

A brief presentation of

Swedish

work and policies on

Gender

Equality





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Foreword

In order to promote equality between women and men in international development cooperation, there is a need for comprehensive knowledge of gender equality issues and work with gender equality in Sweden. This booklet provides a brief presentation of the processes and methods used to increase equality between women and men in Sweden. The booklet mainly contains information on the work done on gender equality during the 1990s and examples are provided of a number of projects and development programmes - at national, regional and local levels.

The information has been obtained from a number of different publications and reports, but most of the contents are based on the government's report 1996/97:41. This report describes developments in the gender equality policy in Sweden during the last few years and outlines the main features of the focus of the policy in the future.

Work with equality in Sweden covers all sectors in society, is taking place at all levels and involves a number of different parties. The content of this booklet is far from complete and new initiatives are being taken continuously.

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1. The Swedish policy for equality between women and men

1.1 Introduction

In general Sweden can be said to have made a considerable amount of progress in creating equal conditions for women and men, not least at the formal level. Equality between women and men is included in the constitution and, since 1980, equality in working life has been regulated by the Act on Equality between Men and Women - the Equal Opportunities Act. Furthermore, aspects of gender equality are also taken into consideration in legislation covering social areas such as schools, universities and the social insurance systems. One important point of departure is that it is the individual, not the family, who is regarded as the smallest unit, for example where social insurances and income taxes are concerned.

During recent years women have strengthened their position in many areas where they are under-represented. This applies not least to the government, (50 per cent women) and to Parliament (40 per cent women), as well as in other areas. The position of women on the labour market has been further strengthened and their financial independence has increased.

In the educational field a large number of measures for gender equality have been implemented. Furthermore a number of measures have been implemented to counteract violence against women, most recently through proposals to Parliament for amendments to the criminal code, new legislation, measures to enable the agencies concerned to work more effectively in the field, and the provision of greater support to non-governmental organisations. Awareness of the importance of the role of men has also increased, not least where the responsibility for the home and children is concerned.

Despite great steps forward in the work with gender equality, much remains to be done. The division of power and influence between women and men is still unequal, both in society and in the family. Changing a large part of the structure of society, which has been built up in accordance to male norms, is a long-term process.

The goals of the work with gender equality

The goals of the Swedish gender equality policy state that women and men shall have the same possibilities, rights and obligations in all important areas in life.

This implies the even distribution of power and influence between women and men, the same opportunities to achieve financial independence, equal conditions where entrepreneurship, jobs and working conditions are concerned, as well as the same opportunities to develop in the working situation.

Furthermore it implies equal access to education and to opportunities to develop personal ambitions, interest and talents, shared responsibility for the home and children, and freedom from gender-related violence.

In order to achieve shared power and shared responsibility:

- the proportion of women in decision-making and advisory bodies must increase
- the conditions and influence of women in working life must be improved
- the principle of equal pay for work of equal value must be put into practice
- there must be an end to the traditional selection by women and men of educational programmes and professions
- men must share the responsibility for working with children and in the home
- freedom from gender-related violence must be achieved

Some milestones in the history of gender equality in Sweden

- 1845 Introduction of equal rights to inheritance for women and men.
- 1846 Widows, divorcees and unmarried women are permitted to work with handicrafts and in certain trades.
- 1863 Unmarried women come of age at 25 years.
- 1870 Women are entitled to sit for the higher certificate as external students
- 1919 All women are given the right to vote in local elections and are eligible for election to municipalities and county councils.
- 1921 Women receive universal suffrage and may be elected to Parliament. Married women come of age at 21 years. Women and men are treated as equals in the new marriage act.
- 1922 The first five women are elected to Parliament.
- 1927 Government grammar schools are opened to girls.
- 1938 Contraceptives are permitted, maternity allowance is made available to all.
- 1939 Gainfully employed women may not be dismissed on grounds of pregnancy, childbirth or marriage.
- 1947 The first woman in the government. Equal pay for the same job is introduced for government employees.
- 1950 Both parents become the guardians of the child.
- 1955 Paid leave of absence (3 months) prescribed by law for gainfully employed women on the birth of a child.
- 1958 Women are given the right to become priests.
- 1974 Parental insurance is introduced giving parents the right to share leave of absence on the birth of a child.
- 1980 Legislation introduced against sexual discrimination in working life.
- 1982 All abuse of women in private places becomes liable to public prosecution. Pornographic performances prohibited in public places.
- 1983 All professions are open to women, even professions in the defence.
- 1988 Parliamentary resolution on a five-year national action plan for equality between women and men.
- 1992 New Equal Opportunities Act.
- 1994 Amendments made to the Equality Opportunities Act. Parliamentary resolution on a new national policy for equality between women and men. Gender equality statistics are made official.
- 1997 First woman bishop in Sweden.
- 1998 Proposal to Parliament to make the purchase of sexual services a criminal offence.

1.2 Power and influence

Power and influence are unevenly divided between women and men, both in society and in the family. Many of the structures in society have been built up according to male norms. Visible or invisible, these norms even dominate the way in which women and men organise their family life.

In its report "*Demokrati och Makt i Sverige*" (Democracy and Power in Sweden) (SOU 1990:44), the commission of inquiry into democracy and power presented theories and descriptions of the so-called gender system and the culturally inherited relationships between the sexes which create and recreate social patterns.

The achievement of a balance between women and men in decision-making positions, in the public sector as well as in private trade and industry, is an important issue for both democracy and power. Where an increase in the proportion of women is concerned, goal-oriented efforts have led to results but, despite considerable successes, there are still shortcomings where the influence of women and the division of powers are concerned.

Since 1988 a report has been made each year to Parliament on the proportion of women and men in the governing bodies of government agencies at central and regional level. Furthermore an annual report is made on the proportions of women and men responsible for government committee reports.

The aim of the annual reports is to show progress towards the goals for the proportion of women in government boards and committees - 1992 (30 per cent), 1995 (40 per cent) and 1998 (50 per cent). Where the central government boards are concerned,

it has hitherto been possible to reach the objectives within the stipulated time, while progress has been slower where the regional boards are concerned, on average 34 per cent in 1995.

The measures which are being used to accelerate progress towards even proportions of women and men in government boards etc. are based on stricter internal routines in the preparation of official assignments, making existing proportions visible through statistics, and taking different actions to stimulate an increase in the proportion of women.

The ministries' proposals in respect of persons who shall undertake assignments shall be notified to the Division for Equality Affairs in the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications for approval before the matter is taken up for decision in the government. Furthermore organisations and agencies which are offered a place on a government board or committee are requested to propose two names, a man and a woman, for each place offered. Measures to stimulate an increase in the proportion of women in government boards and committees have primarily included providing support to organisations and agencies for projects to make it easier for young female politicians to participate in the work of local councils and committees.

In 1992 Statistics Sweden (SCB) published a study, "*Man är chef*" (Man is the boss), on women and men in leading positions in the public and private sectors. Among other things the study showed that only 10% of management in the private sector and 30 per cent in the public sector were women. The figures were based on data from 1990. In a small survey published in 1995 it emerged that only

Facts and goals:

- 50% women in the government and Parliament in 1998

proportion of women in the government in 1996 - 50%

proportion of women in the Parliament in 1996 - 40%

- 50% women in governing boards and committees in 1998

proportion of women in central boards: 1996 - 43%

proportion of women in regional boards: 1996 - 38%

proportion of women in committees: 1997 - 43%

- An even proportion of women and men at management level

proportion of women chairing central boards: 1995 - 33%

proportion of women chairing committees: 1995 - 20%

proportion of women managers in trade and industries: 1993 - 10%

proportion of women professors: 1993 - 6%

A change in the role of politicians - Östergötland

In 1995 the Östergötland County Association of Local Authorities, the County Council and the County Administrative Board took the initiative to start a mentor project which had the aim of supporting young female politicians and newly-elected female politicians during their first term of office.

The project came into being in an attempt to get them to stay in politics, since young female politicians and newly-elected female politicians are over-represented amongst those who chose to leave politics. Factors such as a lack of real influence, a poor introduction to political life, and old fashioned working methods, together with the difficulties of combining politics with a family and professional life are decisive factors when women choose to leave politics.

The project involved supporting each politician in the project with both a male and a female mentor. Seminars and lectures were arranged and meetings were held to find strategies to change political life. The project was finalised in 1997 and the evaluation showed that several of the politicians probably would not have stayed in politics had they not been given the possibility to participate in the project. Nevertheless 43 per cent stated that they did not intend to stand for re-election.

According to the female mentors the most positive aspect of the project was the creation of an informal women's network over party boundaries.

three per cent of management in 168 companies quoted on the stock exchange were women.

In 1997 SCB published a new survey of the number of women and men in leading positions "Kvinnor och män på toppen. Fakta om antal och löner 1995" (Women and men at the top. Facts on numbers and salaries, 1995). The study shows that the number of women in management positions has increased somewhat. Of the managers in the

private sector 20 per cent are women and in the public sector 42 per cent are women. Where managing directors of large companies and heads of major government agencies etc are concerned, the proportions are still very uneven, nine per cent women and 91 per cent men. The study also shows that there are general differences in the salaries of women and men and that the average salary of women managers is lower than men in various age and educational groups.

Since 1995 the government's objective for the public sector has been that at least half of the new heads of government agencies appointed in the civil government administration shall be women. The number of newly appointed female heads of agencies more than doubled in the period 1995-96 compared to 1993-94. Corresponding goals for the proportions of women and men at management level have also been given as a point of departure for the government agencies. However, the proportion of women in management posts in the government administration in 1995 was only 23%.

Under the Equal Opportunities Act (1991:433), government employers shall, as all other employers, pursue active and goal-oriented programmes for equality between women and men and shall draw up a gender equality plan for each year. A management development programme has been implemented for female management staff in the government administration and the National Agency for Government Employers plan a so-called mentor programme for new and prospective women managers. One important issue is human resource development, both in the agencies' internal gender equality programmes and in giving a gender equality perspective to the operations of the agencies.

In the private sector different initiatives are being taken to increase the influence of women. The report "Mäns föreställningar om kvinnor och chefskap" (Men's conceptions of women and management) (SOU 1994:3) was presented in 1994. The main proposal

The theme of democracy - the project equality in committees and boards

Since 1997 the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and the Federation of County Councils have run a project to support and develop the working methods of committees and governing boards in municipalities and county councils in respect of gender equality. The project is intended to support women in their role as politicians,

increase knowledge of the opinions of men on gender equality in politics, and develop working methods in committees and governing boards which will lead to greater gender equality. Ten committees and governing boards are participating in the production of methods to improve gender equality in the work of committees and boards. In 1999 the methods shall be distributed to other municipalities and county councils.

of the study was for the establishment of a management academy. *Stiftelsen Näringslivets Ledarskapsakademi* (the Business Leadership Academy) was formed in 1995 in consultations between the government and representatives of trade and industry. The main aim of the academy is to contribute to the development of Swedish management and to enable it to identify, develop and make good use of the collective expertise and potential of both women and men. This shall be done through, among other things, a forum for business executives, theme seminars and research and management development projects. The Business Leadership Academy is a forum for dialogue between business executives, managers at different levels, and researchers in the field of management and organisation.

In the autumn of 1994 the government commissioned an inquiry into the division of financial power and financial resources between women and men. In January 1998 the commission of inquiry into the empowerment of women presented its final report "*Ty makten är din Myten om det rationella arbetslivet och det jämställda Sverige*" (The Myth on the Rational Working Life and the Equal Sweden) (SOU 1998:6). The report is based on 13 volumes of research reports which have three parallel points of departure - the family, working life/labour market and the welfare state.

The commission of inquiry established, among other things, that three of four managers are men, that education is less profitable for women than for men, and that women lose salary increases when they have children.

The study proposes among other things that a form of "gender equality labelling" of companies and organisations is introduced in Sweden, that the government takes steps to establish an organisation in which all parties are represented, which shall take action to ensure that salaries are set locally in a carefully prepared way, which is entirely neutral where women and men are concerned, and that the government commissions a further study of how political decisions affect women and men.

The study also points out that it is important that a process of change takes place in the school in respect of equality. Among other things the principles of gender equality should be part of all teacher training programmes and a gender perspective should permeate all educational programmes at university level.

A pre-study has been initiated on "gender equality labelling", i.e. a system for the labelling of

products manufactured by a company, which shows that the company fulfils certain gender equality criteria. Among other things the pre-study shall look at the possibilities this type of labelling system could provide and criteria for labelling.

The commission of enquiry into the empowerment of women states, among other things, that.....

- Managing directors of companies quoted on the stock exchange are often selected from a small narrow circle of (male) acquaintances and the acquaintances of acquaintances.
- The surest way to reach the top in private trade and industry is to have a technical education.
- Even when women choose to educate themselves in untraditional ways, their education is less profitable for them than for men. In respect of both salaries and careers, well educated women have problems in competing against men with lower levels of education.
- Professional groups dominated by women have lower salaries than professional groups dominated by men.
- Women lose pay increases when they have children and men who take their parenthood seriously and take the parental leave of absence they are entitled to, lose even more.
- The public sector exploits women since the great number of part-time and temporary jobs held by women contribute to low salaries, poor prospects of development, and low pensions.
- When re-organisations are implemented at workplaces, or programmes are introduced to break segregation between the sexes on the labour market, men almost always gain more than women.
- It is not just working life which is irrational: even the traditional division of work in the family creates problems, for society and individuals. It is most often women who take the initiative where divorce is concerned and a major reason for this is the dissatisfaction of women with the uneven division of work in the home.

but things are better in some areas....

- Today fathers take more day-to-day responsibility for their children.
- Women's incomes and paid working time have grown closer to men's.
- Today women are less financially dependent on their husbands.
- Unemployment has not affected women more severely than men.

1.3 Men and gender equality

Gender equality is an urgent matter for both women and men. The redistribution of power and resources in society concerns both women and men to an equal extent. More power for women in decision-making bodies means less power for men. More responsibility and thereby more power for men in the practical work at home and with the children means less responsibility and less power for women. If the traditional divisions on the labour market are to be broken down, it is not only necessary that women take part in new education programmes and enter new professions, it is equally necessary that men change their traditional patterns.

Since the mid-1980s attempts have been made at central level to take up issues on men and the role of men in the work with gender equality. From 1983 to 1992 the so-called *Idégruppen för mansrollfrågor* (a group working with the roles of men) worked with disseminating information and forming opinion on issues concerning men in various social areas. This group has been replaced by *Arbetsgruppen om papporna, barnen och arbetslivet* (a working group on fathers, children and working life) which primarily took up the conditions necessary for men to take a greater part of their parental leave entitlement. In the working group's final report it is proposed, among other things, that a total of three months leave is introduced for fathers and that separate custody of children is abolished as a legal concept.

Issues of men and gender equality have increasingly focused on men's practical responsibility

for their children and their relations with their children. The basic issue concerns the right of a child, from an early age, to have close relations with both its parents and have access to both female and male models. One prerequisite for women to establish and develop their own career on the same conditions as men is that men accept their share of the practical responsibility for the home and children. One political objective where both the family and gender equality are concerned is that both parents shall be able to combine working life with active parenthood. The instruments which are mainly used for this purpose are parental insurance and child care services.

Parents' insurance, as well as the right to leave of absence to care for sick children, has been extended step by step over a number of years. In 1995 the so-called fathers' month was introduced into the insurance. However, the right to parents' allowance is mostly used by women, even if the number of fathers who take advantage of this possibility has increased somewhat in a long-term perspective.

Since the end of the 1980s county councils, municipalities, social insurance offices, companies and trade union organisations have implemented a number of information and education projects which have had the aim of increasing the amount of parental leave taken by fathers. Experience gained from the so-called fathers' project in the province of Värmland, which included targeted information programmes for men who had recently become fathers, shows that information on leave of

Training for fathers

Between 1994 and 1996 the Division for Gender Equality Affairs at the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications and the Federation of County Councils ran a training project for fathers aimed at fathers-to-be and men who had recently become fathers. The project was implemented at maternity clinics in the counties of Jämtland, Gävleborg, Älvsborg and Malmöhus and in the city of Malmö.

The purposes of the project were

- to increase the amount of parental leave taken by men,
- to increase the understanding of an active father's role, and
- to contribute to making it easier for both women and men to combine a professional life with family life.

Some 70 trainers, all fathers who had been recruited by midwives, led groups and carried out training programmes with some 1200 prospective fathers or recent fathers.

The project has been evaluated and, without exception, it has been regarded as very positive. The aim of the pilot project has been to incorporate training for fathers into the county councils' programmes of training programmes for parents.

The project has also attracted great interest internationally and there has been great interest among the Nordic countries. In Norway for example the Swedish model for training for fathers will be spread throughout the country.

absence for fathers provided through the social insurance offices has a relatively good effect.

The parental leave taken by men has also been studied in a number of projects. Among other things Stiftelsen Manscentrum i Stockholm (the Men's Centre in Stockholm) has conducted a survey with the aid of interviews on how men who have taken parental leave use their time, with the aim of increasing knowledge of the conditions of men during parental leave. Furthermore Jämställdhetscentrum i Karlstad (the Centre for Gender Studies in Karlstad) has conducted a survey of attitudes with the aim of finding out about the attitudes of women, men, employers and colleagues to parental leave taken by women and men. An review of existing studies, evaluations and reports dealing with the amount of parental leave taken by men has also been compiled.

In 1997 a commission of inquiry was given the assignment of proposing how the training of parents and other forms of support for parents can be developed and stimulated. In its report "Stöd till föräldrautbildningen" (Support for education programmes for parents) (SOU 1997:161) the commission proposed that the government should appoint a reference group for issues concerning the role of men as parents and fosterers in order to follow up and evaluate projects targeted at fathers.

A number of projects have also been implemented with the objective of increasing the proportion of men working in the child care services and participating in teacher training programmes to become pre-school teachers and recreation instructors. Of employees working in pre-school and after-school recreation centres in 1994, only six per cent were men and this proportion has remained unchanged during the 1990s. An increase of the number of men in pre-school and after-school recreation centres is important to enable children to meet both male and female models in their daily life. The teaching profession is also dominated to a great extent by women.

Fewer and fewer men are enrolling for the teacher training programmes run by universities and university colleges, and measures are being devised in an attempt to increase the proportion of male teacher trainees.

One of the aims of the project run by the National Board of Health and Welfare's project, "*Får pojkar och flickor samma chans?*" (Do boys and girls get the same chance?) is increasing interest in and awareness

of gender equality issues among the personnel working in child care services. It shall also increase knowledge of gender equality in education and training activities and of the importance of adults as models for children. The report on the results of the project will be published in June 1998.

The great majority of the employees in county councils are women and the Swedish Federation of County Councils is therefore running projects which focus on male employees. The projects include networks for men, alternative mentor activities for men in various positions, and a development project for young male doctors.

Gender research, which takes up relations between male and female, has hitherto had a female perspective. Voices are now being heard which urge that this research shall also be pursued on a basis of a male perspective, for example by studies of masculinity and its importance where the possibility of achieving gender equality is concerned. The Centre for Gender Studies at Karlstad University is making a survey of existing national and international research on men. The final report shall be presented in October 1998.

Issues concerning men as perpetrators of violence have been given greater attention during recent years. A very great proportion of the violence committed against women and men is committed by men. The relationship between violence, which in the first place is directed towards women, and the lack of equality between women and men, has also become increasingly clear. However, more research is required into these issues.

Sweden has given prominence to issues on men and equality at the Nordic, European and global level in several different connections. Among other things Sweden had the main responsibility for a conference on men's issues in April 1995. The conference, which was a part of the Nordic Council's preparations for the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, was documented in the report "*Nordens män - en skiftande skara*" (Towards New Masculinities).

1.4 Violence against women

Assault and sexual abuse of women are not merely serious crimes, they are also an expression of a lack of gender equality. During recent years a number of measures have been taken to counteract violence against women and to support and protect vulnerable women. Among these measures can be mentioned new legislation and amendments to existing legislation, for example increases in the penalties for a number of crimes of violence and sex crimes.

Efforts have also been made in respect of preventive measures, for example through further training for personnel who come to contact with vulnerable women and through improvements in the protection of women who are exposed to violence or are at risk of being exposed to violence, for example through alarm systems or other equipment. Furthermore a number of special shelters for women and men have been established.

Sexual violence against women has been made visible through the work of the Commission on Violence against Women. The commission's final report "*Kvinnofrid*" (Violence against Women) (SOU 1995:60) proposed new legislation which makes domestic violence against women a criminal offence. The underlying reason for this is that many women experience abuse from men close to them as a process and not as a series of individual acts. Furthermore proposals were presented for a number of amendments to existing laws in the criminal code, including radical amendments to the provisions in respect of rape and a strengthening of the protection of children who are exposed, or at risk of being exposed, to sexual abuse.

The work of the Commission on Violence against Women also resulted in the establishment of a centre for women who have been assaulted and raped. *Rikskvinnocentrum i Uppsala* (the National Centre for Battered and Raped Women in Uppsala) is open for both women undergoing an acute crisis and for women who live in a situation of long-term maltreatment. Experience gained hitherto is very positive and it is intended that this experience shall be spread to other county councils.

In February in 1998 the government tabled a bill, "*Kvinnofrid*" (Violence against Women) (1997/1998:55), on measures to counteract violence against women and prostitution. Three studies form the basis of the government bill: the study of prostitution made in 1993, the Commission on Violence against Women of 1995, and the report

on sexual harassment of 1997.

The government proposes among other things that domestic violence against women is made a criminal offence, that the concept of rape is extended, that the purchase of sexual services is prohibited, that the provisions of the Gender Equality Act on Sexual Harassment are made more rigorous, and that the Social Services Act is supplemented. The new criminal offence has the aim of deterring repeated punishable acts against closely related women and also against children and other closely related persons. It is proposed that the amendments come in effect on 1 July 1998 (the prohibition in respect of the purchase of sexual services on 1 January 1999).

Some of the proposals in the government bill are aimed directly at men. Among other things it is proposed that support is provided for the work done at men's shelters and other men's organisations where issues concerning violence and women are concerned. Furthermore it is proposed that the treatment of men sentenced for crimes of violence against women shall be surveyed and evaluated.

The agencies concerned have been commissioned to increase their efforts to prevent crimes of violence against women and to prepare action programmes or policy documents for their own work in these issues. The agencies are also urged to co-operate with each other and with voluntary organisations concerned.

Violence against women shall be combated by

- the introduction of new legislation and the intensification of existing legislation
- an emphasis on preventive work;
- programmes for those who meet, on a daily basis, women exposed to violence.

An extensive further education programme for professional groups who come into contact with women exposed to violence (for example policemen and prosecutors) will be implemented and certain professional examinations will be supplemented with educational programmes on equality and violence against women (for example the legal examination and the teachers' examination). In total a sum of SEK 41 million will be allocated to different proposals to combat violence against women; among other things the support given to women's shelters will increase.

Violence against Women

Since 1997 the county administrative board in Stockholm has been running a project to prevent violence against women. The project is in fact a broad programme of cooperation between agencies and voluntary organisations which has the aim of bringing domestic violence against women into the open in order to improve the knowledge of the general public and to change attitudes.

Riksorganisationen för kvinnojourer i Sverige- ROKS (The National Organisation of Battered Women's Shelters) is implementing a nation-wide campaign entitled "Every 20 minutes a man batters his woman in Sweden" with the aim of counteracting violence against women.

"*Manliga nätverket - för manlighet, mot mäns övergrepp*" (Male Network - for men, against violence by men) in which some 2000 men participate, is working with spreading information on issues concerning men and violence. The network has the goal of stopping men's violence against women and developing positive male examples instead.

1.5 Labour market and working life policies

A cornerstone of the Swedish gender equality policy is that women and men shall have equal opportunities to be able to attain financial independence and to support themselves through their own work. Developments on the labour market are therefore of great importance for equality between women and men.

The proportion of women in the labour force is, in general, as large as the proportion of men but, on average, women have a weaker position on the

labour market.

The Equal Opportunities Act (1991:433) is an important tool for the promotion of the equal rights of women and men in respect of work, working conditions and the opportunity to develop in the working situation. The construction of the law, with its rules prohibiting discrimination and rules on the obligations of employers to take active forward-looking measures for gender equality at the working place, is unique in an international perspective.

The existing law entered into force in 1992, replacing earlier legislation on equality between women and men in working life (1979:118). The introduction of the new legislation was preceded by a report entitled "*Tio år med jämställdhetslagen*" (Ten Years with the Equal Opportunities Act) (SOU 1990:41).

In July 1994 a number of amendments to the new law came into effect. Among other things the prohibition of salary discrimination was made more rigorous. Rules in respect of indirect discrimination were also introduced as well as in respect of the prohibition of sexual harassment. New rules on the obligation of employers to make surveys of differences in salaries, to counteract harassment, and to make it easier for both women and men to combine working life with parenthood were introduced. Proposals have recently been submitted to Parliament for a further intensification of the rules on sexual harassment at the working place.

Employers with ten or more employees are liable to make an annual survey of differences in salaries between women and men at the working place. The results of this survey and the measures that the employers intend to take shall be presented in an annual equality plan. Employers who do not follow the provisions of the law risk fines.

Women and men on the labour market

- Divisions between women and men on the labour market occur on at least three levels: the division between household work and market work, between different working areas (for example more women in health and medical services and child care while men dominate the technical occupations); by different conditions in occupations (for example in the matter of salaries and positions).
- Women work part-time more often than men, 40 per cent of the women as opposed to eight per cent of the men, which is connected to the division of work in the home.

- Women have increased the amount of time they spend in gainful employment and their economic dependence has decreased. The proportion of women who are totally dependent on somebody else for their support decreased from 13 per cent in 1981 to three per cent in 1991.
- The difference between the average working income of women and men has, in general, remained unchanged during the last few years. The average working income of women is 77 per cent of men's income.

Gender Equality plan

A gender equality plan shall be drawn up by employers in consultations with employees. It shall contain proposals for active measures to promote equality between women and men at the work place. It shall be started or implemented during the forthcoming year.

The measures shall be linked to an objective which shall be based on a survey of conditions of importance for gender equality. An account of how the measures have been implemented shall be included in the following year's plan.

The survey shall include, among other things, an examination of the organisation, of the places where women work and where men work, the salary situation of women and men, the amount of parental leave taken by fathers, and needs for education and training. Furthermore an accounting system shall be in place to enable the statistics to be gender-disaggregated.

The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman (JämO) shall ensure that the Equal Opportunities Act is observed. JämO is appointed by the government. Both women and men who feel that they have been treated unfairly on account of their sex when applying for a job or as an employee can turn to JämO. The trade union organisations have the primary responsibility to help their members in disputes on sexual discrimination but, if the trade union does not want to take action, JämO can take over the matter. JämO also monitors the active gender equality work of employers at the work place by, among other things, examining the equality plan in order to assess whether it is concrete and contains meaningful measures.

Individual persons, trade unions and employers can turn to JämO for information and advice on the Equal Opportunities Act. If a dispute cannot be solved or if an employer refuses to follow JämO's directives, JämO can take the matter to the Labour Court or the Equal Opportunities Commission.

The Swedish Labour Market Agency which includes the National Labour Market Board and the local employment offices is developing measures to break the divisions between women and men on the labour market. Training and human resource development are of great importance in this respect and, during recent years, almost 200

projects have been implemented. Amongst these can be mentioned projects which have had the aim of providing guidance to unemployed women, mentor programmes, training projects in IT and economics, projects to help women to start their own businesses, and projects which have the direct aim of making it easier for women to break into working places dominated by men.

In 1995 a commission of inquiry was appointed to make a survey of the situation of women and men on the labour market in the 1990s. In its final report "*Hälften vore nog - om kvinnor och män på 1990-talets arbetsmarknad*" (Half would be enough - on women and men in the labour market of the 1990s) (SOU 1996:56), the commission of inquiry makes the assessment that unemployment amongst women will increase during the next few years in view of the weak trends in the professional areas dominated by women in both the private and public sectors.

In its employment bill (1995/96:222), which was tabled in 1996, the government presents a number of proposals which are of importance to counteract unemployment among women, including a five-year programme of adult education, primarily aimed at the unemployed, but also at employees who do not have an upper secondary school education. Employers can obtain grants to cover the salary of a replacement when an employee is given leave of absence on full pay for study purposes or to start his or her own business. Employers can also receive compensation to cover the costs of the employee's training.

According to the new labour legislation part-time employees shall be given priority when employers need additional manpower. Since it is primarily women who work part-time, this reform is important to improve gender equality.

Where salary issues are concerned, available statistics show that there are still considerable differences between the salaries of women and men. The differences can partly be explained by

Cooperation, Work, Sex

A two-year project entitled *Samverkan, Arbete, Kön* (Cooperation, Work, Sex) was started in 1996 at the Ministry of Labour. The aim of the project was to work with gender equality in labour market policies, both internally and externally. The project regularly publishes gender-disaggregated statistics.

the different situations of women and men with regard to profession and position, level of qualifications, age and education, but there are differences in salaries which cannot be explained. Statistics Sweden is developing central statistics on wages and salaries which can form the basis of in-depth analyses of differences between the salaries of women and men.

The working life policy has the aim of promoting a good working environment. An important task in this respect is to prevent industrial injuries and other forms of ill health in working life. In vocational areas such as health and medical services in which there are considerably more women than men, the proportion of musculo-skeletal disorders is high. At the beginning of the 1990s the National Board of Occupational Safety and Health implemented extensive education and methods development projects in respect of ergonomics and psychological and social issues in the working environment. These have had the result that the Labour Inspectorate is now giving priority to problems in the working environment in sectors and professions dominated by women in a completely different way than it did before.

The National Institute for Working Life and the Swedish Council for Work Life Research support research into and development of the conditions of women in working life. The research of the National Institute for Working Life focuses on developments in working life and issues relating to industrial ill-health, while the Swedish Council for Work Life Research is financing some 25 research projects into the different conditions of women and men and the opportunities available to them in working life. Aims of the research are to shed light on the division of work between women and men, mechanisms behind the divisions of power between women and men at the work place, the origins of vocations dominated by women, the importance of greater use of IT, and how distance working affects the opportunities of women on the labour market.

On the initiative of the Council a review has been made of research carried out hitherto in the 1990s into the conditions of women in the work organisation.

1.6 Industrial and regional policy

In Sweden there are almost half a million enterprises. Where persons who run their own businesses are concerned, 26 per cent were women in 1996.

There are differences in the way women and men run businesses, for example in the choice of sector, forms of enterprises, and ways of working. Women who run enterprises are represented in all sectors of trade and industry, even if men dominate entrepreneurship in most sectors, with the exception of personal services. Women entrepreneurs are mainly to be found in the trade and service sectors.

For a number of years the Swedish National Board for Industrial and Technical Development, NUTEK, has run activities designed to support women who start or run their own businesses. NUTEK's role is to develop women's businesses, to make it possible for women to run businesses, and to show that this can be done. The methods used include pilot projects aimed at women.

In 1992 NUTEK made a survey of the conditions for women who start and run businesses. As a result NUTEK was commissioned to implement a programme of measures in the areas receiving special support under the government's regional policy. Women business advisors were introduced in 62 municipalities. They had the task of helping women who wanted to start businesses or of developing existing businesses. The project took place over a three-year period (1993-1996), but most of the municipalities concerned have continued this activity.

ALMI Företagspartner AB and the Enterprise Agency (two organisations working with existing enterprises and new businesses) as well as several industrial organisations have received grants for the development of new models, methods or forms to promote female entrepreneurship. One example of a project is the business school for women.

Business loans for women were established in 1994. One of the reasons providing these loans was that different surveys had indicated that women start businesses with much less capital than men. Loans which can be combined with start-your-own-business grants have been much in demand.

As part of the aspiration to achieve a more even distribution of regional development resources between women and men, the county administrative boards participated in the creation of regional

resource centres for women in 1994. It is intended that these centres shall initiate local development projects, contribute to the establishment of local networks for women, and encourage and implement human resource development programmes. In co-operation with the National Rural Development Agency, NUTEK has established a national resource centre for women which co-ordinates and supports the building up and development of regional and local resource centres. Stiftelsen Forum för Småföretagsforskning (a foundation working with research into small enterprises) is conducting a research programme into female entrepreneurship.

2. New forms for the work with gender equality

2.1 Mainstreaming

The measures taken in the 1970s and 1980s to strengthen the position of women and increase their influence were coordinated and implemented in addition to ordinary operations. In general, programmes were run in form of projects which were financed by temporary allocations in different ways and often by external funds. The projects had the aim of increasing the resources and knowledge available to women in different areas and testing and designing new working methods and organisational forms which make better use of and develop the resources of women.

Experience shows that even if certain project activities have assumed more regular forms, the regular activities of agencies, companies or organisations have not been affected to any great extent.

During the last few years research into women and equality has contributed to increasing knowledge of causes of and mechanisms behind the segregation which still exists in society. In combination with experience gained hitherto, this has led to gender equality work being given a greater focus on changing those structures in society, both formal and informal, which contribute to maintaining or strengthening negative divisions between women and men and an uneven distribution of powers.

Mainstreaming is a strategy which means that a gender equality perspective is incorporated into all areas of daily life. If this is to take place, the decision-makers in politics, in companies and in organisations must possess knowledge of the different conditions which apply to women and men. Furthermore routines and working methods are needed which guarantee that information on the situation of women and men is included in the data on which decisions are based, and that all proposals, wherever relevant, are analysed from a gender equality perspective. The methods include developing guidelines, action plans, checklists, analyses, schedules and handbooks etc to permit a gender equality perspective to be incorporated into all subject areas.

Sweden's national policy for equality between women and men states that all proposals and decisions in all policy areas shall be analysed from a gender equality perspective in order to determine their consequences for both women and men at central, regional and local levels. One of the instruments in this work is gender-disaggregated and easily accessible statistics with the aid of which problems of relevance for the work with gender equality can be analysed. Gender shall therefore represent a common basis of division in all statistics relating to individuals.

The work of incorporating a gender equality perspective includes

- making differences between the sexes visible, by providing gender-disaggregated statistics and other information;
- determining the situation of women and men and relations between the sexes in different social areas;
- making analyses from a gender equality perspective and formulating objectives for change;
- training managers and staff in gender equality issues;
- systematically following up and evaluating the results of gender equality work in relation to their objectives.

A gender equality perspective shall permeate all social areas by making the conditions, needs and interests of both sexes visible and by translating knowledge acquired into concrete action in all areas. Mainstreaming means that gender equality issues cannot any longer be treated separately or in addition to ordinary activities. A gender equality

perspective shall be included as a natural part of all work. This necessitates that more parties take responsibility for gender equality issues.

In 1994 Parliament decided that gender equality statistics should be official statistics. The objective is that all statistics which relate to individuals shall be collected, analysed and presented in a gender-disaggregated form and shall reflect gender equality issues and problems in society. Statistics Sweden, which is the agency responsible for official statistics, has a special programme for statistics on equality. It is continually developing methods to enable it to present gender-disaggregated statistics for different social areas.

Statistics Sweden - Programme for statistics on gender equality

The work of improving statistics from a gender equality perspective shall be performed by all persons responsible for statistics both at Statistics Sweden and at other agencies responsible for collecting and producing statistics. The programme for gender equality statistics at Statistics Sweden has a coordinatory role in this work.

The programme shall provide an overall picture of the needs and the supply of statistics where statistics on gender equality are concerned. It shall function as a source of new ideas, a coordinator, and an activist in Statistics Sweden, shall have the responsibility for internal and external information and be responsible for all activities in the field which do not naturally fall within another subject area.

The products and services of the programme consist of publications and fact sheets, lectures and courses, the design of study materials, the special processing of existing statistics, and surveys of working places as a basis for internal gender equality work.

Furthermore the programme shall work with development projects in respect of gender equality statistics in Estonia, Lithuania, Russia and Ukraine and a number of countries in the South.

2.2 Gender equality work at the central level

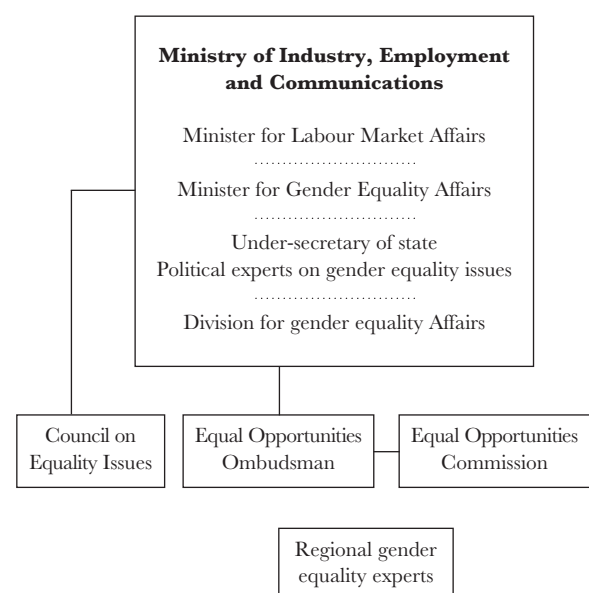
In all activities of central government a gender equality perspective shall be incorporated into all areas and at all levels, and working with gender equality shall be part of ordinary working duties. This makes it necessary that the highest levels of

political leadership have the explicit intention of encouraging and promoting the work and that there is sufficient knowledge in all ministries, central government agencies and authorities.

For a long time Sweden has had both a political organisation and an administrative organisation at the central level working with gender equality in the country. The Minister for Gender Equality Affairs co-ordinates gender equality issues in the government and works with the formulation of the gender equality policy. The objective is that gender equality issues shall be included as a component in all policy areas and that all ministers shall assume responsibility for gender equality within their areas of responsibility.

A special Division for Gender Equality Affairs assists the Minister for Gender Equality Affairs in co-ordinating the work on gender equality. The Division for Gender Equality Affairs has the responsibility for examining in advance all proposed government bills, directives for commissions, and appointments of members in government boards and committees from a gender equality perspective before the government makes the decision.

Organisation of Gender Equality Work



The *Equal Opportunities Commission* is a government agency. Its responsibility is to instruct employers to follow the requirements of the Gender Equality Act, i.e. to take active measures in respect of gender equality, at the request of JämO. The Council on Gender Equality Issues is a forum for the exchange of ideas and discussion of current gender equality issues. The Minister for Gender Equality Affairs is chairman of the Council, which consists of 31 members: representatives of the political parties and their women's associations, women organisations, employer and trade union organisations and certain popular movements.

Since January 1995 there has been a *gender equality expert* at each county administrative board. The expert shall assist the management of the county administrative board in matters of supporting, pursuing and implementing the national, regional and local goals for gender equality and giving prominence to the gender equality perspective in different subject areas.

Five main areas

The strategic work of the government to incorporate a gender equality perspective in all political areas focuses on five main areas.

1. Make the situation of women and men visible.
2. Improve knowledge of objectives and methods in work with gender equality.
3. Develop methods and ways of working which lead to the effect that the gender equality perspective permeates activities.
4. Systematically follow-up and evaluate projects in the field of gender equality.
5. Introduce special measures for gender equality in areas given priority in order to stimulate progress and to develop methods.

In order to make the situation of women and men visible in the reports and other documentation which form the basis of government proposals in different areas, the government issued in 1994 general directives to all committees and persons in charge of commissions of inquiry. This directives state that the proposals presented shall contain an analysis and presentation of their effects on the gender equality policy.

A follow-up made in the spring of 1997 showed

that, of a total of 193 commissions of inquiry, only 33 per cent had a gender equality perspective. Most merely included some general comments, only a few made a deep and broad analysis. A new follow-up will be made in the beginning of 1999.

Different methods have been tested to promote the development of gender equality in practice. Strategies have been established for the government's work on gender equality in both a short and long-term perspective. Central initiatives and other interventions in the field of gender equality have been presented in special bills and in the annual budget bill. Each year the government allocates special funds in the budget bill for the testing of new methods and models for gender equality work, mainly to support regional and local developments in this area.

The special projects make it possible to stimulate development in important areas. One such area is to increase the power and influence of women. Furthermore priority is given to projects which make it easier for men to take their share of parental leave. Other examples are project support for the development of gender equality in working methods in the child care services and for the development of courses in gender equality which shall be included as part of the basic university teacher training programmes, pre-school teacher and recreation leader training programmes, and the training of doctors.

Senior officials in each ministry are responsible for developing methods which lead to the permeation of the gender equality perspective throughout all operations. The ministries also have the support of experts to assist them to define the overall guidelines which apply in the field of gender equality and to translate them into practical action.

In order to increase knowledge of objectives and methods in gender equality work the government has regularly arranged special training programmes for key groups in the Cabinet Office and ministries and the central government administration and agencies.

The change in the forms of management, with a clearer focus on objectives and management by results, have given the government greater possibilities to exercise controls and follow the outcome of the distribution of resources between women and men. Government agencies, authorities and organisations receiving financial support can be requested to report on the outcome of the

operations from a gender equality perspective. Objectives in respect of gender equality have been laid down in different directives such as, for example, instructions to agencies, letters of appropriations or rules for certain appropriations or grants.

All ministries are responsible for the follow-up and evaluation of projects in the field of gender equality, for example the impact of the gender equality perspective in the different areas of responsibility of the ministries, the results which have been achieved, how analyses and impacts on gender equality policy are presented, and information on the proportions of men and women in governing bodies and committees.

2.3 Regional gender equality work

With the aid of central initiatives and their own priorities, the county administrative boards have taken a number of measures in the areas of education, the labour market and regional policy in order to promote equality between women and men. In particular efforts have been made to change and improve the conditions of women in working life and in the educational system.

Experts in gender equality issues support the management of the county administrative boards in their responsibility for running goal-oriented work with gender equality and for contributing to the incorporation of a gender equality perspective in the responsibilities of the county administrative boards. The county administrative boards have produced strategies for gender equality work and in practically all counties special resource centres for women have been built up which have the aim of drawing attention to women as resource for regional development.

The overall goal of the gender equality strategy for 1996-2000 of the county of Västerbotten is that the proportion of women entrepreneurs shall increase by ten per cent. Another goal is that 4,500 job opportunities shall be made available to women and that the proportions of women and men in management positions shall be the same.

An important instrument in the mainstreaming work of the county of Västerbotten is the county gender equality delegation. This delegation includes the management of the county administrative board, the county labour board, the county council, the association of local authorities, Umeå university, the social insurance office and representatives of the Swedish Employers' Confederation (SAF), the

Strategies for gender equality in Stockholm county - 2000

The gender equality strategy of the county of Stockholm consists of a number of overall measurable goals in three areas: skills for new jobs and companies, welfare and influence, and health and security.

Some of the objectives are:

- That the proportion of women in educational programmes which have their main focus on data processing and electronics in the university colleges in the county increases from 12 to 15 per cent.
- That the proportion of men in the training programmes for pre-school teachers increases from five to ten per cent and, in the teacher training programmes for teachers in the first seven years of compulsory school, from 12 to 20 per cent.
- That the proportion of women starting their own companies increases from 26 to 30 per cent and that a relative measure, the so-called women's index, is developed to shed light on the proportion on women in management positions in trade and industry.
- That at least half of the municipalities in the county have resource centres for women and that there is an increase in the proportion of immigrant women in the work force, among employees and entrepreneurs.
- That the negative trend for women where sick leave is concerned is reversed and that the smoking habits of young women are decreased by, on average, ten per cent in three years.

Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) and the Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees (TCO). The county gender equality delegation is running two projects which are part of the mainstreaming project run by the Nordic Council of Ministers, which has the aim of developing methods for the incorporation of a gender equality perspective into the regular work done in respect of the policies for young people and the labour market.

The work of the county gender equality delegation mainly focuses on the areas of trade and industry, infrastructure, education and health. The action plan for 1998 focuses on a regional resource centre for women (county administrative board), projects to get more men into the child care services and schools (the association of local authorities, TCO), physical communications planning with a gender



equality perspective (county administrative board), leadership and mentor programmes for women (county labour board, SAF) drawing attention to the influence young people can exert in municipal policies (association of local authorities, municipality of Skellefteå), the project Livsmiljö och Hälsa (living environment and health) and projects to counteract and prevent violence against women (the county council, the county administrative board).

Resource centre for women in the county of Västerbotten

The Västerbotten regional resource centre for women works with the labour market for women, the development of enterprises, education and training programmes, information programmes and leadership. Local resource centres for women are being built up in the county.

The projects for the development of enterprises involve IT projects, networks for innovative women, networks for new entrepreneurs, and market training. The resource centre also runs projects for several women in active committee work and a mentor programme.

The gender equality unit at the county administrative board in Västra Götaland is participating in a pre-study on the possibilities of voluntary "equality labelling". An instrument for gender equality labelling shall be tested in a number of public and private working places in Västra Götaland. "A good choice in the gender equality and working environment perspectives" is a proposal for a gender equality labelling system with instructions and criteria which companies and working places shall fulfil in order to receive a gender equality label. The results of this pilot project will be presented in September 1998.

The division for gender equality affairs has also produced a so-called gender equality reflex. This is a little folder which can be used to determine whether a planned action will influence relations between women and men in working life and society, i.e. whether it is of importance for gender equality between women and men. The folder shall help those who administer different measures, projects and development programmes to pose a number of overall questions. It shall be possible to fold it in

three parts so that it is easy to carry in a wallet or handbag.

The *KOM-programmet* (Women and Men in Cooperation) was started in 1989 when three regions were appointed as special KOM regions (Östergötland, Gävleborg and Kopparberg, Västernorrland and Jämtland). The programme, which was part of a five-year programme on gender equality approved by the Swedish Parliament, was finalised in 1994. The overriding goals were to reduce the imbalance between women and men where responsibility and influence were concerned, to improve conditions for women in working life, and to make better use of women's knowledge and experience so that their skills are better shown to advantage in all areas of working life. Within the framework of the KOM programme some SEK 42 million was allocated to more than 200 projects and several thousand persons were involved in the project work.

Some 80 per cent of the work of county councils concerns health and medical care, but they are also responsible for activities which contribute to regional development, such as education, public transport and industrial development. The county councils, which have a great predominance of women employees, are working actively to produce, evaluate and follow-up gender equality plans. Several county councils have produced a gender equality policy.

Employer organisations and trade unions working in the municipal and county council field have worked together to produce a joint approach to gender equality in order to achieve equal conditions for women and men. Local project groups in three county councils and four municipalities have been linked to the central project "Utveckling till lika villkor" (development for equal terms). This has resulted in an overall policy for gender equality work in municipalities and county councils.

Six important areas for development have been given prominence:

- managers and management
- work organisations and working hours
- salary and employment conditions
- human resource development
- working environment
- combining gainful employment with the responsibility for a home

Several county councils have implemented management programmes, for example mentor programmes, with the aim of increasing the number of women in management positions. Experience shows that the dissemination effect of management programmes increases if the work places also take part in the process of change.

The Federation of County Councils, the county council of Östergötland and the County Council of Västmanland are working with the project "*Förnyelse och utveckling med genusperspektiv*" (Renewal and development with a gender perspective) in which projects for managers and prospective managers are linked to concrete development work at work place level.

The project contains among other things the following activities:

- mentor programmes for persons responsible for running a development process at their work places,
- work place meetings, internal seminars and study material to provide greater knowledge for all staff at the work places concerned,
- meetings between representatives of the employer and trade unions to provide information on gender equality issues
- strategy groups in which the personnel at the work place are given the opportunity for in-depth discussions.

Network between Swedish and Spanish regional politicians

In 1996 the Federation of County Councils took the initiative to establish a network building EU project for women regional politicians - "Network between Swedish and Spanish regional politicians". The aim was to build a network between women regional politicians in Kalmar and Andalucia for the exchange of experience on gender equality and regional policies.

The project, which lasted for nine months, provided many lessons and a great deal of experience, for example that differences in the situation in society make it impossible to transfer gender equality projects and gender equality policies automatically from one country to another. Equality work must be based on the culture in question.

2.4 Gender equality work at the local level

The work of the municipalities is of central importance for gender equality issues. Apart from the fact that the municipalities employ 700,000 employees, of whom over 80 per cent are women, they are responsible for community planning, local development, schools, and care and welfare services which make it possible for women and men to work.

The proportion of women in municipal politics has increased considerably. The newly elected women express a strong intention to achieve change both in the case of forms for their work in politics and the content of this work.

It has also proved to be the case that the gender equality issue has been given greater legitimacy in municipalities in which women hold important political posts. In 87 per cent in all municipalities there is a central gender equality administrator and approximately every other municipality has a special representative in the administration.

Pilot project in Bengtsfors, Södertälje and Umeå

During a five year period (1989-1993) a pilot project was implemented in three municipalities: Bengtsfors, Södertälje and Umeå. The aim of the project was to increase knowledge of how equal conditions for women and men can be achieved through the coordination of work in all policy areas.

The evaluation of the project showed that, in all the three municipalities, the overall work on gender equality was not coordinated in the activities aimed at the residents of the municipalities nor in the internal work amongst employees.

Whether the gender equality issue was integrated in decisions and planning or not depended on whether the politicians and senior local government officers had an explicit positive attitude to the work with gender equality and whether they took specific responsibility for this in the organisation. The will to pursue the work with gender equality proved to be dependent on their knowledge and interest.

Furthermore it was of great importance that gender equality work was undertaken at different levels and in different parts of the activities of the municipalities and that there was a gender equality administrator and a special gender equality representative.

In 1995 the Swedish Association of Local Authorities board appointed a programme committee for gender equality "Kommunerna och jämställdheten" (Municipalities and equal opportunities). The committee was given the task of developing methods so that the Association of Local Authorities and the municipalities could analyse all their operations from the perspective of equality between women and men.

In the first phase an inventory was made of research and evaluation material, and new research for a gender equality perspective was initiated in the operational areas of the municipalities: child care, schools, care of the elderly, care of individuals and families, cultural activities, recreation activities, and the environment and community planning. In the second phase of the project the material has been used to test and further develop methods of making a gender equality analysis of the activities of municipalities.

Among other things the committee has devised a method which is applied when subject areas are analysed from a gender equality perspective, the so called *3R method*, where the three Rs stand for representation, resources and realia. The method involves looking at how women and men are represented as politicians, local government officers and citizens in the decision-making process; how women and men receive resources in the form of money, time and space; and the qualitative content of operations.

Since 1996 nine committees in six municipalities - Gothenburg, Köping, Södertälje, Skellefteå, Växjö and Haparanda - have participated in a project organised by the Association of Local Authorities called JämKom (Equality - women and men). The project has tested methods of integrating gender equality into normal work, i.e. mainstreaming in practice.

The JämKom project will be presented in 1998 in a series of reports containing the lessons learned by researchers and politicians. Among other things the reports will take up democracy, the school and child care, social services and care of the elderly, community planning and the environment, and culture and recreation policies.

The gender equality municipality of the year

During the last five years five trade union organisations and the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman have invited the municipalities in the country to compete for the title "gender equality municipality of the year". The previous winners have been Växjö, Malmö, Kungälv and Karlskrona. In 1998 the jury decided to award the prize for coordination between gender equality and other parts of municipal activities. The winning municipality shall have included gender equality in its daily work, and not merely in a special compartment for gender equality administrators.

A look at the JämKom project

- The planning and building committee in Södertälje is working on integrating a gender equality perspective into all its operations by, among other things, investigating how different groups of residents in the municipality feel about and use the town centre, how women and men come into the planning process, and what women and men feel about their housing area.
- The education committee in Köping and the child and youth welfare services committee in Haparanda studied how resources such as time, space and funds were divided between girls and boys at day-care centres, recreation centres and in the school. Who spoke most at the morning assembly in the day-care centres? How did the teachers divide the questions between girls and boys in the classroom? The committees also investigated how divisions between girls and boys at the upper secondary school level came into being.
- The leisure and recreation amenities committees in Gothenburg and Skellefteå and the cultural amenities and recreation committee in Växjö made a survey of representatives and the division of resources in cultural associations and sports clubs. Are for example women and men represented in club committees to an equal extent and do girls' teams receive the same financial support as boys for travelling and competitions?
- The social services committees in Köping and Haparanda investigated how resources for the care for the elderly were distributed between different recipients of the care services to see if there is a pattern between the women and men. Furthermore a survey was made of the distribution of social security benefits, both in respect of how much money women and men receive and the reasons given for the decisions.



3. International gender equality work

3.1 The Nordic Countries

Nordic gender equality work is well in line with the Swedish gender equality policy. In 1995 a new Nordic co-operation programme for gender equality was adopted for the period 1995 to 2000.

The Nordic Council of Ministers intends to focus its work with gender equality on activities which promote equal access of women and men to the political and economic decision-making processes, activities for equal economic status and influence for women and men, and initiatives which promote gender equality in working life. Furthermore priority is being given to activities which improve the opportunities of both women and men to combine parenthood and gainful employment, and to activities which can influence European and international developments in the area of gender equality.

In 1995 the conference "Nordens Män" (Nordic Men) was held in Stockholm. At the follow-up of the conference the ministers responsible for gender equality affairs in the Nordic countries agreed to support further active work in issues concerning men and gender equality from both a Nordic and a global perspective. In August 1997 the Nordic Council of Ministers adopted an action plan for men and gender equality for the period 1997 to 2000.

In 1997 the Nordic Council of Ministers initiated a Nordic mainstreaming project which shall run for three years. The aim is to develop strategies and methods to incorporate a gender equality perspective into the regular work on labour market policies and youth policies. The core of the project is the sub-projects at municipal, county and government level which are being implemented in the Nordic countries. In Sweden there is a project at regional level in the county of Västerbotten, which has been mentioned above.

During the last few years different interventions have been made to support gender equality work in the Baltic countries. In 1997 a conference on gender equality, "Women and men in dialogue" was arranged in Latvia. It was attended by just over a thousand participants. The conference took up, among other things, working life, health and media.

Nordic research

Nordiska Institutet för Kvinno- och Könforskning -NIKK (the Nordic Institute for Women and Gender Research) was established in Oslo in 1995. Within the framework of Nordic cooperation the Institute has the responsibility for promoting, coordinating and stimulating Nordic research and for presenting information on the results of research in the field.

The project "*Halva makten - nordiska kvinnor på väg*" (Half the power - Nordic women on the way) started in the same year within the framework of Nordic cooperation. With the support of existing research, in particular the new theories and concepts in the field of research into women, this project has the aim of deepening the analysis of the problems concerning women's political power and powerlessness.

3.2 Europe

European Union (EU)

The Treaty of Amsterdam (the EU's revised constitution) was signed in October 1997 by the EU's foreign ministers. The treaty contains an essential strengthening of issues relating to gender equality, partly as a consequence of the fact that Sweden pursued these issues during the negotiations on the treaty. Equality between women and men is now included as one of the EU's fundamental objectives. The so-called mainstreaming principle, i.e. that a gender equality perspective shall be observed and promoted in all the activities of the union, is also included in the treaty.

The present prohibition on wage discrimination in article 119 has been intensified and now also covers wage discrimination in similar work. Article 119 has also been extended and now states explicitly that the EU shall make decisions to increase gender equality on the labour market and to ensure that the principle of equal pay for equal work is observed. It is now also possible to use so-called "positive discrimination" where the under-represented sex is concerned with the aim of achieving gender equality in practical terms on the labour market. The fact that the last mentioned issue, an issue in which Sweden has shown particular interest, is now included in the treaty, has the consequence that member states will be permitted to use positive discrimination in the future if they so wish.

A steering committee follows the application of the Council of Minister's action programme for gender equality in the EU for the years of 1996-2000 which was adopted on December 22, 1995. The main purpose of the programme is the exchange of experience, the dissemination of good examples of gender equality work, and support for projects. The programme's priority areas include gender equality on the labour market and in the economy, gainful employment and parenthood, equality between women and men in decision-making bodies, improved opportunities for women to use their rights under EC law in the area of gender equality, and methods and models for the integration of a gender equality perspective in all political areas. The steering committee includes representatives of member states, the governments of EEA states, and the Commission which is chairman. Among other things the committee has the responsibility for making decisions in respect of the cooperation projects between the member states which shall be granted funds on account of the programme.

In the commission there is an equal opportunities unit in Directorate-General V. Furthermore there is an advisory committee for gender equality issues which includes representatives of member countries and employer and trade union organisations and the European Women's Lobby. The committee is a valuable forum for the exchange of ideas and information, and for creating contacts.

The Council of Europe

The Council of Europe's steering committee for equality between women and men appointed an expert group in 1995 which was given the task of preparing a report on methods to incorporate a gender equality perspective in all policy areas. The aim was to collect and disseminate knowledge and experience in the member countries and in regional and international co-operation organisations. The group submitted its final report "*Gender Mainstreaming, Conceptual framework, methodology, and presentation of good practices*" (EG-S-MS (98)) in March 1998.

The Council of Europe's fourth conference on gender equality was held in Istanbul in November 1997. The theme of the conference was "Democracy and equality between women and men". Sweden presented one of the main reports under the theme "*Männens roll när det gäller att främja*

jämställdhet i ett demokratiskt samhälle" (the role of men in promoting gender equality in a democratic society).

As a result of a Swedish initiative the Council of Europe arranged a conference in Strasbourg in 1997 on the role of men in gender equality work "Promoting gender equality: a common issue for men and women".

3.3 Global

United Nations (UN)

The UN's Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing in September 1995. The conference unanimously adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for gender equality work at national, regional and international level up to the year 2000.

Sweden's participation in the conference was prepared at home by an inter-ministerial committee. In the final phase of the preparation work and during the conference itself, Sweden acted as a member of the EU. Sweden was successful in gaining the EU's support for many Swedish text proposals. Several of these were then adopted by the conference in the form of EU positions. Sweden advocated the strengthening of undertakings in issues on the influence of women, women and economy, women's human rights and violence against women. Sweden also tried to obtain support for the idea that gender equality is an essential issue for both women and men and should not be regarded as only a women's issue. Sweden's official contribution to the conference was the anthology "Men on Men", which contains the personal reflections on gender equality, masculinity and parenthood of eight Swedish men.

With the aim of strengthening the work of the UN with gender equality issues and to act to ensure that a gender equality perspective is integrated throughout the entire UN system, Sweden strongly urged that the Secretary-General should be recommended to establish a senior post for these issues in his office. After the conference the Secretary-General responded to this recommendation and appointed a woman, Angela King, in this position.

The UN's Division for the Advancement of Women has the task of following the implementation of the decisions made in Beijing at national and international level.

In June 1994 Sweden submitted a so-called national report "Shared Power, Shared Responsibility" to the UN prior to the conference. The report describes the progress made in Sweden towards gender equality since the UN World Conference on Women held in Nairobi in 1985.

In July 1997 Sweden submitted a report to UN on the progress of work in Sweden to follow-up decisions from the UN World Conference on Women in 1995. The report "*Sweden's Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, July 1997*" states, among other things, that, in general, Sweden is living up to the requirements of the Platform for Action which was adopted in Beijing and that work is being actively pursued and will be pursued in the future in the areas taken up in the Platform for Action.

International Development Co-operation

In the field of international development cooperation Sweden has tried to introduce a clear gender equality perspective in all activities where combating poverty, human rights and democracy are concerned.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Sida have worked actively in the EU's expert group for gender equality and development cooperation, as in the UN's Division for the Advancement of Women. Furthermore, in the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), work has been done in DAC's special expert group on a new mandate for gender equality in development co-operation, which shall be a valuable instrument to obtain an impact for gender equality issues in DAC's strategy for development co-operation prior to the 21st century.

In 1998 the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has a new budget allocation of SEK 15 million at its disposal for projects to strengthen gender expertise, chiefly in multilateral development co-operation. A dialogue is being conducted with the UN and the development banks on different forms of projects.

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Swedish **Gender** Equality



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