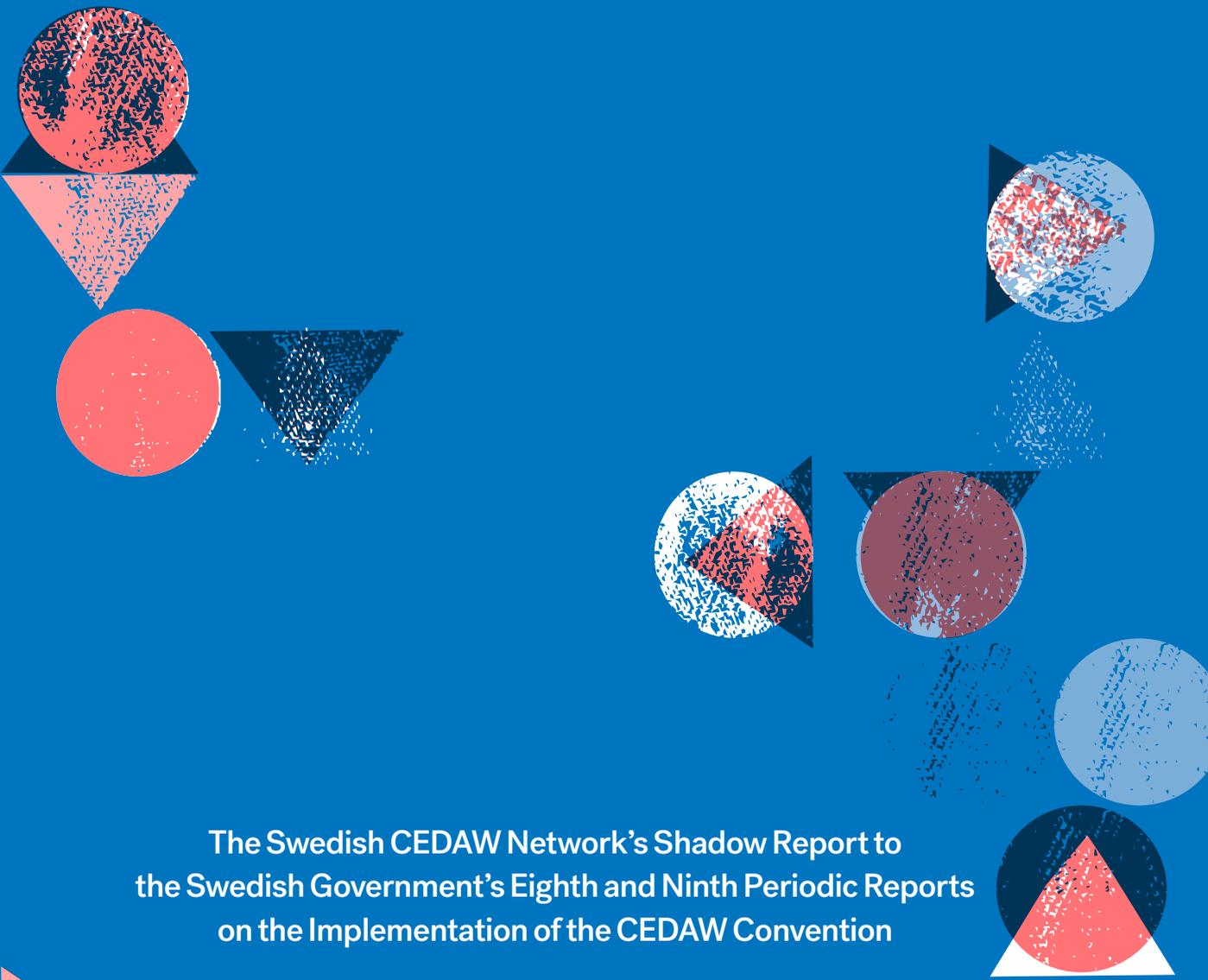




The Swedish Women's Lobby

Living Up to CEDAW– What Does Sweden Need to Do?



The Swedish CEDAW Network's Shadow Report to
the Swedish Government's Eighth and Ninth Periodic Reports
on the Implementation of the CEDAW Convention



The Swedish Women's Lobby is a politically independent, non-governmental umbrella organisation for women's organisations in Sweden. It unites 45 member organisations with the aim to strengthen the position of women in the Swedish society. **The organisation rests on a feminist ground and the foundations of our activities are the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA).** The Swedish Women's Lobby works to integrate women's perspectives and gender equality into all political, economic and social processes, locally and nationally as well as at a European and international levels.

The Swedish CEDAW Network consists of twenty organisations, collaborating on analysing the Swedish Government's official reports to the UN CEDAW Committee, and to develop shadow reports. The Network is coordinated by the Swedish Women's Lobby and its purpose is to monitor the Government's implementation of commitments under CEDAW and BPfA, and to coordinate joint actions of the women's movement. This includes the follow up on recommendations of the CEDAW Committee regarding Sweden's periodic reports on CEDAW.

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**THE SWEDISH
WOMEN'S LOBBY**



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Introduction

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nation's General Assembly in 1979. The Convention has been ratified by 190 of the UN's 195 member states, Sweden among them.

The purpose of CEDAW is to abolish all forms of discrimination against women and to achieve full human freedoms and rights for women on equal terms with men. CEDAW is a framework document with 16 main articles promoting women's rights in areas such as education, work, health and their own bodies.

CEDAW is binding on those states that have ratified it and therefore there is a monitoring body within the UN, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (the CEDAW Committee), which examines whether or not states are fulfilling their obligations. Member states must submit a report every fourth year on how they have lived up to the articles of the Convention and what measures they have taken to implement it. In September 2014, the Swedish Government submitted their eighth and ninth periodic reports on measures for the implementation of CEDAW.

The women's movement has an important role to play in overseeing and monitoring how Sweden conducts itself with regard to women's rights and gender equality, as well as assessing what measures are required. For this reason the women's movement produces a shadow report in response to the Government's own report in order to illuminate the situation for women in Sweden in the various areas of society. It is important that the civil society reveals the reality of women's lives relative to Sweden's obligations. The CEDAW Committee itself requests such shadow reporting.

The Swedish CEDAW Network was formed in 1998 for the purpose of producing shadow reports. The Network consists of over twenty organisations and is coordinated by the Swedish Women's Lobby. Through the shadow report we aim to increase the opportunities for women to monitor their rights and pursue their demands. Our intention is to urge the Government to realize their obligations on gender equality and women's rights.

The implementation of CEDAW must give all women, including

women with disabilities such as visual impairments, dyslexia or women with limited knowledge of the Swedish language, the opportunity to monitor their rights. Therefore this report will also be produced in an Easy-to-Read version as well as in Braille.

Another important task for the Swedish CEDAW Network is to increase awareness of CEDAW. Despite entering into force in Sweden in 1981 and having been in existence for over 30 years, it is still one of the UN's least known conventions. The more people who know about CEDAW, the more successfully it can be implemented. We therefore arrange study circles on the subject of women's rights and CEDAW in Easy-to-Read Swedish. The Swedish Women's Lobby has also produced material for schools about women's rights for use by teachers and students in upper secondary schools. This material is available for free at kvinnorsrattigheter.org.

The task of providing data to and commenting on the various articles has been carried out by a broad range of participants, with the organisations in the Swedish CEDAW Network providing expertise and experiences.

The organisations comprising the Swedish CEDAW Network, and who have been involved in producing this report are:

The Swedish Women's Lobby
Equally Unique
Everything is possible – Media Watch Group
Forum – Women and Disability in Sweden
Women Can
International Women's Union
The Dea Society for Women's Museums in Sweden
The Delta Kappa Gamma Society Sweden
The National Organisation for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden
The Swedish Medical Women's Association
Operation 1325
Soroptomist International of Sweden
Swedish National Committee for UN Women
Unizon
Varken Hora eller Kuvad
Winnnet Sweden
Women's Organisations Committee on Alcohol and Drug Issues

Article 1: Definition of Discrimination

CEDAW States

Discrimination is when women have fewer opportunities or are treated as inferior to men, or when women's freedoms and rights are limited in the spheres of politics, economics or culture, or when women are not able to play an active role in society.

When women and men do not have the same human rights it is discrimination against women.

The Current Situation

Swedish legislation must not be in conflict with Sweden's obligations under the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Legislation in Sweden has incorporated many of the articles of CEDAW and in some cases goes further than the Convention requires, which we welcome. National gender equality policy also embodies several of CEDAW's most important articles.

Even though CEDAW entered into force in 1981 it is still relatively unknown in Sweden. More information is also needed about the Optional Protocol adopted in 2000. The Optional Protocol has not been applied in Sweden, which indicates that few people are aware of the opportunity for individuals and groups to turn to the UN when national institutions fail to live up to their commitments under CEDAW. The responsibility for the implementation of CEDAW lies with the Government agencies, local and regional authorities as well as the judicial system.

We Demand

► CEDAW's Definition of Discrimination Must Be Clearly Included in the Constitution

The expression gender equality between men and women is a part of the Swedish Constitution. In order to meet the requirements of the Convention a more comprehensive description and definition of discrimination against women is needed.

We call on the Government to integrate CEDAW's definition of discrimination into the Swedish Constitution and to fully integrate CEDAW and the Optional Protocol into Swedish law.

► Increase the Knowledge of CEDAW and the Optional Protocol

The Government, along with state and municipal bodies, are responsible for spreading knowledge of women's rights and implementing international commitments. We call on the Government to allocate funds to the women's movement for a comprehensive information campaign on CEDAW and the Optional Protocol, as was previously done with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Knowledge of women's human rights should be included in the curriculum and taught in schools.

Article 2: Legislation to Eliminate Discrimination

CEDAW States

States Parties are obliged to eliminate the discrimination against women.

Laws to forbid discrimination against women must be introduced into national legislation.

States must ensure that everyone follows the law and that those who violate anti-discrimination laws are punished.

States must ensure that the courts and other agencies protect the rights of women to the same extent as those of men.

States must ensure that any legislation that discriminates against women is changed or repealed.

The Current Situation

CEDAW requires governments to use all available means such as legislation and administrative regulations to implement the Convention. However, instead of taking concrete steps to reinforce CEDAW, as demanded by Article 2, Sweden has dismantled the already weak institutional safeguards for gender equality.

The new Discrimination Act (2008:567) entered into force on 1 January 2009, which introduced the Equality Ombudsman (DO) and replaced the previous Gender Equality Ombudsman (JämO). The Gender Equality Ombudsman's activities were transferred to the DO who provides oversight on implementation of the Discrimination Act. The changes in the anti-discrimination legislation and the dismantling of the Gender Equality Ombudsman has meant that gender equality and discrimination against women is now one of several discrimination grounds, with the result that they receive less attention and a lower priority. The focus is on individual cases of discrimination instead of change-oriented, structural gender equality efforts. These changes have led to a situation where gender equality today is in a weaker position than other policy areas in Sweden, and lacks an operational government agency.

In order to reach gender equality objectives, the Government use the strategy of gender mainstreaming, which means having a gender equality perspective in all policies, budget allocations and decisions. At present there is a lack of effective methods of coordination, monitoring, accountability and sanctions with regard to the Government's plan for gender mainstreaming. In order to remedy this state of affairs a number of governmental inquiries have recommended the introduction of a gender equality authority, the latest being the report from the Gender Equality Commission SOU 2015:86¹.

Men's needs generally constitute the norm, and distribution of public resources more often benefits men than women. In order to ensure that public funds are equally distributed, it is necessary to gender mainstream all budgeting

processes. This is required to monitor consequences that policies and decisions may have for women and men. In the Government's Budget Bill for 2016 the stated ambition is to incorporate gender-responsive budgeting. We welcome this and encourage the government to develop analytical tools, including additional gender-disaggregated data, to overcome shortcomings.

Many women and girls are subjected to discrimination on a variety of grounds in addition to gender, so-called multiple discrimination. Examples of this are ethnicity, language, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and disability. A gender analysis must be undertaken to establish how discrimination impact on various groups of women and girls to ensure that the correct action can be taken.

Roma women and girls in Sweden form a particularly vulnerable group. Their health and economic position are generally worse than for Roma men, and they are more likely than other women to be the victims of violence. They suffer more often from illness and take more medication such as sleeping pills and anxiety medication. Poorer health can be the result of unemployment, low levels of education and a reluctance to seek medical advice. The group Roma women and girls often have weaker ties to society and perceive that they are treated condescendingly by various public institutions. Levels of unemployment among Roma, and especially Roma women, are far above the national average².

We Demand

► Institute a Gender Equality Authority

A gender equality authority must be created with responsibility to strategically implement and comply with gender mainstreaming at all levels of government, both regionally and nationally. This authority must support municipal bodies, regional authorities, governmental agencies and other organisations in their gender mainstreaming work. The authority should work closely with the women's movement and non-governmental organisations with expertise in various areas of gender equality work, and carefully monitor research in the field.

► Ensure that All Budget Processes Are Gender Mainstreamed

The Government must ensure that budgets at both regional and national levels are gender mainstreamed. Budgets must include and be based on gender-disaggregated data, measurable indicators and gender equality analyses as well as monitoring and reporting results based on gender. These efforts would be more systematic if a gender equality authority was created. The authority should act as a resource and provide support to the Government, other agencies, municipalities and regional authorities in their work with gender-responsive budgeting.

► Have a Clear Gender Equality Perspective in the Work for Roma Inclusion

There must be a clear gender equality perspective in the strategy for Roma inclusion 2012–2032 and in the implementation of it. Actions must be taken to ensure that Roma women are able to enter the labour market and the area of education. Specific initiatives to improve the health of Roma women and to support Roma women subjected to violence, prostitution and trafficking are needed. Staff in the government agencies, municipalities, the police, schools and the healthcare system must be educated on Roma's rights, history and social situation. These initiatives must be carried out in collaboration with Roma women's groups.

► **Ratify ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples**

Sweden's parliament has in the constitution acknowledged the Sami as a people, as indigenous and as a national minority. The Sami have the right to the full enjoyment of their human rights and basic freedoms. Against this background it is notable that Sweden has yet to ratify ILO Convention No. 169. If this convention is not ratified then Sami women's rights cannot be guaranteed. This applies for example to the right to bilingual education, land rights, property rights and the right to be consulted and take part in decision making processes. In order to ensure the rights of the Sami people, Sweden should immediately ratify ILO Convention No. 169. This is also of importance to the convention's status and for the opportunity to put pressure on other countries to ratify it.

► **Establish a National Independent Institution for Human Rights**

Actively promoting human rights is a prerequisite for eliminating discrimination against women. The UN has on numerous occasions urged Sweden to establish an independent institution for human rights, like 17 other EU countries have already done. Sweden has also committed itself to do so by ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). An independent institution for human rights should be established immediately in accordance with the Paris Principles. This institution should both review compliance with human rights and actively promote gender equality.

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1. Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Mål och myndighet - En effektiv styrning av jämställdhetspolitiken (Aims and Authorities - an Effective Management of Gender Equality Policies), SOU 2015:86
 2. The Public Health Agency of Sweden, 2015: Fördjupad studie om romska flickors och kvinnors livssituation (In-depth Study on the Life Situation of Roma Girls and Women).

Article 3: Women's Human Rights and the Elimination of Men's Violence Against Women

CEDAW States

Women should have the same opportunities and freedom as men to exercise and enjoy human rights.

States must do all in their power, including legislation as required, to ensure the development and advancement of women in a political, social, economic and cultural context.

The Current Situation

Work to prevent men's violence against women has evolved, knowledge has increased and a great deal of resource material has been produced. Between 2007 and 2014 approximately SEK 1.2 billion was set aside for initiatives to achieve the gender equality goal of eliminating men's violence against women and a Government inquiry was carried out from 2010 to 2014 tasked with recommending a coordinated national strategy to reach the target (SOU 2014:71)¹. Despite this historically large investment it is apparent from both

the State's investigation and the Swedish National Audit Office's review (RIR 2015:13) that the initiatives have been fragmented, project-based and short-term in nature and that the conditions necessary to achieve long-lasting results have been lacking². Also within the framework of the national strategy to stop men's violence against women (SOU 2015:55), it is apparent that the preventive and supportive work needs to become better coordinated, more effective and quality-assured at a national level³. The aggregated shortcomings revealed in these investigations show an alarming lack of coordination and a need for strategic steering and institutional structure.

Few cases of rape and sexual crimes are reported and even fewer lead to prosecution and conviction. During 2013, 98,000 people (ranging in age from 16 to 79 years) reported that they had been the victim of sexual crime⁴ but in that same year only 1,170 cases of sexual assault led to prosecution or a conviction in court⁵. The percentage of rapes for which somebody was convicted is 20%. Of those suspected of sexual offences 98% are men⁵.

Despite the Government strengthening the law 2013, impunity for sexual offences and the judiciary's handling of these cases is still deeply flawed. Perpetrators are not held accountable for their crimes, judicial procedures often vilify victims and put their testimony in dispute, further aggravating the victims vulnerability. Investigators can also be careless in securing evidence. The courts knowledge regarding men's violence against women is not uniform and courts often take differing approaches to similar cases.

Women who are subjected to men's violence are victims of crime and have the legal right to protection and support, which is ultimately the responsibility of the municipality. Access to funding for women's shelters varies among municipalities and some are unable to offer shelter. The CEDAW Committee has on a number of occasions urged Sweden to set aside sufficient funds for women's shelters. Specific shortcomings have been revealed with regard to protection for women with special needs, for example those with disabilities. There is often no permanent organisation for this group. Municipalities have been granted project funding to train staff, politicians and other involved in matters relating to men's violence against women with disabilities. These projects seldom form part of the municipality's regular operations and in most cases are discontinued when the project ends.

Furthermore, there are shortcomings in the treatment and knowledge of violence against women who belong to the national minorities, notably among social service, healthcare workers and the police. Women belonging to national minorities are often met with prejudice in attitudes and comments when contacting authorities and the legal system⁶.

Women who misuse drugs or are suffering from addiction run a greater risk of being subjected to violence, while at the same time they find it harder than other victims of violence to obtain support and help. Women in addiction are subjected to violence from partners, acquaintances and professionals with

whom they come into contact, for example security staff, police and healthcare workers. There is need to improve treatment and cooperation between parties involved, such as social services, women's shelters, police, healthcare, psychiatric care and abuse and addiction care⁷.

The widespread use of commercial pornography is a growing problem. The most recent governmental inquiry into pornography was in 1983 (SOU 1983:70)⁸. Since then the dissemination has increased exponentially, the content has become more explicit and violent, and the consumers younger. Over 30 years of collected research shows that the pornography today inspires and normalizes assaults on women and children and impact sexual relations⁹.

The Government and its agencies use to a greater extent the term "violence in close relationships" instead of "men's violence against women". The fact that the formulation of the problem is no longer based on a gender analysis renders invisible the most vulnerable groups worldwide – women and children. This also ignores men's violence against women in spheres other than relationships. In order to highlight and combat women's structural subordination, the concept "men's violence against women" should always be used.

We Demand

► A National Political Strategy with a Clear Gender Equality and Power Perspective

The national coordinator's recommendations in SOU 2014:71 need to be followed by a national policy strategy, with a clear gender equality and power perspective in which the perpetrator of violence is held accountable. Work to stop men's violence against women cuts right across a number of political areas such as criminal, gender equality, integration, children's and public health policies. Therefore, a clear coordination of the various departments and agencies is required. Municipalities that fail to follow existing legislation must be fined to a greater extent. Continuous monitoring should be carried out and responsibility for the issue of violence should be removed from individual municipal employees to management level. It is crucial that men's violence against women becomes an area of expertise in itself. Training regarding men's physical and sexual violence against women and children should be compulsory for all professions and bodies that come into contact with vulnerable women and children.

► Increased Resources to Women's and Girls' Shelters

Women and girls' shelters require increased, long-term resources to carry out their essential work. Support for victims of violence must include more than shelter. The regulations contained in the Parental Code regarding custody, accommodation and visitation rights must be revised in order to protect women and children who have been victims of violence and who are currently forced to live with their perpetrators. Responsibility to deal with perpetrators of violence should lie with the police and not with non-profit organisations. Women's and girl's shelters should receive more resources to address issues related to honour-related violence, accessibility for disabled women and ethnic minorities. Women with substance abuse or addiction should have access to specialized shelters, staffed by personnel with expertise in the mechanisms of violence and addiction.

► **Increase the Level of Reporting, Prosecution and Conviction for Sexual Crimes**

In accordance with the Istanbul Convention, a treaty ratified by Sweden, the Government should pass a law on sexual consent. All professionals within the legal system should have compulsory training on sexual crimes and men's violence against women, in particular judges in sexual offence cases. The Government should establish a commission of enquiry to review the judiciary's handling of sexual crime cases as well as improve methods for combating sexual abuse and rape.

► **Combat Violence Against Women with Disabilities**

Permanent initiatives are required on activities to ensure that women with disabilities receive the same protection and support as other women who are subjected to men's violence. Municipalities must take responsibility for ensuring that information about shelters reaches all women, and that such accommodation is accessible irrespective of disability, ethnicity or where you live.

► **Combat Violence Against Women who Belong to National Minorities**

Knowledge of men's violence against women and national minorities' specific living conditions must be increased among personnel of social services, the police and healthcare. According to the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, people from the national minorities have the right to their own language. This right must be ensured in contacts with authorities. More resources are needed to eliminate violence against women in minority groups.

► **Implement the Restraining Order Act**

There are flaws in the implementation of the Restraining Order Act. Women who apply often experience difficulties obtaining a Restraining Order, delays in processing and rejection of the applications. Furthermore the police fail to react with sufficient rapidity, which makes Restraining Orders a false security for women. More resources must be put in place to ensure that the law is implemented.

► **Investigate Legislation Against Pornography**

We demand that a commission is established in order to investigate the consequences of pornography for incidences of sexual abuse, sexual harassment and discrimination against women as well as how pornography leads to gender inequality. The commission should also review how legislation can be strengthened and how the dissemination of commercial pornography can be limited. Schools, workplaces and the public space must be environments that are free from pornography.

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1. Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Ett jämställt samhälle fritt från våld - Utvärdering av regeringens satsningar (A gender equal society free from violence - Evaluation of Government initiatives) 2010-2014, SOU 2014:71
 2. Swedish National Audit Office Report, Regeringens jämställdhetsåtgärder - tillfälligheter eller långsiktiga förbättringar? (Government gender equality initiatives - Coincidence or Long-Term Improvement?) RIR 2015:13
 3. Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Nationell strategi mot mäns våld mot kvinnor och hedersrelaterat våld och förtryck (National Strategy Against Men's Violence Against Women and Honour-Related Violence and Oppression), SOU 2015:55
 4. The Swedish Crime Survey (NTU), 2015, The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, Rape and Sex Offences, 2014
 5. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, Rape and Sex Offences, 2014
 6. The Public Health Agency of Sweden, Bemötande av våldsutsatta kvinnor som tillhör de nationella minoriteterna (Treatment of Abused Women who Belong to National Minorities), 2010
 7. The National Board of Health and Welfare, Skylla sig själv? Utbildningsmaterial om våld mot kvinnor med missbruks- eller beroendeproblem (Only Yourself to Blame? - Educational Material on Violence Against Women with Misuse or Addiction Problems), 2011
 8. Yttrandefrihetsutredningens betänkande, Värna yttrandefriheten (Freedom of Speech Enquiry Report, Protecting Freedom of Expression), SOU 1983:70
 9. Max Waltman, the Politics of Legal Challenges to Pornography: Canada, Sweden, and the United States, Stockholm University, 2014

Article 4: Temporary Measures for Achieving Gender Equality

CEDAW States

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

The Current Situation

Private sector companies are far from achieving gender balance. Even though we have seen an increase in the total number of female board members in stock market listed companies over recent years, by 2014 women accounted for only 25% of the total. As of 2014 95% of chairpersons in boards were men¹. At management level inequality is even more striking. Men make up 81% of management groups and 94% of CEOs and Managing Directors. These figures have hardly improved since 1999².

Women in Sweden have higher education than men and have dominated education in economics and law degrees for many decades. Women account for a third of all engineering degrees since the 1990s. This must be reflected in boardrooms and management groups. It appears, women's competencies are not being utilized. The Swedish business model is based on voluntary measures and the Swedish Corporate Governance Board administers guidelines to be followed by stock market listed companies. In 2014 the Board announced a number of changes to the Corporate Governance Code aimed at achieving a more equal gender balance in boardrooms. According to the Code, 40% of board members should be women by year 2020. The Code is intended as a complement to other legislation and is not binding. However, companies are obliged to report any deviation from the Governance Code in their annual reports.

We Demand

► Ensure Gender Equal Representation in the Private Sector

In order to make progress, systematic gender equality efforts and specific demands from the Government are needed. Monitoring and performance reviews of boards should be introduced. Higher education institutions that supply businesses with skills should demonstrate measurable results annually for their contribution to greater gender equality in the private sector. We also recommend the introduction of projects aimed at men as a group. If the Corporate Governance Code target for gender equality in boardrooms by 2020 is not met, the Government should introduce gender quotas for the boards of stock market companies.

1. The AllBright Report 2015, Done with Lean Boardrooms: Time to Promote Competence
2. AllBright, Wanted: 220 Women, 2015

Article 5: Sex Role Stereotyping

CEDAW States

States shall take measures to combat prejudices, stereotyped gender roles and all practices based on women's subordination or inferiority to men.

States shall ensure that women and men have equal responsibility for caring for and raising children.

The Current Situation

The fact that gender stereotypes are widespread in Sweden has been pointed out by the UN CEDAW Committee as one of the obstacles to achieving gender equality. The news media, social media and advertising industry reflect and form society. The lack of gender equality in the media is a democratic deficit since women's experiences, problems and opportunities are reflected to a lesser extent. The Swedish Government must do more to combat sexualization of public spheres and stereotypical and sexist representations of women.

The press in Sweden is now gender balanced if one looks at the total number of male and female journalists. However, at management and board levels there is still strong male dominance. There are three men for every woman in newspaper boardrooms and 84% of managing directors are men¹. Moreover, the daily news feed generally focuses on men's opinions and actions. In several other countries we see positive developments but in Sweden it remains static. Men make up 70% of those who are heard in the media while the percentage of women who are news subjects has remained at 30% since the Global Media Monitoring Project began in 1995. Men make up a constant 80% of experts and spokespersons in the media. Despite that Sweden has one of the highest percentages of female politicians in the world, only 34% of politicians in news reporting are women. Women are more often called upon to represent the general public or speak from personal experience². The news media is a power sector and carries important responsibility for the democratic development of society. Systematic efforts are required to prevent the continued marginalization of women in news reporting.

The underrepresentation of women in the news media must also be viewed against a background of the harsh and sexualized exposure of women in other areas of the media, such as advertising. The current system of self-regulation carried out by the advertising industries' own organisation, the Swedish Advertising Ombudsman (RO), is not sufficiently effective. The RO can neither issue economic sanctions nor require that advertising campaigns are withdrawn. The 2008 governmental inquiry into Gender Discriminatory Advertising (SOU 2008:5) recommended that legislation banning sexist advertisements should be implemented as early as the following year³. This recommendation was rejected by the then incumbent government with reference to

the principle of self-regulation. Since then there has been no further development. There is no indication that the amount of gender stereotypical and sexist advertising has decreased since the RO was introduced. On the contrary, there is a tendency toward increased sexualization of women, especially in the public sphere. Research has pointed out an increase in pornographic imagery used by advertising and the media.

A 2015 report from The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention reveals that women and men are subjected to different forms of Internet hate crimes, and that women to a greater extent are subjected to sexual harassment and molestation. The majority of identified perpetrators are male and few cases lead to prosecution. Only four percent of cases investigated have resulted in a perpetrator being sentenced⁴. The Justice Department is currently investigating how protection under the criminal law can be strengthened in cases of threats and other harassment, Ju 2014:74⁵. However, the inquiry lacks a consistent gender equality focus and the level of acceptance of online systematic violation of women's and girls' human rights is a matter of great concern. Internet hate crimes must be seen in the wider context of general gender inequality, where pornography and the objectification of women figure. The legal definition of hate crimes does not specifically include gender, which makes it impossible to apply hate crime legislation in gender related cases.

The Government must also do more to combat stereotypical gender roles and to ensure that the responsibility for children and household tasks is equally shared. Women continue to perform one hour more of unpaid household work than men every day. Women take more days off from paid work for parental leave (75%), care for sick children (63%) and sick relatives (73%) than men do⁶.

We Demand

► Introduce Legislation Against Gender Discriminatory Advertising

In order to combat gender discriminatory advertising, a legally binding ban is required. Similar legislation is in place in the other Nordic countries. The purpose of the law must be to promote gender equality. This must also be the guiding principle when determining what qualifies as gender discrimination in advertising. Breaking this law must result in sanctions, such as fines. The Inquiry into Gender Discriminatory Advertising (SOU 2008:5) has demonstrated that legislation can be designed so that it does not impinge on the freedom of expression. A government authority should be assigned the task of ensuring that the law is passed and implemented.

► Ensure Gender Equal Representation in the Media

The Government has a responsibility to disseminate knowledge of Sweden's European and global commitments and ensure that these are translated into local practice. Requirements should be imposed on the media industry (film, journalism, advertising, computer gaming etc.) to present in regular intervals available, reliable and comparable gender disaggregated statistics, both with regard to content and

representation. Media organisations should actively work toward gender balance in their workforces at all levels, as well as ensuring that women's and men's voices are heard to the same extent and that genders are represented in non-traditional roles and positions. Regular oversight is needed to ensure compliance, including monitoring of gender equality plans and annual reports. A database of female experts should be created in which the media, business and industry, government agencies, political bodies and others can search for female experts. Knowledge of gender equality, norms and power structures must be better integrated into journalism and media courses.

► **Action on Online Hate Crimes Against Women and Girls and a Ban on Revenge Porn**

It is of utmost importance that the Government takes action to combat harassment of women and girls on the Internet and that these initiatives are carried out with the understanding that threats and harassment online are a gender-related phenomenon that affects women and girls to a greater extent and differently than men and boys. Blackmail, threats and sexual harassment in relation to the unauthorized spreading of private images, so-called revenge porn, should be prohibited. There is also a need for effective legislation on harassment in social media, as well as the introduction of an independent complaints authority for discrimination against women and girls online. Gender should be included in hate crime legislation.

► **Parental Leave Must Be Non-Transferrable and its Flexibility Reassessed**

The single most effective initiative to come to grips with inequality in parenting and in the labour market is the individualization of parental leave benefits. This would strengthen women's position in the labour market, lead to a more balanced distribution of home and care work and strengthen the child's right to both parents/guardians. The two months already reserved for fathers has proven effective and has led to a more even pattern distribution among parents. The introductions of the Gender Equality Bonus and other initiatives at the individual level have not had the desired effect. We welcome the Government's decision to introduce a third reserved month. However, it is important to take further steps in the direction of wholly individualised and non-transferrable parental leave. The Government should also look into how the flexibility of parental leave affects women's participation in the workforce. This flexibility can act as a trap for women, especially those who already are far from the labour market.

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1. Nordicom, Gender Balance in Nordic Journalism, 2014
 2. Räkna med kvinnor (Count on Women), Global Media Monitoring Project, 2015
 3. Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Könsdiskriminerande reklam – kränkande utformning av kommersiella meddelanden (Gender Discriminatory Advertising – offensive design of commercial messages), SOU 2008:5
 4. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, Polisanmälda hot och kränkningar mot enskilda personer via internet (Police Complaints of Threats and Harassment Against Individuals Via the Internet), 2015
 5. Ministry of Justice, Ett modernt och starkt straffrättsligt skydd för den personliga integriteten (A Modern and Strong Criminal Protection for Personal Privacy), Committee Directive 2014:74
 6. Statistics Sweden (SCB), Women and Men – Facts and Figures 2014

Article 6: The Trade in Women and the Exploitation of Women in Prostitution

CEDAW States

States must take action, including legislation, to combat all forms of trade in women and prostitution.

The Current Situation

The Act prohibiting the Purchase of Sexual Services (1998:408) is a cornerstone of Swedish gender equality politics and a strong stand for human rights. This legislation shows that Sweden lives up to international treaties such as the 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others and CEDAW from 1979. The Act was introduced in 1999 and criminalizes the person buying sex but not the person in prostitution. The law takes aim at the demand and affects society's view of who bears responsibility for the purchase of sex and its consequences. This is an important prerequisite for successful supportive and preventative action.

The Act has resulted in a decrease in demand for sexual services and prostitution in Sweden. The Government's latest evaluation (SOU 2010:49) shows that the law has had the intended effect and that it is an important instrument for preventing and combating prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes. The percentage of men who admitted to purchasing sex fell from 1 in 8 to 1 in 13 during the first ten years after the Act was passed¹. In 2014 The Stockholm County Administrative Board presented an overview of prostitution in Sweden that showed that the Act had been effective and that it still enjoys strong support. Approximately 7.5% of Swedish men between 18 and 65 years of age have purchased sexual services at some time in their lives. This number is low in comparison to other European countries².

During 2014 prosecution of one case of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, 5 cases of heavy pimping, 12 cases of pimping and 260 cases of sex purchase were sentenced. The vast majority of victims were girls and women, usually between 20 and 37 years of age. Girls and women trafficked to Sweden for sexual exploitation during 2014 came mainly from Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia and Nigeria³. Roma women, EU migrants and undocumented migrant women are particularly at risk to become victims of prostitution and human trafficking. A greater awareness of this must be part of asylum and migration policies.

We Demand

► The Criminalization of Sex Purchase Abroad

Despite the fact that Sweden's sex purchase act has led to a fall in demand, 80% of Swedish citizens' sex purchases take place abroad. The Swedish Parliament (Riksdag) has ruled that buying sex is a crime against human rights and an obstacle

to achieving gender equality. Swedes should not violate human rights in Sweden but neither should they do so in other parts of the world. The Government must prohibit sex purchases committed by Swedes abroad.

► **Carry Out Information Campaigns on the Sex Purchase Act in Sweden and Internationally**

Within the framework of the action plan to combat prostitution and human trafficking, the Swedish Institute was previously mandated to provide information on the Swedish sex purchase Act. This task no longer exists despite the fact that we see high demand for information about the sex purchase law and its effects from countries around the world. The Government must actively disseminate the positive experience of the Act to other countries. There is continued need for information campaigns towards the Swedish public about the background and purpose of the Sex Purchase Act.

► **Prioritize Work Against Prostitution and Human Trafficking and Use the Full Penalty of the Law**

The Stockholm County Administrative Board has had a specific mandate during 2011 to 2015 to coordinate activities to combat prostitution and human trafficking for sexual exploitation. During 2013 the Board's responsibility was expanded to include human trafficking for other purposes, forced labour and the trade in human organs. There is a risk that this may lead to less focus on activities against prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes. In 2011 the maximum prison sentence for buying sex was increased from six months to one year. Despite this no one has been sentenced to prison since the law was introduced. The Government must ensure that the police prioritise and that more cases of human trafficking, pimping and sex purchases are uncovered and prosecuted.

► **Increased Support for Women in the Risk Zone or Seeking to Escape Prostitution**

The Government must ensure that women in the risk zone for or wishing to leave prostitution receive the support they need. Specific initiatives should be aimed at risk groups such as Roma women and girls, undocumented migrants and women with disabilities. Shelter for women seeking to leave prostitution or in need of support is insufficient. In Sweden there are only three municipal prostitution groups and these offer only advice, no shelter. The victims of prostitution must have access to protection and high quality assistance such as shelters and exit programmes. "Reflection time", the period during which the woman receives the help she requires without any obligations should be extended.

► **Ensure that Human Traffickers Are Convicted of Human Trafficking and that Women in Prostitution Are Given Crime Victim Status**

Human traffickers are more often convicted of pimping than trafficking³. The sentencing scales is the same but in the case of pimping women are treated as witnesses rather than victims of crime and are not guaranteed the same support and possible reparation. When the perpetrator is convicted of human trafficking women have more rights with regard to reflection time, shelter and exit programmes. Persons being bought in prostitution should be given crime victim status. This is to clarify that they are victims of crime and should be given improved support if they wish to leave prostitution. The ongoing review of criminal protection against human trafficking and the purchase of sexual acts from children (Committee Directive 2014:128) should consider this matter and develop recommendations for improvements.

1. Ministry of Justice, Evaluation of the Prohibition of the Purchase of Sexual Services 1999–2008, SOU 2010:49

2. The Stockholm County Administrative Board, the Extent and Development of Prostitution in Sweden, 2015

3. The Swedish National Police Board, Trafficking in Human Beings for Sexual and Other Purposes, Situation Report 16, 2015

Article 7: Political and Public Life

CEDAW States

States must ensure that women do not face discrimination in politics.

Women must have the same opportunities as men to vote, to be elected to political office, to work politically, to work in public institutions and authorities and to join non-profit and political organisations.

The Current Situation

One of Sweden's gender equality objectives is the equal distribution of power and decision-making. It includes both formal political rights and the equal distribution of power in areas such as the private sector, the media and religious bodies.

With regard to gender equality in public institutions and authorities, there is still work required if Sweden is to reach its goals. Of 349 members of the Riksdag (Parliament), 197 are men (56.4%) and 152 women (43.6%). This is a decrease compared to the 2006 and 2010 elections. In 2014 women accounted for 54% of ministers, 37% of under-secretaries and 67% of senior civil servants. In 2013 men constituted 63% of Supreme Court judges, 83% of Court of Appeal Presidents, and 65% of Courts of Appeal Heads of Division¹.

The gender balance of boards of fully or partly state-owned companies is relatively equal with 47% being women and 53% men. However, women account for only 37% of chairpersons and only 29% of CEOs or managing directors².

We Demand

► Increase the Number of Women in the Riksdag, Among Elected Officials and the Judiciary

Important decision-making functions in society must reflect the population composition. It is a democratic problem that the representation of men and women is unequal in high-ranking politically elected posts, in the Riksdag, among elected officials, in governmental agencies and the judiciary. The Government must devise strategies to live up to the goal of equal division of power and influence. More initiatives must be put in place to increase the number of women, particularly young and foreign born women, in decision-making positions in public institutions.

► Improved Governance of State-Owned Companies Through Time Bound Gender Equality Goals for Boards and Management Teams

Within state-owned companies the distribution of women and men at boardroom level has improved through targeted and active governance strategies, along with recruitment and nomination efforts. The same principles should be implemented in municipally-owned companies where owner guidance is often weak or non-existent with regard to gender balance. When recruiting board members to municipal or regional authority-owned companies, merit based job descriptions with clear gender equality criteria should be established. A timeframe should be set to reach gender equality for both boards and management teams, including if necessary affirmative action such as quotas. The Government must monitor and report on the distribution of women and men in state, municipal and regional authority-owned companies.

1. Statistics Sweden (SCB), Women and Men - Facts and Figures 2014

2. Government Offices of Sweden, Verksamhetsberättelse för företag med statligt ägande (Annual Report for State-Owned Companies), 2013

Article 8: International Work and Representation

CEDAW States

Women must be afforded the opportunity to represent their government on the same terms as men at international level and to participate in the work of international organisations.

The Current Situation

Women and children suffer disproportionately in armed conflicts, while at the same time women, not least women's rights activists and, are often excluded from peace processes. Men continue to constitute the vast majority of those holding formal power to influence security and defense policy. The UN Security Council's Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325) was adopted in 2000 and has since been strengthened through a number of further resolutions and commitments. The agenda for Women, Peace and Security is a commitment from the UN and its member states to increase women's participation in conflict prevention, peace-building and post-conflict resolution as well as strengthening security for women in armed conflicts. It also includes calls to strengthen women's empowerment, to stop the spreading of weapons that risk contributing to gender-related violence and to apply greater support for women's rights activists in the civil society. A number of countries have produced national action plans for how the UNSCR 1325 shall be implemented, including Sweden. Many non-governmental organisations have been critical of Sweden's current national action plan, calling it too weak and the Government is currently working to produce a new plan. The process has included consultations between the Government Offices, the Riksdag, non-governmental organisations, researchers and women's rights activists in conflict and post-conflict countries.

Women's power and political participation must increase. Sweden's 8th and 9th reports to the CEDAW Committee have scarce information on the distribution of men and women in international organisations. However, the Swedish Government has encouraged women to apply to positions in international organisations. This policy has shown results in a positive gender distribution among Swedes serving in international bodies. In the UN Secretariat women represents 55%, while at the highest level (P5-USG) 45% are women. UN specialized agencies and programs show similar numbers of women with up to 65% in UNHCR being women in higher positions, while in UNICEF 50% are women and in UNDP 41%¹.

Of 31 peace processes between 1992 and 2011 men have been 96% of those signing treaties, 98% of mediators, 96% of witnesses and 91% of negotiators have been men. Of 585 peace treaties adopted between 1990 and 2010, only

92 have included at least one reference to women or gender². Among those taking part in Swedish peacekeeping operations in 2014 on average 12% were women³.

Women are underrepresented in most international courts and judicial bodies. As of September 2015 women accounted for 17% of members of international and regional tribunals and 20% of judges in the International Court⁴. These bodies play an essential role in developing and establishing practice in the fields of international law and cooperation. The underrepresentation of women hampers gender equality and diminishes the legitimacy of the institutions. It is not democratic that women do not have the same access to real influence on the interpretation and implementation of international law and human rights.

We Demand

- ▶ **Secure Women's Representation and Active Role in Peace and Security Actions in Accordance with the UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security**
Women have the right to participate in all aspects of crisis and conflict solution, as delegates in negotiations, as mediators, in peacekeeping missions, in post-conflict reconstruction, disarmament and conflict prevention. The Government must ensure that peacekeeping operations live up to gender-balanced representation and device clear strategies for accomplishing it.
- ▶ **Strengthen and Clarify Sweden's Commitments in the New National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security**
Sweden's new national action plan for Women, Peace and Security will be adopted in 2016. The plan must explicitly identify parties responsible for setting goals and achieving them, and explicitly include the role of the Swedish Government Offices, including ambassadors and representations. The timeframe for implementation must be established, the plan of action must be specific, goals measurable and sufficient resources earmarked.
- ▶ **All International Activities Must Be Gender Mainstreamed, Including Budget Processes**
A gender equality perspective and women's human rights must be mainstreamed in all of Sweden's international activities, from international operations (military and civil) to foreign-aid policies. This applies to all areas that today are part of the wider agenda for women, peace and security, such as weapon control. Sweden must ban exports of war-materials to states that fail to respect women's right to represent their government at an international level and participate in international organisations. The Government's efforts to gender mainstream all budget processes must cover development cooperation so that all initiatives, programs and projects reach women and men, girls and boys equally. This must be done in all phases; from strategies, targets and action plans to project and program activities, recruitment and appointments.
- ▶ **An Active Work for Gender Equal Representation in High-Level Positions in the UN and EU as well as in International Courts and Judicial Bodies**
In the majority of cases member states are responsible for nominating candidates to high-level positions within the EU and UN. The Swedish Government must work to ensure that more women are nominated and to influence the representation among ambassadors, in international courts and judicial bodies. Sweden should actively

support the recruitment of women within the EU and UN and monitor how the division of women and men develops, as well as openly report on this. Furthermore Sweden should forcefully make its opinion known on the UN's internal work for gender equal recruitment of women and men in all professional capacities, as well as on the need for special reporting on working environments and career prospects of women and men within the UN.

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1. Enheten för främjande och EU:s inre marknad (UD-FIM) (The Unit for Promotion and Inner Market of the EU), 2015
 2. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom - Swedish section, Grejen med Resolution 1325 (The Thing with Resolution 1325), 2014
 3. Operation 1325, Women Count, Civil Society Monitoring Report 2014: Sweden's implementation of UNSCR 1325
 4. GQUAL Declaration, 2015

Article 9: Citizenship

CEDAW States

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

Women shall have the same right as men to influence the citizenship of their children.

The Current Situation

Both women and men are refugees, but fewer women and girls reach a safe location. Women and girls have less chance of crossing borders and often remain in conflict zones and refugee camps. According to UNHCR only 11% of those crossing the Mediterranean in 2014 were women¹ and according to the Swedish Migration Agency approximately 30% of those seeking asylum in Sweden in 2015 were women².

A number of circumstances contribute; women may have small children to care for, be breast-feeding, menstruating, pregnant or give birth. The lack of drinking water leads to kidney problems for many pregnant and breast-feeding women. Sexual abuse, prostitution and violence are used as strategies to deprive women and girls their civil rights.

Women refugees are more likely to arrive in Sweden via family reunification. Temporary residence permits limit family reunification. More women and children are forced to use unsafe routes, such as crossing the Mediterranean, instead of organised travel to be united with partners or fathers. This leaves more women in conflict zones and refugee camps. Temporary residence permits puts integration at risk and can cause mental illness for women who have often already been subjected to serious human rights violations. Linking permanent residency permits to work permits may lead to exploitation of women in the labour market. Out of fear of losing their jobs and therefore a future permanent residence permit, women might not dare to report any sexual assault or harassment.

We Demand

► **Ensure that More Women and Girls Refugees Are Able to Come to Sweden**

The Swedish Government must help women and girls to seek asylum. Women and accompanying children should be given priority to quota refugee status. All refugee initiatives must have a conscious gender equality perspective. We demand increased security and protection of women upon arrival in Sweden, for example resources for pregnant women and those with small children and support for women who have been subjected to violence and abuse.

► **Ensure that Women Are Granted Permanent Residency and Citizenship**

Women must be granted permanent residence permit, unconnected to any man. In the event of the introduction of temporary residence permits, family reunification should never be limited.

► **Abolish the Two-Year Rule in the Aliens Act**

A woman who marries or cohabits with a Swedish citizen is granted a temporary residence permit for the first two years. If the relationship ends during those two years the person must leave the country. This two-year rule leads to women not leaving violent partners out of fear of being deported. Many refrain from reporting violence or contacting women's shelters. The two-year rule should be abolished so that women who come to Sweden due to marriage or cohabiting with a Swedish citizen are granted permanent residency. Rules for the protection of women who are victims of violence should be strengthened.

► **Increased Support for Women's Necessities and Women's Organisations on Site**

We demand increased support for women's organisations on site in refugee camps and conflict zones, urgent action to combat sexual abuse and human trafficking in refugee camps and war zones and resources for women's and girl's special needs.

► **Recognize Women's Specific Grounds for Asylum**

The asylum process and system for family reunification in Sweden must be comprehensively gender mainstreamed. Women's specific grounds for asylum, such as escaping threat of female genital mutilation or other violence, should be viewed as sufficient grounds for granting a woman permanent residency. Government agencies that handle asylum applications must have expertise in gender equality, women's protection needs and grounds for asylum. They must also inform women that fear of gender-based violence and discrimination in itself can be well-founded grounds for asylum. The asylum process must follow UNHCR guidelines on international protection, particularly guideline 35 on the right to specific support and confidential treatment of gender-related asylum grounds.

► **Improved Initiatives to Help Women Without Citizenship who Are Subjected to Violence**

Women who reside in the country illegally must be able to report violence and prostitution and seek medical help – without risk of being deported. Undocumented women should have the same right to protection as all other women in Sweden. The law to prevent and stop violence against women should have clear precedence over the Aliens Act.

► **Include Knowledge on Women's Rights in SFI Teaching**

Refugees and migrants coming to Sweden should be provided information on women's human rights. Swedish language classes (SFI) should teach knowledge of human rights, women's and children's rights as well as democracy and Swedish law.

1. The Un Refugee Agency UNHCR, 2015

2. The Swedish Migration Agency, Applications for Asylum, 2015

Article 10: Education

CEDAW States

Women shall have the same rights as men to education and the same opportunities to have an academic career. This applies to both urban and rural areas and to all levels of education from preschool to university and vocational training.

States shall ensure that women do not end their education too early.

Curricula and textbooks must be free from sex role stereotyping.

States shall ensure that women and men have the same access to grants, scholarships and research funding.

Women shall have the same opportunities as men to participate in sports and physical education in schools.

The Current Situation

For over 30 years women have formed the majority of those studying and graduating from higher education. As of 2012 51% of women and 39% of men had a post-secondary education (age group 25 to 44). However, in the higher academic hierarchy women are fewer. In 2014 75% of university professors were men while women drop out along the way from research student to professor. Furthermore, the earlier increase in the number of women professors has slowed somewhat in recent years¹.

Female researchers have more difficulty in obtaining funding, both calculated in funding per person and in terms of the percentage of women involved in research. A survey of a number of higher education institutions shows that 39% of funding went to women's salaries in 2013, compared to 61% to men's salaries².

An explanation to why more research funding goes to men than women is that men are active in research areas considered more strategic and prioritized. The Delegation for Gender Equality in Higher Education (2011:1) estimates that anywhere between SEK 0.5 billion and SEK 1 billion has been redistributed from women to men as a result of the Government's so-called Investments in Excellence. Areas dominated by women have been deemed less strategic worth and have therefore received less research funding³. In recent years an ever greater percentage of research funds have been distributed via external scientific advisory bodies, while direct which that universities themselves control has decreased. This development has benefited men to a larger extent than women, since men are more prone to apply for external funding. Instead of combating the gap between men and women in academia, the political policies of the past decade have increased the imbalance³.

Education is a prerequisite for women with disabilities to assert themselves in society and to develop competencies not limited by their disability. This provides women conditions for employment and self-support.

Studies show that one in five girls in secondary education have been subjected to sexual harassment and that girls in general are more likely to face abuse and to feel insecure in school than boys. Girls face harassment from both boys of their own age and from teachers and other school employees⁴. According to the Discrimination Act (2008:567) nobody should face sexual harassment in school or university. Schools have a responsibility to actively prevent and halt discrimination and harassment and to have routines for handling them. Reviews have shown that teachers are reluctant to intervene and that there is a lack of a systematic approach to the task. 90% of all equal treatment plans fail to meet the guidelines of the Swedish School Inspectorate⁵.

Within the framework of the Delegation for Gender Equality in Education, a comprehensive survey was carried out of educational materials from a gender perspective. The results showed that women make up a considerably smaller percentage of people in Swedish textbooks, e.g. History⁶ and Civics⁷. This trend is consistent from primary to secondary schools.

We Demand

► Introduce Concrete Measures to Increase the Number of Female Professors

We welcome the appointment of an expert group for gender equality and the initiatives introduced to promote gender mainstreaming in higher education. The Government must ensure equal opportunities with regard to careers in higher education through an active and gender-equal leadership, and by making visible informal networks, cultures and notions of competence. We urge the Government to utilize the existing sections of the law on affirmative action to promote gender equality in higher education. In order to deal with gender inequality short and long term structural reforms are needed.

► Ensure that Research Funding Benefits Women and Men on Equal Terms

Procedures for distributing research funding must be gender mainstreamed and a plan must be put in place for how funding to the respective female and male-dominated fields can be balanced. The link between education and research must be strengthened in female-dominated areas such as healthcare sciences and pedagogy. In the upcoming Research Bill the Government should establish that research links must be equally strong in all areas of education and that neither male nor female-dominated research and educational fields should be seen as having a higher priority.

► Ensure Secure Academic Employment and Career Paths

With increased basic funding colleges and universities can better plan their work, and ensure more full-time researchers and lecturers instead of the current situation with short-term contracts lasting no more than a few months at a time. This should lead to stricter demands on the institutions on fair and transparent recruitment procedures. It is especially important to ensure that all post-graduate students and young researchers can be given steady employment instead of being forced to rely on education grants and scholarships. Stricter requirements, in combination with advertising all positions, will promote merit-based employment. This will prevent higher education institutions from, whether consciously or unconsciously, employ and promote men over women.

► **Combat Gender Stereotypical Educational Choices and Ensure Gender Mainstreaming of Teaching Materials**

The 2011 curriculum includes demands for gender equality in education. The responsible government agencies must ensure that these demands are adhered to and that teaching materials are quality assured from a gender equality perspective. Concerted efforts must be pursued to break gender stereotypical educational choices, aiming to break the gender-segregated labour market. The task requires both developing the content in educational courses and to actively market courses towards the underrepresented gender.

► **Prevent Sexual Harassment in All School Environments**

Schools must improve work on preventing and investigating sexual harassment and abuse. Schools have a responsibility to set limits to unacceptable behavior and to work actively to promote gender equality. Sexual harassment, gender-related violence and abuse must be differentiated from bullying. Knowledge of this must be increased among members of staff. We also demand improved sex education including gender equality and preventing sexual harassment, the banning of so-called revenge porn and that schools are environments free from pornography.

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1. Statistics Sweden, Register on Participation in Education, 2012 and 2013
 2. The Swedish Agency for Public Management, Research Appropriations from a Gender Equality Perspective, 2014:27
 3. Ministry of Education and Research, Svart på vitt - om jämställdhet i akademien (In Black and White - On Gender Equality in Academia), SOU 2011:1
 4. The Friends Report 2014
 5. Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, "Det går över när de mognar" (It Will Pass as They Mature), 2011
 6. Ministry of Education and Research, Kvinnor, män och jämställdhet i läromedel i historia (Women, Men and Gender Equality in Educational History), SOU 2010:10
 7. Ministry of Education and Research, Kvinnor, män och jämställdhet i läromedel i samhällskunskap (Women, Men and Gender Equality in Educational Civics), SOU 2010:33

Article 11: Employment and the Labour Market

CEDAW States

States must ensure that women are not discriminated not in the labour market.

Businesses and organisations that are employers must use the same basis for evaluating women and men.

Women and men shall have the same right to choose their own job and to be promoted.

Women shall have the same wage as men when carrying out the same type of work.

Women shall have the same rights to social benefits as men in the event of unemployment, illness or injury at work. They shall also enjoy the same pension rights as men.

Women shall have the same right as men to work in a good working environment and under safe employment conditions.

Pregnant women shall be given extra protection, for example to take time off if the job is physically demanding, to take sick leave or change job.

It shall be prohibited to dismiss women because they marry, become pregnant or take parental leave.

Women shall be able to take time off work with economic support from the State when giving birth. They shall not lose their job, suffer any sanctions at work or lose benefits because they have a child.

States shall guarantee childcare, for example preschool, so that parents can combine family obligations with paid work.

The Current Situation

The wage gap between women and men in Sweden in 2014 was 13,2%¹. The gap has remained largely unchanged for over 30 years. Women as a group also have worse working conditions and lower pensions. However, instead of ensuring that the wage gap diminishes through annual wage surveys, today such a review is required only every third year and only in workplaces employing 25 or more people. There is clear evidence that where wage surveys are carried out, the gender wage gap decrease.

Involuntary part-time work and insecure employment conditions in the form of hourly-pay, temporary and short-term contracts are more widespread among women and within female-dominated sectors. In 2013 30% of women worked part-time (against 11% of men). The most common reasons why women works part-time are that there are no suitable full-time jobs available or because they care for children. Of those working part-time due to caring for a child or adult relative, 88% are women. Women account for 75% of paid parental leave and 63% of temporary parental benefit to care for a child. On an average day women spend approximately one more hour on unpaid work than men².

Furthermore, certain groups of women suffer discrimination based on two or three grounds at work. The level of labour market participation among women born outside Sweden is 54%, almost 20% lower than for those born in Sweden. Between 2008 and 2011 only 57% of women with a disability (against 66% of men) were employed, despite the fact that women have a higher level of education². In 2014 the CRPD Committee expressed concern over this and the disabilities movement has on a number of occasions, including in the co-called FunkA Investigation (A 2011:03), pointed out that a better understanding of gender differences is required if labour market policies are to contribute to real gender-equality.

The wage gap between women and men is structural and women's work is less valued throughout the entire labour market. Therefore structural changes are required in order to change the pattern.

We Demand

► **Legislate the Right to Full-Time Employment and Reduce Women's Part-Time Employment**

To ensure women's economic independence legislation is required on the right to full-time employment. We also urge the Government to take strong action to improve the working environment and conditions in female-dominated sectors. It is important that the public sector provide sufficient and accessible professional preschools, health care and social care so that women have the opportunity to combine parenthood and paid work. The professional care of the elderly must be strengthened and secured as a publicly financed welfare service through increased resources.

► **Increase Employment Levels Among Women Born Outside of Sweden**

Follow-ups of past labour market projects and initiatives aimed at foreign-born women have proved insufficient. The Government should identify initiatives that give results and immediately take action to promote migrant women's establishment in the labour market. Men's and women's situations in life are different and newly arrived women risk to be hit harder when social welfare fails. Women often shoulder higher responsibility for matters concerning family and care work, for example contact with the health services, preschools and schools, parental leave and more. Gender equal service in connection with establishment in the labour market must therefore be ensured. Care of children and the elderly must be accessible for everyone throughout the country.

► **Increase Employment Levels Among Women with Disabilities**

Support for people with disabilities such as education and work varies widely from municipality to municipality and there are notable differences in how men and women benefit from the labour market initiatives that are implemented. Specific support must be aimed at women with disabilities, for example in the form of guidance, supplementary education, assistance in finding the correct aids and help in establishing contact with employers.

► **Reintroduce the Requirement for Annual Wage Surveys and Introduce Job Evaluations to Counter Structural Wage Differences**

The previous requirement for annual wage surveys and action plans for gender equality for all businesses employing 10 or more people should be reintroduced. This should be complemented with a requirement for job evaluations to identify and correct structural wage differences between professions and sectors. Mechanisms that lead to female-dominated professions not having the wage levels justified by the level of competence and responsibility must be dismantled. We urge the Government to ensure that rules regarding insight are followed and that failure to do so will result in penalties.

1. The Swedish National Mediation Office, Wage Differences Between Men and Women 2014
2. Statistics Sweden (SCB), Women and men - Facts and figures 2014

Article 12: Health and Healthcare

CEDAW States

States shall ensure that women have the same access to healthcare and that women are not discriminated against.

Women shall be given information about and access to birth control.

States shall guarantee women high quality, cost-free healthcare during pregnancy, childbirth and breast-feeding.

The Current Situation

The aim of healthcare legislation is to provide quality care on the same terms for the entire population. Everyone shall have the same right to health service irrespective of factors such as gender, age, ethnic and religious affiliation, place of residence, disability, social status and sexual orientation. Diagnosis, care and treatment must be based on the patient's actual needs, without being affected by false ideas and perceptions, for both women and men. This means that healthcare providers must take into account both biological gender differences and gender specific needs. Many studies show disparities in the care of women and men, not medically motivated, which lead to incorrect diagnoses and inadequate results of treatment.

Since the 1990s Sweden has seen an increase in mental illness, most markedly among young women in the age group of 15–24. Women born outside Sweden, women with disabilities and trans women are overrepresented. Worry and anxiety, sleep disorders and depression are increasing among both boys and girls but to a greater extent among girls. Increasing numbers of young women are receiving psychiatric inpatient care and self-harming behaviour is on the rise. Most common is poisoning with medicine or alcohol. Women and girls smoke more and use more medication than men and boys¹. There is also clear evidence that alcohol and drug misuse are more common among young people suffering from mental illness and those who have been subjected to sexual abuse. Women and girls are overrepresented in both of these groups.

Since the 1980s women have a higher rate of sick leave than men. Heavy domestic workloads, combined with obligations at the labour market, increase the likelihood that women will be absent due to illness. Factors such as level of education, income, place of residence, employer and profession also have an effect. Women who work in healthcare, schools and social services run the highest risk of being absent due to illness².

We Demand

► Improve the Mental Health of Young Women

Preventative measures and increased resources are required to combat mental illness among young women and to meet the healthcare needs of this group.

The Government should carefully monitor research and initiate studies on how any gender bias is expressed in attitudes and treatment, for example in order to reduce the number of young women who are subjected to forced treatment. A number of identifiable factors that cause mental illness in young women can be attributed to a growing societal focus on the individual's sole responsibility for their successes and failures. We call for greater investment in structural solutions to societal problems, for example in the labour market – a cause of stress and anxiety for a lot of young women.

► Reduce Women's Sick Leave

Gender equality in child and domestic chores is a key to reduce sick leave among women. We therefore demand individualized and non-transferable parental leave. Strong measures that improve working environments and conditions in female-dominated sectors must be put in place. The Government should introduce a right to full-time employment, reduce the use of insecure short-term employment contracts and invest in more and more sustainable jobs in the welfare sector.

► Reduce Women's and Girl's Alcohol and Drug Use

Despite the fact that the increase in alcohol and drug use is greatest among girls and young women, and despite the increase in fatalities caused by drugs among both young and old women, the Government are lacking a thorough gender equality perspective in their strategies. The Government must increase the preventative actions towards women's and girl's addiction problems.

► Ensure Gender Equality in Healthcare and Medical Research

Gender-disaggregated data and gender equality analyses must be carried out in all parts of healthcare. A clearer and mandatory gender perspective must be introduced in healthcare education and in the work of existing healthcare staff in order to achieve gender equality in treatment and attitudes. We urge the Government to steer publicly funded medical research to ensure gender balance and gender mainstreaming.

► Review the Healthcare Sector Reimbursement System from a Gender Perspective

The current system for healthcare reimbursement, Diagnosis Related Groups (DRG), appears from a gender perspective to be biased. A number of examples point to systematic discrimination against "women's illnesses" with regard to reimbursement, which can lead to women's health receiving a lower priority. The National Board of Health and Welfare have carried out an investigation of the reimbursement system but without taking gender into account³. Taking account of gender and gender equality is fundamental in avoiding gender discrimination.

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1. The National Board of Health and Welfare and the Swedish National Institute of Public Health, Folkhälsan i Sverige, Årsrapport 2013 (Public Health in Sweden Annual Report 2013)
 2. The Swedish Social Insurance Agency, Större risk för dubbelarbetande mammor att bli sjukskrivna (Greater Risk of Sick Leave for Working Mothers), 2013
 3. The Swedish Medical Women's Association, Motion om diskriminerande ekonomisk ersättning i vården (Motion On Discrimination in Financial Reimbursement in Healthcare), 2015

Article 13: Economic and Social Rights

CEDAW States

Women and men shall have the same economic and social rights.

Women shall have the same right as men to earn money and obtain family benefits, to obtain bank loans, mortgages and other forms of credit.

Women shall have the same right as men to participate in sport and all aspects of cultural life and to join associations.

The Current Situation

Poverty among the elderly has increased dramatically in Sweden, especially among women. In Sweden today there are over 150,000 women living on an income below the EU's definition of poverty (SEK 11,100 per month). Half a million people, 80% of whom are women, are living on the minimum state pension, despite the fact that many of them have worked all of their lives. Women's pensions are on average SEK 6,000 lower per month than men's. Among the reasons are inequalities in the labour market, with part-time and short-term jobs, poor working conditions and low wages for women. Furthermore these disparities are increased by the pension system itself that fails to create a sufficient safety net for the most vulnerable and those on lowest salaries¹.

Another problem is that women more often take care of children or sick relatives. Since the 1980s a smaller proportion of elderly people receive publicly funded elderly care, while the burden on relatives has increased. 114,000 middle-aged women and 75,000 men had their income reduced due to caring for relatives. Daughters of elderly parents with low educational levels are the group that increased their unpaid contribution most².

Women as a group are financially weaker and find it harder to obtain loans than men. In divorce 70% of men retain the residence. Women victims of domestic violence find it difficult to find their own permanent accommodation. Older women have such low pensions that they cannot afford to pay the cost of accommodation.

The Government's funding to women's organisations, allocated through the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, remained unchanged at SEK 28 million from 2006 to 2014. During this same period the number of women's organisations seeking contributions multiplied. With the increasing number of organisations seeking support and, available funds remaining unchanged, the funding criteria have become stricter. A funding ceiling per organisation has also been introduced.

We Demand

► **Ensure that Female Pensioners Receive a pension They Can Live on**

Lifelong economic independence is one of the objectives of the Government's gender equality policy. In order to improve the future situation for the women currently in the labour market, we request individualized parental leave, the right to fulltime employment, improved working conditions and equal pay. Specific initiatives are needed to increase employment among foreign born women and women with disabilities. However, these initiatives will have no impact on older women who are already living under the poverty line. Therefore urgent measures are also needed including an increased guarantee state pension, a raise in housing subsidies for pensioners and more resources for elderly care.

► **More Resources to Publicly Financed Child and Elderly Care**

In order to reduce women's absences from the labour market on account of care of children or relatives, an extended and fully functioning system of childcare and care for the elderly is required. All citizens must have access to such publicly financed care on equal terms. This is a prerequisite for women to be gainful employed and support themselves in short and long run.

► **Ensure Gender Equal Housing Policies**

The Government must ensure that housing policy is gender mainstreamed so that women and men have access to housing on equal terms. More rental accommodation and other housing are required and women's economic positions must be strengthened.

► **Increase the Budget Allocation to Women's Organisations**

Funding for women's organisations shall facilitate women's participation in the democratic process and in society as a whole, as well as enable women to safeguard their rights and pursue their demands. If women's organisations in Sweden are to carry out this task and pursue their activities, increased funding is required.

► **Ensure Gender Equality in the Distribution of Resources for Cultural and Recreational Activities**

The distribution of resources and support for culture, sport and recreation must be gender mainstreamed. Steering documents must include requirements for conscious efforts to ensure gender equality and all state owned companies should have gender equality policy for sponsorship activities. We also demand more money for sports and sports clubs where women dominate.

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1. The Swedish National Pensioners' Organisation (PRO), Ålderdom utan fattigdom - om äldrefattigdom och kvinnors låga pensioner (Old Age Without Poverty - On Poverty in Old Age and Women's Low Pensions), 2015
 2. Petra Ulmanen, The Cost of Caring in the Swedish Welfare State - Feminist Perspectives on Family Care for Older People, Stockholms University 2015

Article 14: Rural Women

CEDAW States

Women in rural areas shall have the same rights as women in cities.

Women in rural areas shall be able to participate in benefit from rural development and have access to healthcare, education, employment, credit and loans.

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

The Current Situation

The Rural Development Programme for the period 2014–2020 has an increased gender equality perspective and among other things includes the following target “Women and men must have equal opportunities, rights and possibilities to work in agriculture and to live and play an active role in rural communities”. This is part of the EU’s strategy for achieving the goals of the common agricultural policy and is therefore partly financed by the EU. It is of utmost importance that the allocation of funds from all of the five European Structural & Investment Funds is gender mainstreamed and that it is closely monitored.

Access to services such as healthcare and addiction treatment, Internet, transportation, schools etc. still varies depending on where in the country you live and your gender. The initiatives already implemented, such as the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions’ Programme for Sustainable Gender Equality, have had mixed results regionally. It is also apparent that women do not benefit from development funds to the same extent as men^{1,2}.

We Demand

► Ensure Gender Equality in Public Services Throughout the Country

The Government has a responsibility to ensure that all citizens can benefit equally from public services, irrespective of where they live or their gender. Girls and women in rural areas must have equal access as men and urban dwellers to healthcare, education, property rights, agricultural subsidies and financial independence. The transport system must be gender equal so that it meets women’s and men’s transport needs to the same extent. In order to monitor this, gender-disaggregated data are required along with measurable objectives based on regional conditions.

► Rural Development Policies Must Be Carried Out on Equal Terms for Women and Men

Gender mainstreaming must be ensured in the new Rural Development Programme for the period 2014–2020. More research, data and gender disaggregated statistics are required with regard to implementing support systems, business support and other projects in rural areas. All activities, evaluation and monitoring must be carried out with a gender equality perspective, including budgeting at national level and through EU funds. In order to implement and monitor this work, specific, measurable gender equality objectives are needed. Expertise in gender equality in regional and county authorities must be part of future implementation, evaluation and monitoring in the Rural Development Programme.

1. Winnet Sverige, Landsbygd på lika villkor (Rural communities on equal terms)

2. County Administrative Board Jönköping & Winnet Sverige, Landsbygd på lika villkor – Ur ett regionalt perspektiv (Rural Communities on Equal Terms – From a Regional Perspective), 2013

Article 15: Equality Before the Law

CEDAW States

Women and men shall be equal before the law and treated equally in all in courts and tribunals.

Women and men shall have the same right to conclude contracts, administer property, travel and to choose where to live.

Any contract or other legal document written in a way that restricts women's rights shall be deemed invalid.

The Current Situation

Sami women's rights are limited by the Swedish Reindeer Husbandry Act (SFS 1971:437). The law became formally gender-neutral in 1971 when women no longer lost their privileges through marrying a man without privileges. Despite this, the power structures caused by earlier legislation remain. In practice women are often subordinate to men in that they seldom become full members of the Sami village in which all economic decisions are taken. Influence in Sami villages is dependent on how many reindeers a herder owns. In general women have less influence in the Sami village than men. Fewer women than men have mandates in Sami villages and women often works outside the village in order to contribute economically to the family. Many women feel that the Sami village's communal economy affects their family negatively¹.

We Demand

► Improve the Reindeer Husbandry Act from a Gender Equality Perspective

The Sami Parliament is a governmental agency that monitors issues relating to Sami culture in Sweden and is among other things the administrative body for issues of reindeer management. The Sami Parliament, in common with other government agencies and public bodies, has been a Government mandate to implement gender mainstreaming. This must be fulfilled. The reindeer Husbandry Act must be improved so that the gender equality perspective permeates and Sweden must ratify ILO Convention No. 169. All changes that impact Sami women, especially in regard to legislation, must be carried out in close consultation with those involved.

1. Andrea Amft, Sápmi i förändringens tid: En studie av svenska samers levnadsvillkor under 1900-talet ur ett genus- och etnicitetsperspektiv (Sápmi in a Time of Change. A Study of Swedish Sami Living Conditions During the Twentieth Century from a Gender and Ethnic Perspective.), 2000

Article 16: Marriage and Family Life

CEDAW States

Women shall have the same right as men to marry and to choose whom they wish to marry.

Women shall not be forced to marry and have children against their will.

Women and men have the same rights and responsibilities during marriage and divorce.

Women and men have the same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of marital status, on all issues regarding their children.

Women shall have the right to choose how many children they wish to have and the time between births. They also have the right to education and information to allow them to exercise this right.

Women have the same right as men to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation.

Children shall not be allowed to marry or become engaged to be married.

The Current Situation

In June 2015 a Government inquiry left their final report for a national strategy to stop men's violence against women and honour-related violence and oppression (SOU 2015:55). The inquiry confirmed that honour-related violence and oppression is widespread in Sweden¹.

A 2009 survey by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society showed that around 70,000 young people between 16 and 25 years of age in Sweden have limited options with regard to marriage or have conditions imposed by their family regarding their choice of partner. Approximately 8,500 youths, mostly girls, were worried that they could not choose their own partner. Forced marriage is used to control girl's and women's sexuality. Girls are limited in their freedom of action while boys are raised to control their sisters. For some, access to education, employment, decision-making, participation and recreational activities are greatly limited². In 2014 the Government strengthened the protection against forced and child marriage by introducing the new crimes forced marriage ("äktenskapstvång") and deceptive travel to undergo a forced marriage. Despite this, forced and child marriages still occur and few cases result in a conviction.

The National Board of Health and Welfare estimate that 38,000 girls and women in Sweden have suffered genital mutilation, of which 7,000 are girls under the age of 18³. Female genital mutilation (FGM) has been illegal in Sweden since 1982. The punishment for those carrying out FGM is imprisonment from two to four years. It is also illegal for residents of Sweden to carry out the procedure abroad. Preparation for and failure to disclose FGM are also punishable by law. Despite this only two cases of FGM have led to a conviction.

tion. Östergötland County Administrative Board has produced guidelines for preventive measures along with a website containing information and support for government agencies and others. The National Board of Health and Welfare have produced guidelines as well as information material for healthcare workers. These initiatives are important, but strategies and preventive measures need to be expanded and implemented by additional authorities and organisations.

We Demand

► Ensure that Legislation Against Forced and Child Marriage Is Enforced

The Government must invest more in preventive measures and enforce current legislation against forced and child marriage, and ensure that perpetrators are brought before the courts and convicted. The possibility to approve child and forced marriages, entered into abroad, as well as proxy marriages in “exceptional circumstances” must be removed. There is also a need for increased knowledge and financial resources at municipal level to investigate abusive relations in homes and to ensure that victims are protected. Municipalities must also report all suspected cases of child and forced marriage to the police. Marriage must only be entered into by two fully consenting adults.

► Ensure that Female Genital Mutilation Is Discovered and Prosecuted

That only two cases of FGM in Sweden have been judged in courts and led to prison sentences, is disproportionate to the number of girls who are reported at risk. More work is needed to discover and prosecute these crimes. Staff in schools, social services, youth guidance centers, maternity welfare centers and the health care system should be educated about FGM. Girls who may be at risk must receive help in the form of preventative measures, such as information to both the girls themselves and their families. The Swedish Government must work more actively to put an end to FGM at a European and international level.

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1. Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Nationell strategi mot mäns våld mot kvinnor och hedersrelaterat våld och förtryck (National Strategy Against Men's Violence Against Women and Honour-Related Violence and Oppression), SOU 2015:55
 2. The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society, Gift mot sin vilja (Married against their will), 2009
 3. The National Board of Health and Welfare, Flickor och kvinnor i Sverige som kan ha varit utsatta för könsstympning – en uppskattning av antalet (Girls and Women in Sweden Who May Have Been Subjected to Female Genital Mutilation – An Estimate of Total Numbers), 2015

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