



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Responses to the list of issues and questions with regard to
the consideration of the combined sixth and seventh
periodic reports**

Sweden*

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Responses to the list of issues and questions with regard to the combined sixth and seventh periodic report by the Government of Sweden on measures to give effect to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework

Question 1.

1. The results of gender equality policy are measured, first, through the development of the distribution of economic resources between women and men and the representation of women and men on government-sector boards (agencies, state-owned companies, etc.) and, second, through the development of gender mainstreaming in the Government Offices and in government agencies. In the case of the distribution of economic resources between women and men, a report is made on developments each year in a special section of the central government budget. In addition to describing the current situation for different groups, e.g. two-parent and lone-parent households, this year, the report also makes comparisons with the situation ten years ago in order to analyse changes over time. At a general level, the results show that, in the main, the differences in economic resources between women and men persist, which is largely explained by the fact that women still carry out the major part of unpaid work. As regards the representation of women and men, the gender distribution of the boards of government agencies is reported in another special section of the central government budget. In addition to this, every two year, Statistics Sweden publish a report (Women and Men in Sweden, facts and figures) with statistics showing the situation of women and men in many different areas of life.
2. The question of how to organise gender equality work at government agency level is currently being prepared in the Government Offices. The Government does not intend to set up a gender equality agency, as announced in the gender equality bill (Govt Bill 2005/06:155).
3. Considerable extra funding, SEK 400 million, was earmarked to gender equality policy measures in the 2007 Budget Bill a tenfold increase in the appropriation. This extra funding will, *inter alia*, be used for a national action plan to combat men's violence against women and for research on women's health. The Government also intends to initiate reforms in other areas to promote gender equality, for more information see question 26.

Question 2

4. A point of departure in Sweden has been the acknowledgement that gender mainstreaming requires long-term, sustained development work. A systematic approach is required to achieve lasting results. Four areas have been identified as particularly important in this respect: management and control, training, methods, and the organisation of work. Experience has shown that it is the combined impetus of measures in all four areas at the same time that brings about lasting change. Work has therefore focused on developing all four areas at each individual stage of the decision-making process.

5. The first interim evaluation of the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Government Offices was conducted in 2006. The results point to the importance of formal steering documents for implementing gender mainstreaming. One important steering document to reach the goals of the overall Plan for Gender Mainstreaming in the Government Offices 2004-2009 is the annual action plan that each ministry is required to develop. The single most important factor for successful implementation of gender mainstreaming is that politicians continuously and actively demand gender-sensitive drafting material and results from gender mainstreaming efforts in central government administration.
6. Moreover, the interim evaluation points out that the overall objective of the plan expressed in the following vision: “The Government Offices has the best possible conditions to have gender equality perspectives permeate all Government policies” has not yet been achieved. However, the conditions for successful implementation of the plan have improved in certain areas, especially in the budget process. The interim evaluation concludes that the work has to continue and develop in order to reach the objectives of the plan, since the work has not yet produced the desired results. Instead, the main achievements so far are linked to the process itself. The structures and organisational preconditions are largely in place, as are formal steering documents.
7. The gender equality analyses carried out in the different policy areas have resulted in both new objectives directed at government agencies and re-phrased objectives with an improved gender equality dimension. Altogether the analyses resulted in approximately 50 objectives with a clear link to the implementation of the gender equality policy, a number of indicators, approximately 20 special assignments and approximately 60 reporting requirements concerning progress directed at government agencies. Today almost half the government agencies have various gender equality requirements, including specific gender equality objectives. With a greater number of both objectives and special assignments on gender equality, directed at government agencies, input from more directions will be visible in results in the future.

Question 3

8. A public information and awareness-raising campaign, run by Workers Educational Association and the Swedish UNIFEM committee, took place during 2006 and up to mid 2007. Some 20 persons were trained to be able to teach others about CEDAW, the Optional Protocol, the obligations of State Parties, United Nations work on issues concerning women’s enjoyment of human rights, the role of NGOs and their parallel reports. During the campaign approximately 50 lectures and workshops were held around the country for, among others, politicians and women’s organisation. A handbook about CEDAW has also been produced (*Make the world gender-equal! A study guide on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and gender equality*).
9. Information about CEDAW and the Optional Protocol is available to the general public on the Government’s website, including the Government’s Human rights website.

Question 4

10. Information concerning cases in the Labour Court:

- In 2001, the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman brought an action in the Labour Court against a county council on the grounds of sex discrimination of a female worker. The Labour Court came to the conclusion that a female intensive care nurse performed work of equal value in comparison with the work of a male engineer working at the same hospital. The Court also found that the wage gap between them was motivated referring to, among other things, salary levels in the private sector labour market for engineers.

In another case, a trade union brought an action against the State, claiming wage discrimination of female workers. Two men were hired to do work of the same value as the existing workers most of whom were female. The men were given higher pay than the women. The Labour Court ruled that it was necessary and appropriate to remunerate the male workers more favourably, since they were recruited from previous employment with higher pay and had recent experience of matters relevant to the work at hand that none of the existing female – or male – employees had.

In another case the EOO claimed that a county council discriminated against a female intensive care nurse who had lower pay than a male engineer working at the same hospital and performing work of a different kind. The Labour Court ruled that while different kinds of work may well be compared in order to investigate possible wage discrimination, and the two types of work were indeed considered to be of equal value, nurses were generally confined to employment within the public sector. Engineers, on the other hand, generally had a wide range of possible employers to choose among, in the public and the non-public sector, and engineers as employees were widely sought after (the market situation, as it was called was held to be decisive). For these reasons the Court found that the council had proved that the pay gap in question was not linked to gender.

- In 2002, the EOO claimed that another Swedish county council was guilty of unlawful sex discrimination for not having employed a pregnant woman. The Court found that the pregnant woman had been passed over in filling the position since she was objectively better qualified for the job than the woman who was appointed. The county council had to pay general damages amounting to SEK 25 000. In another case in 2002 a trade union won general damages of SEK 80 000 for a female worker who had been subjected to sexual harassment by a work colleague in a superior position. The employer was held not to have investigated the female workers complaints of harassment sufficiently, and not to have made sufficient efforts to put a stop to the ongoing harassment.

- In 2004, the EOO filed a complaint in the Labour Court and claimed that a female inspector working in a police office was better qualified than the man who was appointed for the vacant position as a director of an investigating department at the office. The case was dismissed by the Labour Court, which found that the man was better qualified for the employment.

- In 2005, three cases were dealt with in the Labour Court. One case concerned the employer's obligation to investigate incidents of sexual harassments in the workplace. The Labour Court found that the employer had not fulfilled its duties under the Equal Opportunities Act. The female victim received general damages amounting to 50 000 SEK. The second case concerned a dismissal at the workplace of a UN soldier on duty in Kosovo. The EOO claimed that she was forced to terminate her employment because of sexual harassment in the workplace. The case was dismissed by the Labour Court. The third case concerned indirect discrimination. A car manufacturer applied a height criterion: applicants seeking employment on the production line had to be at least 163 cm tall. The Labour Court found that the criterion was discriminating against women. The female claimant received general damages of 40 000 SEK. The EOO also reached settlements on behalf of two other women who had been discriminated against by the car manufacturer (they received 40 000 SEK each).

- In 2006, the EOO filed a complaint in the Labour Court about a dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy. The court came to the conclusion that there had been no dismissal of the woman and that the employer could not be held responsible for the termination of the woman's employment. There were different versions of what was said at the meeting where the complainant formed the impression that she had been dismissed summarily. The employer said that the complainant herself had resigned as a result of certain criticism of her made at the meeting in question.

11. Information concerning complaints reported to the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman: The EOO received 362 complaints in 2006 (133 of those did not fall under the supervision of the EOO). In 2006, the EOO completed 152 complaints (34 from men) under the Equal Opportunities Act (equal rights in working life). The Ombudsman found after investigating the complaints that there had been no breach of the ban on sex discrimination in 52 cases, or at least that there was not enough evidence to show that there had been. The trade union represented the complainant in 45 cases, one case had expired, 22 were withdrawn and 13 were completed on other grounds. The EOO, the trade unions or the complainant him/herself reached 16 settlements and there were court rulings in three cases (one brought by the EOO and two by the trade unions).

The case brought by the EOO in the Labour Court in 2006 has been reported above under para. 10. The second case, which was brought by a trade union, was about an appointment to a position in the police. The Court took the view that there was no sex discrimination since the woman was not as qualified as the man, and was therefore not in a "similar situation" as required by the wording of the Act. The complainant also stated that the woman had suffered reprisals as a result of making a sex discrimination complaint. The reprisals were that the woman was given a salary reduction and a retroactive pay deduction. However, the Court found that there had not been any reprisals as the employer had set the woman's pay in accordance with the regular salary she had had before she obtained a temporary position with other duties. However, the employer had to pay general damages of SEK 10 000 to the woman as compensation for the incorrect retroactive salary deduction.

The third case was examined by a district court and was about a trial employment and disfavouring a person in connection with pregnancy. The district court took the view that there

was no sex discrimination since the employer in the case showed that the cause of the decision to terminate the trial employment was that the woman in question was not suitable for the work.

12. Information concerning decisions made by the Equal Opportunities Commission: The Commission has made a decision in four of the cases in 2001–2007. These cases have concerned the duty of employers' to prepare a plan of action for equal pay. In two cases the Commission ordered the employer to fulfil its obligations on pain of a default fine. A trade union had filed an application in one of the cases, which the Commission rejected. In the fourth case the EOO claimed that the Commission should order the Swedish Armed Forces to carry out an overall and central survey and analysis of wage disparities between women and men, and to assess whether any existing wage disparities were directly or indirectly related to gender. The Swedish Armed Forces claimed for its part that the obligations under the Act only applied to the different units and not to the central armed forces authority. The Commission came to the conclusion that the Swedish Armed Forces had to conduct an overall central survey and analysis even though the Commission did not find it necessary to order the authority to do so on pain of a default fine.
13. Information concerning complaints under the Equal Treatment of Students at Universities Act: The EOO has received 23 complaints under the Act since the Act came into force in 2002. The Ombudsman has reached one settlement under the Act; the case concerned a female student who was pregnant and the University therefore decided she could not participate in a course during her law studies. During the course the student was supposed to participate in a court proceedings competition held in Europe where the students prosecuted a fictional case. The female student received 50 000 SEK in compensation.
14. It is difficult to say why complaints from students to the Ombudsman are so few. One reason could be that the complaints are dealt with in the universities and do not reach the Ombudsman.

Question 5

15. The EOO has very few examples of applying the possibility to make exceptions from the ban on discrimination on the basis of sex. One example is a complaint that the Ombudsman received from a man who was denied employment as a personal assistant helping a male person with disabilities. The disabled person preferred a female personal assistant. The EOO found that the employer, a county council, was entitled to invoke the personal integrity of the person receiving care.

Question 6

16. The human rights action plan applies to the period 2006–2009. In spring 2008, the Government will invite the stakeholders that submitted views and proposals as part of the process of elaborating the plan to a meeting for a mid-term implementation review. In connection with this meeting, the current status of implementation of the different measures will be followed up and the main results so far presented to the stake-holders. The implementation of the whole action plan and its results will be evaluated by an external evaluator starting by the end of 2009. It is thus too

early to report on the impact of the different measures contained in the action plan to address discrimination against women.

17. Several of the measures in the human rights action plan that specifically address discrimination against women deal with work to combat men's violence against women. These issues are addressed in the Swedish report (see information under article 3 in the report) and are ongoing; they include training activities for professional groups that come in contact with women victims of violence. See also information under questions 10, 12 and 13.
18. In general the Delegation for Human Rights in Sweden has integrated a gender equality perspective into its activities. However, activities more specifically focused on discrimination against women are not carried out by the Delegation, as its role is complementary to other government agencies and actors with a more specific mandate related to human rights, such as the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman.
19. Among the activities carried out by the Delegation for Human Rights on more general human rights topics that have included a gender equality perspective, the following can be mentioned.
 - As part of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, the Delegation organised four days of seminars focusing on non-discrimination and human rights. During these seminars, workshops and discussions were organised on, *inter alia*, violence and oppression in the name of honour, practical methods for working with gender equality and diversity, and coordination of strategies aimed at combating different types of discrimination.
 - The Delegation has also worked with a project (ADIS) with the objective of increasing knowledge and awareness of the new Swedish law against discrimination in schools. This law prohibits discrimination based on gender, as well as other grounds, in the school system. As part of this project, the Delegation has worked with training of trainers and also produced a comic and information on the new law. The comic has been distributed widely among pupils, especially in upper secondary schools.

Political participation and decision-making

Question 7

20. The Government decided in April 2007 that the inquiry appointed to report on the gender distribution in positions of power should be prolonged, its findings have not yet been reported.
21. The findings of the report from Uppsala University indicate that there are some differences in the way women and men are treated in the nomination process of the political parties, to the disadvantage of women. However, nominated women are not elected to a lesser extent than men. As these findings relate to the internal activities of the political parties, it is the parties that have the primary responsibility for taking appropriate actions.

22. Equal representation of women and men in decision-making bodies is an important democratic issue. The Government has the aim of combating and changing systems that preserve the gender-based distribution of power and resources.

Question 8

23. The Government is concentrating on action to make it easier for both women and men to combine work and family life so that more women are willing and able to apply for the leading positions that become available. The reforms that the Government is implementing in order to enable women and men to combine working life and family life include a gender equality bonus in parental insurance and tax subsidies for household-related services. (See also information under question 26)
24. After the 2006 election the gender distribution of municipal councillors was unchanged compared with the situation after the 2002 election, i.e. an average of 42 per cent women and 58 per cent men. After the 2006 election the gender distribution of county councillors was 47.6 per cent women and 52.4 per cent men on average. After the 2002 election the figures were 47.3 per cent and 52.7 per cent respectively.
25. In 2005 the proportion of women on the boards of national-level agencies was 49 per cent on average with 51 per cent men (in 2004 the figures were 48 per cent and 52 per cent respectively). In regional boards the gender distribution was still 50:50 on average (2005). The gender distribution of chairs is 38 per cent women and 62 per cent men (2005).
26. The composition of each board should also achieve a balance regarding background, sphere of competence and experience. In order to achieve an equal gender distribution, the proportion of each sex should be at least 40 per cent.
27. On 27 May 2007, on average 44 per cent of the board members appointed at the annual general meetings of state-owned companies were women and 56 per cent men. In wholly state-owned companies, the proportion of women was 47 per cent and the proportion of men 53 per cent, in May 2007. The goal of an equal gender distribution was achieved in 28 of the state-owned companies, i.e. the proportion of each sex was at least 40 per cent. The goal was not achieved in 25 companies. Men were overrepresented in 19 of these companies, i.e. more than 60 per cent men and less than 40 per cent women. There was a majority of women on the board in 6 companies.

Question 9

28. The inquiry with the task of studying whether, and if so how, provisions on gender quotas on boards of directors in the private sector could be introduced into Swedish law reported its findings in mid-2006. The report contains a proposal for an amendment to the Companies Act according to which, in certain listed Swedish companies, the proportion of each sex shall be at least 40 per cent. If a certain listed company did not meet the requirement, it would be obliged to pay a special fee to the Swedish Companies Registration Office. The report has been circulated for

consultation. Many respondents were critical of the proposals, especially business representatives. One objection was that a quota would constitute a disproportionate interference in the shareholders' ownership. The Government has decided not to submit any legislative proposal based on the report. Instead, the Government is seeking other ways to tackle the problem of an unequal gender distribution on boards of directors, for example through dialogue with private sector representatives.

Violence against women

Question 10

29. In November 2007, the Government presented an action plan to combat men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships, see information under question 13.
30. Although it is difficult at this stage to assess the full impact of measures taken concerning men's violence against women, some tendencies can be identified.
31. Intensive training courses have been conducted within the Swedish Police Service with particular emphasis on treatment of victims, risk and threat assessments and comprehensive and effective first-stage measures in the investigative process. These measures have already changed working practices and attitudes and will, in the longer term, probably improve the ability to prevent violence against women. Risk and threat assessments have been applied by a majority of the local police authorities.
32. A large number of judges have attended various courses dealing with issues concerning men's violence against women, trafficking in human beings, violence in the name of honour, treatment concerning victims, as well as gender equality issues in general. The results have been shown to be greater knowledge and awareness of these issues among judges.
33. As stated in the report, the Swedish Prosecution Authority has devoted substantial resources to combating violence against women for a number of years. In 2006 and 2007 the authority has employed several specialist prosecutors who coordinate the work carried out by local offices to combat domestic violence. There are also specialist prosecutors for other kind of offences, such as violent crimes of a serious nature.
34. At four places in Sweden – Umeå, Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö – there are special prosecution development centres. The task of the development centres is to conduct methodological and legal development in different criminal areas and to be responsible for overall knowledge in their areas of responsibility. Legal follow up and inspection of the activities of the local prosecution offices are also conducted at these places. One example of this is the fact that all appeals made against prosecution decisions are handled by the development centres. The development centre in Gothenburg is working continuously to develop methods to increase the quality of investigations of, for example, domestic violence and crimes committed in the name of

honour. For example, the development centre in Gothenburg has developed manuals for prosecutors for use in the investigation and prosecution of crimes regarding the violation of women's integrity and violence in the name of honour. Furthermore special courses have been arranged on violence in the name of honour.

35. These efforts and the improved cooperation between the Swedish Prosecution Authority and the police authorities have improved the quality of the preliminary investigations and the possibilities of prosecuting these kind of crimes. The aim is to achieve an increase in the number of suspects brought before the courts.

36. Statistics from the annual reports of the Swedish Prosecution Authority:

- In 2003, the local prosecution authorities registered 15 927 alleged crimes of violence against women and closed investigations regarding 15 857 crimes. Of these, 4 808 of the suspicions led to legal action.

- In 2004, the local prosecution authorities registered 16 165 alleged crimes of violence against women and closed investigations regarding 16 308 cases. Of these, 5 096 of the cases led to legal action.

- In 2005, the Swedish Prosecution Office registered 16 569 alleged crimes of violence against women and closed investigations regarding 16 934 cases. Of these, 4 956 of the cases led to legal action.

- In 2006, the Swedish Prosecution Office registered 17 778 alleged crimes of violence against women and closed investigations regarding 17 600 cases. Of these, 5 135 of the cases led to legal action.

37. In recent years, there has been an increase in the amount of attention focused on violence against women in Sweden, in society in general and in the judicial system in particular. According to a report presented by the National Council for Crime Prevention in 2002, this has led to an increase in the propensity to report such crimes. One of the Government's aims has been to increase the visibility of violence against women. The fact that an increased number of victims are reporting such crimes to the police must thus be regarded as a positive development. It is unclear, however, whether an increase in the amount of reported crimes of violence against women also reflects an actual increase in such crimes committed against women.

38. According to the report from the National Council for Crime Prevention, the increase in the propensity to report crimes led to an increase in the reported crimes of violence against women in the 1990s. Statistical data shows that currently there is a trend of an increasing number of cases of violence against women being reported to the police. For example, since 2001 the number of reported cases of "gross violation of a woman's integrity" has increased (see Sweden's fifth periodic report, article 6 for more information about this offence).

39. Since 2001, there has also been an increase in the number of perpetrators sentenced for gross violation of a woman's integrity, and statistical data show that the number of perpetrators being sentenced to prison has increased since the provision on gross violation of a woman's integrity came into force, from 129 in 2001 to 274 in 2006.
40. As regards measures taken in the area of the social services to address and improve their work and support to women subjected to violence, see the answer to question number 12.
41. Sweden has unfortunately no further information to provide, over and above that described in the report, about the impact of these measures with respect to women belonging to national minorities.
42. The issue concerning violence against women with disabilities will be addressed in the action plan to combat men's violence against women. For information about the action plan see question 13.
43. Information concerning measures taken to combat violence and oppression in the name of honour: The Swedish Government stresses that violence in the name of honour also means oppression for the individual young woman/girl, in the sense of severe limitations on her freedom of movement, e.g. not being allowed to have boy/girlfriend, to meet with friends after school and stand under constant surveillance from brothers and/or other relatives, as well as repressive or punitive actions that limit her ability to express her views and that are designed to hinder development of independent thinking. The measures taken to combat violence and oppression in the name of honour in 2003–2007 are being evaluated by Umeå Centre for Evaluation Research, (UCER). Two reports have been submitted so far: an evaluation of cooperation projects (in October 2006) and an evaluation of sheltered housing (in May 2007).

The evaluation concerning cooperation projects showed that out of 373 of the projects financed by the county administrative boards 75 were projects where at least two actors, authorities and/or NGOs, cooperated. One conclusion of the report from the evaluation is that cooperation between authorities is predominant and that the most important aim is to increase knowledge.

The main conclusions from the evaluation of sheltered housing was that the shelters, along with other measures, contributes to the protection and safety of young people, mainly young women. The shelters contribute to a stronger self-image and stronger self-esteem and self-confidence for the young women and also to new social relations. More long-term measures might nevertheless be required after the stay at the shelter, to support the young people's development. All the shelters that were studied could offer psychological support and crisis management care and other measures to empower the young woman. It is too early to assess the long-term effects of these measures.

The third report will be submitted at the end of this year and the fourth report is due at the beginning of 2008. A final report with an evaluation of the whole package of measures will be delivered in the beginning of the summer 2008.

Question 11

44. Two basic sources of statistical information are being used in Sweden when discussing violence against women. The first source comprises incidents reported to the police. In respect of assault it is, for instance, possible to identify offences that have been committed by a person acquainted with the woman. This category has often been interpreted as an indicator of the prevalence of violence against women in intimate relationships. However, the number of police-reported crimes is not necessarily a reliable indicator either of the actual level or of trends or the structure of violence against women. An increase in a statistical series of crimes reported to the police can depend on an increase in the actual level of crime, as well as on an increase in the propensity to report crime, or on a combination of both of these factors.
45. The other source of information when discussing violence against women comes from national surveys. Statistics Sweden has conducted annual surveys of living conditions since 1978. These surveys have included a number of questions relating to crime victimisation, including violence. Since 2006 the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention conducts a large-scale victimisation survey each year that also covers violence against women. An advantage of this survey is the possibility to relate victimisation data to offences reported to the police. However, these data also have their limitations, since they are dependent on the willingness of people to respond to questionnaires or questions from these authorities.

Question 12

46. The Inquiry on Social Services' Support for Women Subjected to Violence presented its report on 29 June 2006. The report concludes that the work done by municipalities to support and assist women who are subjected to violence and children who have witnessed violence has developed in recent years. Several municipalities have, for example, appointed staff or units with special responsibility for women exposed to violence. Cooperation between the municipalities and women's shelters has also increased. However, there are still shortcomings. The support provided varies between municipalities and not all municipalities are able to offer sheltered housing for all women who need it. Nor is the sheltered housing available always adapted to the special problems that some women have, for example women with disabilities or women who are substance abusers. In order to improve the situation, the inquiry proposed an amendment to the Social Services Act, stipulating that the social welfare committee "shall" (instead of as previously provided "should") consider in particular that women subjected to violence and children who have witnessed violence may need support and assistance. The proposed amendment entered into force on 1 July 2007.
47. Other initiatives proposed by the Inquiry include guidelines to support the application of the legislation by the social services concerning women subjected to violence and children who have witnessed violence. As a result, the Government has instructed the National Board of Health and Welfare to develop such guidelines.

48. In order to reduce the differences between municipalities and to attain a more uniform assessment of measures available for women and children, the Government commissioned the Institute for Evidence-based Social Work Practice (IMS) at the National Board of Health and Welfare to develop assessment instruments for action taken by the social services in support of women and children. IMS has also been commissioned to evaluate methods and practices in the work of the social services concerning women subjected to violence.
49. These and other assignments commissioned by the Government will be concluded and followed up within the next few years.
50. The budget of SEK 135 million a year from 2006–2008 is equivalent to approximately USD 21 million. The funds are being provided as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>National knowledge centre</i>	<i>Women's organisations</i>	<i>Women's shelters</i>	Total
2006	11	25,5	81.5	118
2007	16	27	100	143
2008	16	28	100	144

51. As a main rule, residence permits in Sweden are independent. A residence permit shall be granted to an alien who is a spouse or a cohabiting partner of someone who is resident in, or has been granted a residence permit to settle in Sweden. If the spouses/partners have not lived together on a permanent basis the Swedish Migration Board will grant the alien a residence permit for two years, or a minimum of one year, before a permanent residence permit is granted. In this case, the first permits are not independent. If the relationship ends during their term of such a temporary residence permit, the permit is not normally extended. However, if the relationship has primarily ended because the alien or the alien's child has been subjected to violence or some other serious violation of their liberty or peace in the relationship, or there are other strong grounds for extending the alien's residence permit, the residence permit may be extended even though the relationship has ended. Such grounds can exist if the person is at risk of becoming an outcast when she returns to her country of origin. The Board can also withdraw a temporary residence permit if the relationship ends.
52. When an alien applies for a residence permit on the grounds that he or she intends to get married to or enter into a co-habitee relationship with a person who is resident in or who has been granted a residence permit to settle in Sweden, the Migration Board may refuse a residence permit (temporary or permanent) if it can be assumed that the alien, or the alien's child, will be subjected to violence or some other serious violation of their liberty or peace if a residence permit was to be granted.
53. The definition of a refugee in the Aliens Act includes those who have a well-founded fear of persecution on grounds of gender, as well as other membership of a particular social group. This specific definition came into force in 2006.

54. Persecution within the private sphere may be grounds for an alien to obtain refugee status in Sweden depending on what motives lie behind the inability or disinclination in the country of origin to provide protection.
55. An English translation of the Swedish Alien's Act is available at: <http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/06/61/22/fd7b123d.pdf>

Question 13

56. In November 2007, the Government presented an action plan to combat men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. The plan includes 56 measures, and the Government is allocating a total of approximately SEK 800 million to implement these measures. The action plan has a comprehensive approach to the problem and the measures are grouped in six areas: protection and support for the victims, preventive measures, enhanced quality and effectiveness in the judicial system, measures aimed at the perpetrator, greater cooperation between the actors affected and more knowledge. The authorities working in this field will be given new assignments with the aim of achieving long-term effects in work to combat men's violence against women. The point of departure in the action plan is the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the Government Bill on gender equality.

Question 14

57. Based on the report presented by the National Police Board, the Government concluded that there was a need for more thorough testing of technical solutions that can be used for electronic monitoring of restraining orders. The National Police Board has thus been instructed to test technical solutions that could be used for this purpose. The findings of these tests will be presented by 15 December 2007 and will be used by the inquiry appointed by the government to review, inter alia, the legislation concerning restraining orders. This inquiry will present its findings by 30 September 2008.

Question 15

58. In 2005 a new extended definition of rape was adopted, and chapter 6 Section 1 in the Swedish Penal Code now reads:

A person who by assault or otherwise by violence or by threat of a criminal act forces another person to have sexual intercourse or to undertake or endure another sexual act that, having regard to the nature of the violation and the circumstances in general, is comparable to sexual intercourse, shall be sentenced for rape to imprisonment for at least two and at most six years.

This shall also apply if a person engages with another person in sexual intercourse or in a sexual act which under the first paragraph is comparable to sexual intercourse by improperly exploiting that the person, due to unconsciousness, sleep, intoxication or other drug influence, illness,

physical injury or mental disturbance, or otherwise in view of the circumstances in general, is in a helpless state.

If, in view of the circumstances associated with the crime, a crime provided for in the first or second paragraph is considered less aggravated, a sentence to imprisonment for at most four years shall be imposed for rape.

If a crime provided for in the first or second paragraph is considered gross, a sentence to imprisonment for at least four and at most ten years shall be imposed for gross rape. In assessing whether the crime is gross, special consideration shall be given to whether the violence or threat was of a particularly serious nature or whether more than one person assaulted the victim or in any other way took part in the assault or whether the perpetrator having regard to the method used or otherwise exhibited particular ruthlessness or brutality.

Question 16

59. Since the requirement regarding double criminality was abolished, Swedish courts have (in 2006) sentenced two people for offences under the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act to severe sentences of imprisonment and substantial amounts of damages.
60. One important result of the work of the National Board of Health and Welfare to further improve preventive work against female genital mutilation (FGM) is a common written declaration by the Swedish Imam Council, the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church and the Swedish Christian Council. All these religious communities disassociate themselves clearly from all forms of FGM. The National Board of Health and Welfare has also produced and disseminated guidance regarding female genital mutilation to the police authorities and prosecutors. Educational material adapted to schools, health and medical services and social welfare services has also been produced and a web-based information bank with facts and information about FGM has been created through the work of the Board. A folder targeted at girls who have suffered or are at risk of FGM has been distributed to primary and secondary schools.
61. A proposal is currently being processed within the Government Offices regarding the extension of the statutory limitation period for FGM committed against children so that the statutory limitation period starts to run on the date when the aggrieved party attains or would have attained the age of 18. Today, the limitation period starts to run from the day the crime was committed, the statutory limitation period is 10 years. If the crime is gross the statutory limitation period is 15 years.
62. No official statistical information is available on how many women/girls living in Sweden have been genitally mutilated.

Prostitution and trafficking

Question 17

63. The Government will present an Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Prostitution and Trafficking in Human Beings for Sexual Purposes. Measures to combat trafficking for labour exploitation and for other purposes are also being prepared.
64. The Government's strategy *Poverty and Trafficking in Human Beings*, for combating trafficking in human beings through Sweden's international development cooperation, is being implemented through actions in bilateral Swedish work as well as in multilateral development work.

Question 18

65. On 1 July 2007, the provision of the Aliens Act concerning the possibility to issue time-limited residence permits to victims or witnesses of trafficking in human beings was amended. A time-limited residence permit should be granted for at least six months, and the permit may be prolonged if necessary. The new legislation also provides for the possibility of granting a residence permit valid for 30 days (reflection period) to victims or witnesses of trafficking allowing them to recover and escape the influence of the perpetrators of the offences so that they can take an informed decision as to whether to cooperate with the competent authorities. The reflection period may be extended if needed. During the victims' stay in Sweden, they are entitled to health care and medical attention, as well as financial aid. If necessary, accommodation in sheltered housing may be arranged by the social authorities. Under the Social Services Act, the social welfare committees bear the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that everyone living in their municipality receives the assistance and support they need, irrespective of whether or not they are crime victims and regardless of age or sex.

Question 19

66. The Government is in the process of appointing an inquiry to evaluate the effects of the legislation criminalising the purchase of sexual services (see below). There is no comprehensive statistical data on women in prostitution, however the statistics from 2006 on the purchase of sexual services show 133 men suspected of buying sexual services and 108 convictions. This data does not differ between "clandestine"/indoor prostitution or street prostitution. Many of those convicted of purchasing sexual services have been buyers of women and girls in brothels operated by traffickers, which shows that the legislation is used both against street and indoor prostitution.
67. The policy of criminalising the purchase of sexual services is being looked at from different points of view. The Government is planning a study evaluating the prohibition against the purchase of sexual services; the study is scheduled to begin in 2008. It will focus on how the prohibition against the purchase of sexual services and criminalising buyers is actually working and what the effects have been on prostitution and trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes. The National Board of Health and Welfare is going to present a new survey on Prostitution in Sweden

in late autumn 2007. Also The National Criminal Investigation Department, which is a national rapporteur on trafficking in human beings, will submit a progress report on trafficking in human beings in late autumn 2007.

68. The Nordic Council has a research project in progress called Prostitution in Scandinavia. The project will gather information on prostitution and trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes, study how these matters are being handled in the legal and the social systems and also map women's and men's attitudes to purchases of sexual services. A concluding conference will be arranged in autumn 2008 and the result from the project will be published on the Nordic Council website.

Stereotypes and education

Question 20

69. The FLICKA project has been evaluated by The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs. The impact of the project was rather limited. The outcome of the project is that it made it possible for different local activities for girls to be visible and recognized during the FLICKA days; the days served as a meeting place where young people and adults could discuss conditions for girls; the cooperation between local activities for young people has improved; issues concerning conditions for girls have a higher standing; and professionals in school have obtained tools to use in education on gender equality.
70. The inquiry on sex discrimination in advertising was appointed by the Government in July 2006 and will report its findings to the Government no later than 31 December 2007.
71. The projects concerning sexualisation of the public sphere (see para 128 in the report) were reported to the Government in 2006. The reports show, among others, that the projects functioned as an important arena for parents and young people to discuss attitudes and the way women and men are portrayed in the media and on Internet.
72. The Riksdag (the Swedish Parliament) adopted the Government Bill on public service radio and TV in June 2006. The Bill states that equality between women and men is a clear aspect of the fundamental democratic ideal of equal rights for all. The licence period for the public service broadcasters started on 1 January 2007 and will run until 31 December 2009.

Question 21

73. Some of the activities to eliminate gender stereotypes in educational curricula listed in the report are ongoing, for example, gender equality continues to be a priority area in the work of the Agency for School Improvement, and the Swedish National Agency for Education continues to take gender into account when drafting syllabuses. In 2005, Umeå University carried out an evaluation of the training of pedagogical resource personnel with skills in gender equality. In the

final report the University stressed that the project was successful and suggested, among other things, that more teachers should be given the opportunity to achieve skills in gender equality.

Question 22

74. The Government has instructed universities and other higher education institutions to submit annual reports on measures taken to assure an equal gender distribution:

- in educational programmes with an unequal gender distribution, such as teacher training, education and training for medical and paramedical professions and engineering,
- in areas related to postgraduate studies with an unequal gender distribution.

75. Universities and other higher education institutions are also required to report to the Government in what way a gender equality perspective has been taken into consideration in higher education programmes.

76. In 2006, the proportion of women and men among professors was 17 per cent women and 83 per cent men and the proportion of women and men among senior lecturers in higher education was 37 per cent women and 63 per cent men.

Employment and reconciliation of work and family life

Question 23

77. The National Institute for Public Health (NIPH) mainly disseminates the methodology compiled in the report through other information providers, i.e. individuals and organisations who cooperate in various ways with municipal decision-makers. Other channels for dissemination are the NIPH web site, which provides information about sources of information on different forms of parental support and contains links to associations and institutions offering training of group leaders; personal contacts and approximately 80 conferences around the country; written material produced by the NIPH; and telephone and email consultations.

78. In September 2007, the NIPH organised a national conference at which a DVD-based method of support for parents was introduced. The DVD in question was produced in cooperation with two associations for adult education the SV popular education association and the Workers' Educational Association. In the autumn of 2007 pilot studies will be carried out using the Family Workshop material, in some 10 municipalities. If the material works out well, it will be disseminated in the spring of 2008. The dissemination process is not yet finalized, but the SV popular education association and the Workers' Educational Association will be actively involved.

Question 24

79. After the election in September 2006 the Government decided to withdraw the Action Plan for Equal Pay. Within the framework of a policy for full employment and less exclusion the Government is seeking to reduce differences in conditions and opportunities between women and men concerning work and entrepreneurship. In order to create the conditions for analysis, monitoring and the coordination of measures, the Government intends to draft a concerted strategy during 2008 concerning gender equality in the labour market and business. For example, the Government announced in the 2007 Budget Bill that SEK 100 million per year is being used in 2007–2009 to promote women's entrepreneurship and increase knowledge about and research on women's enterprise. Furthermore, the Government recently raised the maximum level of the micro-loans (mentioned in para 271 in the report) from 50 000 SEK to 100 000 SEK, these loans are in great demand in Sweden, not least among women.

Question 25

80. To reduce the imbalance between women and men in occupations and sectors in the labour market, a range of other political areas and issues have to be addressed over and above labour market issues. For example, taxation, childcare, parental leave, education are all important areas, which must be scrutinised in order to see how initiatives in different policy areas all could contribute to achieving a more gender-balanced labour market.

81. The Labour Market Board (AMS) has been tasked by the Government with reducing gender segregation in the labour market. Staff at the Swedish Labour Market Administration (AMV) has taken the initiative for a "Gender Desegregation Project". The main focus is to counteract gender-bound vocational choices. Priority areas for 2007 are cooperation with employers; projects intended mainly for men and women respectively; and developing methods for counteracting gender-bound vocational choices.

Question 26

82. The Government is considering the conditions for introducing a gender equality bonus in the parental insurance system that improves the possibilities for men to take greater parental responsibility during the first twelve months of the child's life and for men and women to share domestic chores. Furthermore, a Government bill on tax relief for household services with the aim of making it easier for women and men to combine family life and work was adopted by the Riksdag in spring 2007.

Health

Question 27

83. In October 2007, the Swedish Government presented a new political objective for the healthcare sector. The new objective states that all citizens shall be ensured efficient and accessible care based on individual needs and wishes. In setting out the implications of objective, the Government underlined the importance of giving the gender equality perspective particular attention. Women and men must be guaranteed medical treatment on equal terms and based on individual needs.
84. In order to further strengthen the knowledge base on gender inequalities in healthcare, several measures have been initiated by the Government. For example, from 2008 the national database for presenting easily accessible information on waiting times for different treatments will be disaggregated by sex, making it possible to visualize and further analyze the existence of inequalities in access to different treatments. Furthermore, the Government has substantially increased the budget resources for research on women's health.
85. The report by the National Board of Health and Welfare, presented in 2004, points out a number of challenges where the healthcare regions and county councils are responsible for taking appropriate measures. The Swedish Association for Local Authorities and Regions therefore presented a report in September 2007 that gives an overview of areas that need special attention in the next few years. Better education and awareness among healthcare professionals on the existence of gender inequalities is highlighted as a matter of particular importance.

Question 28

86. The Government has decided to appoint a working group within the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs whose remit will be to consider how work on preventing unwanted pregnancies may best be developed among adults and young people. The working group is to complete its work no later than 15 September 2008. The Government has also instructed the National Board of Health and Welfare to survey work on the prevention of unwanted pregnancies currently being carried out at youth counselling centres, student health clinics and the like. The Board is also expected to describe and analyse the approaches taken in such work and, where necessary, to suggest concrete improvements and develop indicators for youth counselling centres, student health clinics, etc. to enable the processes and results of their work to be openly reported, evaluated and compared. The results of this assignment will be reported no later than 15 May 2008. In addition, the Government is currently reviewing all compulsory school curricula, one of which deals with education in sex and cohabitation issues.
87. In June 2007 the Government presented a bill (Govt Bill 2006/07:124) to the Riksdag proposing to amend the Abortion Act to remove the requirement that a woman has to be a Swedish citizen or resident in Sweden to have an abortion or terminate a pregnancy. This requirement is not compatible with the case-law of the European Court of Justice concerning free movement. Nor is requiring Swedish citizenship or residence in Sweden compatible with the principle of equal

treatment that is applicable within the Community. The Bill proposed that the amendments to the Act enter into force on 1 January 2008. The Bill was adopted by the Riksdag in November 2007. Minority, immigrant and refugee women.

Question 29

88. The task of the Office of the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination (DO) is to ensure compliance with Swedish anti-discrimination legislation as regards discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, religion or other belief. Over the past five years, DO has been given a broadening remit as a result of the new anti-discrimination legislation that came into force in 2003. As the Office's remit has grown, it has also received substantially more government funding in recent years. In order to improve supervision of the applicable legislation and to reach more vulnerable individuals, the DO has been given a further SEK 13 million in funding as from 2007.
89. In accordance with the Ordinance on Government Support to Activities that Prevent and Counteract Discrimination (2002:989), support may be awarded to organisations and foundations for activities aimed at preventing and combating discrimination on grounds of sex, ethnic origin, religion or other belief, disability and sexual orientation. In Sweden, there are several local anti-discrimination bureaus. The task of the bureaus is to provide advice, support and information, free of charge, to persons who are discriminated against due their ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation or disability. The need for additional expertise at the bureaus on all the grounds for discrimination has been raised on several occasions and there is ongoing cooperation for that purpose between the anti-discrimination bureaus and DO, the Office of the Disability Ombudsman (HO), the Office of the Ombudsman Against Discrimination on Grounds of Sexual Orientation (HomO) and the Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman (EOO). In light of the need for greater expertise, this cooperation will be further developed as regards advice, support and training given by the various Ombudsmen to the anti-discrimination bureaus. The funding for the anti-discrimination bureaus has been increased by SEK 4 million in 2007 and 2008 respectively.
90. The report concerning discrimination of Roma in Sweden from the special assignment carried out by the DO (see para. 51 in the report), presented in 2004, contained a number of proposals, on how to improve the situation for Roma in Sweden. The proposals have been the subject of further discussion in the Government Offices. One result is that the DO has been asked by the Government to concentrate more on issues concerning discrimination of Roma. As from 2005, it has also received more funding for this and similar measures aimed at counteracting discrimination.
91. In the autumn of 2006, the Government appointed a Delegation for Roma Issues with the task of improving the situation of the Roma in Sweden. The delegation consists of ten members, half of whom are of Roma origin. A number of experts and a broad reference group consisting of representatives of the Roma organisations have also been appointed by the Government. One of the Delegation's first tasks is to gather experience and knowledge in the area and submit proposals for how the living conditions of Roma in Swedish society can be improved. The Delegation is also to promote and support municipal projects and activities aimed at improving the situation of

Roma. Finally, the Delegation is to inform and disseminate knowledge about Roma and their situation in Sweden and encourage the exchange of knowledge and experience among central agencies and municipalities. In its activities, the Delegation will draw particular attention to the conditions for Roma children and young people, the need for support and the situation for women and girls. A gender equality and child rights perspective is to be fully integrated into the Delegation's analyses and proposals. The work also presupposes a close dialogue and cooperation with Roma – both women and men as well as girls and boys. The Delegation is to present its final report in December 2009 and will then put forward proposals for how work on improving the situation of Roma in Sweden is to continue.

92. In December 2007 Sweden is arranging a conference on Roma women's rights in cooperation with the Council of Europe and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. The objective is to provide a forum for discussion and the sharing of information and good practices between policy-makers and Roma networks across Europe on the challenges facing Roma women today. The core element of the Conference is the opportunity for Roma women to express their concerns on the trafficking of human beings, reproductive rights, and access of Roma communities to public health care, in particular. It will also examine how Roma women can positively influence Roma policies implemented in Europe today.

Forced and early marriage

Question 30

93. In 1999–2001 there were 45 exemptions for early marriages, and 15 of these concerned foreign citizens. After the legislative changes in May 2004 the number exemptions given has dropped significantly. According to statistics there were 7 married girls under the age of 18 (December 31, 2006). Six of them were foreign citizens. Sweden has no statistics available on the occurrence of forced marriage. In the recently adopted action plan to combat men's violence against women, the Government announced it intends to investigate and map marriages arranged against the will of a person and study the level of knowledge and competence concerning these marriages within the authorities concerned.
94. The definition of a refugee in the Alien's Act includes those who have a well-founded fear of persecution on grounds of gender, as well as other membership of a particular social group (Chapter 4, Section 1, first paragraph). This specific definition came into force 2006. Consequently, a person who faces forced marriage can be granted refugee status. One judicial decision from a Migration Court can be mentioned as an example on how the law is applicable. A fifteen year-old girl had left her country of origin in order to avoid a forced marriage. The country has legislation against forced marriages and marriages for women under the age of 17. The Court made the following ruling. The legislation against forced marriages in the country of origin is relatively new and there is reason to believe that this legislation is not obeyed to its full extent at all levels of the society. Entering into marriage with free and full consent is a human right, and a forced marriage is a violation of the girl's rights. This violation is considered to be persecution attributable to her gender and membership of a particular social group. It cannot be assumed that

the girl will receive protection from the authorities in her country of origin due to the structure of the society and the fact that she is under age, and therefore more vulnerable. The Court granted the girl refugee status.

95. In February 2006, the Government appointed an inquiry to analyse whether the penal legislation offers sufficient protection against forced and child marriage. The inquiry is to propose necessary amendments to the law and is to complete its work by April 2008 at the latest.
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