



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of  
Discrimination against Women**

**Tenth periodic report submitted by Sweden under article 18  
of the Convention, due in 2020\***

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



## General

### *Question 1*

1. Information and, where relevant, statistics that illustrate developments in relation to the obligations of the Convention is presented as part of the answers to the questions in the report.
2. Since 2018, governmental agencies are required to include sex-disaggregated data in the annual reports and budget documentation presented to the Government. This obligation is acknowledged in Section 1, Chapter 3 of the Swedish Annual Reports and Budget Documentation Ordinance (2000:605). This improves the Government's ability to achieve targeted reforms.
3. The Government's six gender equality policy goals are continuously monitored with the help of a set of 173 indicators. The indicators have been increased and reformulated several times so that they are well targeted and aligned with the changes in the policy goals. For instance, in 2019, Statistics Sweden added an indicator on reported cases of purchase of sexual services and purchase of a sexual act from a child. Convictions of purchase of sexual services and purchase of a sexual act from a child have also been included in the statistics. Statistics Sweden is currently working to develop and improve the accessibility of the national gender equality statistics based on different user needs and the reporting of regional gender equality statistics.
4. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions has created a platform for regional comparisons on gender statistics which gives an overview of gender differences in political representation, employment and services provision.
5. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency which was established in 2018 contributes to the effective implementation and monitoring of the Government's gender equality policy goals. Furthermore, The National Board of Health and Welfare has been tasked to develop indicators to monitor the objectives of the Government's strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women.
6. There is limited national statistics concerning honour-related violence and oppression. However, some information is available as a result of a few surveys conducted at local level, including municipal surveys carried out in Göteborg, Malmö and Stockholm (Örebro University 2018). According to these surveys, 7–8 percent of pupils in year nine of compulsory school in these areas live in families that use violence and punishments to protect the reputation of the family or relatives, and 10–20 percent of the pupils live in families with strong social norms on marriage and sexual relationships before marriage. There are also some national statistics on conditions related to female genital mutilation in the realm of healthcare.
7. Access to statistics aggregated by sex in combination with other categories, e.g. ethnicity, religion and disability, is limited in Sweden since this information is regarded as personal data according to the General Data Protection Regulation. There are some exceptions, for instance if an individual gives explicit consent to being part of such data collection, and the National Living Conditions Survey (ULF/SILC) include statistics combining data on both disability and gender. Statistics Sweden and other government agencies do not collect data on ethnicity but instead gather data based on other parameters, such as citizenship and country or region of birth.
8. Regarding the gender-neutral pronoun 'hen', there is not enough data to assess the impact of its inclusion in the Swedish Academy Glossary (SAOL). However, the mere fact that 'hen' is listed in the glossary means that it will have a certain degree of impact, since this glossary sets the unofficial standard for the spelling, pronunciation and conjugation of Swedish words.

9. The preface to the glossary states that a word must be in established use in order to be included: “In simple terms, it can be said that when words come into use to a sufficient extent, they are included in this glossary.” The use of the gender-neutral ‘hen’ had increased steadily since the debate about the word gathered pace in 2012, and ‘hen’ was thus already in use to a fairly large extent before its inclusion in the Swedish Academy Glossary.

10. In line with its feminist foreign policy, Sweden supports the need for an intersectional perspective and the use of statistics disaggregated by gender and age in the international arena.

11. Visibility of the Convention, the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee’s general recommendations

#### *Question 2*

12. In view of the fact that 2020 marks the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Government has commissioned the Swedish Gender Equality Agency to carry out national activities to increase awareness and knowledge about the aims of the platform and its twelve critical areas of concern. The link between the platform and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and The UN Sustainable Development Goals shall be made clear in the implementation of the assignment, which is to be reported to the Government by 31 January 2021.

13. No specific training on the CEDAW convention is available for judges and prosecutors. Current training for judges and prosecutors is described in the answer to questions 12 and 14.

### **Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework**

#### *Question 3*

14. Sweden adheres to a dualistic system and ratified conventions do not automatically become part of domestic law. There are two main methods for giving legal effect to international conventions in Swedish law: incorporation and transformation. International conventions are usually transformed into Swedish law by the enactment of equivalent provisions in an existing or new Swedish statute. In certain cases, a convention can be incorporated by means of general law, stating that the convention shall apply in Sweden as law and be directly applicable. One example of the latter approach is the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which was incorporated into Swedish law in 1995. According to the principle of interpretation in conformity with a treaty, courts and public authorities shall interpret Swedish law to make it consistent with Sweden’s convention commitments as far as is possible within the wording of the law.

15. According to the Discrimination Act, discrimination on the grounds of sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age is prohibited. A combined act covering different grounds of discrimination makes matters easier for those who are subject to discrimination on multiple grounds since this allows the Equality Ombudsman to investigate and handle a complaint of discrimination on several grounds. It is not uncommon for complainants to state that discrimination is linked to several grounds of discrimination.

16. Several government agencies have been instructed to apply an intersectional perspective in their operations based on e.g. various grounds of discrimination.

**Access to justice***Question 4*

17. The Government has appointed an inquiry to conduct a review of the Swedish Discrimination Act (ToR 2018:99), in order to consider measures to ensure full compliance with the provisions in the Discrimination Act on active measures, i.e. measures to prevent discrimination and in other ways promote equal rights and opportunities. The assignment will be reported on by 1 October 2020.

18. The Equality Ombudsman plays a vital role in combatting discrimination. It has a broad assignment which involves several areas of concern. The state allocation of fund provided to the Ombudsman has been increased by SEK 10 million in 2016 and a further SEK 10 million in 2018.

19. There are also other actors with important roles in combating discrimination. The actions by local anti-discrimination agencies have great significance in terms of combating discrimination at local and regional levels. Their work is in great demand, and there are currently 16 such agencies across the country. With effect from 2018, the Government has increased its funding for anti-discrimination agencies from SEK 14 million per year to SEK 29 million per year.

20. Since 1 March 2016, the Equality Ombudsman has brought action in relation to complaints by seven women relating to discrimination on the grounds of gender. One of these cases relates to sexual harassment and the others relate to pregnancy. The Ombudsman has not referred to CEDAW in any of these cases.

21. Examples of cases of the Ombudsman include the following:

- The Ombudsman brought action against a company whose chief executive officer (CEO) had subjected a female employee to sexual harassment at a Christmas party. The company was ordered to pay the complainant SEK 50 000 in damages.
- The Ombudsman brought action against a company that had terminated the probationary employment of a pregnant woman working as a restaurant assistant. The Ombudsman cited both the Discrimination Act and the Parental Leave Act in this case. The woman was awarded SEK 80 000 in damages.
- The Ombudsman brought action against a taxi company that had terminated the employment of a woman as a result of pregnancy. The Ombudsman cited both the Discrimination Act and the Parental Leave Act. The taxi company admitted discrimination and the Swedish Labour Court ordered the company to pay the woman SEK 100 000.

22. The Ombudsman brought action in three cases in 2015 relating to sexual harassment and discrimination on the grounds of gender. In all these cases, the Swedish Labour Court ruled in favour of the women.

*Question 5*

23. In the reformed sexual offences legislation, the dividing line between a punishable and a non-punishable act is drawn according to whether participation in a sexual act was voluntary. From the Government's viewpoint, this, in combination with the fact that liability for negligence has been introduced for certain sexual offences, may lead to more convictions.

24. On 23 January 2020, the Government presented a bill to the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament) proposing to abolish the statute of limitations for *inter alia* rape

committed against a person who had not attained 18 years of age. See also question 12a.

25. The Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority has been commissioned by the Government with developing information and education concerning the changes in the sexual offences legislation. This includes producing web-based training and teacher guidance. The main target group is young people aged 13–25 and professionals. The material should also be suitable for use at special schools. Other target groups include civil society organisations, the justice system, social services, schools and healthcare. In addition, parents should receive information concerning the legislation as well as suggestions on how they can talk to their children about these issues. The assignment will be reported in December 2020.

26. The Swedish National Courts Administration has been tasked to assist the Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority with initiatives to inform and educate the judiciary about the sexual offences legislation. Seminars about the legislation were arranged for judges and legal staff in the Swedish courts, prosecutors and the police.

27. In the appropriation directives for 2016, 2017 and 2018, the Swedish Prosecution Authority and the Swedish Police Authority were assigned to report on the measures taken to develop and improve the quality of criminal investigations relating to rape cases. The Government is continuing to monitor the agencies' work within this area – see also question 12a.

28. According to a new regulation, a counsel for an injured party should be assigned at an earlier stage in the process compared to previously. In addition, since 1 July 2018, there are new requirements regarding the level of knowledge and experience of the counsel for an injured party. It is no longer possible for a counsel for an injured party to transfer a case on to a colleague without the approval of the court. The Swedish Prosecution Authority and the Swedish Police Authority are currently developing a joint, standardised routine for the police and prosecutors to use when requesting a counsel for the injured party.

29. Since 1 July 2019, it is easier for the injured party to provide their testimony without feeling distressed, threatened or pressured. This includes having better opportunities to participate in Court via video link. Also, the spectators attending the hearing shall be able to listen to the hearing from a different location than the actual courtroom. New rules also allow for the possibility to remove a party or a spectator from the courtroom.

30. In May 2019, the National Council for Crime Prevention published a review of rape cases from 2016 and 2017, before the new sexual offences legislation came into force. The report showed that the police and prosecutors generally expend extensive efforts to clear filed rape reports, and that the work has improved in recent years. The proportion of complainants who are assigned a counsel for an injured party has increased, and the police use a so called “rape kit” for forensic trace preservation more often. The National Council for Crime Prevention noted that there are possibilities to improve investigations of rape, but that it would not lead to a dramatically higher percentage of clearances. An estimated 3 percent of the closed cases could have gone to prosecution with better investigation work. Improvements in the work of the police and the public prosecutors that could contribute towards increasing clearance rates include for example shorter investigations, to always and as quickly as possible interview individuals who are under reasonable suspicion, and to always make sure to investigate whether the criteria for a “particularly vulnerable situation” are fulfilled. Within the framework of the study, the Council also carried out a preliminary assessment of the first nine months of the new sexual offences legislation, from July 2018 until March 2019. It included around fifteen judgements

relating to the new provisions on rape, of which five had resulted in convictions. The reason for the acquittals related to the fact that the court has not deemed the proof that the sex was non-consensual to be sufficient. The Council also noted that cases that constituted rape even before the legislative amendments now result in stricter punishments. The Council will do a new follow up on the rape legislation reform to monitor the longer-term effect of the legislation. This assignment will be reported on by 15 June 2020.

31. Data on applications processed by the Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority is divided by gender of the victim and by the type of crime. Regrettably, there are no statistics regarding age.

32. The criteria for assessing applications of criminal injuries compensation is provided in the Crime Injuries Compensation Act (2014: 322) and contains provisions on state compensation for persons who have been injured as a result of crime. Criminal injuries compensation is primarily paid for personal injury and violation of personal integrity. In exceptional cases, compensation can be paid for loss of or damage to property or a pure financial loss. Compensation can also, in some cases, be given to children who have witnessed crimes against their relatives.

33. See annex one for data.

### **National machinery for the advancement of women**

#### *Question 6*

34. The Government established the Swedish Gender Equality Agency in January 2018.

35. When the Riksdag decided on the Budget Bill for 2019 in December 2018, it also decided that the Swedish Gender Equality Agency should be closed down and cease to be a government agency on 31 December 2019. The Riksdag further decided that the Agency should have its administrative appropriation halved during 2019. However, in an Additional Budget Amendment Bill for 2019 and in the Spring Adjustment Budget for 2019, the Government submitted a proposal to the Riksdag to reinstate the appropriation for the Agency. The Riksdag voted in accordance with the Government's proposal, and since the end of June 2019 the Agency has had its operational conditions reinstated, including a reinstated administrative appropriation for 2019.

36. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency is assigned to support other government agencies, regions and municipalities in their work to achieve the gender equality policy objectives. The Agency cooperates with many government agencies and actors at national, regional and local levels. In the work to implement the Government's national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women, the Agency cooperates on a regular basis with the county administrative boards in order to reach out to the regions. In this work, the Agency also cooperates with the National Board of Health and Welfare, the Swedish Police Authority, the Swedish Prosecution Authority, the National Council for Crime Prevention, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women at Uppsala University, Barnafriid at Linköping University and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. Many of the Agency's assignments include cooperation with relevant actors.

37. The Agency cooperates with civil society organisations on an ongoing basis. The Agency has also cooperated with representatives from the #MeToo movement and have carried out an assignment against the background of this movement, including the production of five short #MeToo films based on narratives from different vulnerable groups.

*Question 7*

38. Gender mainstreaming within the Government Offices is carried out in accordance with the Government's decision for gender mainstreaming within the Government Offices for the period 2016–2020. The decision establishes that gender mainstreaming covers all work carried out within the Government Offices but highlights four central processes in particular: the legislative process, governance of public agencies, EU matters and the budgetary process.

39. A related Government Offices decision made by the Prime Minister, as Head of the Government Offices, states that all ministers are responsible for gender equality within the framework of their policy areas. The heads of units are responsible for gender equality being taken into consideration in all work carried out by the government's officials. All ministries must also have a gender equality coordinator and an annual action plan.

40. The Division for Gender Equality offers all ministries training, methods and e-learning tools on gender mainstreaming. The division convenes an inter-ministerial working group for gender mainstreaming.

41. Statistics Sweden carries out an annual quantitative evaluation of the Government Offices' gender mainstreaming work. Statistics Sweden's evaluation regarding 2017 showed good results. The evaluation investigated the four central processes for gender mainstreaming. Regarding the legislative process, such as Government bills to the Riksdag, 99 per cent of the bills included a gender analysis. In the Government's written communications to the Riksdag, a gender analysis was included in 96 percent of the cases. The proportion of government agencies that have a requirement regarding gender equality included in their instructions has risen from 47 percent in 2017 to 52 percent in 2018. The trend in terms of integrating a gender equality perspective into EU affairs has risen from 51 percent to 77 percent.

42. During 2017, the Swedish National Financial Management Authority carried out a study regarding parts of the Government's gender budgeting work. The report showed that the reforms on the expenditure side of the state budget did not always lead to a gender equal outcome. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has also made a survey of the Government's gender budgeting work during 2018 and submitted a report to the Government on 31 March 2019. The Agency's report showed that the overall impact of the Government's gender equality policy on the annual budget bill had increased as compared to 2015.

43. The Government has a development programme designed to strengthen the gender mainstreaming work within government agencies. The program was carried out during the period 2013–2018 and has gradually been expanded to include almost 60 government agencies. Since its establishment in 2018, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency has been assigned the task to provide support to these agencies in their work with gender mainstreaming.

44. The Swedish Agency for Public Management has evaluated the programme for gender mainstreaming within government agencies. The evaluation shows that the authorities have carried out extensive work. For example, the Swedish Migration Agency has begun to apply the principle that all adults should have their own bank card, rather than, as before, only issue a bank card to the man in the family. Other examples include the Swedish Tax Agency, which has developed a more gender equal treatment of citizens at the agency's service offices, and Vinnova, Sweden's innovation agency, which has increased the proportion of women leading projects in the area of small and medium-sized businesses. Also, the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth has increased funding to women who run businesses

from 7 percent in 2015 to 13 percent in 2017. The Government has announced that the programme for gender mainstreaming within government agencies will continue.

45. The work on local and regional level is supported by an agreement between the Government and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions on gender equality work at local and regional levels for the period 2018–2020.

46. Since 2015, the Government finances the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions' project called "Model Municipalities". In the project, benchmarking is used as a method for mutual learning through systematic comparisons of gender mainstreaming efforts in municipalities in groups of three. In 2018, the initiative was expanded to include "Model Regions".

47. Within the policy areas of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs', the responsibility for gender mainstreaming is manifested via the Government's feminist foreign policy. The feminist foreign policy has the aim of contributing towards global gender equality and all women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights. A gender equality perspective is to be systematically incorporated into Sweden's entire foreign policy.

### **Extraterritorial obligations**

#### *Question 8*

48. Human rights are an integrated part of the Swedish Government's ownership policy and corporate governance. The focus on human rights in the management of state-owned companies has been strengthened over the years. By way of example there is now guidance to the boards of the state-owned companies with respect to their role and responsibility in the field.

49. The Swedish National Pension Funds are six government agencies that are governed only by legislation (the Swedish National Pension Funds Act (2000:192) and the Sixth National Pension Fund Act (2000:193)). Since 1 January 2019, the legal requirements on the First to Fourth National Pension Funds have been strengthened and a new objective for investment activities has been introduced, implying that the funds shall be administered in an exemplary manner through responsible investments and responsible ownership. How sustainable development can be promoted without compromising on the overall objective for investment activities is of particular importance. This objective shall be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis and shall be reported on in the Government's annual evaluation report on the operations of the National Pension Funds.

#### *Question 9*

50. The Government's work on development cooperation aims to create opportunities for better living conditions for people living in poverty and oppression. The Government's focus on gender equality in development cooperation is based on the insight that strengthened gender equality contributes to poverty reduction and sustainable development. It is also based on the insight that poverty is different for women and men, girls and boys.

51. All development cooperation shall be gender mainstreamed. The Government's aid agency (Sida) operates according to a gender mainstreaming plan in its work. Sida has also developed a toolbox with a focus on gender equality in development aid, the Sida Gender Toolbox. This can be found at: [www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/gender-tool-box/](http://www.sida.se/English/partners/methods-materials/gender-tool-box/).

52. Targeted support for gender equality is carried out within all areas of Sweden's feminist foreign policy. This includes support to strengthen legislation for women's and girls' rights around the world, to promote women's economic empowerment, to



combat men's violence against women, to strengthen women's role in peace processes and to increase women's political participation and access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

53. In 2017 the Swedish Government adopted a global strategy on gender equality and women's and girls' rights for the period 2018–2022 which is implemented by Sida. The strategy's objective areas include strengthened global and regional normative efforts, as well as combatting discrimination, gender stereotypical norms and all forms of gender-related violence and harmful customs. The strategy also aims to strengthen conditions and security for women's rights organisations, feminist movements and female human rights defenders. Another area of the strategy involves working for increased access to and use of statistics disaggregated by gender and age, and gender equality research.

54. Gender budgeting has been strengthened within the Swedish Foreign Service's grant management. Requirements are set to ensure gender mainstreaming of grant management in each individual case. Sweden works to achieve gender equality in all multilateral organisations by being an active donor and board member. For example, Sweden is the biggest donor to UN Women and is also a major donor to UNFPA. Sweden has also played a leading role in drawing up gender equality strategies for the development banks, including the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the European Investment Bank.

### **National human rights institution**

#### *Question 10*

55. In March 2018, the Government appointed an inquiry with the aim of exploring the establishment of a national institution for human rights. The memorandum 'Proposal for a national institution for human rights in Sweden' was submitted in October 2018. The proposal has been circulated to almost 200 government agencies and organisations for consultation, and the issues is now being prepared further in the Swedish Government Offices. In the Statement of Government Policy of 10 September 2019, the Prime Minister declared that an independent institution for the protection of human rights will be established.

56. The provisions of the Discrimination Act on active measures were amended on 1 January 2017. Active measures involve demands on employers and training providers to work in a preventive and promotional manner to counter discrimination and work for equal rights. The amendment means that the provisions include all grounds for discrimination specified in the Discrimination Act. An overall framework for the work with active measures is provided, while the structure of the concrete measures is up to employers and training providers to design in cooperation with employees and students, pupils and children.

57. Since 1 January 2015, the Discrimination Act has been further strengthened through the expansion of the protection against discrimination in the form of inadequate accessibility.

### **Discriminatory stereotypes and harmful practices**

#### *Question 11*

a.

58. In 2016, the Government abolished the municipal childcare allowance that had been in place for parents with children aged one to three in order to make it possible for them to extend their parental leave. The allowance was abolished since it was

deemed to preserve a stereotypical division of responsibility for unpaid and paid work between women and men. Primarily women with foreign backgrounds with low levels of earned income applied for municipal childcare allowance.

59. In 2017, the Government also introduced restrictions on parental benefit for parents who arrive in Sweden as refugees or as labour migrants. The aim has been to provide incentives for such families and particularly newly arrived women not to remain in long periods of parental leave but instead quickly enter into the labour market and into society. Additional changes to parental benefit are described in the answer to question 17c.

60. Through an agreement with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions during 2016–2018, the Government has contributed to work on gender norms and the involvement of men and boys in gender equality work. For example, activities that challenge gender norms within maternity health care and child healthcare have been carried out in order to encourage fathers to take part in gender equal, engaged parenting.

61. The Government programme for gender mainstreaming in government agencies provides many examples of how the work of these agencies have contributed to challenging stereotypical gender roles. See question number 7 for examples.

62. The Government regularly monitors trends regarding the division of unpaid housework and childcare between women and men through a statistical survey carried out by Statistics Sweden approximately every ten years. The Government assigned Statistics Sweden to draw up a proposal on how a survey of time use can be carried out in 2021.

b.

63. The Government is unable to directly or indirectly influence editorial material in the media.

64. According to the Swedish Radio and Television Act, a media services provider must ensure that the program content of a service is characterised by the fundamental ideas of democracy, the principal of equal value of all people and the freedom and dignity of the individual.

65. As of 2014, the public service broadcasters Swedish Radio, Swedish Television and Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company have a provision in their broadcasting licences stating that the program content of a service shall be carried out based on a gender equality and a diversity perspective.

66. The media industry has developed ethical rules for the press, radio and TV regarding journalistic decisions with the aim to provide greater protection against harmful publicity for individuals, in addition to that provided by the law.

c.

67. The commercialisation and exploitation of women's bodies in advertising, the media and pornography in order to reproduce ideas about the subordination of women is included in the Government's national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women. The Government has assigned The Swedish Gender Equality Agency and the county administrative boards to support the strategy's implementation, also in this respect.

68. The Swedish Media Council has the task to work towards strengthening children and young people as conscious media users and to protect them against harmful media influence. One way of doing this is to equip children and young people with media- and information literacy (MIL). Since 2013, the Agency has been responsible for the No Hate Speech Movement on racism and similar forms of hostility online. It also

aims to strengthen the ability of children and young people to use their freedom of speech and to respect human rights and gender equality, as well as encouraging critical thinking when using media. During 2016–2017, the Agency was assigned to map the protection of children and young people online in relation to racism, similar forms of hostility, hate crimes and extremism.

69. The Broadcasting Commission is a specific decision-making body within the Swedish Press and Broadcasting Authority that reviews the content of radio and TV. According to the practice of the Commission, broadcasters are not allowed to broadcast programmes or features that are obviously offensive towards any gender. The practice also includes a requirement for restraint in showing advanced sexual depictions.

70. The Swedish Advertising Ombudsman is the business sector's self-regulating body that strives to achieve a high ethical level in all commercial marketing communications aimed at the Swedish market. The Ombudsman reviews complaints about advertising and publish its decisions on its website. The decisions are based on the International Chamber of Commerce's rules for advertising and marketing communications and are purely advisory in nature.

71. The Swedish Media Ombudsman and the Swedish Media Council are self-regulating bodies that shall work to ensure good media ethics practices and deal with complaints about harm to privacy because of something that has been published or broadcast. The Ombudsman's task is to advise and assist individuals who feel that they have been harmed by publicity in the media. Businesses, organisations and government agencies can also submit reports in certain cases too. On 20 September 2019 the Media Ethics Administrative Board was established to serve a new expanded media ethics system.

72. In 2012, the National Board of Health and Welfare estimated that approximately 38 000 girls and women in Sweden had been subjected to female genital mutilation. Around 7 400 of them were under the age of 18. Approximately 19 000 girls were estimated to be in a risk population where their guardians have a positive or ambivalent attitude towards female genital mutilation, even after migration. Since 2012, the number of people in Sweden with a foreign background has increased, including from the areas where female genital mutilation is commonly practised on girls and women. This means that the current number is probably higher than the previous estimate of 38 000. Estimates of the extent of other honour-related violence and oppression are reported under question 2.

### **Gender-based violence against women**

#### *Question 12*

a.

73. In order to increase law enforcement capacity, the Government has initiated a significant reinforcement of the Swedish Police Authority. This entails an increase of 10 000 employees between 2016 and 2024. By the end of 2019, the number of employees had increased with approximately 3 500.

74. The Swedish Police Authority has decided to increase the number of people investigating domestic violence, rape and violent and sexual crimes against children by around 350 full-time equivalents from 2020 onwards. The Police Authority will also pay increased attention to ensuring that the available methodology manual is used in investigations, for example regarding initial evidence preservation and interrogation. In 2019, the Swedish Prosecution Authority and the Swedish Police Authority published a report on domestic violence and sexual crimes. The report showed that prosecutors and police who work in accordance with the agencies'

common methodology manual had higher prosecution rates. The Swedish Prosecution Authority has in 2019 also updated its manual on restraining orders.

75. On 23 January 2020, the Government presented a bill to the Riksdag proposing to abolish the statute of limitations for rape, gross rape and female genital mutilation if the crime was committed against a person who had not attained 18 years of age. This will also apply to crimes committed before the change of the legislation. The bill also proposes that the minimum punishment for gross child pornography offence should be raised from six months to one year of imprisonment.

76. The Government has appointed an inquiry on further strengthening protection under criminal law against sexual violations, which will review issues relating to inter alia collection of evidence in sexual offence cases. The assignment is to be reported in early 2021.

b.

77. Basic police training includes providing police officers with basic knowledge about crimes in close relationships, restraining orders and threat and risk assessments. In-depth training on investigative work related to crimes in close relationships, sexual crimes, crimes against children and young people and serious violent crimes, is also provided. In addition, there are specific trainings on advanced work with victims of crime and risk assessments.

78. An in-depth training for officials investigating sexual crimes was introduced in the autumn of 2018. The training is for two weeks and aims to strengthen officials' ability to apply current legislation and knowledge on factors that affect successful investigation of sexual crimes.

79. The training for prosecutors mentioned in point 95 in the Swedish Government's eighth and ninth periodic reports remains. Regarding the Swedish Prosecution Authority's basic training for prosecutors, it includes training on violent and sexual crimes. The Authority's advanced training for prosecutors includes training on men's violence against women and on how to approach victims of sexual crimes. The Authority also arranges seminars regularly for prosecutors to share experience in the field of domestic violence and sexual crimes. During 2018, the Prosecution Authority has provided training on the new sexual offences legislation for all its prosecutors.

80. The independent position of judges restricts the Government from imposing binding requirements on their training. Training for permanent judges is provided by the Swedish Judicial Training Academy, which independently produces training based on the needs in the courts. The Academy offers two different courses on sexual offences and domestic violence. These trainings are not compulsory.

81. The Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority has been assigned to develop knowledge support for social services' family law services, counsels and courts regarding needs of children who have witnessed domestic violence and who are accommodated in sheltered housing. This Authority shall report the assignment by January 2022.

c.

82. The Swedish Aliens Act contains rules on residence permits on the grounds of family ties. The rules are compatible with international conventions. When a residence permit is granted to a foreigner who intends to marry or enter a cohabitee relationship with a resident in Sweden, the permit should be temporary. The same applies when a residence permit is granted to a spouse or cohabiting partner of someone who is resident in Sweden, unless the spouses or the cohabitees have lived together for a longer period abroad, or the relationship is well established. After a trial period, normally two years with a temporary residence permit, a permanent

residence permit can be granted provided that the relationship still exists. This is referred to as deferred immigration assessment. If the relationship has ended before the end of the trial period, a residence permit can still be granted if the foreigner has special ties to Sweden, if the relationship has ended primarily due to that the foreigner or the foreigner's child(ren) have been subjected to domestic violence or other serious violation of their freedom or peace, or if there are other strong grounds for a prolonged residence permit. When examining an application for a residence permit from a foreigner who intends to marry or enter into a cohabitee relationship with a resident in Sweden, particular attention shall be paid to whether it can be assumed that the foreigner or the foreigner's child(ren) will be subjected to domestic violence or some other serious violation of their liberty or peace, if a residence permit were to be granted. If such a risk exists, this constitutes a special ground for not granting a residence permit. The Swedish Migration Agency carries out checks against registers of suspects and criminal records for this purpose.

83. In 2018, the Government assigned the National Board of Health and Welfare, the Swedish Migration Agency, the Swedish Public Employment Service and the Swedish Social Insurance Agency to present a plan for increased cooperation on issues regarding improved detection of domestic violence. The agencies have presented a three-year plan to develop procedures and methods aimed to detect vulnerability to domestic violence and instances of domestic violence, to improve information to the target group and strengthen support for professionals who encounter vulnerable individuals.

84. In 2014, the National Council for Crime Prevention published the results of a national survey regarding offences in close relationships. The results were reported under point 85 in the Swedish Government's eighth and ninth periodic reports. The report was conducted within the framework of the Swedish Crime Survey and was designed so that it can be repeated. In December 2019, the Council was assigned by the Government with preparing for a new national mapping of crimes in close relationships in connection with the Swedish Crime Survey data collection which will take place in 2021.

85. In the Swedish Crime Survey for the period 2014–2017, the proportion of victims of sexual offences increased significantly but fell somewhat in 2018. The mapping of sexual offences in the Swedish Crime Survey includes a wide range of crimes – from minor crimes, such as flashing, to serious crimes, such as rape. The trend of increased exposure to sexual offences in recent years is difficult to interpret. To gain further knowledge about the prevalence of sexual offences, the National Council for Crime Prevention has studied trends in the field since 2005. According to the Council, the increases seen in the survey during recent years relate primarily to less serious sexual offences. This is to a large extent related to an increased propensity among women to speak openly about their exposure to sexual offences. However, according to the Council, it is not possible to draw any firm conclusions about this trend, and sexual offences still need to be monitored closely over time.

86. Since 1990, the Council has carried out annual studies of lethal violence against women in Sweden. A total of 33 women were killed in 2018, corresponding to 31 percent of all cases of lethal violence that year. According to the Council, the number of cases of lethal violence in intimate relationships throughout the 1990s and the 2000s were on an average of 17 cases per year, before declining to an average of 13 cases per year during the period 2008–2013. During 2014–2018, the average was 15 cases per year.

*Question 13*

87. The national strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women includes an action programme for the period 2017–2020, which covers many different actions carried out by the Government through assignments to governmental agencies, inquiries and agreements with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency has been tasked with following up on all relevant actors' implementation of the strategy, and the Government has announced that the overall work with the strategy will be evaluated by an actor that does not have a central role in its implementation. An assignment to make such an evaluation has recently been given to the Swedish Agency for Public Management. The strategy has four objectives: Increased and effective preventive work against domestic violence, improved detection and stronger protection and support, more effective law enforcement and improved knowledge and method development. The strategy also has nine points of departure that are to be taken into consideration throughout every initiative, including a disability perspective. The Gender Equality Division at the Swedish Ministry of Employment coordinates the work on the strategy within the Government Offices.

88. Among those government agencies that have been tasked with specific assignments regarding the strategy are the Swedish Agency for Participation. The Agency was assigned in 2017 to report on men's violence against women with disabilities and to develop a plan for the Agency's work in this area.

89. In 2019, the Sami Parliament was assigned by the Government to map out and analyse Sami society from a gender equality perspective.

90. In 2018, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service was assigned by the Government to develop measures that prevent relapse among perpetrators of domestic violence and honour-related violence and oppression.

91. The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society has carried out information initiatives regarding health and gender equality for newly arrived and asylum-seeking children and young people. The information covers issues such as honour-related violence and oppression, including female genital mutilation, sexual violence, sexual harassment and legislation within the field, including legislation on the purchase of sexual services. The work has resulted in the website [youmo.se](http://youmo.se). Information is provided in simple Swedish and English, and in the most common languages among the target group: Dari, Tigrinya, Arabic and Somali.

92. The Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority has provided information about the new sexual offences legislation (see also question 5).

93. On 28 February 2018, the Riksdag adopted the Government Bill on Strengthened Control of Exports of Military Equipment, which came into force on 15 April 2018. The assessment of Swedish arms exports is based on an overall assessment. Within the framework of this assessment, Criterion 2 of the EU's Common Position on control of exports of military technology and equipment, and Article 7 of the Arms Trade Treaty are applied. An export license will not be granted if there is a clear risk that the military technology or equipment to be exported might be used for internal repression or that it might be used in the commission of serious violations of international humanitarian law. The risk of the arms being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence, or serious acts of violence against women or children, is considered. The licensing process also considers whether the export impedes the sustainable development of the recipient country.

## Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

### *Question 14*

94. The Government decided in February 2018 on a national action plan to combat prostitution and trafficking in human beings. The actions are targeted at preventing and combating prostitution and trafficking in human beings for all purposes, as well as contributing to better protection and support for victims of human trafficking. The prohibition of purchase of sexual services is central to the work to prevent and combat prostitution and trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes. The Government has assigned the Swedish Institute to support Sweden's missions abroad in their work to provide information about the Swedish prohibition of purchase of sexual services.

95. The Government has also appointed an ambassador to strengthen the work to combat trafficking in human beings. The ambassador also works to contribute towards international efforts to combat trafficking in human beings.

96. Information about the situation regarding prostitution and trafficking is provided through, for instance, mapping assignments to national authorities. According to a report in 2014 from the Stockholm Administrative Board, there was no indication of an increase of the number of individuals involved in prostitution. Updated information on the situation regarding prostitution and trafficking in human beings will be provided through a new mapping assignment that has been given in September 2019 to the Gender Equality Agency, as part of the national action plan. For more information about the effects of the prohibition of the purchase of sexual services, particularly since the offence was incorporated into the Criminal Code in 2005, see Sweden's eight-ninth report to CEDAW.

97. In 2016, the Government appointed an inquiry to review the protection under criminal law against the purchase of sexual services and the purchase of sexual acts from children. A legislative change entered into force on 1 January 2020 through which the penalties for purchasing sexual acts from children were raised. The minimum penalty was raised from a fine to imprisonment and the maximum penalty was raised from two to four years imprisonment. The offence was also renamed exploitation of a child through the purchase of a sexual act', see 'Criminal actions against the exploitation of a child through the purchase of a sexual act', (Govt Bill 2018/19:157).

98. Internationally, Sweden actively promotes work to combat trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes and on encouraging more countries to consider the same type of legislation as Sweden has.

a.

99. The national assignment to coordinate the work to combat prostitution and trafficking in human beings for sexual and other purposes that was previously assigned to Stockholm County Administrative Board was made permanent with effect from 1 January 2018 when the assignment was transferred to the Swedish Gender Equality Agency. The assignment includes leading the National Task Force against Prostitution and Human Trafficking (NMT), which provides support for municipalities, government agencies and non-profit organisations in matters relating to prostitution and all forms of trafficking in human beings. In autumn 2019, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency updated the National Referral Mechanism manual (NRM), which can be used as a support in the work to highlight and identify possible victims of trafficking in human beings.

100. The Swedish Police Authority has been assigned to identify and describe the actions taken by the police to strengthen the ability to combat trafficking in human beings throughout the country. Initiatives carried out by the police include for

example training programmes and the introduction of an action plan to combat trafficking in human beings. Since 1 April 2018, all cases of trafficking in human beings are handled by the National Unit against Organized Crime within the Swedish Prosecution Authority which is composed of senior prosecutors with many years of experience.

b.

101. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency is developing training for professionals regarding trafficking in human beings for all purposes. The training will be offered during spring 2020, also online. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency currently offers online training on trafficking with children and young people.

102. The National Board of Health and Welfare has developed guidance for social services that provides practical support when encountering cases of trafficking in human beings with a focus on children which has been disseminated nationally.

103. The Board has included information about vulnerability and the risk of trafficking in human beings and exploitation in the introduction programmes for staff working at homes for care or residence for children and young people. The reason for this is that children in homes for care or residence might have experiences of trafficking in human beings and exploitation and may also be at risk of such practices.

104. The Board also provides information about trafficking in human beings on the national website, where information about risk factors and signs, support and protection, and links to the Board's and other government agencies website and materials on trafficking in human beings can be found.

105. The Swedish Prosecution Authority provides online training and method support on trafficking in human beings primarily aimed for prosecutors working in the local prosecution offices who come in to contact with this type of crime. The Authority's manual on offences against children includes a specific chapter on crimes against children abroad.

106. The Swedish Migration Agency has developed manuals to support the handling of cases involving violence or trafficking in human beings, as well as online training on honour-related violence and oppression and on trafficking in human beings.

107. The Swedish Police Authority provides training on trafficking in human beings, such as interactive training that is accessible to all employees, and further education for investigators and specific training for the border police.

c and d

108. Since 2012, the National Board of Health and Welfare has been commissioned by the Government to allocate funding to municipalities and non-profit organizations in order to develop the quality of work relating to violence in intimate relationships, including honor-related violence and oppression. In 2016 the Government decided that the funding should also be made available to the regions and to include the target group of women and men with experience of prostitution and trafficking in human beings.

109. During 2018, the Board was assigned to train social services workers on domestic violence directed particularly against vulnerable groups, including people with experience of prostitution and trafficking in human beings. The assignment was based on needs that had been expressed by people involved in prostitution, for instance during the #MeToo movement.

Civil society organisations play an important role for people who are victims of prostitution and trafficking in human beings who need support and assistance or who wish to escape their situation. These organisations can also be a link between



individuals and government agencies. The Government therefore intends to continue to provide funding for civil society organisations that work to support people who are victims of prostitution and trafficking in human beings.

110. In 2018, the Government assigned the Board to map what operations within social services and healthcare that needed further competences and skills in order to better identify women and men in prostitution and their need for protection and support.

### **Participation in political and public life**

#### *Question 15*

111. The feminist foreign policy has six objective areas according to the foreign service's action plan. The foreign service shall contribute towards (i) all women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights; (ii) freedom from physical, psychological and sexual violence; (iii) participation in preventing and resolving conflicts, and post-conflict peacebuilding; (iv) political participation and influence in all areas of society; (v) economic rights and empowerment; and (vi) sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). These objective areas are broad in order to correspond to the challenges faced and to make cooperation between the foreign policy's various tools possible. In addition, the foreign service's internal work shall support the feminist foreign policy.

112. During the five years that the Government has pursued a feminist foreign policy, significant results have been achieved. A report submitted to the Riksdag on the feminist foreign policy (Govt. Com. 2019/20:17) describes the work and provides examples of results, e.g. that the work is taking place at all levels: bilaterally, regionally and globally. The policy is well established and has inspired countries and organisations to follow. A handbook about the feminist foreign policy has been produced and summarises the work.

113. Other examples of results achieved within the feminist foreign policy include initiating a network of female mediators who are active all over the world, driving forward the agenda for women, peace and security within the UN Security Council, and working for women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). As part of the feminist foreign policy, the Government has made efforts to increase female representation in peace processes and legal systems, and to strengthen protection for female journalists, human rights defenders, environmental activists, politicians, cultural works and others who defend women's and girls' enjoyment of human rights. The Government also cooperates with Wikimedia and a number of local partners as part of the #WikiGap initiative, which aims to increase the visibility of women on Wikipedia.

114. A feminist trade policy was launched in 2019 with the aim of contributing towards international trade bringing positive effects for women as producers, entrepreneurs, employees and consumers, in the same way as for men.

115. In April 2018, the Government arranged the Stockholm Forum on Gender Equality, bringing together more than 700 participants from over a hundred different countries to exchange methods and strengthen cooperation across borders and sectors. The aim was to create a global mobilisation platform for gender equality. As a follow-up event, Tunisia – in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women, and with the Governments support – organised the Tunis Forum on Gender Equality on 24–26 April 2019. This work is continuing, and France and Mexico – together with UN Women – will arrange global forums for gender equality during 2020.

116. The Government strategy for democracy policy describes the situation for democracy in Sweden where several serious challenges are highlighted. A report developed by Statistics Sweden on behalf of the Government, shows detailed statistics on women's and men's participation in various areas in society and shows that there are no large differences between women and men in terms of electoral participation, participation in democratic processes between elections, trust in democratic institutions, and the proportion of women and men represented in political bodies. One challenge is that men are overrepresented in relation to women in senior positions within political bodies, for example as chairs of municipal executive boards.

117. Another challenge that has been observed is that women with disabilities participate in electoral participation to a lesser extent compared with other women. The Agency for Participation has updated the checklist for accessible polling stations which was developed in 2014.

118. In order to promote a high and more equal level of participation in elections, the Swedish Agency for Accessible Media has been tasked with running the website 'All voters'. The website includes easy-to-read news information particularly aiming at groups of eligible voters which register low levels of participation in previous general elections, such as young people, foreign-born people and persons with disabilities.

119. In July 2017, the Government adopted an action plan – Defending free speech – containing measures to reduce exposure to threats and hatred among journalists, elected representatives, artists and opinion makers. The aim is to provide increased knowledge, support for those who are exposed to threats and hatred, and a stronger judicial system.

120. In 2019 the Swedish Gender Equality Agency reported that women generally face tougher conditions than men within political bodies and parties.

121. Since 2016, the Swedish Prosecution Authority has carried out a project focusing on crimes relating to threats and violence against elected representatives. The most common form of crime was threats and harassment, with violence being less common. This was shown by the 2019 survey of politicians' safety carried out by the National Council for Crime Prevention on behalf of the Government.

122. The Government decided on new legislation in 2018, allowing elected representatives from municipalities and regions who work full time or a significant portion of full time to take parental leave. The Government's aim is to make it easier for female and male elected representatives to combine holding elected positions with family life.

123. Civil society organisations can receive government funding to promote women's organisation and women's participation in the democratic process and in social life including gender equality project. The Government also provides support to government agencies to promote women's increased power and influence. The Swedish Film Institute Foundation, which allocates government film support, has worked actively to achieve an equal gender distribution of production support, including via the 50/50 by 2020 action plan. This work has created a better gender balance in leading positions within the film industry.

124. The Government assigned the Swedish Research Council for Sport Science in 2018 to analysis and report on equality within sport. The report reveals that there is a gender imbalance of government and municipal funding for sports associations as well as gender distribution of board positions and elected representatives.

125. The Government has assigned the Swedish Gender Equality Agency to carry out a follow-up of developments in relation to the Government's gender equality policy

sub-goal of Gender equal division of power and influence which will be reported on by 31 January 2021.

126. For information about women's representation at universities, including professors, see question 16. For information about women's representation in economics, see questions 17–18, and in environment, see question 23.

127. In accordance with a decision made by the Riksdag, the Government has reported on the distribution of economic resources between women and men as part of the Budget Bill since 1988, and on the development of women's and men's individual disposable income (the total of income from work, income from capital and transfers minus tax) since 1995. Women's individual disposable income has been around 20–25 percent lower than men throughout the entire period. However, the composition of women's and men's incomes is not the same. On average, men have higher levels of income from work, income from capital and pensions, while women have higher levels of income from transfers. Men also pay higher taxes than women on average.

128. In 2017, women's income from capital was, on average, 49 percent of men's income from capital. Much of this difference can be explained by considerably more men than women reporting capital gains from the sale of financial assets, and dividends from closely held companies which accounted for more than a quarter of the overall income from capital.

129. According to the latest statistics from the Swedish Forest Agency (2018), the total number of forest owners (physical people) in Sweden was 319 649 in 2017. Of the physical people counted as owners of forest in 2017, women constitute 38 percent and men 60 percent. For around 2 percent – mainly owners living abroad – details of gender are missing, and these cannot therefore be included. In comparison with 2007 there is virtually no change in the distribution of gender in relation to the ownership of forest in Sweden.

130. Men are business owners to a considerably higher degree than women. Today, there are just over 1 000 000 registered businesses in Sweden, which includes businesses that do not carry out any operations but are still registered. Women make up around 30 percent, and the figure has remained around this level for a long time. In Sweden, the gender distribution is particularly noticeable for so-called operative business owners, i.e. those who run or own their businesses. The proportion of female operative business owners in Sweden was 29 percent in 2017. Female business owners are a strategically important growth issue for the Government. A diversity of businesses and business owners strengthens the competitiveness, renewal and sustainability of industry. The Government sees it as important to continue working for equal conditions for women and men to start, run and develop businesses in Sweden.

## **Education**

### *Question 16*

131. According to the Swedish Education Act, education within the school system should be structured in compliance with basic democratic values and human rights, such as the sanctity of human life, the freedom and integrity of the individual, the equal value of every human being, gender equality and solidarity between people.

132. In addition, according to the Swedish Education Act and national curricula, no one at school should be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnic origin, religion or other declaration of faith, transgender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age or disability, or to any other form of harassment. All tendencies towards discrimination or harassment should be actively countered. Schools should

also actively and consciously promote women's and men's equal rights and opportunities. Pupils should be encouraged to develop their interests without gender prejudices. Schools should inform and guide pupils when choosing courses, continued education and professional work, and should counteract such restrictions in their choices that are based on concepts of gender and on social or cultural background.

a.

133. In 2017, the Government appointed an inquiry to propose actions to develop study and career guidance. The inquiry's report, 'Future choices – career guidance for individuals and society', SOU 2019:4, has been circulated for consultation and the proposals are currently being prepared within the Government Offices.

134. The Government, the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise and the Swedish Trade Union Confederation runs a tri-party collaboration, WorldSkills Sweden. WorldSkills Sweden works, among other things, with promoting vocational education to pupils who are going to make career choices. The question of gender-stereotypical career choices has been in focus in all activities carried out by WorldSkills Sweden, for example within the framework of various campaigns, in visual materials and in appointing professional ambassadors to break gender patterns.

135. The inquiry on vocational programmes acknowledged in 2015 that pupils who make non-traditional education choices, for example girls who choose a vocational programme where boys are in the majority, may be particularly vulnerable in work-based learning. The Swedish National Agency for Education works to support cooperation between school and working life and provides training for supervisors in work-based learning. Since 2019, this training includes information on workplace culture and values.

136. The Government has included knowledge on men's violence against women and domestic violence as a qualitative target in the System of Qualifications for e.g. the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Physiotherapy, the Degree of Master of Laws, the Degree of Master of Science in Medicine and the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Social Work.

b.

137. In 2016, the Government tasked all public-sector universities and university colleges with producing a plan outlining their intended work with gender mainstreaming. This can include equal opportunities regarding research careers and combating gender-based study choices. The work has been followed-up and in March 2019, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency submitted a status report on gender mainstreaming in higher education institutions.

138. Gender equality within higher education institutions can be measured, for example, by the proportion of women and men employed as professors and senior lecturers, and in career-development positions. The proportion of female professors has risen by an average of one percentage point each year since 2016. It is important that women can also qualify for the most senior positions. The Riksdag has established that there should be targets for gender distribution for newly recruited professors at higher education institutions. These targets have been in place since 1997. The Government's long-term national objective is that 50 percent of newly recruited professors should be women by 2030.

139. Many government agencies within the field of higher education and research are included in the Government's development programme for gender mainstreaming in government agencies. The Swedish Research Council was one of the first government agencies to take part in the programme and has had a gender mainstreaming remit

since 2013. In addition, the Swedish Research Council runs a network for gender mainstreaming for government agencies within the higher education sector.

c.

140. National Curricula for various school forms include sex education. In compulsory school, head teachers are responsible for sex education being integrated in various subjects. In upper secondary school, head teachers have a responsibility, within given frames, for sex education.

141. In 2019, the Swedish National Agency for Education was tasked by the Government with reporting on proposals for curriculum changes to improve sex education in compulsory forms of schooling, in upper secondary school, in upper secondary special school and in municipal adult education. The Agency's proposals are being prepared by the Government Offices.

d.

142. In order to strengthen preventive work against sexual harassment, the Swedish National Agency for Education has developed support and tools for schools' development of the teaching of sex education, and for work against harassment. School staff can use digital support materials and online training on sex education to strengthen and develop this work.

143. The Agency also distributes funding to organisations within civil society that offer school staff in-service training on sex education and anti-bullying, including combating sexual harassment.

144. The inquiry 'An effective and appropriate review of the Swedish Discrimination Act', ToR 2018:99 will review the supervisory responsibility in the Discrimination Act concerning discrimination in the national school system. See question 4.

145. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency was assigned to support higher education institutions in their gender mainstreaming work during 2016–2019. The assignment includes support with the planning and implementation of educational institutions' gender mainstreaming work, development of skills in gender mainstreaming, organising network meetings to share experiences between educational institutions and other government agencies and sharing useful examples on effective method development.

146. The support was designed in dialogue with the educational institutions and with other relevant actors and adapted to the activities. The Agency submitted a status report on the assignment to the Government in March 2019 and will submit a final report by 31 March 2020.

147. There are no actions that are specifically aimed at girls within the groups of Sami and Roma in schools. Instead, the work aims to improve teaching in the national minority languages. Actions to promote integration and reduce unemployment among foreign born and migrant women are reported on in question 20.

## **Employment and economic empowerment**

### *Question 17*

a.

148. In 2015, the Government changed the Swedish Public Employment Service's instruction whereby the Service should structure its activities so that they promote diversity and gender equality, and combats discrimination in working life and gender segregation in the labour market.

149. In the 2018 annual report the Agency states that it has worked for three years with gender mainstreaming as a method, and has further strengthened the gender equality perspective in its governance by including gender-specific targets for e.g. labour market training and for people in the introduction program for newly arrived immigrants who continue to work or studies.

150. The Government has decided on a work environment strategy for 2016–2020. The strategy acknowledges challenges and opportunities of modern working life, where the psychosocial working environment that particularly affects women's health is a prioritised area.

151. The Swedish Work Environment Authority has adopted new provisions on the organisational and social working environment, which came into force on 31 March 2016. The Authority has also been assigned a number of remits by the Government, including analysing fatal accidents from a gender perspective, further developing specific preventive measures within female-dominated sectors, and supporting research on supervisory operations during 2016–2018 with an emphasis on the working environment and ill-health relating to the working environment from a gender perspective.

152. There are several initiatives to attract and retain women in technical education and professions. For example, Chalmers University of Technology and the Royal Institute of Technology arrange annual festivals and technology camps for girls. The Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences runs the Technology Leap initiative, in which young people carry out four months of paid, supervised work experience where half the participants are women. Mentoring programmes are common, and there are large networks such as Womenengineer. Within the initiative Pepp, girls at upper secondary school are given a university mentor who helps them to discover the technology industry.

153. Within agriculture and forestry, the Federation of Swedish Farmers – the largest interest and business organisation for the green industries – established a gender equality academy already in 2009 to contribute towards a development whereby men and women will have equal opportunities to start and run a business. The academy initiates and finances research projects and studies to obtain more knowledge about gender equality and enterprise within the green industries.

154. When it comes to the construction industry, the Government intends to work together with the industry to create an industry where everyone wants to stay and develop, regardless of their gender. In March 2017, the Government announced its goal that at least 25 percent of those who are newly employed within the construction industry should be women by 2030.

b.

155. Information about the code of conduct for corporate governance is provided in the response to question 18, and information about the Swedish Public Employment Service's instruction can be found in the answer to question 17a.

c.

156. The social partners have the main responsibility for wage formation in Sweden. Legislation on equal pay for equal work and work of equal value applies to all employers within both the private and the public sectors.

157. The fact that women and men are often in different professions and sectors is a key reason for the pay gap between women and men. In 2018, the gender pay gap was 10.7 percent, a reduction by 5.6 percentage points since 2005. Adjusting for known variables such as occupation, sector, education, age etc., the gender pay gap was in all 4,4 percent.

158. The Government decided in December 2017 on an action plan for “gender equal lifetime earnings”. The action plan describes which policy areas that are considered relevant in order to explain and change the differences in lifetime earnings between women and men, such as education, the labour market, the working environment and family policy. The action plan included a new assignment for the Swedish National Mediation Office to report on the relative wage changes for various professions between 2014 and 2017, and on the basis of the report, initiate a discussion with the social partners, in order to promote the work to reduce wage differences between women and men.

159. The results in the report from the Mediation Office showed that there had been changes in relative wages between several large professional groups between 2014 and 2017. Many of the professional groups that experienced the most positive changes in relative wages are dominated by women and are among the largest professional groups in the labour market. Wage developments in these large professions have therefore been one of several contributing factors behind the reduction in the overall pay gap between women and men during the period 2014–2017.

160. As a result of changes in the Discrimination Act in 2017, salary mapping for gender equal salaries must now be carried out annually instead of every three years. The requirement for written documentation of salary mapping was changed to include companies with at least ten employees, instead of companies with at least 25 employees as was previously the case.

161. In July 2019, the Government tasked the Equality Ombudsman to inform employers about the requirements in the Discrimination Act’s provisions on active measures, including on annual salary mapping. This remit will be reported on by 1 April 2020.

162. The inquiry to review the Discrimination Act, (ToR 2018:99) will analyse whether the supervision of the provisions on active measures is effective and appropriate. The work relating to active measures includes salary mapping.

a.

163. The Government has an objective that full-time work for both women and men should be striven for. The proportion of women working part-time has decreased in recent years (see the table below) At the same time, the proportion of men working part-time has increased slightly when looking at the same age group.

**Table: Employed aged 20–64, divided by full-time and part-time (percent)**

	<i>Women</i>		<i>Men</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Full-time</i>	<i>Part-time</i>	<i>Full-time</i>	<i>Part-time</i>	<i>Full-time</i>	<i>Part-time</i>
2005	65%	35%	89%	10%	78%	22%
2012	69%	31%	89%	11%	79%	21%
2018	73%	27%	89%	11%	81%	19%

*Source:* Statistics Sweden.

164. It is still more common for women to work part-time than men. The reasons why women and men work part-time are similar, primarily being due to not having a suitable full-time work. However, it is considerably more common for women to state caring for children or work being too physically or mentally demanding as a reason for working part-time. For men, it is more common to state studies or having several jobs as a reason for working part-time.

165. Since 2012, the number of underemployed part-time workers, that is, employees reporting that they would wish to work more hours, has fallen by 81 000. This reduction has been particularly evident among women (62 000).

166. Initiatives are being taken for full-time work to be an option. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and the Swedish Municipal Workers' Union, which organise many employees within welfare professions and have 80 percent female membership, are carrying out a joint project to make full-time work the norm within care and nursing.

b.

167. In 2015 the regulations regarding when general temporary employment is converted into permanent employment in the Employment Protection Act (SFS 1982:80) was amended. Through the changes the employers' possibilities to use temporary upon permanent employment for a long period of time was limited.

168. The number of employees on the Swedish labour market aged 20–64 increased by 243 000 between 2015 and 2018. The entire net increase consisted of an increase of permanent employment. The number of people in temporary employment fell during the same period by more than 13 000, of whom 6 200 were women and 7 000 were men.

169. The positive changes in the number of employees in permanent and temporary employment have taken place during a period of a successively stronger economy and greater demand for workers. It is therefore hard to establish the extent to which changes in legislation has had any effect. A longer economic cycle will probably be needed in order to determine whether the change in legislation has contributed towards transitions from temporary to permanent employment.

c.

170. On 1 January 2016, the number of days in the parental benefit scheme which is reserved to a parent increased from 60 to 90 days. The aim of the additional reserved days for each parent is to increase gender equality between parents when it comes to the division of house- and childcare work. The results of the change have been followed-up by the Swedish Social Insurance Agency and the results show an increase in men's use of parental benefit during the first two years of children's lives, with a corresponding reduction for women. The proportion of men taking at least 90 days of parental leave during the first two years of children's lives rose from 36 percent to 40 percent. These changes were mainly observed in those groups that have completed upper secondary education but do not have any education at university level. Men with high incomes already took more than 90 days on average. Overall, the amount of leave taken by men rose by 6.7 days and fell by 12.4 days for women. Overall, the amount of leave taken by men rose by 6.7 days and fell by 12.4 days for women.

171. 'Double days' are an opportunity for parents to take up to 30 days of parental benefit together during the first year of a child's life and was introduced in 2012. A report from the Swedish Social Insurance Inspectorate notes that fathers with lower levels of income and education and fathers in couples where both parents were born abroad – where the use of parental benefit is often low – were more likely to use 'double days' than other fathers.

172. The Government appointed an inquiry in 2016 to conduct a review of parental insurance. In December 2017, the inquiry proposed several actions to achieve a more gender equal distribution of parental benefit and parental leave. The proposal, which came into force on 1 July 2019, means that more family configurations are included in the opportunities to care for a child using parental benefit. The inquiry's other proposals are being prepared within the Government Offices.



173. Since 2016, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency is assigned in its annual appropriation directive to promote gender equal use of parental benefit and temporary parental benefit. The work includes informing parents about the regulations of parental insurance including campaigns encouraging parents to share their parental leave equally.

174. Parental benefit rules were changed on 1 January 2019. The change makes it possible for the parent who is not pregnant to also receive parental benefit and take leave from work for prenatal visits, etc. This change aims to provide better conditions for parents to establish more equal parental responsibilities early on.

#### *Question 18*

175. As part of the changes made to the Discrimination Act on 1 January 2017, the requirement for employers to promote an equal gender distribution in management positions has been made clearer. The Government hopes that the change can better support employers' work towards equal gender distributions in management positions.

176. The Swedish Corporate Governance Board, which is responsible for the Swedish code of conduct for corporate governance, has had stated ambition levels since 2014 that each gender should have at least a 40 percent share after the 2020 annual general meetings.

177. The Government has a goal of an equal gender distribution on the boards of companies that are partly or fully state-owned. In accordance with the state ownership policy, these boards should consist of at least 40 percent women and men. According to the policy, the Government shall be a role model in gender equality work and shall work actively with gender equality issues in its operations, not least when making appointments at management level.

178. According to the Second Swedish National Pension Fund's women's index for 2019, the proportion of women in the management teams of listed companies rose for the ninth year running to 24.0 percent. Since 2013, the proportion of women on the boards of listed companies has increased by 11.6 percentage points to 34.0 percent. The proportion of female board chairs and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) is also growing, albeit slowly. For the first time, more than 10 percent of listed companies' board chairs were women (10.2 percent, an increase from 8.8 percent). In terms of CEOs, 9.0 percent were women (an increase from 8.4 percent). Newly elected women on boards are younger than their male counterparts, and female board members hold on average more board positions than male board members.

179. New regulations for active measures in the Discrimination Act apply from 1 January 2017 and include a new feature, that all grounds for discrimination are covered by the requirements for active measures. Among other things, the law states that employers should have operational guidelines and routines to prevent harassment or sexual harassment. The employer should also have routines to prevent reprisals.

180. The Equality Ombudsman and the Swedish Work Environment Authority have been assigned with producing a joint digital information platform with support for employers in their work to prevent sexual harassment in working life. The Ombudsman has also been assigned to carry out specific knowledge-boosting and supervisory initiatives directed to employers, employer organisations and trade unions in connection with labour inspections. In 2019, the Authority and the Ombudsman were given continued assignments to work to devise information and to raise awareness on active measures and victimisation, including work to combat sexual harassment in cooperation with the Swedish Gender Equality Agency.

181. Those who have been subject to discrimination or reprisals and those whose employers have not met the obligations to investigate and act against harassment or sexual harassment, or whose employers have not done enough to prevent harassment and sexual harassment, can report this to the Equality Ombudsman.

182. Since 1 March 2016, the Ombudsman has brought action in relation to complaints from one woman in which the Ombudsman has alleged sexual harassment (discrimination on the grounds of gender).

183. 1. The Ombudsman brought action against a company whose chief executive officer (CEO) had subjected a women employee to sexual harassment at a Christmas party. The company was ordered to pay the complainant SEK 50 000 in damages.

184. The Ombudsman has brought action in three cases in 2015 relating to sexual harassment.

1. Café. Action brought in 2015 regarding gender as a ground for discrimination (sexual harassment). The employer was ordered to pay the woman SEK 50 000 in damages.
2. Bakery. Action brought in 2015 regarding gender as a ground for discrimination (sexual harassment). The employer was ordered to pay the woman SEK 50 000 in damages.
3. Restaurant. Action brought in 2015 regarding gender as a ground for discrimination (sexual harassment). The case resulted in a settlement. The woman was granted SEK 80 000 in damages.

185. During 2018 and 2019, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency was tasked with gathering and disseminating knowledge about sexual harassment. The assignment was reported on in November 2019, and as a result the Agency developed a website where employers and training providers, as well as children and adults who have been subjected to sexual harassment, can find information about legislation, regulations and obligations, and about whom to contact in the event of being subjected to sexual harassment.

186. Internationally, Sweden works actively to combat sexual harassment including within the development aid sector.

## **Health**

### *Question 19*

a.

187. On 17 December 2015, the Government decided on a strategy for physical health 2016–2020 which has a broad focus and aims to prevent mental ill-health. The number of girls aged 15 to 17 who have been treated for depression and anxiety within psychiatry for children and young people tripled between 2006 and 2016. Girls and women are affected by mental ill-health to a greater degree, this means that they are an important group in the work to implement the strategy.

188. Care and support for people with abuse and addiction problems are a joint responsibility for regions and municipalities. Since 1 July 2013, regions have been obliged to enter into agreements on cooperation regarding people with alcohol, narcotics, medication and doping abuse issues. Older people also need access to care for abuse and addiction issues and identifying ways of offering interventions – particularly to older women – is a challenge within health and social care. Taking a holistic viewpoint and coordinating efforts is of great importance in order not to miss out on any specific group.

189. One of the central components to achieve the Government's objectives and to support the implementation of the Government's strategy within the field of mental health for 2016–2020 is continued agreements on cooperation with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. The Government's funding within these agreements has mostly been used to improve accessibility and cooperation, and for staff skills development. The results show local and regional variations. This is often seen as positive but has the potential to increase the risk of greater inequality within mental health. There is a real need for development work within the field of mental health, and continued long-term initiatives are therefore important.

190. The Government also allocates funding to voluntary organisations working within the field of mental health through remits to the Public Health Agency of Sweden and the National Board of Health and Welfare.

b.

191. Women have higher levels of sick leave than men. This is particularly true of sick leave due to psychiatric diagnoses. Of the women on sick leave, around 53 percent had a psychiatric diagnosis. The corresponding figure for men was approximately 40 percent. The largest diagnosis group for both women and men can be characterised by milder or moderate mental ill-health, e.g. moderate depression.

192. An overview of current knowledge from the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working life and Welfare, on mental ill-health, working life and sick leave shows that there is a scientific link between work, mental ill-health and sick leave and. risk factors in working life include mentally strenuous work, high demands, low control, an imbalance between effort and reward, and role conflicts. The knowledge overview shows that the effect on mental health is similar when women and men are exposed to the same factors at work.

193. The Swedish Work Environment Authority has produced a report on women's work environment as a result of growing work-related ill-health within female-dominated sectors. The work environment, combined with physical and mental workloads, are currently the main reasons for women's work-related ill-health. Women work to a large extent in what are known as contact professions such as schools, care and nursing. The proportion of employees who feel that they have strenuous jobs with high demands and little control is highest within the contact professions.

194. Another factor that can affect women's sick leave is their dual roles as workers and having main responsibility for the family. The results of two studies from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency and the Institute for Evaluation of Labour Market and Education Policy provide some support for this. Among other things, the Institute's study shows that having a family increases women's sick leave compared to men's, and that this difference remains if 16 years after the birth of the first child.

195. The Government has commissioned the Swedish Agency for Public Management with analysing government agencies' work to prevent and reduce sick leave among women employed by the state, since they are sick listed twice as much as men employed by the state. The report will be submitted on 31 May 2020.

196. The Riksdag decided in 2017 on a new objective and a new direction for the disability policy. Individual support and solutions for the individual's independence are one of four prioritised areas for the implementation that the work shall be directed towards.

197. Support for persons with disabilities are regulated by the Act on Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (LSS) and the Swedish Social Services Act (SoL). The proportion of women granted support in accordance

with LSS is somewhat lower (41 percent) than the proportion of men (59 percent). The proportion of men is higher than the proportion of women within every type of support. The differences between the genders are greatest among younger people, and in 2017 32 percent of support measures in the 0–12 age range were granted to girls. The Government decided in 2016 on an inquiry to review the initiatives within LSS and assistance benefits in order to deliver more effective support in accordance with LSS. The report from the inquiry is currently being considered within the Government Offices.

198. Support in accordance with SoL include housing support, home care services, contact persons, special housing and day activities. In October 2016, 52 200 people aged 0–64 received one or more support measure in accordance with SoL. Support in the home in the form of housing support was the most common. Almost 21 000 people received this support, with women accounting for 51 percent. Housing support aims to support the individual in day-to-day life, in both practical and social terms, and is commonly directed at those with mental disabilities living in their own homes.

199. Other forms of support include mobility services in accordance with the Swedish Mobility Service Act). In 2018, 315 000 people had a mobility service permit. Of these, 38 percent were men and 62 percent were women.

200. A car allowance is an important benefit for encouraging participation in society for persons with disabilities. In 2018, 57 percent of those who were granted a car allowance were men and 43 percent were women. In 2018, a total of SEK 93 928 000 was paid in car allowances, of which 36 percent was paid to women and 64 percent to men, according to information from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency.

201. A new social insurance benefit, the additional cost allowance, was introduced on 1 January 2019. This is an allowance for people whose functional capacity has been reduced before the age of 65, and whose reduction in functional capacity can be assumed to last for at least a year. The allowance can also be disbursed to parents whose child has a reduction capacity that can be assumed to last at least for six months. In order to be eligible for additional cost allowance, the person must have additional expenses related to the disability. Since this benefit is relatively new, there are no statistics broken down by gender. In December 2018, almost 62 000 people received disability allowance which successively will be replaced by the additional cost allowance. 53 percent were women and 47 percent were men.

202. In Sweden, there is no specific legislation regarding forced institutionalisation for persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities. Psychiatric forced institutionalisation can be applied under certain circumstances, mainly with the support of the Swedish Act on Compulsory Psychiatric Care (LPT) and the Swedish Act on Forensic Psychiatric Care (LRV). Both LPT and LRV include material and procedural rules that meet basic legal security requirements, such as requirements for predictability and the opportunity for legal control. When as an exception care is provided without consent but with the support of the law, this care naturally includes quality requirements, including a requirement for science and proven experience.

203. If someone is admitted to a medical institution against their will, a special doctor's certificate – a care certificate – is required. The care certificate must be written in connection with an examination by a registered doctor. For forced institutionalisation to occur, three conditions must be met, and this must be stated on the care certificate. First, the individual must be suffering from serious mental health problems. Second, the individual must have an absolute need for psychiatric care around the clock due to his or her mental condition and personal circumstances. This must take place at a medical institution. The third criterion is that the individual opposes care for his or her mental health condition or is so ill that he or she is unable to assess his or her need for care. Forced institutionalisation must not be applied in

cases relating only to a learning disability. There is no legal support for applying forced institutionalisation to individuals with psychosocial difficulties. As a rule, these individuals instead receive the care and nursing they need through initiatives such as living in group accommodation once they have reached the age of 18.

### **Women facing intersectional discrimination**

#### *Question 20*

204. The Equality Ombudsman ensures compliance with the Discrimination Act, and states in its 2019 annual report that it is not uncommon for those submitting complaints to say that the discrimination they have experienced has been linked to multiple grounds of discrimination.

205. Women's exposure to various forms of racism is acknowledged within the framework of the Government's national plan to combat racism, similar forms of hostility and hate crimes. Assignment in the plan should apply a gender equality perspective. For example, anti-Gypsyism affects the rights of children and women, which is why several of the initiatives carried out for the inclusion of Roma focus on this.

206. Women with disabilities are often in a particularly vulnerable situation compared with the population in general, and the new national goal for the disability policy area states that the policy should contribute towards greater gender equality.

207. Women who are migrants are in a vulnerable situation. The Government has provided funding for civil society organizations (including non-formal adult education) and municipalities to be able to offer meaningful activities for women and men seeking asylum, such as information about the Swedish society and language courses.

208. The municipalities are responsible for offering civic orientation courses to newly arrived immigrants. From 2020, the courses have been extended to at least 100 hours of civic orientation instead of the former level of at least 60 hours. The Government has also tasked a County Administrative Board with developing the training material used within civic orientation for a greater focus on gender equality and human rights.

209. During 2018–2022, the Government will make it easier for asylum seekers and newly arrived immigrants on parental leave to continue developing their knowledge of Swedish language during the leave. The Government has also tasked a special investigator to analyse differences in student completion rates in Swedish language courses for men and women, and proposals should be submitted on how women in particular can be motivated and supported to continue their studies and their introduction in the labour market (ToR 2019:65). The Government has decided that from 2020 onwards, study associations will also receive funding for measures in Swedish-language skills. The main target group is foreign-born women with children.

210. The Swedish Public Employment Service cooperates locally with employers, municipalities and other actors, for example in what are known as the local job tracks. According to the Delegation for the Employment of Young People and Newly Arrived Migrants, there were 493 local jobs tracks with approximately 6 300 participants at the end of 2018. The proportions of female and male participants were 56 percent and 44 percent respectively. The gender distribution varies in different industries and job tracks.

211. The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth has been tasked during the period 2018–2021 with promoting the establishment of foreign-born women, for example by supporting initiatives that help foreign-born women to start and run their

own companies. The Swedish Forest Agency and various other government agencies were also tasked in 2017 with contributing towards more and simpler routes into jobs in the green industries.

212. Research shows that subsidised employment that is correctly designed is an effective tool for getting unemployed people into work. During the 2014–2018, the Government introduced so-called “extra jobs” and “introduction jobs”. These subsidised employments are considered important in order for long-term unemployed and newly arrived immigrants to get a job and connections to the labour market.

213. Since 2018, study associations have been allocated targeted funding for outreach and motivational initiatives directed at foreign-born women. The initiative runs until 2020. The initiative aims to increase participants’ self-confidence, offer opportunities to complement basic knowledge in various knowledge areas, and – through guidance discussions – show possible ways into various forms of studies within e.g. non-formal adult education, municipal adult education and vocational education.

214. Adult education is of great importance for newly arrived women and men to learn Swedish and complement their previous education. In 2015, the Government initiated a measure called the “knowledge boost” and increased the number of study places within different forms of education for adults. This “knowledge boost” is on-going.

215. During 2016–2019, the Government also carried out a specific initiative of vocational courses at the Swedish Folk High Schools in occupations where there are labour shortages. Until 2018, more than 64 percent of the participants were women and around 75 percent were foreign-born.

216. A new legal framework for the introduction programme for newly arrived immigrants entered into force on 1 January 2018. In January 2018 an education and training obligation was introduced and open for all newly arrived immigrants who attend the Public Employment Service’s introduction programme.

#### *Question 21*

a.

217. The Swedish Migration Agency works actively to ensure equal treatment of all applicants, regardless of their gender, gender expression and sexual orientation, and regardless of whether the applicant is a child or an adult. This work is guided by the Agency’s action plan for equal treatment 2019–2020.

218. In the recently revised ordinance (2019:502) with the instruction to the Swedish Migration Agency, the Government establishes that the Agency shall gender mainstream and design its operations so that gender equal conditions for women and men are achieved. The Agency does this by providing applicants with information about gender equality and that all forms of violence are forbidden, including violence within marriage and corporal punishment of children. The Agency can to a certain extent provide sheltered housing which is otherwise primarily provided by the social services.

219. Thematic quality monitoring of grounds for asylum was carried out in 2016, and in 2017 a legal position was taken regarding the investigation and assessment of persecution on the grounds of gender in relation to women.

220. The Swedish Police Authority has not taken any specific measures following the reintroduction of internal border controls as regards asylum seekers. Asylum seekers at the controls are handled in accordance with the rules that otherwise apply. The investigation and assessment of women’s asylum applications is carried out by the Swedish Migration Agency. The Swedish Police are only responsible for the initial

parts of an investigation, i.e. obtaining identity details and establishing that the person is applying for asylum.

b.

221. Migrant women and girl's vulnerability is a prioritised matter for the Government and the Swedish Migration Agency works in accordance with its instruction with gender mainstreaming in its design of operations so that gender equal conditions for women and men are achieved. There are ongoing pilot projects with tailored information only for women, and the outcome of these projects will be followed up. The Agency's gender mainstreaming work has led to greater awareness of the importance of avoiding operations being based on, and reproducing, the idea of males being the prevailing norm in the asylum process.

222. Work to improve discovering vulnerability to violence and instances of violence among asylum seekers is ongoing within the Agency. See the response to question 12.

c.

223. The Swedish Agency for Public Management has been assigned by the Government to evaluate the gender mainstreaming work carried out by government agencies, including the Swedish Migration Agency. Key successes in the work with the Swedish Migration Agency's action plan for gender mainstreaming include a generally increased level of knowledge about gender equality and greater awareness of gender equality problems within operations and how these can be countered. The case management process has become more individualised as it emerged that family case management can lead to gender equality problems not being discovered. The action plan has also resulted in increased knowledge about women's grounds for asylum, clearer legal support when investigating and assessing persecution on the grounds of gender, and additional information being provided to applicants on gender equality and gender-related violence, within both asylum assessment and processing permit applications. See also the answer to question nr 7.

a.

224. Information about actions to ensure the social integration refugees and asylum-seeking women can be found under question 20.

b.

225. Since 2016, the governmental agency the Living History Forum has been responsible for coordinating and following up on the national plan to combat racism, similar forms of hostility and hate crimes. A number of initiatives have been carried out since 2016 within the framework of the plan, in order to improve knowledge about racism, to improve the conditions for civil society to take part in the work to combat racism, to prevent racism and similar forms of hostility online, and to strengthen the work within the justice system. These initiatives are targeted at both racism in general and specific forms of racism.

c.

226. Investigation and prosecution of hate crimes is a particularly prioritised area within the Swedish Prosecution Authority, and one of the Authority's development centres has specific responsibility for method development, monitoring and education on hate crimes. Each prosecution office has one or more appointed prosecutors with specific responsibility for the operational work with hate crimes. These prosecutors receive coordinated support from the development centre, such as information about development of the law within the area, guiding legal memos and an annual conference at which the prosecutors can discuss and share their experiences from handling cases of hate crimes. The Swedish Prosecution Authority has also appointed

an area specialist on hate crime, in order to further strengthen the Authority's work with hate crimes. The Authority participates in the inter-agency collaboration against racism, xenophobia and hate crimes which is coordinated by the Living History Forum.

227. The Swedish Police have raised their level of ambition regarding hate crimes and other crimes that threaten fundamental rights and freedoms. A national contact point has been set up and so-called democracy and anti-hate crime groups have been established in the three metropolitan police regions. Other police regions shall have an equivalent capacity. In addition to investigating suspected offences, the allocated resources shall work with victims of crime, internal training, collaboration and other security- and confidence-building measures. As of 2018, the Swedish Police Authority is allocating special funding to reinforce on-going work to increase prosecutions of hate crimes, coordination, strategic work, monitoring and follow up.

228. Training on hate crimes is a compulsory part of the basic training for police officers. There is also internal online training available to all police employees. The Swedish Police have also procured training from Linnaeus University in Växjö that provides more in-depth knowledge about the underlying causes of racism, hate crimes and crimes that threaten the free formation of opinion.

229. The police are also intensifying their action to address IT-related crime, including hate crimes. Further expansion of the national resource is on the way, and decisions have been taken to set up regional IT crime centres in the seven police regions. These operations are now being built up and will be part of investigative work concerning these crimes.

230. The Swedish Police will continue to develop and improve work to combat hate crime. In its appropriation directive for 2020, the Swedish Police were given a new assignment in this area. The report shall include a description of how cooperation with government agencies and organisations is carried out, and how to ensure the effectiveness of dialogue with groups that are subjected to this type of crime.

#### *Question 22*

231. During 2016–2019, the Government issued a large number of assignments on Roma inclusion to government agencies. The National Board of Health and Welfare was assigned to train social workers to develop their working methods to be more welcoming and inclusive. In this work, the Board was instructed to particularly involve Roma women in this work. The Swedish Public Employment Service was assigned to initiate dialogues with employers to improve knowledge about the challenges on the labour market experienced by many Roma. Within the framework of its assignment, the Service was instructed to improve women's opportunities for benefiting from these measures. Also, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society was tasked with allocating government grants to organisations that carry out health promotion initiatives aimed at Roma, educating Roma organisations on issues such as organisational techniques, and arranging exchanges of experiences between these and non-Roma organisations. In its implementation of the assignment, the Agency should particularly encourage the participation of Roma girls and women.

232. Stockholm County Administrative Board has a continued assignment to coordinate, support and monitor the strategy for Roma inclusion during the period 2020–2023. All aspects of this work shall be carried out in dialogue with Roma representatives, including Roma women and young Roma. The work shall include a gender equality perspective.

233. The Sami Parliament's gender equality programme is a steering document for the Sami Parliament's operations and awarding grants. Among other measures, the



Sami Parliament places requirements on grants recipients to include gender equality plans. The Sami Parliament has noted in a report to the Government that there is a lack of knowledge about gender equality within Sami society, and that there is a need to map this area. In June 2019, the Government commissioned and financed a special initiative to map and analyse Sami society from a gender equality perspective. The mapping and analysis will form the basis for any proposed measures that the Sami Parliament deems to be required where there are knowledge gaps and development needs.

234. The Government will work towards ratifying ILO convention 169. However, this is ultimately an issue for the Riksdag to decide on.

### **Climate change**

#### *Question 23*

a, b.

235. In 2019, the Government initiated work with developing a gender equality strategy for climate work. This involved the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, the Swedish Energy Agency and the Swedish Gender Equality Agency carrying out a preliminary study on a gender equality strategy for Sweden's implementation of the Paris Agreement.

236. In addition, the Swedish Energy Agency has been instructed to integrate a gender equality perspective into its operations and to promote gender equality when allocating funding for research and innovation work.

237. The Government prioritises the integration of gender equality into climate and environmental work in international contexts. Gender equality, the environment and climate change are horizontal issues in the Government's development policy, and 86 percent of the climate-related funding provided by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency during 2015–2018 also promoted gender equality.

c.

238. The Government has long demonstrated a need to strengthen women's decision making in climate negotiations. Sweden was therefore one of the driving forces behind establishing a Gender Action Plan at COP23 in Bonn, a long-term plan to ensure women's influence in decisions relating to climate change. Strengthening gender equal representation at national level, including in the environmental field, is one of the Government's gender equality sub-goals.

239. The Government incorporates a gender equality perspective in its work with sustainable transport. Measures within community planning that promotes walking, cycling and public transport has the potential to decrease gender differences in travelling patterns as men drive cars more often than women, and women probably use public transport somewhat more than men. The Government decided in 2015 on the Ordinance (2015:579) on support for promoting sustainable urban environments, which has also been increased for the period 2018–2029. The support is distributed to municipalities and regions to promote sustainable transport.

240. The Government has tasked a committee with drawing up proposals for amended travel expense deduction rules. The committee's proposal is that the travel expense deduction will be abolished in its existing form, and that the deduction will be replaced by a distance-based and transport-neutral tax reduction for longer commutes between home and the workplace (SOU 2019:36). According to the committee, the design of the proposed tax reduction contributes towards the transport policy's functional objective by providing a transport-neutral tax reduction, which

more equally corresponds to both women's and men's transport needs. The proposal is being prepared by the Government Offices.

241. On 1 July 2018, a bonus-malus system was introduced for new light vehicles with the main motivation of increasing the proportion of more environmentally adapted vehicles with lower carbon dioxide emissions. The system is a complement to the more general fuel taxes and contributes towards reducing the transport sector's dependence on oil and its climate impact. Men own almost two thirds of the cars owned by individuals, and an increase in vehicle tax will affect men more than women. In general, women own vehicles with lower average emissions. Overall, this means that the cost of the bonus-malus system is expected to be lower for women than for men.

242. The financial market regulations are mostly governed by EU directives. Where possible the Government strives to incorporate a gender equality perspective and to increase understanding and awareness of gender equality aspects within the area. Among other things, there are reporting requirements for the government agencies which aim to highlight and consider gender equality aspects within the area of financial markets. In addition, e.g. the Swedish Financial Supervisory Authority shall report on the work that has been carried out in accordance with Agenda 2030 and how the financial system has contributed towards sustainable development. This reporting shall relate to the implementation of the recommendations regarding the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures.

### **Marriage and family relations**

#### *Question 24*

243. The best interests of the child shall be of decisive importance for all decisions on custody, residence and contact rights. Since 2006, the wording of the law has explicitly stated that when assessing what is best for the child, the risk of the child or another family member being subjected to abuse or of the child being unlawfully removed or retained, or otherwise suffering significant harm, should be taken into particular account. The court and the social welfare committee must always consider whether there is a risk that the child will come to harm, and in such a case must always carry out a risk assessment. This shall be based on previous investigations and previous events or other relevant circumstances.

244. In 2014, an inquiry was appointed with the remit of evaluating the 2006 reform of the Swedish Parental Code. The inquiry submitted its report in 2017(SOU 2017:6). The inquiry shows that social welfare committees and courts carry out risk assessments to a greater extent than before. In 2018, the Family Law and Parental Support Authority was tasked by the Government to develop a manual with case studies for the social welfare committees' on how to work with risk assessment in cases regarding custody, residence and contact rights. The abovementioned inquiry also proposes actions to strengthen the child's right to be heard in cases regarding custody, residence and contact rights, as well as new rules on jurisdiction where protected personal data applies. The report from the inquiry is currently being considered by the Swedish Government Offices.

245. The presumption of the Swedish rules on division of property in the event of divorce is two independent and equal individuals living together, both having the ability to support themselves and contribute to the family's development. As mentioned in Sweden's eight-nine periodic report, there are however exceptions to these rules on equal division of property, to protect against unreasonable results. For example, there are rules on maintenance between unequal parties and rules on adjustment of the division of property that can be used in these cases.

246. The Judicial Training Academy offers family law courses for judges. These include a two-day in-depth course on the best interests of the child and a two-day in-depth course on particularly difficult cases of custody, residence and relationships.

247. The main role of the Family Law and Parental Support Authority (MFoF) is to conduct and promote knowledge-based work and to convey knowledge sharing within the fields of family law, family advice, parenting support and international adoptions. MFoF is also the Central Authority under the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Inter-country Adoption. The Authority is responsible for the authorisation and supervision of inter-country adoption mediation associations. In addition, the Authority is responsible for producing official statistics. MFoF shall promote the rights of the child including gender equality and equal parenting and shall work with relevant government agencies and organisation.

248. In 2016, the Authority reported an action plan to the Government on how it intends to develop its gender mainstreaming work for its operations, in order to contribute towards achieving the gender equality policy objectives. The Authority's focus during 2017–2018 was mapping and strategic planning. The action plan contains targets to measure effect result and activities within three areas the next few years.

#### **Additional information**

##### *Question 25*

249. Additional information based on the follow-up letter from CEDAW on 5 September 2018.

250. 1. In order to meet its obligations in accordance with international law regarding asylum seekers and refugees, for example the principle of non-refoulement.

251. The principle of non-refoulement is absolute and must always be upheld. This is stated in the Swedish Aliens Act (2005:716). The European Convention is also incorporated into and directly applicable in Swedish law. If someone who has applied for asylum is refused, he or she has the right to appeal the decision in court. After a decision has been heard in court, the Swedish Migration Agency also has an obligation to ensure ex officio that a refusal or expulsion does not contravene the principle of non-refoulement. If new circumstances arise, the person in question can also apply to have his or her grounds for protection reconsidered.

252. In 2019, The Riksdag passed a bill from the Government extending the period of validity for the Temporary Act until 19 July 2021 with the amendment that persons eligible for subsidiary protection shall have the same right to family reunification as refugees. This amendment, which the Swedish Government considered to be desirable from a humanitarian perspective, was implemented as part of the Government taking responsibility for a humane and sustainable migration policy.

253. 2. Adopt additional legal support for investigating and assessing women's grounds for asylum, to ensure that the needs of female asylum seekers and refugees who arrive in the State party are treated as a prioritised problem. Additional information is provided in the answer to question 21a.

#### **Additional information on health.**

254. In August, the Government tasked the Public Health Agency of Sweden to develop a national strategy for sexual and reproductive health and rights. Basic starting points when developing the strategy shall be good, equal and gender equal sexual and reproductive health for the entire population with a focus on young people, people with inadequate socioeconomic circumstances, persons with disabilities,

people from foreign backgrounds and LGBTQ people. The Agency shall report on the remit to the Government Offices by 30 September 2020.

**Additional information on polygamy.**

255. Polygamy is not permitted in Sweden, but if the marriage was entered abroad by parties who at the time of the marriage were not Swedish citizens or resident in Sweden, the possibilities to not recognise the marriage are limited. A report from the Swedish Tax Agency from early 2018 shows that there are people registered in Sweden as married to more than one person. In 38 of these cases, more than one spouse was also registered in Sweden. In the summer of 2018, the Government tasked an investigator to submit proposals on how to prevent foreign polygamous marriages in Sweden. The remit also included reporting on the legal consequences that can arise from a foreign polygamous marriage not being permitted to continue in Sweden and how unreasonable consequences for those involved can be avoided. The investigator submitted a report in January 2020. One proposal is that a marriage which has been entered by someone who is already married should not be recognised in Sweden, even when the parties had no connection to Sweden at the time of entering the marriage. However, it should be possible to recognise the marriage if there are exceptional reasons for doing so.

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