Training and information initiatives were also directed towards the justice system, the education system, social services and employers. The Swedish National Agency for Education, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) have worked on violence prevention initiatives in schools. The work has included gender equality and changes in destructive gender stereotypical circumstances (see also question 12).

In February 2018, the Government decided on an action plan to combat prostitution and trafficking in human beings. The action plan seeks to strengthen national coordination in the area and contribute towards better protection for people affected. An important part of the action plan concerns preventive work, which includes a reduced demand for the purchase of sexual services. The action plan presents eight focus areas:

- Enhanced coordination between agencies and other stakeholders.
- Strengthened prevention
- Improved detection of prostitution and human trafficking
- Legislative measures
- Stronger protection and support
- More effective law enforcement
- Greater knowledge and methodological development
- Increased international cooperation

#### 14. What actions has Sweden prioritized in the last five years to address violence against women and girls?

The Government's national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women decided on in autumn 2016 has the following four objectives which will guide the State's governance to prevent and combat men's violence against women and children:

- increased and effective preventive work to combat violence,
- improved detection of violence and stronger protection for and support to women and children subjected to violence,
- more effective crime fighting, and
- improved knowledge and methodological development.

The strategy contains measures that strengthen protection for and support to women subjected to violence, measures to combat violence in same-sex relationships as well as measures that counteract destructive masculinity and notions of honour.

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency plays a central role in coordinating and following up the strategy at national level. The agency's remit includes developing preventive measures against men's violence against women, honour-related violence and oppression, prostitution and trafficking in human beings and violence in close relationships. In these efforts the Gender Equality Agency collaborates with a number of other agencies and actors. The agency is also charged with following up indicators that show developments in the field. In Sweden, access to statistics is generally good but there are certain development needs to make it possible to follow up and develop work on men's violence against women. In February 2017, the Government tasked the National Board of Health and Welfare with producing indicators to follow up the national strategy, investigate the feasibility of including data on violence and genital mutilation in open comparisons of health and medical care, and reporting measures for the development of national statistics on victims of violence.

In 2018 and 2019, Sweden's 21 county administrative boards were charged with making the national strategy known in their respective counties and producing their own action plans and strategies to contribute towards work to prevent and combat men's violence against women. In line with the national strategy, it is planned that the strategy and the initiatives it

incorporates will be evaluated by an external actor to follow up what works and where there is a need for additional initiatives.

In 2015–2019, the Government set aside a total of more than half a million kronor for support to local women’s shelters. The Government also supports civil society organisations which work for gender equality by means of different development grants. The non-profit women’s shelters are able to run preventive outreach work and represent knowledge, skills and experience that is valuable in developing public provision for victims of crime. Non-profit women’s shelters are capable of providing protection and support to women who cannot or do not wish to be in contact with the social services.

In recent years, several surveys have been conducted with a focus on men’s violence against women. In October 2017, for example, the Swedish Agency for Participation (MFD) reported a survey on vulnerability to violence and abuse among people with disabilities. Örebro University has carried out municipal surveys of victims of honour-related violence and oppression. The surveys were presented in the end of 2018.

The National Board of Health and Welfare is tasked with carrying out investigations where children or adults have died – since 1 January 2019 this also includes cases where children have suffered gross assault or exceptionally gross assault if the crime was committed by a person, close related, or former close related to the victim. When it comes to adults, in cases where the crime constitutes an attempt, preparation or conspiracy to commit murder or manslaughter it is investigated whether the crime was committed by a person, close related, or former close related to the victim. The development of these inquiries of deaths is a step in obtaining additional information that can prevent violence.

In recent years, a number of measures have also taken place in terms of criminal law which are significant for the sub-goal of men’s violence against women. One important reform is the new consent-based sexual offences act. The act includes a compulsory counsel for victims of sexual crimes. The amendment entered into force on 1 July 2018. Information and training on the new law on sexual crimes have been provided for professionals and the general public. In February 2018, the Government commissioned the Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority to provide information on the act. On 1 July 2017 the penalty for some serious violent

crimes was increased. At the same time, the scales of penalties for breach of the Act (1982:316) prohibiting female genital mutilation were also increased.

There is now greater, more up-to-date, protection under criminal law for personal privacy due to legislative amendments that entered into force on 1 January 2018. See also question 16.

On 1 July 2018, several legislative amendments entered into force intended to enhance the protection under criminal law regarding, among other things, trafficking in human beings. The amendments in this respect involved a more clear description of the crime in the criminal provision of trafficking in human beings, granting children better protection and increasing the minimum penalty for less serious crimes of trafficking in human beings to six months' imprisonment. On the same date, the maximum penalty for gross procuring was increased to ten years' imprisonment.

On 1 January 2018, legislative amendments entered into force under which the criminal liability for grooming was expanded to further prevent adults contacting children for sexual purposes. It is already a criminal act to propose meeting a child under the age of 15 if the aim is to commit certain sexual crimes against the child. It is no longer necessary for the adult to take any further action to ensure that the meeting takes place after the proposal is made. The maximum penalty was also increased from imprisonment for one year to imprisonment for two years.

On 1 July 2018, legislative amendments entered into force in the Non-Contact Order Act (1988:688) that are intended to provide stronger protection against harassment and persecution. On 1 July 2018, legislative amendments entered into force which mean that every person has an unconditional right to personal and sexual integrity and sexual self-determination. The changes include: The threshold for a criminal act is exceeded whether or not participation in a sexual activity is voluntary. It is no longer required for the perpetrator to have used violence or threats or exploited the particularly vulnerable situation of the individual, e.g. to be able to be convicted of rape. A separate negligence responsibility has been introduced for certain serious sexual crimes. The minimum penalty for aggravated rape and aggravated rape of a child has been increased from four years' imprisonment to five years' imprisonment.

## 15. What strategies has Sweden used in the last five years to prevent violence against women and girls?

Preventive work against violence, with a focus on universal prevention of violence, has been an important part of work to combat violence in close relationships and other forms of violence against women. Universal programmes to prevent violence, which can be used in schools and preschools, have been developed and disseminated to counteract destructive norms of masculinity but also to better identify, highlight and prevent violence in society. Work on universal violence prevention programmes, including work on norms of masculinity are also run within the world of sport with a focus on boys and young men.

Since 2018, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency has been charged by the Government with encouraging the use of effective violence prevention programmes among municipalities and in civil society. With the aim of combatting different forms of men's violence against women, the county administrative boards, the Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority and the Swedish Gender Equality Agency have run campaigns and information initiatives, individually and together with other actors, focusing on topics including destructive norms of masculinity and behaviours that impose restrictions on others.

Examples of campaigns and information initiatives include:

- <https://valjattsluta.se/> – run by Operation Kvinnofrid and Stockholm County Administrative Board, 2016
- <https://ungarelationer.se/> – a national support and knowledge platform to combat violence in young people's partner relationships. The target group is people aged 15–20, victims, perpetrators and friends. The programme is run by the foundation 1,000 Opportunities, with support from funding bodies including the Swedish Gender Equality Agency in 2019.
- <https://www.frivilligtsex.se/> – a campaign for sex with consent, providing information about Sweden's new sexual offences act, focusing on young people's relationships and providing support to ensure they are open and voluntary. Run by the Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority, 2018
- <https://www.umo.se/> – UMO is a website geared towards a target group aged 13 to 25. umo.se is an online youth guidance centre with

information on bodies, sex, relationships, mental health, alcohol and drugs, self-esteem and a wealth of other information. It is run by the county councils and the regions.

- <https://www.youmo.se/> – online youth guidance centre in Arabic, Dari, Somali, Swedish and Tigrinya. It also provides contact details for all Sweden’s youth guidance centres. Run by the county councils and the regions, 2017 (see question 11).
- <https://duavgor.se/> – Campaign by Stockholm County Administrative Board entitled *du avgör* (you decide) geared towards potential and active buyers of sexual services. An information film is shown in Sweden’s cinemas and in major supermarkets. A website has been produced with additional information geared towards buyers of sexual services.

The Government has strengthened work on values in schools and sex education which is crucial for equipping students with awareness of sexual violence as well as of fundamental values and human rights (see answer to question 11).

Sweden has several different manual-based programmes that work with perpetrators to prevent criminals reoffending in cases of violence in close relationships. The development of initiatives geared towards perpetrators and the scope of clinics geared towards perpetrators has increased since 2014. There is a wide range of preventive programmes within the municipalities, often using the Alternative to Violence (ATV) method from Norway. There are also dedicated fathers’ groups with a focus on how men can manage control as a parent. In 2013–2017 the Swedish Prison and Probation Service was commissioned by the Government to develop and strengthen its work to prevent reoffending with a focus on men’s violence, which contributed to the development of treatment programmes for perpetrators of violence. Within the Prison and Probation Service, in prisons and in probation, there are two nationwide treatment programmes for perpetrators who have inflicted violence on a close related. There is also a sexual crimes programme for perpetrators who have committed a sexual crime, including rape.

The Government is examining proposals from a government inquiry on measures to prevent reoffending geared towards men who have been violent towards a close related and who are not deprived of their liberty (SOU



2018:37). The proposals are a development towards making action on the part of society more effective and uniform.

Since 2017, the National Board of Health and Welfare has been commissioned by the Government to develop methods for the work of the social services and the health and medical sector on men who commit violence. Within the remit of the Government's crime prevention mandate, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, Brå's mandate has been increased, in February 2017, for greater coordination and support at national level and the county councils have taken responsibility for coordination at regional level.

**16. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?**

The Government's national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women also includes threats and abuse on the internet. In the strategy, in autumn 2016, it was stated that the penal provisions that protect personal privacy are out of date in some cases.

The protection provided has been strengthened and modernised with the aim of bringing protection of personal privacy under criminal law in line with developments in technology and social development. A new crime – unlawful violation of privacy – which makes it a criminal offence to intrude into the private life of another person by disseminating sensitive images or other information, e.g. on the internet, was introduced on 1 January 2018. This may involve, for example, spreading revenge porn, an image of a person's wholly or partially naked body or an image of or other information about a person being subjected to an offence that includes an attack on their person, liberty or peace. The crime is divided by degrees into an ordinary offence and an aggravated offence. The penalty for unlawful violation of privacy is a fine or imprisonment for a maximum of two years, and for aggravated unlawful violation of privacy imprisonment for a minimum of six months and a maximum of four years.

The penal provisions on unlawful threats, molestation, gross defamation and insulting behaviour were also clarified and modernised. The provision on unlawful threats was expanded, making it a criminal offence to threaten with

more types of criminal acts, e.g. threatening to disseminate images of someone's naked body. The crime of molestation was also expanded. Unlawful threats and insulting behaviour also constitute criminal offences under freedom of the press and freedom of expression. Equivalent amendments were therefore also made to the Freedom of the Press Act. These amendments entered into force on 1 January 2019.

The obligation of the provider of an electronic bulletin board (an interactive service on the internet) to remove particular messages from the service was expanded to also apply to messages that clearly contain unlawful threats and unlawful violations of privacy. Additionally, the right to criminal injuries compensation was expanded to also cover compensation for harm caused by gross defamation.

The Swedish Media Council is an agency tasked with working to strengthen children and young people as aware media users and protect them from the harmful effects of media. The council does this by equipping children and young people with media and information literacy. Since 2013, the Swedish Media Council has been tasked with running the 'No Hate Speech Movement', which partly aims to increase awareness of racism and similar forms of hostility on the internet among children and young people. It also seeks to increase the capacity of children and young people to exercise their freedom of expression, respect human rights and gender equality, and to stimulate critical thinking when using media. In 2016–2017 the council was tasked with surveying the protection of children and young people on the internet in terms of racism, similar forms of hostility, hate crime and extremism.

**17. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media?**

Under the Constitution, the Government has no opportunities to influence editorial decisions in the media either directly or indirectly. This also applies to negative depictions. Any initiative on the part of the Government or other agencies initiating media debate on the question of how a group is depicted could be interpreted as infringement of media freedom. In the Government Bill Education and accessibility – radio and TV in the service of the public 2014–2019 (Govt Bill 2012/13:164), the Government states that the public service companies Sveriges Radio AB (SR), Sveriges

Television AB (SVT) and Sveriges Utbildningsradio AB (UR), by virtue of their special position and range of programming, have a greater opportunity than other media companies to influence attitudes and phenomena in society, and that it is therefore natural for higher demands to be made of public service programming. For this reason, the broadcasting licences for SR, SVT and UR for the period 2014–2019 decided in December 2013 introduced a provision that programming as a whole must be run on the basis of a gender equality and diversity perspective. The range of programmes must also reflect circumstances across the whole of Sweden and the variation of the entire population. The public service companies also have to comply with impartiality conditions. In 2019 work is in progress to draw up the broadcasting licences that will run from 2020 to 2025.

According to the Radio and Television Act, a media service provider shall ensure that the overall media services reflect the fundamental concepts of a democratic society, the principle that all persons are of equal value, and the freedom and dignity of the individual. Under their licence conditions, the Swedish terrestrial channels are obliged to take into account the particular power of the media in programme design and determining topics and the time of broadcast. Content that can be viewed as prejudiced against an ethnic, social or religious group may constitute a breach of the licence conditions.

The Discrimination Act, which entered into force in 2009, seeks to combat discrimination and promote equal rights and opportunities irrespective of gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. The Equality Ombudsman (DO) is an agency whose mission is to combat discrimination and otherwise promote equal rights and opportunities with the aim of combatting discrimination.

The Government has tasked the Equality Ombudsman with carrying out a survey of the prevalence of gender stereotypes and sexist advertising. This includes assessing whether there is a need for additional steps to be taken in this area in the form of expanded self-regulation and training initiatives. The Equality Ombudsman commissioned the University of Halmstad to conduct the survey. The resultant report submitted in March 2019 provides an overall assessment that self-regulation regarding sexually discriminatory advertising and the prevalence of such advertising is not satisfactory. The survey includes a number of recommendations to the Advertising Ombudsman, a

body that examines reported advertisements in line with industry self-regulation.

In 2018, the Equality Ombudsman audited the industries of media, culture and law to ensure that employers are complying with the requirements set out in the Discrimination Act for guidelines and procedures to prevent and hinder harassment. Major deficiencies emerged in the audit in terms of guidelines and procedures on reprisals. The Equality Ombudsman also carried out an extensive audit of a total of 290 municipalities and 20 county councils in 2018. This showed that the majority of employers, i.e. municipalities, county councils and other industries, had deficiencies in guidelines or procedures.

The press adheres to rules of press ethics, which are also applied by the public service broadcasting companies and independent broadcaster TV4. The rules include not highlighting the gender, ethnic origin, nationality or religious belief of people concerned if this is of no significance in the context or is disparaging. There is an ongoing discussion in the media and also among academics regarding how different groups in society are depicted in the media.

The Fojo Media Institute is an independent institute within Linnaeus University in Kalmar/Växjö. The Institute has a special mandate to offer in-service training and further training for professional journalists and free, independent media.

PO (the Press Ombudsman) and PON (the Press Council) are independent bodies which handle complaints on press content. PO is tasked with advising and assisting individuals who feel unfairly treated by press publicity. PO receives complaints from individuals who have been written about in the press. Companies, organisations and agencies can also report complaints. The Swedish Broadcasting Commission is an independent decision-making body which examines the contents of radio and TV programmes to see whether they adhere to the applicable provisions of the Radio and Television Act or broadcasting licences. The commission's examinations are based on reports from viewers or listeners or carried out on the council's own initiative.

The Swedish Advertising Ombudsman is a self-regulatory organisation which examines complaints regarding advertising in line with the Advertising

and Marketing Communication Practice of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). It comprises two scrutinising bodies: The Advertising Ombudsman (RO) and the RO Jury (RON). RO and RON examine commercial advertising targeting the Swedish market and provide guidance for actors in this market. RO and RON's mission is to work to ensure a high level of ethics in all commercial marketing in the Swedish market. Another important function is providing guidance and information as well as training in marketing ethics.

The Government has decided that each year from 2018 onwards, the Swedish Film Institute is to provide a summary report on how the goals of film policy in terms of improving gender equality in the film industry have been attained and how work towards attaining them has been conducted.

**18. Has Sweden taken any action in the last five years specifically tailored to address violence against specific groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination?**

The national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women (see question 13) includes measures focused on specific groups of women who risk suffering multiple discrimination. The strategy includes initiatives targeted towards newly arrived immigrants and young people in Sweden. Examples of initiatives are the task assigned to the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) which resulted in youmo.se (see question 11) and the website ungarrelationer.se which combats violence in young people's relationships. All initiatives to prevent and combat men's violence against women must also continuously incorporate a disability perspective and be accessible to everyone irrespective of disability. Furthermore, since 2018, the county administrative boards have had a regional mandate to pay attention to particular vulnerabilities, a disability perspective, the existence of honour-based norms and LGBTQ persons rights in the light of the national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women.

In 2015, the Public Health Agency of Sweden was given a three-year mandate from the Government regarding national minorities. Its purpose was to propose how the health situation of these groups could be monitored, so finding better routes to facilitate good and equal health. The result proposed measures that would make it possible to monitor the health situation of minority groups and proposed how future consultation and dialogue could be designed.

In 2014, the National Board of Health and Welfare issued regulations and general advice for the work of the health and medical sector and social services to combat violence in close relationships (SOSFS 2014:4). When planning activities and in individual cases, the social welfare committees should take into account the special needs a victim of violence may have due to age, disability, transgender identity or expression, sexual orientation, belonging to a national minority, foreign-born, abuse and addiction, or the risk of honour-related violence,

<https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/Lists/Artikelkatalog/Attachments/19441/2014-5-7.pdf>

In 2018, the National Board of Health and Welfare was tasked with producing training for social services staff on violence in close relationships and men's violence against women. This was carried out in partnership with the Gender Equality Agency, the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women and the county administrative boards. The focus was on people who have been in a vulnerable situation, e.g. older people, people with a disability and people with an addiction or with experience of prostitution and trafficking in human beings.

The Government also has agreements with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) which include to improve the work around sick leave and rehabilitation of the county councils and regions between 2017–2018 with a total budget of SEK 2.9 billion. Among other things, the county councils are required to ensure that knowledge on domestic violence is included in staff training on medical services related to matters of sick leave. The Swedish Social Insurance Agency (in consultation with the National Board of Health and Welfare) is commissioned to annually follow up and report on the work of the county councils to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. According to the agency, all county councils met the above requirement in 2017. The Social Insurance Agency has been commissioned to specifically review measures addressing domestic violence by the county councils in its final report on the agreement, to be submitted by February 15 2019.

Another agreement between the government and SALAR concerns pre- and post-natal care and other health services for women in 2017–2019 with a total budget of SEK 1 billion. This funding is part of an initiative in which the Government has notified that it will propose the Riksdag allocate

resources for this purpose until 2022. The county councils/regions have been able to fund initiatives to identify experiences of domestic violence among women in maternity care as well as to inform women about legislation against domestic violence and female genital mutilation and relevant support services for affected women. SALAR is obliged to report measures taken by the county councils to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs on an annual basis. In addition, the Swedish Agency for Health and Care Services Analysis is commissioned to carry out a more in-depth review of the work of the county councils, knowledge gaps and needs for further support in this area. The agency will submit its final report in September 2020.

There is also an agreement aiming to promote mental health and well-being in 2018, by all relevant health care providers including county councils and service of primary care, child and adolescent psychiatry and youth clinics on sexual and reproductive health with a total budget of SEK 1.4 billion. Children and young people, asylum seekers and newly arrived immigrants constitute specific target groups in the agreement. Exposure to violence is recognised as a possible cause of mental illness among children and young people. SALAR will report on the use of the grants involved no later than by 31 March 2019. The National Board of Health and Welfare is commissioned to review initiatives by municipalities and county councils under the agreement in 2016–2018 and will submit a final report by 31 May 2019.

Yet another agreement aims to increase access to child health services by the county councils with a total budget of SEK 122 million in 2018. The agreement enables child health service providers to fund home visits, outreach work and initiatives of prevention, targeting, among other things, domestic violence against children. The Government and SALAR have declared their intention to renew the agreement on an annual basis until 2020. SALAR will report on the use of the grants involved no later than by 31 March 2019. The National Board of Health and Welfare has been commissioned to follow up and analyse the work of the county councils and will submit an annual report by 1 October in 2019–2020.

Finally, there is a new agreement aiming to strengthen local and regional work for gender equality in 2018–2020 with a total budget of SEK 60 million which mainly concerns initiatives to combat men's violence against women by county councils/regions and municipalities. SALAR was to present a

project plan for 2018 by 31 March 2018. SALAR will submit a report on activities under the agreement in 2018 to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs by 31 March 2019.

**19. What actions and measures has Sweden taken in the last five years to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?**

To promote a more even distribution of power and influence between women and men, the Government is working to ensure that the gender distribution on the boards of government agencies and advisory councils is equal, a goal that the Government attained in 2016. Equal gender distribution has also been attained in management positions at Swedish embassies. The proportion of women who are heads of missions abroad employed by the Government has gradually increased and gender distribution is now equal. The Government has also increased its ambitions in terms of an equal distribution of men and women among newly recruited professors and has the aim of ensuring that film policy is characterised by gender equality and diversity (see question 20).

In the new Local Government Act (2017:725) which entered into force on 1 January 2018, the Government made it possible for elected municipal and county council representatives who perform their duties full-time or for a significant proportion of a full-time post to take parental leave. The proposal is expected to make it easier for women and men to combine their duties as an elected representative with family life.

In 2017, the Government adopted the action plan 'Defending free speech'. The purpose of the measures in the action plan is to reduce exposure to threats and hatred among journalists, elected representatives, artists and opinion formers by paving the way for more knowledge, offering support to victims and strengthening the work of the justice system. Among other things, the Government has tasked the Fojo Media Institute at Linnaeus University with developing support for journalists and editorial teams. Since 2016, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) has been granted funds to develop and support local work to prevent and tackle threats against elected representatives. Since 2018, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) has been tasked with allocating funding to civil society organisations for initiatives to combat threats and hate in public debate.



Through its tougher work to combat racism and similar forms of hostility and hate crime, the Government has also strengthened work to combat sexism and foster gender equality. At the end of 2016 the Government adopted a national plan to combat racism, similar forms of hostility and hate crime. Because different types of intolerant attitudes often exist in the same environments, it is important to take an integrated and consistent approach against racism and sexism.

In 2015–2018, the Government tasked the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) with taking gender equality into account when allocating funding to civil society organisations. This effort focuses on areas of towns and residential areas characterised by low turnout in elections and weak engagement in democracy. The aim is to set up local resource centres to strengthen citizens as actors participating in democracy.

**20. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to increase women’s access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?**

The curricula for compulsory schools and equivalent forms of education and for upper secondary schools and municipal adult education have been changed to clearly set out the task of schools in improving the digital skills of students. Changes were made in the curricula of several subjects in compulsory and upper secondary education. With regard to compulsory education, changes were particularly made in mathematics and technology, which now include programming as an important component. Changes were also made in the syllabuses of social science subjects with a greater focus on improving students’ capacity to criticise sources and improving students’ media and information literacy. This is also a way of strengthening students’ active participation in a world of work and of leisure that is increasingly digitised.

To meet teachers’ needs to improve their skills in using ICT and various digital tools in their teaching, the Swedish Government has invested in skills development for teachers and in 2017 tasked the Swedish National Agency for Education with promoting digitisation and making it easier for schools and education providers to exploit the opportunities of digitisation in education and administration.

One of the Government's aims in the film industry is for film policy to be characterised by gender equality and diversity. The Swedish Film Institute, whose remit includes allocating state funding to film production, has actively worked to attain an even gender distribution of production support, partly through the action plan '50/50 by 2020', which has spread internationally. This work has created a greater balance between the sexes in leading positions in the film industry.

Preventing and combatting violence, threats and hate against female journalists online and offline is a priority issue for Sweden. Support to this end has been awarded to OSSE's media freedom representative for the 'Safety of Female Journalists Online' project and to the Fojo Media Institute's report #journaldefender. Sweden also works actively to reduce the digital divide between the sexes which currently prevents women and girls from fully enjoying their human rights by working for access to an open, equal and free internet in Sweden's development cooperation.

**21. Does Sweden track the proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?**

For gender equality policy, in this five-year period there has been a specific appropriation for special gender equality measures in the national budget amounting to approximately SEK 200–480 million per year. The level varies each year depending on the Government's proposal and the Riksdag's budget decision. Funding for special gender equality measures is intended to be used for specific gender equality initiatives to attain the goals of gender equality policy. In the period 2015–2019, the majority of the resources under the gender equality appropriation, more than 90 per cent, have been used to combat and prevent men's violence against women, including honour-related violence and oppression. In total more than SEK 1 billion has been earmarked for efforts to combat violence for 2015–2019, from the appropriation for gender equality policy.

Funding to attain gender equality has also been set aside in other policy areas during the period, e.g. within the appropriation for health and medical care for women's health and for increased staffing levels in health and medical care and care of the elderly.

Specific funding for gender equal conditions in business has been earmarked within the expenditure area for business policy. For example, in 2018–2021 funding was allocated for an investment in higher employment among foreign born women through three tasks assigned to the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth. This involves promoting enterprise among women born abroad, improving networks and labour market contacts for women born abroad, and strengthening the integration perspective in regional skills supply initiatives, with women as a designated target group.

The Government has given the study associations SEK 30 million in 2018 and SEK 50 million in 2019 and 2020 to run outreach activities among women born outside Sweden encouraging them to study and demonstrate possible routes to study.

In accordance with the Government's decision to apply gender-responsive budgeting, a gender equality perspective is to be included in work on the budget bill, throughout the entire process. As a consequence of this, gender equality aspects will be analysed and taken into account in decisions on new reforms and initiatives from the start. Gender equality analyses must also be made when results are presented and when a new policy direction is presented too. There are clear guidelines within the Government Offices for how a gender equality perspective is to be included into work on the budget.

**22. As a donor country, does Sweden track the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?**

The focus on gender equality in development cooperation is well established, and with the feminist foreign and development policy, Sweden has high ambitions. Gender equality and the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls should be highlighted in development cooperation, both through direct support and through gender mainstreaming. According to the OECD-DAC gender marker, about 70 per cent of the development assistance is gender mainstreamed (OECD/DAC policy marker 1) and about 20 per cent is targeted efforts for gender equality (OECD/DAC policy marker 2). Experience shows that gender mainstreaming must be combined with targeted efforts to achieve the best results. In April 2018, in line with this, the Government adopted a global strategy for gender equality and women's and girls' rights for the period 2018-2022, with funding of SEK 1

billion. The strategy will address global gaps when it comes to gender equality, such as global normative work, work against discrimination and all forms of gender-based violence and harmful practices, as well as access to gender-disaggregated data and gender equality research. The strategy also has a special focus on strengthening the conditions for, and protection of, women's rights organizations, feminist movements and female human rights defenders. The Swedish Government pursues gender-responsive budgeting and in line with this, the MFA's grant management is being gender mainstreamed, including through core support for multilateral organisations.

### **23. Does Sweden have a valid national strategy or action plan for gender equality?**

On the basis of the overarching objective of gender equality policy laid down by the Riksdag, in November 2016 the Government submitted the Government Communication 'Power, goals and agency – a feminist policy for a gender-equal future' (Govt Comm. 2016/17:10). The Communication sets out the following goals and sub-goals of gender equality policy.

The overarching goal of gender equality policy laid down by the Riksdag is: Women and men are to have the same power to shape society and their own lives.

The Government's sub-goals are:

- Equal division of power and influence
- Financial gender equality
- Gender equitable education
- An even division of unpaid household and care work
- Gender equal health
- Men's violence against women must end

The Communication describes the direction of gender equality policy in relation to each of the sub-goals. To achieve the goals, the Government is working broadly on gender mainstreaming as the predominant strategy, in combination with what are known as special measures, which are funded by an appropriation for gender equality policy. The gender mainstreaming strategy means that a gender equality perspective is to be incorporated in all decision-making, at all levels and at every stage of the process, by the actors who normally participate in decision-making. The work to attain the goals of gender equality policy is carried out by means of decisions, assignments and agreements, ensuring that gender mainstreaming is implemented at all levels and in all policy areas. On top of this, there are specific assignments and

initiatives linked to the sub-goals of gender equality policy. The system for implementing gender equality policy, including the gender equality policy goals, thus covers all the targets under SDG 5 in Agenda 2030.

Work on gender mainstreaming spans several different levels of society. To support the work of the Government Offices on gender mainstreaming, there is a Government Decision to gender mainstream all the work of the Government. The decision lays down that gender equality is to be integrated in all work of the Government Offices with a focus on four central processes: the budget process, governance of government agencies, the legislative process and work with the EU.

The decision on gender mainstreaming thus includes gender mainstreaming of the Government's governance of agencies. In addition, a large number of government agencies have a more specific remit to work on gender mainstreaming their core activities. These efforts are partly regulated through tasks assigned in the agencies' instructions and partly through tasks and reporting requirements in appropriation directions. In 2013–2018, the Government conducted a special development programme for gender mainstreaming in government agencies (JIM). The purpose of the development programme was for the agencies' core activities to contribute even better towards attaining the goals of gender equality policy. The programme covered about 60 government agencies and these have now been ordered to continue reporting on their gender mainstreaming. The programme is currently being evaluated so as to analyse needs for further governance in this area.

The Swedish Gender Equality Agency is tasked with providing support and expertise so that other government agencies are able to gender mainstream their core activities. The task of the Swedish Gender Equality Agency is to provide knowledge support and coordinate efforts to make the national action effective in helping to reach the goals of gender equality policy. See also question 32.

At regional level, the county administrative boards are tasked with working to ensure the goals of gender equality policy have an impact in the county and integrating a gender equality perspective in their operations. This is part of the county administrative boards' remit, set out in their instructions. To promote gender mainstreaming and attain the goals of gender equality

policy, all county administrative boards are charged with producing, reporting and implementing county gender mainstreaming strategies. The strategies cover both the internal work of the county administrative boards and external work in the county in partnership with municipalities, agencies, the business community and civil society organisations.

With the aim of supporting gender mainstreaming efforts at local level, the Government has drawn up an agreement with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) to strengthen work for gender equality and protecting women from violence at local level in 2018–2020. The agreement seeks to encourage development towards all the sub-goals of gender equality policy.

The agreement also includes the initiative ‘Model municipalities – equal services and welfare’, which aims to safeguard equal welfare services for different groups of women and men, girls and boys. The initiative encourages a systematic exchange of experiences through benchmarking between municipalities on gender mainstreaming issues. In 2019 this will be expanded to also cover model regions.

Besides this systematic work on gender mainstreaming, there are a number of strategies and action plans produced for specific sub-goals and areas. The most extensive of these is the national strategy to prevent and combat men’s violence against women. To supplement this, the Government has also decided on an action plan against prostitution and human trafficking and an action plan against genital mutilation of girls and women (see question 13 for more information on the Government’s action plans).

Funding for special measures under gender equality policy is set aside under a specific appropriation in the national budget (see question 21). Measures in other policy areas are funded from appropriations in these areas in line with the gender mainstreaming principle.

**24. Does Sweden have an action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women?**

There are no separate action plans for the recommendations of the conventions referred to. However, Sweden has submitted a follow-up report (2018) in which Sweden accounts for the actions that already exist or have been taken in the areas in which the CEDAW Committee submitted views and recommendations. Sweden is also to submit its tenth report to the CEDAW Committee in 2020. In the third cycle of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Sweden is to submit its report to the UN on 1 October 2019.

**25. Is there a national human rights institution in Sweden?**

The government appointed in March 2018 a ministry inquiry on the establishment in Sweden of a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles. The inquiry's report has been published in the Ministry Publication Series (Ds. 2019:4). It is currently being circulated for formal consultation.

**26. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?**

Ensuring the integration of the women, peace and security agenda into all work for peace and security is highly prioritised by Sweden. Sweden pursues this issue at country level and within the UN, NATO, OSCE, the EU and the Council of Europe, and in cooperation with the Nordic nations. Sweden's has used its non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council 2017–2018 as a platform to pursue the agenda for women, peace and security.

In the EU, Sweden has pushed for the establishment of a senior advisor in the European External Action Service (EEAS) on gender equality and women, peace and security. Sweden has also contributed to the EEAS having carried out a study of how human rights and gender equality are integrated into the EU's planning and implementation of its foreign and security policy. One outcome is that the code of conduct for all missions has

been updated with references to sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and gender-based violence.

A new national action plan on women, peace and security was adopted in spring 2016, and was drawn up in broad consultation with relevant actors, not least CSO's, and with five conflict and post-conflict nations. Sweden is also seconding Swedish experts and contributes to training of Swedish and international actors.

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

Sweden's feminist foreign policy takes three Rs as its starting point: All women's and girls' Rights, Representation and Resources. When it comes to representation, women's participation and influence in decision-making processes shall be promoted at all levels and in all areas, and dialogue should be conducted with women representatives at all levels, including in civil society.

One of the cornerstones of Sweden's feminist foreign policy is that work on sustainable peace and security must be representative and inclusive. During its time as non-permanent member of the UN Security Council 2017-2018, Sweden has championed the UN Security Council's inclusion of information from representatives from women's organisations in its analyses. Sweden has also contributed to increased involvement of women in peace processes in countries such as Colombia, Mali, Syria, Afghanistan, Myanmar and Somalia through political, technical and financial support. Sweden's work has for example contributed to Colombia's peace agreement featuring a clear gender equality perspective and thereby being able to serve as a model for others. Another example is support to Syrian women's involvement in political processes at local and international levels, and the opposition's Women's Advisory Committee (WAC).

Sweden has also established, in 2015, the Swedish Women's Mediation Network. The mediation network consists of women in senior positions with long experience of peacebuilding, diplomacy and political processes and is a flexible resource that can engage at short notice in different conflict



contexts. The network also provides technical support and advice to countries/actors wanting to establish equivalent mediation networks. The Swedish network is part of a Nordic mediation network, and works closely alongside a number of similar initiatives, not least in Africa and the Mediterranean region, and with the UN, the EU, the AU and OSCE.

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

Sweden has continued to be an active State Party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). This includes financial contributions to the ICC Trust Fund for Victims, for which Sweden remains the largest contributor. As a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, Sweden consistently raised the importance of accountability for violations of IHL and violations and abuses of HR. Sweden worked actively to integrate a gender perspective in the work of the UNSC, including language on women's empowerment, participation and representation and conflict-related sexual violence in resolutions and statements. When renewing mandates of UN peacekeeping and political missions, Sweden has promoted the inclusion of gender expertise and women personnel in UN field missions and better reporting on gender issues.

Sweden is active in the work against sexualised and gender-based violence in conflict and crises. Sweden has contributed, in the UN Security Council, to making sexual and gender-based violence a specific listing criterion in sanctions regimes. Sweden has also collaborated with, and provided support to, the UN's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

Sweden has been chair and active in the international 'Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies', an initiative that brings together countries and organisations to prevent and improve protection against gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies.

Sweden has collaborated with the International Criminal Court (ICC), its chief prosecutor and bilateral actors to combat the occurrence of, and impunity for, sexual and gender-based violence in conflicts. These efforts

aim to strengthen national capacities to investigate and prosecute such violence, assist victims of crimes and rehabilitate soldiers.

Sweden has also contributed to raising awareness of, and improving knowledge about, the link between the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons and gender-based violence through such measures as support to UN bodies and civil society organisations, and collaboration with authorities. Swedish support has enabled research and the development of policy documents in this area, as well as targeted initiatives in connection with international negotiations and procedures concerning small arms and light weapons and international control.

**29. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child?**

The majority of actions initiated by the Government in the field of children's rights seek to protect and promote the rights of all children and young people irrespective of their gender. The rights of girls are not specifically mentioned in all actions, although girls are naturally encompassed by them, and in relevant contexts, agencies and other actors are encouraged to observe a gender perspective in designing actions.

To strengthen the protection of children's rights, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child will be incorporated into Swedish law. Incorporation means clarifying the fact that courts and those applying the law are to take into account the rights that derive from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in weighing up issues and making assessments in decision-making processes in cases and matters that concern children. Additionally, the incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into Swedish law will help to make the rights of the child visible and facilitate a children's rights-based approach in all public activity. On 13 June 2018 the Riksdag passed a decision to incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into Swedish law. The act will enter into force on 1 January 2020.

Sweden has taken several measures to combat trafficking in human beings, exploitation and sexual abuse. In 2016 the Government decided on an action plan to protect children from trafficking in human beings, exploitation and sexual abuse (Govt Comm 2015/16:192). The action plan applied between 2016 and 2018 and is currently being followed up by the Government

Offices. The action plan contains 23 measures divided into four areas: increasing the effectiveness and coordination of the government agencies affected, increasing knowledge and competence in the area, preventing and prosecuting crimes against children, and giving children the support they need. The Government has also decided on an action plan against prostitution and trafficking in human beings (S2018/00905/JÄM) which has children as a target group (see question 13).

Stockholm County Administrative Board has been commissioned by the Government to be the national coordinator on issues of trafficking in human beings. A manual and web-based training have been produced to support professionals who may come into contact with people who have been trafficked or subjected to prostitution, and an in-depth study has been conducted on groups of children considered to be particularly vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation. On 1 January 2018 the national remits were made permanent by transferring them to the Swedish Gender Equality Agency (Comm 2016/17:10, ToR. 2016:108).

In 2016 the Government appointed a special ambassador to combat trafficking in human beings. There has been a specific focus on the particular vulnerability of women and children to sexual exploitation whereby Swedish legislation that bans the purchase of sexual services has been highlighted as an effective law. The ambassador has also represented Sweden in European and global cooperation on trafficking in human beings and violence against children and during the year has focused especially on lobbying governments in countries including South Korea which penalises children in prostitution. A number of meetings have also taken place with Swedish agencies and civil society organisations.

Sweden ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the Lanzarote Convention) in October 2013. Since then Sweden has helped to implement the Convention in Europe, including through involvement in the work of the Lanzarote Committee. The Committee presents its conclusions to the ministerial committee in thematic reports.

In order to assert one's rights, one must be aware of them in the first place. The Government has initiated a number of measures aimed at increasing

children and young people's awareness of their rights and how they should act to assert their rights.

- The Ombudsman for Children has been tasked producing initiatives for children and young people on their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and what they mean in practice, both in schools and in other areas (S2015/06288/FST). The work has resulted in the website [minarattigheter.se](http://minarattigheter.se) ('my rights').
- Two agencies, the Ombudsman for Children and MUCF provide websites – [max18.barnombudsmannen.se](http://max18.barnombudsmannen.se) and [ungidag.se](http://ungidag.se) – with statistics on the situation of children and young people in different areas. The sites are tailored for children and young people. Some of the statistics are disaggregated by gender.
- MUCF runs the website [youmo.se](http://youmo.se) with information about bodies, sexuality, health and relationships for 13–20-year-olds in different languages. All the content is in simple Swedish and in Arabic, Dari, Somali and Tigrinya. The background to this is that many young newly arrived immigrants lack knowledge of where they can find information about health, sex, gender equality, relationships and the rights they have in Sweden.

To draw attention to the opinions of children and young people about their lives, the Government has tasked several agencies with producing and spreading ways in which children can participate and increase their influence. The Government has also taken steps to improve knowledge among child victims of violence or other crimes.

- The Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority has produced information on different types of crime and whether victims of crime can get help, following instructions from the Government. The result was the website [jagvillveta.se](http://jagvillveta.se), ('I want to know'), a children's book and an information brochure which can be spread via different organisations that come into contact with children who are the victims of crime.
- The Children's Welfare Foundation Sweden has developed the website [dagsattprataom.se](http://dagsattprataom.se) ('time to talk about') with information on what sexual abuse is and where children and young people can turn if they themselves or someone they know is a victim.

- The website kollpasoc.se has information directed to children and young people on what social services does and how they can help and support children and young people.

The Government has launched a knowledge boost for children's rights in which the Ombudsman for Children has been tasked with supporting particularly concerned government agencies and municipalities and county councils in work to safeguard the application of the provisions in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Government has also tasked the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society (MUCF) and the Ombudsman for Children with strengthening and spreading knowledge among decision-makers and professionals at municipality and county council level on what a children's rights and young people's perspective involves in theory and in practice, and how one can conduct a meaningful dialogue with girls and boys, young women and young men. The agencies produced their final report on this work in February 2018. In the last year of the project, initiatives were coordinated with initiatives in the Ombudsman for Children's Government remit of implementing a children's rights knowledge boost.

The Government has additionally strengthened the rules on recognising child marriage. In line with a main rule in force since 1 January 2019, no foreign child marriages are recognised in Sweden. See also question 13.

The Government has drawn up a national action plan against genital mutilation of girls and women. See also question 13.

In June 2015 Linköping University was tasked by the Government with gathering and spreading knowledge on violence and other abuses against children. The university has set up Barnafriid – a national knowledge centre on violence against children. Barnafriid is to promote the development of knowledge across professional boundaries and encourage and support collaboration and submit proposals for action to the Government. Barnafriid also has a specific remit regarding honour-related violence and oppression and trauma care.

### 30. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies?

In line with its instructions, Formas, a government research council for sustainable development, is to integrate a gender equality perspective in its operations and promote gender equality when awarding research funding. Formas is also to work to ensure that a gender perspective has an impact in research. Formas is part of the Government's programme for gender mainstreaming in government agencies (JIM) and in 2016 was therefore tasked with producing a plan for its gender mainstreaming work. Every year, Formas reports on its efforts, including on the distribution between women and men in its working groups, the distribution in funding applications received and in applications granted.

Since 2011, the Swedish Chemicals Agency has been commissioned by the Government to produce an 'Action plan for a toxic-free everyday environment' with a focus on children and young people. From 2017 onwards, a gender equality perspective must also be taken into account in this work. The project will continue until 2020. A gender equality perspective must also be taken into account in the Swedish Chemicals Agency's work on a Government assignment to survey hazardous chemicals. The Government has also provided funding for the work on a toxic-free everyday environment, e.g. for expanded health-related environmental monitoring to survey environmental factors that may affect the health of women and men.

From an international perspective, people in poor countries suffer a greater risk of exposure to hazardous substances, with women and children being particularly affected. The Government is constantly working to integrate a gender equality perspective in international processes concerning chemicals and, for example, has made contributions to the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions for gender mainstreaming in their work.

The UN Convention on Biological Diversity, CBD, conducts gender equality work and is currently carrying out a Gender Plan of Action 2015–2020. The strategic purpose is to encourage parties to integrate a gender perspective in their biological diversity efforts. Strengthening women's rights and access to resources, such as biological diversity and land, are critical factors in safeguarding the food supply. Women also play an important role in preserving biodiversity and associated local and traditional knowledge. Work

on the Convention's Gender Plan involves support to parties to mainstream gender in their national biodiversity strategies and to integrate biodiversity considerations in national gender equality plans.

To support this work, Sweden made a voluntary contribution of SEK 500 000 in 2017 and SEK 500 000 in 2018. With the help of these funds, in line with one of the activities listed in the Convention's capacity development plan, the CBD Secretariat carried out a regional workshop in South-East Asia to produce material and train the gender equality experts who would then pass that training on in their respective home countries. The reporting they produced, both via reports but also in accounts to partners on following up the Convention's gender equality plan, show how this approach has proved successful and been appreciated. This work continues in 2019.

New provisions on environmental assessments under Chapter 6 of the Environmental Code entered into force on 1 January 2018. The new provisions make it clear that environmental assessments must include effects on the population and on human health. Effects on the population and human health cover the effect on the health of a population and the distribution of these effects within the population. This includes a gender equality perspective. Environmental assessments must be carried out by certain plans and programmes and operations that may be considered to involve a significant environmental impact. The environmental assessment seeks to integrate environmental aspects in planning and decision-making so as to promote sustainable development. In this context, the term 'environmental aspect' is a broad one which embraces human health as well as biodiversity and historic environments, for example.

**31. What actions has Sweden taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation?**

In its instructions, the Civil Contingencies Agency has been required to ensure that a gender equality perspective is integrated in training and exercises on disaster management and civil defence.

Sweden has long demonstrated a need to strengthen women's decision-making in climate negotiations. Sweden was therefore one of the driving countries in establishing a Gender Action Plan at COP23 in Bonn, a long-

term plan for continuously working to safeguard women's influence in decisions on climate change.

In COP24 in Katowice these issues were raised once more when Sweden was one of nine countries backing a declaration that demanded the UNFCCC process work for gender equality and women's influence to a greater extent. Urged by the Climate Convention, Sweden has also appointed a Swedish focal point for gender equality, working to assist with the implementation of the Gender Action Plan in the negotiations and promoting decisions linked to gender equality.

Sweden is a driving force behind gender equality being integrated into work on climate and the environment in an international context. Some examples are provided below.

The Nordic Environment Finance Cooperation (NEFCO) is an international financial institution owned by the Nordic countries with the purpose of promoting Nordic environmental interests in especially Eastern European development projects. During its recently concluded chairmanship of NEFCO, Sweden drew attention to gender equality issues by introducing a new policy with the overarching aim of gender equally distributing the institution's financial support in terms of sex, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, disability, age and sexual orientation. To attain this objective, for the past year NEFCO has required equality evaluations for all new programmes and projects where funding is being considered.

Women and children suffer to a greater extent from short-lived climate pollutants (SLCP), in other words emissions from old hobs, wood fires and kerosene lighting due to physical circumstances and because they generally spend more time indoors than men. Sweden supports, and was one of the founders of the Climate & Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) whose main aim is to reduce these short-lived climate pollutants. Through projects in Nigeria, Bangladesh and Kenya, for example, CCAC helps to pave the way to reduce air pollutants and improve conditions for women and children in particular.



**32. What is Sweden's current national machinery for gender equality and the empowerment of women? Please name it and describe its location within Government.**

In the Swedish Government Offices there is the Division for Gender Equality, which assists the Government in coordinating and developing gender equality policy.

In January 2018 the Swedish Gender Equality Agency was established as an administrative agency for questions on gender equality policy. The agency is to work on follow-up, analysis, coordination, knowledge and support with the aim of attaining the goals of gender equality policy. In addition, the Gender Equality Agency is to contribute towards strategic, cohesive and sustainable governance and effective implementation of gender equality policy. The agency is to assist the Government on issues of gender equality policy on an ongoing basis.

As described in question 1, in December 2018 the Riksdag decided to abolish the Gender Equality Agency and that it should cease to exist as an agency on 31 December 2019 (report 2018/19:AU1, Riksdag Comm. 2018/19:106). However, the Government considers that the Swedish Gender Equality Agency should remain, as is also proposed in the Government Bill Extra Amending Budget for 2019 (Govt Bill 2018/19:73) and in the Spring Amending Budget (Govt Bill 2018/19:99).

The 21 county administrative boards are to implement the Government's policy at regional level and this also includes gender equality policy, (see the description under question 23 for more detail on the regional level). The county administrative boards also play a strategic role in implementing the Government's national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women, (see the responses under questions 14 and 15 for more detail). In addition to this, Östergötland County Administrative Board also has a national mandate to prevent and combat honour-related violence and oppression, child marriage, forced marriage and genital mutilation of women and girls.

Uppsala University, the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women (NCK) is charged with conducting research linked to clinical activity in the field of men's violence against women. The university

(NCK) is tasked with supporting the operation of a national helpline, Kvinnofridslinjen, the National Helpline for Women.

The goals of gender equality policy are broad and attaining them will require many agencies working strategically with a focus on results. The response under question 23 describes the gender mainstreaming strategy and the work on the Government's development programme for gender mainstreaming in agencies (JIM) which was conducted in 2013–2018. JIM spanned 60 agencies commissioned to develop their work on gender equality within their core mandate.

**33. Is the head of the national machinery a member of the institutional process for SDG implementation (e.g. inter-ministerial coordinating office, commission or committees)?**

In the Government Offices there is an interdepartmental working group with representatives of all ministries tasked with coordinating the work on the 2030 Agenda in their respective ministries and the expertise from the Division for Gender Equality is also required.

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

In Sweden, all ministers in the Government are responsible for implementing the 2030 Agenda in their respective areas of responsibility. Two ministers also have a special responsibility for coordinating national and international implementation respectively. An interdepartmental working group comprising representatives of all ministries is tasked with coordinating the work on the 2030 Agenda in their respective ministries.

On 14 June 2018, the Government decided on an action plan for 2018–2020. The Government's intention is for the action plan to strengthen implementation of the 2030 Agenda and make it easier for different actors to do their bit towards continued transition to sustainable development. The action plan is partly built on proposals from the 2030 Agenda Delegation (see below for more details).

Sweden's action plan for the 2030 Agenda contains key policy measures for 2018–2020. The six areas on which the action plan focuses are social equality

and gender equality, a sustainable society, a socially beneficial, circular and bio-based economy, a strong business sector with corporate social responsibility, a sustainable and healthy food chain, and knowledge and innovation.

A central idea in the action plan is to encourage partnerships between the public sector, the knowledge society, business and civil society. Several different ministries were assigned tasks in conjunction with the decision on the action plan in June 2018. Previously about eighty government agencies, Statistics Sweden were tasked with reporting how they work with the 2030 Agenda within the remit of their operations.

In 2016 the Government appointed a committee, the 2030 Agenda Delegation. The Delegation was charged with:

- proposing an overarching action plan to the Government,
- promoting the spread of information and knowledge,
- anchoring the 2030 Agenda through broad-based dialogue with different actors in society.

On 1 July 2017 the Delegation submitted the report *I riktning mot en hållbar välfärd – Agenda 2030-delegationens nulägesbeskrivning och förslag till handlingsplan för genomförandet av Agenda 2030* (Towards sustainable prosperity – the 2030 Agenda Delegation’s status report and proposed action plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda) to the Government. In the proposal for an action plan, the Delegation suggests that in implementing the 2030 Agenda the Government prioritises the following areas, which with certain modifications, were addressed in the Government’s action plan.

- an equal and gender equal society,
- sustainable cities,
- a socially beneficial and circular economy
- a strong business sector with sustainable business models,
- sustainable and healthy food, and
- strengthened knowledge and innovation.

Anchoring and shared ownership, broad participation and dialogue were central elements of the Delegation’s mandate. The Delegation’s work therefore took place in close consultation with collaborative bodies, county councils, government agencies, the research community, the social partners,

the business sector and civil society. The perspectives, participation and ownership of children and young people have also been central to the work of the Delegation.

In March 2019, the Delegation submitted its final report *Agenda 2030 och Sverige: världens utmaningar – världens möjligheter* to the Government. The report contains proposals for how the 2030 Agenda work can be run in the future. The proposals are currently being prepared within the Swedish Government Offices.

In 2018, civil society was responsible for scrutinising Sweden's policy for global development in implementing the 2030 Agenda in Barometer 2018, produced by the umbrella organisation CONCORD, which gathers together 28 organisations. In Barometer 2018, civil society organisations help to highlight challenges and ways forward in implementing a coherent policy from the policy for global development (PGU) and the 2030 Agenda to the Government.

Do you have mechanisms in place to ensure that women and girls from marginalized groups can participate and that their concerns are reflected in these processes?

The Government's 2030 Agenda action plan focuses both on the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda but also encompasses Sweden's contribution to the global implementation of the Agenda. The starting point of the action plan is for Sweden to be an international role model for economic, social and environmental sustainability with a policy derived from the situation, needs, circumstances and priorities of poor women, men and children.

The 2030 Agenda is a matter for the whole of society. For Sweden to be able to show the way towards sustainable development in the future too, the whole of society must play its part. Everyone must be able to be included and no-one must be left behind. Gender equality and all women and girls' full enjoyment of their human rights is a fundamental pillar in implementing the 2030 Agenda in Sweden and in the world. The Government's feminist foreign policy helps to strengthen gender equality and girls' and women's

rights and the Government policy for global development places the rights perspective and the perspective of poor people front and centre. Involving and consulting civil society organisations on work on the 2030 Agenda nationally and internationally, enable questions and interests concerning girls and women who find themselves in vulnerable situations to be addressed.

The Government's national initiatives to improve the lives of certain vulnerable groups of girls and women are outlined in the answers to questions 6 on initiatives to promote gender equality and women's role in paid labour and paid employment, question 9 on initiatives to reduce and eradicate poverty among women and girls, question 11 on the health of women and girls, etc.

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

A thematic consultation forum was held with civil society organisations in April 2019 with the aim of providing information and obtaining viewpoints to feed in to the Government's report. Different civil society organisations attended the forum. In addition, regular thematic consultation forums are held on different issues in gender equality policy to incorporate the expertise of civil society and address any questions.

**35. Is gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls included as a key priority in the national plan/strategy for SDG implementation?**

The Government's ambition to pursue a feminist policy for gender equality is clearly evident in all areas of work to implement the 2030 Agenda. This applies both to steering documents of various kinds and more concrete initiatives in line with the Agenda.

In line with the principle of gender mainstreaming, all ministers are responsible for integrating gender equality in work on the SDGs. The Government has developed tools to ensure that gender equality is integrated in ordinary decision-making processes within the Government Offices. Gender-responsive budgeting is used in working with the national budget and in addition the Government has passed decisions on gender equality in

other core processes, such as the legislative process, agency governance and international work (see answer to question 23). This approach has been tangibly reflected in the ministries' work on the SDGs.

Sweden meets some of the targets linked to the implementation of SDG 5 in the 2030 Agenda and is in a relatively good position in international comparisons but a number of challenges remain to attain gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

These include effectively combatting all discrimination against women in society, evening out pay gaps and differences in employment levels between women and men, achieving a more even division of unpaid household and care work, including by facilitating gender equal parenting, and preventing and combating men's violence against women, including honour-related violence and oppression.

As stated above, in its action plan, the Government has highlighted six cross-sectoral focus areas where Sweden particularly needs to focus efforts to come closer to meeting the SDGs. These areas pose challenges in a broader context and may open up new partnerships and working methods between actors. One of the focus areas is an equal and gender equal society.

Here it is asserted that equality, gender equality and respect for human rights are crucial to creating sustainable prosperity. The differences in living conditions between individuals and groups must be evened out. Sweden is to be a flourishing and sustainable democracy, characterised by engagement and equal opportunities to exert influence.

The Government continues to work to mainstream and prioritise gender equality in relation to the Agenda and the work of attaining the Agenda's goals regarding gender equality.

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

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

Statistics that reflect gender equality issues are compiled and published within the remit of Statistics Sweden's work on gender equality statistics. Gender equality statistics are not gathered separately and are instead compiled from existing surveys or registers.

Statistics Sweden presents gender quality statistics as a theme area on its website. The theme area of gender quality has existed since 2012 and is a result of development work carried out by Statistics Sweden as commissioned by the Government. There are indicators linked to the six sub-goals of gender equality policy. There are also two in-depth areas showing current statistics: 'In and outside the workforce' and 'Entrepreneurship and enterprise'.

The majority of the statistics in the themed portal are updated once a year. Updates take place on two different occasions during the year.

In 2017 Statistics Sweden was tasked by the Government with producing indicators for the new sub-goals of gender equality policy of gender equitable education and gender equal health. The new indicators have been reported on Statistics Sweden's website since mid-2018. This is the single largest development project on gender equality nationally in this most recent five-year period. Internationally, Statistics Sweden plays an active role in bilateral and multilateral development cooperation on gender equality statistics.

Statistics Sweden reports on the development of gender equality every two years in the publication *Women and men in Sweden. Facts and figures*. This publication contains easily accessible statistics on women and men in a number of areas (population, health and social care, education, time use, parental insurance, gainful employment, wages/salaries, income, crime and influence and power). It first came out in 1984. It is now published every two years in Swedish and in English translation. During this current period, it was published in 2016 and 2018. Similar statistics have been produced at regional and local level when commissioned.

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

Since 2018, the Swedish National Financial Management Authority's Ordinance on annual reports and budget data has included the wording: "Individual-based statistics that are included in performance reports must be

divided by sex unless there are special reasons not to do so”. This means that in principle, all individual-based statistics received by the Government from the government agencies in annual reports and budget data are divided by gender, which is important both for the Government’s opportunity to introduce targeted reforms and for the agencies’ efforts in gender mainstreaming their core activities.

Men’s violence against women is a new area where work has been carried out to produce new indicators/statistics. The National Board of Health and Welfare publishes statistics in the areas of health and medical care and social services. In 2018 the National Board of Health and Welfare was commissioned by the Government to work in consultation with more than 30 agencies and a reference group to report proposals for 75 indicators for following up objectives of the national strategy to prevent and combat male violence against women. The agency draws attention to 39 of these indicators as being particularly relevant. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention produces and publishes Sweden’s official crime statistics. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention’s Swedish Crime Survey (SCS) has developed its methodology compared with five years ago. SCS is an annual national survey of victims of crime and perceptions of safety. The method for the Swedish Crime Survey was revised in 2017, as the collection procedure was changed from mainly telephone interviews to postal questionnaires or Internet questionnaires, and that the selection was expanded and some of the questions were reformulated. Since a main purpose of the Swedish Crime Survey is to be able to make comparisons over time, a method has been developed to enable the results for the period 2007–2016 to be compared with 2017–2018 and the years ahead.

Statistics Sweden’s themed portal on Gender equality, which collects statistics on the sub-goals of gender equality policy has been developed somewhat in the past five years but the underlying logic remains fundamentally the same.

Since 2016, The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, (SALAR), has been producing *Öppna jämförelser Jämställdhet* (Open comparisons Gender equality), which provides an overarching picture of gender differences in political representation, employer issues and services to inhabitants. The report mainly based on data already published in existing ‘Open comparisons’ reports or available in Kolada, the municipality and



county council database. The report covers key figures by gender in political representation, working conditions and services to inhabitants. The six key figures for policy and working life are the same for municipalities, county councils and regions. Different key figures are used for the services delivered. This produces 11 key figures for county councils/regions and 18 for the municipalities. The key figures are to serve as support in identifying unjustified gender differences, setting gender equality targets and driving development towards a gender equal society.

The formation of the Swedish Gender Equality Agency in 2018, tasked with following and analysing gender equality statistics saw Sweden reinforcing its work on gender equality statistics.

Gender-responsive budgeting has made inroads at national level in this five-year period. This can be seen, for example, in that gender-responsive budgeting is mentioned in the budget bills during the period, which in turn shone a stronger spotlight than before on the fact that all individual-based statistics in the budget bill are to be divided by gender.

### **37. Out of the following which are Sweden's top three priorities for strengthening national gender statistics over the next five years?**

Work is in progress at Statistics Sweden to develop, and improve, the accessibility of national gender equality statistics on the basis of the different user needs that exist. As part of Statistics Sweden's work on gender mainstreaming and open data, work is also in progress to review and develop the reporting of regional gender equality statistics.

In autumn 2018, the Gender Equality Agency submitted a report on what the agency's structure for following up gender equality policy might look like. Part of this involves following up the national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women. Here not only the Swedish Gender Equality Agency but also the National Board of Health and Welfare and the county councils play very important roles. This involves continuing to improve the production of data, statistics and indicators that can be used to monitor and analyse the work on the strategy and its outcome. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency will also improve the accessibility of the analyses and monitoring produced by the agency.

In 2015, the Swedish Research Council reported on a Government assignment to draw up national guidelines on open access to scientific information (open access/open science). In the report, the Swedish Research Council proposes a vision for Sweden with a ten-year perspective. This will be extremely significant to actors engaged in research but will also influence other agencies' opportunities to work with statistics and other types of data. This partly involves making data accessible and reusing data.

Another central issue is that surveys based on samples must be built on a sufficiently large number of observations for conclusions to be extrapolated from the sample to the total population in order to draw significant conclusions about gender. The finer-grained the reporting of the results, the larger the samples have to be. If the objective of 'leave no-one behind' is to be realised, the statistical sample in the surveys must be large enough to be able to draw statistically significant conclusions on differences between the sexes in smaller groups too, based on disability, for example. The size of the sample can affect the cost of the survey.

Evidence-based methods in social services require statistics that researchers can use to create evidence on methods/treatment. For privacy reasons, keeping registers of personal data within social services requires backing in legislation, which does not always exist. For this reason individual-based statistics are largely lacking, including statistics by gender.

### **38. Have you defined a national set of indicators for monitoring progress on the SDGs?**

Work on producing national indicators is under way. SCB has produced about 50 national indicators, as commissioned by the Government, to complement the globally defined indicators, which together could be useful in monitoring national progress on the SDGs. All indicators that can be calculated based on national individual statistics can be reported by sex. An initial statistical follow-up of the 2030 Agenda carried out in 2017 reported 101 indicators, half of which were individual statistics. 35 of these were reported by gender.

Statistics Sweden has been commissioned by the Government on several occasions to develop a national, cohesive monitoring system for the SDGs. The most recent was in summer 2018 and saw Statistics Sweden drawing up coordination procedures to identify existing data flows for global indicators,

establishing responsibility for indicators, creating and quality assuring the list of indicators with respect to national indicators, digital accessibility and producing Sweden's statistical progress report for delivery in October 2019, 2020 and 2021. It is likely that a national indicator list will be produced which will include the global indicators. Particular focus will be placed on the indicators incorporating the Agenda's aim to 'leave no-one behind' and adapting to a Swedish context.

### **39. Has data collection and compilation on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other SDGs begun?**

Statistics Sweden completed national data collection on the indicators in 2017. At the time, priority was given to the statistics that could be produced without separate processing of existing data. The reporting divided the data by gender where possible and feasible without separate processing. Otherwise, statistics are regularly reported to the UN organisations responsible for global monitoring. This is done based on already established collection mechanisms and where specific enquiries are made by the organisations. In November 2018, data on Sweden was available for four of the ten indicators under SDG 5. Statistics Sweden judges that most of the 10 global indicators will be able to be reported for Sweden in 2019.

In the work to draw up indicators for following up the 2030 Agenda, monitoring of SDG 5 has been supplemented with the indicator Women's proportion of the individual disposable income of men, which is taken from the indicators for following up the goals of gender equality policy. This is because the global indicator refers to what is from a national perspective a very limited part of target 5 A: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws. Statistics Sweden has also proposed that an indicator on honour-based violence and oppression be drawn up for the Swedish context.

<https://www.regeringen.se/4aa7ee/globalassets/regeringen/dokument/finansdepartementet/pdf/2017/agenda-2030/scbs-slutrapport-om-statistikbaserad-uppfoljning-av-agenda-2030>

#### 40. Which of the following disaggregations is routinely provided by major surveys in Sweden?

In Sweden there has been a requirement that individual-based official statistics must be divided by gender since the mid-1990s. The requirement is currently stated in Section 14 of the Ordinance (2001:100) on official statistics and reads: “individual-based official statistics must be divided by gender unless there are special reasons not to do so.” For the past almost 15 years, the division of statistics by gender has been monitored recurrently. In Sweden, data on gender is usually gathered from registers. Data on gender is gathered in, in principle, all surveys referring to individuals. At the same time, there is an awareness that conditions and opportunities for groups of individuals included in the population risk being rendered invisible unless we also report statistics divided based on other relevant reporting groups. For this reason, several of the above factors above appear in the official statistics but which ones will depend on the context. For example, health statistics in the budget bills between 2015 and 2018 include age, income and level of education as important factors in addition to gender.

The requirement to divide official statistics by gender in Sweden under Section 14 of the Statistics Ordinance and Chapter 3, Section 1 of the Ordinance on annual reporting and budget documentation (FÅB) means that gender is an overarching basis for division throughout. In turn, this means that all data in all combinations of variables must be reported by gender. In the last few years, the need for intersectional analysis has also been emphasised outside academia and government agencies. Government Communication ‘Power, goals and agency – a feminist policy for a gender-equal future’ highlights the need for more systematic work on intersectional analysis in implementing and in following up gender equality policy.

As one of the signatories to the 2030 Agenda, Sweden has undertaken to ‘leave no-one behind’. Therefore, a central component of the 2030 Agenda will be for monitoring to provide an opportunity to see how development is affecting different groups of the population. This poses a number of challenges for statistical follow-up. This partly involves the fact that not all people living in Sweden are actually included in the statistical data, and partly that there are no systems in place to gather all the variables that would be necessary to enable comprehensive analysis. Additional crucial aspects are respect for personal privacy and for the confidentiality of statistical data. Legislation and case law are designed such that careful consideration is taken

when weighing up the need to statistically be able to determine phenomena in society versus respect for personal privacy.

Register-based statistics can often be divided by gender, age, income, level of education and origin. However, the agenda also highlights other groupings that are a greater challenge to monitor. In Sweden no data is gathered on people's religion or ethnicity as there is historical experience of such information being used for political purposes that have not benefitted these groups. Disability is not a variable that is generally found in registers and here monitoring must largely be based on selective surveys, which limits opportunities for far-reaching breakdowns of other variables. Particular attention is paid to the privacy of children and young people and therefore fewer studies are carried out in these age groups.

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<sup>9</sup>The term 'gender-specific indicators' is used to refer to indicators that explicitly call for disaggregation by gender and/or refer to gender equality as the underlying objective. For example, SDG indicator 5.c.1 captures the percentage of countries with systems to track public allocations that are directed towards policies and programmes that promote gender equality – the underlying objective is the promotion of gender equality. The term is also used for indicators where women and girls are specified within the indicator as the targeted population (see UN Women. 2018. *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New York).

<sup>10</sup>As specified in A/RES/70/1, with the addition of education and marital status.