



The world's first Feminist Government

Sweden's Government is a feminist Government and has made a clear commitment to promoting gender equality in all policy-making. A feminist Government works to combat inhibitive gender roles and structures and to let gender equality have a formative impact on policy choices and priorities, and in the allocation of resources. 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. Gender mainstreaming is a priority for the Swedish Government as the strategy of gender mainstreaming is pivotal for achieving progress on the gender equality policy goal and the policy sub-goals.

Gender-responsive budgeting as a tool for achieving gender equality

Gender-responsive budgeting, as an application of gender mainstreaming in the budget process, has been given renewed focus within the Government. Extensive efforts to further develop gender-responsive budgeting in the state budget are now under way in Sweden. The purpose of this development work is to strengthen the application of a gender equality perspective in the budget process so that policy reforms are based on gender equality impact analysis, and policy is implemented with a gender-sensitive approach. The aim is to further develop sustainable mechanisms for gender-responsive budgeting by improving internal management and control, training, methodology, support and coordination. These improvements should result in more advanced gender equality impact analysis and the systematic use of statistics disaggregated by sex. This way, the Budget Bill reflects the objectives and commitments of a feminist Government.

Gender-responsive budgeting work has also involved work on new objectives for gender equality within selected strategic policy areas, as a way to concretise how other policy areas can contribute to implementation of the gender equality policy goals. Customised policy objectives and actions for gender equality, with indicators to follow up the result, have been formulated to contribute to the implementation of Sweden's gender equality policy goals and the Government's feminist aspirations. Selected policy areas are labour market, health and social policy, education, foreign and development policy, and juridical policy. These policy areas are pioneering this work as they are important for the Government's priorities. Policy objectives for gender equality will follow in other policy areas. Important steps have been taken, but Sweden's work on gender-responsive budgeting will continue and be further enhanced in the coming years.

Swedish Government – first to be involved collectively in HeForShe

Since January 2015, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven has been an IMPACT World Champion Leader for the United Nations HeForShe solidarity movement. Now all of Sweden's male ministers have joined the movement, making the Swedish Government the first government in the world to get involved collectively in HeForShe.

“Few areas in society have such great potential for development as gender equality. A vital part of Sweden’s success story, its growing economy and Swedes’ personal freedom has been that regardless of gender, people can increasingly work, get an education and make their voices heard. Now it is important for this success story to continue,” says Mr Löfven.

The Government Offices is gender-equal in terms of politically appointed positions and is now moving forward to build the world’s first gender-equal government administration. The Prime Minister emphasizes that gender equality is first and foremost a matter of the equal worth and rights of all people. But it is also a means of increasing growth, productivity and employment.

“Increased gender equality is a tool in the Government’s employment agenda to achieve the lowest unemployment rate in the EU. Gender equality is as ethically right as it is economically smart. For this reason it is the way forward for Sweden,” says Mr Löfven.

Three focus areas for the Government are employment and pay, representation and health

Gender-equal employment and pay

The Government’s objective is for women’s employment rate to be as high as men’s. The employment rate for women will increase during this electoral period. In the longer term, full-time work will be the norm in the labour market and part-time work will be an option. The gender pay gap must be closed.

Gender-equal representation

The public sector must take the lead and show the way forward. The Government intends to build the world’s first gender-equal state administration. At the end of this electoral period, there will be as many women as men in politically appointed positions in the state administration.

Gender-equal health

Avoidable health inequalities will be eliminated in a generation. The long-term goal is to eliminate the disparities between women’s and men’s sick leave, while reducing sick leave rates in general to a low and stable level. Men’s violence against women must stop.

Sweden is stepping up efforts in the field of women, peace and security – developing a network of women mediators

While important steps have been made in the implementation of UNSCR 1325, many peace and mediation efforts have failed to effectively involve women – either as parties to a conflict or members of teams facilitating peace processes. In order to promote sustainable peace and inclusive growth, and within the framework of the Swedish Government’s broader feminist foreign policy, Sweden is therefore developing a network of Swedish women that will stand ready to assist peace efforts wherever they occur at short notice.

The Swedish network is intended to cut across traditional divides and closely cooperate with other women mediation networks from the Global South. The aim is to empower women in peace processes and provide new impetus to the women, peace and security agenda – as called for in the Secretary-General’s high-level Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture.