



**equally unique**  
The Swedish Federation Human Rights  
for Persons with Disabilities



Forum - Kvinnor och Funktionshinder  
Forum - Women and Disability in Sweden

Submission to the United Nation's Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

*Pre-sessional Working Group for the 63rd session, Geneva, 27-31 July 2015*

**List of issues and questions with regard to the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Sweden**

Submission by the Swedish disability movement including

**DHR** – the Swedish Association for the Mobility Impaired [www.dhr.se](http://www.dhr.se)

**Equally Unique** – a Human Rights Federation focusing on the rights of persons with disabilities [www.likounika.org](http://www.likounika.org)

**FQ** - Forum Women and Disability in Sweden - works to combat all forms of discrimination, threats and violence against women and girls with disabilities. FQ is a women's organisation, a non-profit association. The members are individual women with disabilities and groups / organisations / committees formed by women with disabilities [www.kvinnor-funktionshinder.se](http://www.kvinnor-funktionshinder.se)

**The Swedish Disability Federation** is a federation for 39 national disability organizations with about 400 000 individual members. Our goal is a society for all based on human rights [www.hso.se](http://www.hso.se)

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**Article 1 Discrimination and article 2 Policy measures**

Lack of disability in the constitution, leads to problems to identify multiple discrimination and lack of data about hate crimes concerning women with disabilities in Sweden.

According to the Swedish Agency for Participation 18 percent of women with disabilities aged 16-29 years old have been subjected to violence or threats of violence, compared to 8 percent of women without disabilities. In the same age category about 42 percent of women with disabilities are afraid of going out alone, compare to about 7 percent of men with disabilities.

In Sweden there is no independent national human rights institution. We believe that is necessary in order to secure the non-discrimination and human rights of women with disabilities.

Suggested questions:

1. What is the government doing to investigate violence, harassment and possible hate crimes related to women with disabilities?
2. Why is the government not updating the constitution to cover multiple discrimination, women with disabilities?



3. When will the government initiate the process of establishing an independent national human rights institution according to the Paris principles?

### Article 10 Education

Boys in schools get support more often than girls according to data from the report Hur är läget 2015<sup>1</sup>, in the ninth grade 20 percent of boys and 14 percent of girls get support programs in school.

Among 11-year olds, 45 percent of children with disabilities indicate that they have at least one psychological difficulty, the percentage of children without disabilities is 37 percent. Among 15-year-olds, the proportion is greater, 67 percent of children with disabilities indicate that they have at least one psychological difficulty, compared with 51 percent among students without disabilities. The psychological symptoms are more frequent among girls.

#### Suggested questions:

1. What is the government doing to secure that girls get equal support in school?

### Article 11 Work

There are still major differences between women and men in general on the Swedish labor market. According to the statistics of the Swedish Public Employment Agency (*Arbetsförmedlingen*) and the Statistics Sweden (SCB) which was published in their report "Situation of persons with disabilities at the labor market 2014"<sup>2</sup> 84 percent of the population between age 16-64 belong to the labor force. Among persons with disabilities the percentage is 69. Out of the percentage of persons who are assessed by the Swedish Public Employment Agency to have reduced work capacity, 63 percent are in the labour force.

The employment rate among the population between age 16-64 (employment rate) was 77 percent in 2014. Among persons with disabilities, the proportion was lower, 62 percent, and among persons with reduced work capacity, the employment rate was 55 percent.

Regarding unemployment, the report describes that 8 percent was unemployed in 2014 among the general population between age 16-64, compared to 10 percent among

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.mfd.se/publikationer/rapporter/samlad-uppfoljning-av-funktionshinderspoltiken/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se/Om-oss/Var-verksamhet/Rapporter/Aterrapportering/2015-04-01-Situationen-pa-arbetsmarknaden-for-personer-med-funktionsnedsattning-2014.html>



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people with disabilities. Among persons with disabilities with reduced work capacity the same rate was closer to 13 percent.

Meanwhile, there are differences also in terms of opportunities working full time and having a secure employment or not.

There is a lower proportion of persons with disabilities with reduced work capacity working full time than in the population overall. Among employed persons with reduced work capacity 60 percent works full-time, compared to 76 percent among the general population.

A lower proportion of women than men are working full time. Among people with disabilities with reduced work capacity, 48 percent of women are working full time, in comparison with 75 percent of men. In the entire working population, 64 percent of women and 88 percent of men are working full time.

A higher proportion of men with reduced work capacity have a permanent job compared to women with reduced work capacity, 85 percent versus 77 percent. Even in the general population, a higher proportion of men have a permanent job (86 percent) compared to women (82 percent).

The disability movement has highlighted the need for a better understanding of gender based differences in the labor market policy in various contexts, inter alia in the so-called Funkautredningen<sup>3</sup>. The policy must be changed in order to contribute to equality for real.

An example: The report of the Swedish Public Employment Agency from 2015 on disability policy showed a significant difference in the number of men and women who became employed with support from society respectively without support. When it comes to employment without support, the situation is relatively equal between the genders, 11,218 women and 10,772 men. However, when it comes to work with support and state funds are used to finance, the figures show 10,458 women compared to 16,501 men.

The reason of the major differences is not clear which also strengthens our view that more has to be done to map gender differences in the labor market.

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), article 27, 1.g, Sweden has committed to employ persons with disabilities in the public sector. Today many public employers are less likely to employ persons with disabilities than private companies.

#### Suggested questions:

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.regeringen.se/rattsdokument/statens-offentliga-utredningar/2012/05/sou-2012311/>



1. What initiatives are planned by the government to investigate gender differences in labour market programmes?
2. According to the CRPD, Sweden has committed itself to employ persons with disabilities in the public sector. What initiatives are taken by the government to comply with this and how does the government ensure that women and men have equal opportunities to work?

### **Article 12 Health and 13 Economic and social benefits**

In the national public health survey<sup>4</sup> it is ten times more likely to persons with disabilities to perceive themselves as having poor health compared with the general population. The proportion of women with disabilities who estimate their own health as good is 38 percent compared to 79 percent among women without disabilities. The figure for men with disabilities is slightly higher, 46 percent compared to men without disabilities where the rate is 82 percent. About 20 percent of persons with disabilities report that their health is bad compared to about two percent in the general population.

The causes for poor health are, according to the National Health Institute, related to barriers in society, poor finances, difficulties in obtaining education and work, and inaccessible environments. About 34 percent of women with disabilities lack cash margins, compared to 23 percent of men.

The proportion of psychiatric diagnoses which is the basis for care allowance continues to increase. In 2013 the psychiatric diagnoses corresponded to 54 respectively 70 percent of all newly-granted care allowances for girls and boys, which is an increase of 3 respectively 6 percent in comparison with the previous year. Within activity compensation, we can experience a similar development, where the psychological diagnoses account for 84 respectively 85 percent of all newly-granted activity compensation for women and men. The sickness benefit has had a similar development where mental illnesses have become the largest diagnostic group. In 2013, the psychiatric diagnoses corresponded to 43 percent of the newly granted disability benefits for women and 39 per cent for men.

#### Suggested questions:

1. How will Sweden ensure that the structural perspective related to women with disabilities will regularly be taken into account in the field of public health?
2. What measures are planned to improve the health for women, in particular women with disabilities?

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/nyheter-och-press/nyhetsarkiv/2015/mars/samre-halsa-hos-personer-med-funktionsnedsattning/>