EU FP6 Coordination Action on Human Rights Violations

Sweden National Reports on Men’s Practices
- Reports on Research, Statistical information, Law and Policy
  Addressing Men’s Practices

Dag Balkmar and Keith Pringle
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Introduction

This is a compilation of three reports that survey – and re-interpret from feminist perspectives - existing material on men’s practices in terms of academic outputs, statistics and legal/governmental policies in Sweden. The period focused upon was primarily the last five to ten years. Although the main focus of the reports was men’s violence, they also survey the material on other areas of men’s lives such as home and work, social exclusion and health – and the connections between these areas and the field of men’s violence.

It is important to stress that the analysis underlying the reports was inspired not only by feminist approaches but also, more specifically, by a gender relational perspective. Current debates about so-called “intersectionality” also informed the analysis in the reports – therefore much emphasis was placed on considering the way that gender impacted upon, and was impacted upon by, other social divisions associated with, for instance, age, ethnicity, disability and sexuality.

The work was carried out in Sweden by Dag Balkmar at the Centre for Gender Studies at Stockholm University; supervised by Keith Pringle who is based in FoSo at Aalborg University Denmark. These Swedish reports need to be seen within the context of a much broader project. For they were funded by the European Commission as part of the output from the work of the Co-ordination Action and from the sub-network within it\(^1\). That sub-network specifically focuses upon exploring the roots of violence and consists of 11 European countries. It builds on the previous work of the Framework 5-funded Thematic Network on men’s practices in Europe which contained 10 European countries, ran from 2000 to 2003 and was also co-ordinated by Keith Pringle. Among the countries included in that earlier network was Norway and Finland – but not Sweden or Denmark. The earlier network had created national reports on its partners which were very similar to the reports now produced on Sweden as well as Denmark.

All the reports from both the Framework 5 and Framework 6 networks are now placed on an open web-based European Documentation Centre which can be found at [www.cromenet.org](http://www.cromenet.org). This database allows all manner of exciting and important explorations around the issue of men’s practices in Europe – not least in the Nordic countries. We hope these Swedish reports will themselves contribute in a very significant way to this process of exploration.

Keith Pringle and Dag Balkmar

Mars 2006

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\(^1\) However, the Swedish reports published here of course represent the views of the authors alone and are their sole responsibility.
Sweden National Report on Research on Men’s Practices

1. Key Points

a. Since the late 1990s studies on men in Sweden have expanded broadly. Research on men from a critical perspective is mainly connected to the gender equality project. The field is grounded in a feminist research tradition. Men are mostly highlighted and looked upon as a problem and obstacle for gender equality. Areas of focus are fatherhood or men as family members, men in working life and homosocial behaviour, men & manliness, gay men.

b. Research on social exclusion explores the labour market and marginalisation, residential segregation and diversity within working life. Research where gender and ethnicity is an integrated perspective is lacking in Sweden; men are in focus in research on social exclusion but little is done on ethnicity and masculinity from a gender perspective. Research around gay men has been transformed from questions around body and psyche to society, identity and descriptions of living conditions. In recent years the marginalisation of lesbian and gay persons has been subjected to some research. Research around homelessness and disability does often lack a gender and ethnicity perspective.

c. Discussions of men and power in relation to women are made explicit in later research on men’s violence to women.

Most literature on violence against women, children and sexualised violence are being produced within an either feminist, women’s research or gender theoretical context. Literature and research focusing on children’s experiences and treatment of crises where children have been exposed to violence against the mother has become more focused in the late 1990’s and in the beginning of the 2000. During the last years so called “honour” related violence has gained some interest, mainly focusing on the victims and the meaning of culture.

d. Gender differences in health are to some extent highlighted but men are still the norm in research on health. Connections between how men live their lives, dominant constructions of masculinity and health are not given much attention.

e. There is a need for critical research on men’s practices in relation to health, age, ethnicity, sexuality and disability. Critical research needs to focus on the “normal” man and his everyday practices in relation to cultural concepts of manliness and violence.

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2 The work on this report was funded by the Framework 6-funded Co-Ordinated Action on Human Rights Violations (CAHVR - Project PL 506348) (Workpackage 8)
2. National Gender Background and Context

a) Sweden has in 2004 reached a population of 9 million people, with about 85% living in the southern part of the country. Since the 1940s, immigration has accounted for over 40% of the population growth. World War II is described as the turning point transforming Sweden from a country of emigration into one of immigration (Bernhardt et al. 2005). Sweden, which is militarily a non-aligned country, joined the European Union in 1995 and 85% of the population belongs to the Lutheran church of Sweden. In 2002 the percentage of women in parliament was 45% (SCB 2004).

Industrialisation came late and Sweden moved in less than one hundred years from poverty to prosperity. The Social Democratic party has held power alone or in coalitions for the most part of the 20th century. After World-War II, which did not involve Sweden, the building and expansion of “Welfare State” was the major project of successive Social Democrat governments. The welfare state was created through democratic and economic developments that lasted from the beginning of the 20th century until the end of the century. This process was based on cooperation between the State and trade/industry. The environment in which the Welfare State took hold was a male-dominated industrial society where the welfare-model was linked to a male breadwinner ideal. Health care, education, care for the young and the aged, and social welfare are seen as primary responsibilities for the State (SCB 2004). The relatively generous provision of these services has been made possible by Sweden having higher taxes than many comparable countries.

The period from 1950 to 1980 can be described as the “Golden Years” of the welfare project. The late 1980s and early 1990s was dominated by economic and political problems which resulted in a weakening of the public sector and social security net (Holter 2003, SOU 2001:79). After the 1990s the unemployment rates rose together with cut downs in official spending, resulting in increased welfare gaps in Sweden. Since then the situation has improved, but the legacy from the 1990s can be seen in a delimitation of the distribution of welfare, lack of employment, decrease in mental well being, entrenchment of low income, stressful working conditions and increase in stress-related ill health (SOU 2001:79, p. 81-91).

Men and masculinities have been and still are intimately interlinked with working life (Hirdman 2001). In 2003 79% of Swedish women and 84% of Swedish men were in the labour force, consisting of 4 million people in total. However, the Swedish labour market is one of the most gender-segregated in Europe. Men work mostly in the private sector. Women work both in the private and in the public sector. As a category, women earn 82% of a man’s salary (SCB 2004). Gender equality has been politically advocated since 1970s; since then efforts have been strengthened, particularly in the field of sexual harassment and gendered analyses of salaries. Organisations with more than ten employees have to make gender analyses of salaries and a gender-equality plan. The government has taken a political decision that men shall take an active part in gender equality efforts and has investigated removing the obstacles for men to engage in gender equality questions (SCB 2004, Nordberg forthcoming).

The main target of official policy has been to make the labour-market less gender-segregated, but also to make men take more domestic responsibility and take
parental leave. When a child is born the parents are entitled to a total of 480 days’ leave, 60 of these are reserved for each parent and are forfeited if not used. Men’s share of the parental leave days in 2003 accounted for 17% of the total (SCB 2004). This means that men do not take much more parental leave than they must take or lose it.

Gender equality policy objectives set in the Programme of the present Government include the implementation of gender mainstreaming in all central government bodies. This means that a ministry or other governmental body is required to introduce a gender perspective into that activity. Focus areas for the current electoral period are representation; equal access to positions of power and influence, equal pay for work of equal value, violence committed by men against women, prostitution and trafficking in women. But also Men and gender equality are focused as well as the sexualization of the public sphere (National Action Plan for Gender Equality).

A law against sexual harassment and laws to protect women from violence have been enacted during the 1980s and 1990s and in 1999 a law that criminalised sex buying was introduced. The law puts attention on men as sex buyers instead of victimising the prostitute. The law is thereby not, as for example in Canada, principally a moral law (Månsson 2001). Since 1995 lesbian and gay persons can register as couples. In 2002 the possibility for lesbian and gay couples to adopt children was publicly debated. After heated controversy, lesbian and gay couples were given the legal right to adopt. In 2005 a new law will be passed allowing women in same-sex couples to inseminate donated sperms at public hospitals.

b) Key texts. The gradual growth of studies on men in Sweden can be seen as an indirect effect of the growth of Women’s studies, later to evolve into Studies on Gender and feminism. Critical research on men in Sweden has been and still is, tightly linked to Women’s studies. Almost 60% of the work done until 2000 was carried out by women researchers (Folkesson 2000). The field focusing on men as gendered beings is often referred to as “Men’s studies”. Critical Studies on Men (CSM) can be categorized as one direction in that field. CSM in Sweden can be described as focusing on the body and sexuality as prime sites for patriarchal relations; on the problems that men create rather than those they experience; and with a focus on gender relations. The origin of “Men’s Studies” dates from the 1980s, and has connections to Critical Studies on Men and Masculinities in the UK, Australia and US.

In the 1980s two books were published by the Swedish government, building on theoretical models from the Anglophone countries: Lars Jalmert’s Den svenske mannen (1984) (The Swedish Man), and Margot Bengtsson and Jonas Frykman’s Om maskulinitet. Mannen som forsknings-objekt (1987), (On Masculinity. Men as an object of research). The psychologist Lars Jalmert writes about modern Swedish men’s ambivalence toward gender equality. The Swedish man is described as positive to gender equality “in principle” but not in practice. Margot Bengtsson and Jonas Frykman criticise the male-role theory and suggests studies on masculinities, men’s practices and constructions of forms of hegemony instead (Johansson & Kousmanen 2003, Folkesson 2000). Another key text to be mentioned is the anthology Manlighetens många ansikten [The many faces of manliness] where a variety of Swedish (critical) studies on men from a gender perspective are presented through themes like politics, working life, family life and intimacy (Johansson & Kousmanen 2003, for other key texts see for example

Since the late 1990s studies on men in Sweden have expanded broadly. The field is not clearly defined and can still be described as weakly established institutionally and academically. The main theory is grounded in social constructivism and research receiving the most attention is carried out by historians or sociologists. The main focus of recent research has been on a critical review of dominant forms of manliness, and the exploration of alternative constructions (Johansson & Kousmanen 2003, p.7, Johansson 2000, p. 22). The field is often described as grounded in feminist research, but this is sometimes contested and debated in terms of how gender orders within the studies of men work to exclude women researchers and whether a feminist perspective is actually neglected (Folkesson 2000:55, Smirthwaite 2002, Nordberg 2000, 2001 b).

What is known about men in Sweden both in statistics and research is mainly connected to the gender equality project. From that point of view men are mostly highlighted and looked upon as a problem and obstacle for gender equality. If the male breadwinner ideal was linked to the welfare state at first, this ideal has been challenged since due to the women’s movement and the gender equality-project. The government has taken a political decisions to work for that men shall take active part in gender equality strives and has investigated in removing obstacles for men to engage in gender equality questions. The main target has been to reduce a gender-segregated labour-market, but also to make men take more domestic responsibility and take parental leave (Nordberg 2003, p. 76-80, Nordberg forthcoming). Researchers in Sweden, who seem to be drawing at least partly on perspectives from a Critical Studies on Men approach or something similar to it, have mainly focused on men’s violences against women and children, but also on men in power positions, homosocial behaviour and ordinary men's lives.

The main foci in Swedish men’s studies during the 1990’s:
* research on fatherhood/ men as family members,
* men in working life,
* gay men,
* men and manliness.

c) **Timescale.** The focus of this report is on studies in the 1990s, ranging mainly from 1995-2004, with some earlier background references. This report concentrates on four main themes: home and work, social exclusion, violences and health.

### 3. Home and Work

**Fatherhood.** Research on men’s life conditions have increased during the last decades. One area of great interest in Swedish research on men and masculinities is men as fathers, parents and family members. What fatherhood means to men is central as well as constructions of fatherhood and fathers interactions with the surrounding world. Foci have also been directed to men and their ability, or lack of ability, to change in a more gender equal and caring direction.

The researcher Lars Plantin sees three main interests in Swedish research directed to men’s parenting: cultural ideals and expectations, everyday life relations and practices and the effects working life conditions have on men (Plantin 2003, p. 150). Research on fatherhood has moved in two directions, where one is directed towards men as a problem and the other on men's lives and experiences. (Nordberg forthcoming) The sociologist Lisbeth Bekkengen (2002) can be categorised as working in the first direction. In her research she discusses whether men’s emotional interest in their children,
manifests itself in more equal practises. Instead she points to men’s opportunity to choose to take parental leave compared to women: Men can choose to be everyday parents whereas women have no option once a child is born. This is so because child care is still connected with women and womanhood.

Research on men’s lives and experiences focuses on problems and obstacles for gender equal lives, for example Lars Plantins (2001) study on men’s experiences of fatherhood, and Charlotte Hagström’s (1999) study on men’s identity processes in becoming a father. Plantin shows the complexity of modern fatherhood, how traditional and gender stereotype practices and discourses can be upheld as well as more equality oriented practices (Plantin 2003). (see also: Bäck-Wiklund and Bergsten, 1997, Johansson 1998, Klinth, 2002, Plantin, 2001, Åström 1990). Roger Klinth concludes that the extensive Swedish research around families and equality can be described as either taking an optimistic perspective on the welfare-state in relation to equality or a pessimistic stand around parental leave and equality implications. Researchers who take a pessimistic standpoint around Swedish equality mean that fundamental and sustainable change is hard to achieve through current policy, which favours “equality on men’s conditions”. Researchers who take a more optimistic take on Swedish equality politics point to the tradition of consensus and the role that “state-feminism” and a weakly established “men as provider” model (Klinth 2003, 18-23).

The authors in the anthology Making men into fathers (Hobson 2002) examines how men are “made” fathers in various countries. Scholars involved in critical studies on men and feminist researchers on welfare states discuss social politics of fatherhood across time and space from six case studies: England, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United States. Mona Franséhn (2004) studies another aspect of family life, namely lone mothers with sons. Franséhn addresses different aspects of the family life that lone mothers with sons develop in relation to absent fathers and the support from social services. Based on nine case studies, she discusses discourses of motherhood and fatherhood as well as modern family life. Though the fathers are absent in principle, she describes them as extremely present as psychological father figures in these families. From the social service point of view the absence of a father is assumed to imply a need for limits and authority, transformed into a male role model for the son to identify with. Jesper Fundberg (2003) describes activities of a boys’ football teams as a context for male socialisation. The study is based on several years of fieldwork among boys, teamleaders and parents at a sports club in Sweden. Fundberg describes what is the ascribed value in their activities. Football is seen as a context for bringing up boys providing a “good” context for companionship between boys and adult men.

According to Darvishpour (2004) there is limited research around equality, distributions of power and conflicts in families with immigrant background and the consequences this has for families and for separations. Studies show that divorce among immigrant groups is more common than among Swedes, Chileans and Iranians showing the highest rates. High levels of divorce are not only due to cultural or socioeconomical difficulties, but also as a result of shifts in power relations between husband and wife.

Work. Research on gender and organisations has mainly focused on the following topics; men’s constructions of homosocial behaviour and fellowship, homosociality and leadership, emotional work and gender, how gender intersects
with other social categories, and male power hierarchies. The term “homo-sociality” (men preferring the company of men) is highlighted in Swedish gender-research in organisations as means for men to exclude women from positions, resources and power in organisations. The work of Charlotte Holgersson and Pia Höök (1997) emphasises that managers are mainly recruited from homosocial networks, where notions of what constitutes the “right” competence play a vital role. Höök (2001) concludes that men create a greater space to be mutually different in a group and still together constitute a whole. The space for men to be mutually different in a group is greater than it is for women. Charlotte Holgersson (2003) interviewed managers around what makes recruitment “feel good”, and discuss their remarks around notions of homosociality between men. Lindgren (1996) concludes that not all men at a place of work are included in men’s homosocial relations; to be included in the group there has to be some kind of status associated with the man in question. Gunnarsson (2003) shows in her research around companies in Information and Technology how homosocial desire, mutual practices and interests on or of working hours, is more sought after when recruiting someone new to the group, than is gender.

Eva Blomberg (1995) has studied the only surviving revolutionary syndicalist organisation in the world, which started 1920 and is still active. She explores the role of male identity used inside and outside the organisation in order to create tight bonds between men. Susanne Andersson (2003) examines how constructions of gender, mainly masculinities, become intertwined with organisational practises in two Community Police Organisations. Ordering practices are analysed around aspects such as status, age and constructions of a homosocial “we” (Andersson 2003). The police organisation has also been studied from a gender perspective by Granér (2004), Åberg (2001) and Åse (2000).

Other researchers include material symbols as aspects of how bonds between men are created. Ove Sernhede (1998) writes about the biker culture where male identity is created in relation to women and gay men. Criminality is here a central aspect of doing masculinity. Ulf Mellström (1995, 1999, 2003a, 2003b, 2004) studies how masculinity and technology are related in different societies and contexts. Technology and machines are on the one hand interpreted as sources of power, and on the other as sources of intimacy, passion, homosocial fellowship and constructions of identity. Johansson’s research on body-builders points to the importance of the symmetry, form and size as well as dress-codes and attributes (Johansson 1998b, p.250, see also Johansson 1998c). Nehls (2003) points to the importance of the truck for male truck drivers, as a symbol of masculinity. Maja Jacobsson (1998) analyses how young men use clothes, perfume and tattoos as means for creating identity expressing age, gender, occupation in relation to a collective.

Studies on constructions of masculinity are mainly absent in the very few research contributions that has focused on the Swedish military. Susanne Wollinger (2000) deals with young men who in their mid 1990s made their military service at an artillery company in southern Sweden. The focus is on social and cultural aspects of everyday military service, mainly around what happens in the encounter between men born in the 1970s and the hierarchal, routinized, male-dominated and mythical institution as the army. Since 1980 there are no restrictions for women to serve as officers in the Swedish armed forces. Anders Berggren (2002) examines what has been achieved so far in terms of integration of women, what the situation of

If the military is traditionally male dominated, Marie Nordberg (2003) focuses on men in non-traditional occupations. She asks if it is the men in childcare or the (to a lesser extent debated) men that work as hairdressers that are to be interpreted as the “spearhead” of equality. There is a difference in how men in non-traditional occupations talk and describe their work and their practices. The same man can confirm but also challenge gender categories without experiencing this as a contradiction (Nordberg 2003, 90, for research around non-traditional occupations see also: Eriksson, 2002: Havung, 2000, Robertsson 2003).

Research is lacking around intersecting power relations, distributions of power and conflicts in families with immigrant background and until recently also the child perspective. Promising research areas focused by Critical Studies on Men are men’s practices in power positions and men as violent fathers.

4. Social Exclusion

In the past years the topics discussed in terms of social exclusion are mainly around the labour market and marginalisation, residential segregation and diversity within working life. The main focus has been on the “deviant” in relation to the “normal” in a Swedish context, often discussed around gender, ethnicity, disabilities and age groups in a post-industrial society. (Darin 2003:2). The term social exclusion was brought into the Swedish social science context in the beginning of the 1990s as a term to use instead of marginalisation, poverty and segregation. The focus has been broadened from lack of resources to lack of power and exclusion from education, healthcare, associations, and other collective actions as well as limitations of citizenship (Johansson 2002:47-54). According to Schierup, poverty and social exclusion are becoming ethnified in Sweden (Schierup 2003, 238-239).

**Unemployment, ethnicity and age.** Social and economic inequality as well as increased segregation and exclusion have made integration an area that is given priority in Sweden. Paulina de los Reyes (2001) describes how the term diversity (mångfald) has evolved into a vision and goal in working life even though diversity has been and still is unusual in Swedish workplaces. Her focus is on gender and ethnicity and to a certain extent age and disability, not explicitly on masculinity.

Research on ethnicity has been mostly focused on relations between “immigrant” (“invandrare”) and “native” populations, where the Swedish born population seldom are problematised from a perspective of ethnicity (de los Reyes 2001:10-23, 57, 58). An increasing minority of “Swedish born” Swedes have 1 or 2 parents who are from within minority ethnic groups. The fact that such “Swedish born” Swedes are still often publically (and sometimes also semi-officially) referred to as “second generation immigrants” is very telling (though in all fairness this is a common expression in many other countries).

Even though ethnic minorities have a long history in Sweden, groups such as the Romani, Tone Valley Finns, Jews and the Sami are rarely featured in the discussion of ethnicity. From a theoretical point of view the relations between minorities and majority population are now being problematised in terms of subordination and dominance in relation to the ideological power exercised by the Swedish state (de los Reyes 2001:57-58, see also Anft 1998). Eva Franzén (2003) investigated social assistance receipt
among the immigrant population of Sweden; however gender was not explicitly analysed. She compares immigrants and ethnic Swede’s in relation to social assistance receipts, possibilities to be self-supporting and welfare. Due to the fact that the social insurance systems of welfare-states to a great extent are built on access to the labour market, immigrants who are excluded from work face serious obstacles in respect of general social insurance. Immigrants from what in a Swedish context are to be considered as “typical” refugee countries are facing the biggest obstacles to become self-supporting (de los Reyes 2001, see also: Aronsson&Kilbom 1996).

Katarina Mattsson (2001) examines representations and discourses of the Others in the field of immigration and labour market studies, showing racialized assumptions about culture, nation and skills.

Ethnicity and segregation. Sweden possesses one of the most ethnically segregated housing sectors in Western Europe (Pred 2000). Studies around housing have mostly focused on economical, social aspects as well as political aspects of housing policies. Focus has been on costs, productivity, lack of housing and standard. Even though categories such as class have often been included, aspects such as race/ethnicity and gender have often been left out (Molina 1997:36). Research around segregation has become more extensive during the last decade. One example of this is the anthology I stadens utkant (Arnstberg & Ramberg 1997) [In the outskirts of the City, Perspectives on Suburbs] (see also Johansson 2002). Ove Sernhede (2002) writes about young men and hip hop in Gothenburg multi cultural suburbs. In her doctoral thesis Irene Molina (1997) approaches ethnic residential segregation in Sweden. She focus on the role of the Swedish state in processes of urban racialization through ideological discourses and housing policies as well as on symbolic mechanisms in everyday discourses drawing boundaries between Us and Them. (See also Eriksson 2002)

Homophobia, sexuality and gay men. Perspectives of sexuality such as Gay Studies and Queer Theory have not until recently been integrated into Swedish research on men and masculinities. Recently however, both gender and sexuality orders have been integrated in some research projects (Nordberg 2004, for research contributions see for example Nilsson 1999, Nilsson 1998, Lindholm and Nilsson, 2002).

Research around gay men has been transformed from questions around body and psyche to society, identity and descriptions of living conditions. In recent years the marginalisation of lesbian women, gay men, bi- and transsexual persons (LGBT) has been the object of studies (Forsberg et. al. 2003). Under an assignment from The Swedish Council on Health, Eva Tiby (1996) carried out the first Swedish pilot study on prevalence, patterns and consequences from threats and violence against lesbian women and gay men in Stockholm. Eva Tiby’s doctoral thesis is based on a study of 850 victimization narratives from gay men and lesbian women, which describe if, where, by whom and why lesbians and gay men are victimised because of their sexual orientation. The study shows that 25 per cent had experienced what they interpret as hate crimes. The men of the study express higher levels of fear of being victimized than the women. (Tiby 1999) A recent study, carried out in 2004, indicates that hate crimes have doubled since 1996. The study also shows that women are as exposed to hate crimes as are men. (Tiby 2004) What is known about violences against LGBT-people is often about men’s exposure to violence. Much less is known about the experiences of lesbian women.
Thomas Haansbaek has interviewed immigrant gay men and lesbian women around their experiences around discrimination based on their sexual preferences for the National Institute for Public Health in Sweden (Haansbaek 2002). The circumstances under which gay men with an immigrant background live are not covered in Swedish research.

**Ethnicity, sexuality and racism.** Research on lesbian, gay and bi-sexual persons in Sweden is still in its infancy. Very few studies anywhere have a perspective which includes love, sexuality, ethnicity and men; only two have been conducted in Sweden. Sven-Axel Månsson (1984) writes about immigrant men and their life in a Swedish cultural context of sex and cohabitation. Kuosmanen (2001) discusses Finnish men’s lives and social careers in Sweden, including problems concerning their love life (Kuosmanen & Johansson 2003, see also Hammarén 2003 about immigrant young men and sexuality). The researcher Anna Bredström writes about how masculinity is turned into struggles of national arenas and reflects about how Swedish media have portrayed young men with immigrant background. These men are constructed as symbols of that which Swedish men are not: rapists, primitive, not modern, uneducated and against equality between men and women (Bredström 2003).

**Homelessness, drug abuse and alcohol consumption.** Research around homelessness does often lack a gender perspective; the main research objective is most often men. A few studies focus on women from a gender perspective (Beijer 2000, Thörn 2000). Early research on homelessness focused on individuals and their social problems as well as physical and psychological ill health, but ignored systemic aspects (Halldin 2000, Beijer et al 2001). Runquist and Swärd (2000) give an overview of Swedish research on homelessness. There is not much done around immigrant men and homelessness (Erlandsson & Remaeus 1997). Research around use of alcohol is insufficient apart from studies of consumption. Most studies on abuse have been based on male populations without a gender perspective; studies of men’s patterns of consumption and abuse from a gender perspective are rare. Leissner (2002) interviews six men from a small municipality about their alcohol consumption. They describe drinking from different angles and in sometimes paradoxical ways, talking about consumption patterns, family contacts, problems, control, helplessness and care, manliness and loneliness (Leissner & Hedin 2002, see also for example Norell & Törnquist 1995). Kuosmanen (2001) discusses immigrant Finnish men and how they do manliness and culture in Sweden around drinking.

**Disabled men.** Gender has been a neglected area in research in disability. It has been assumed that the experiences of disabled men are representative of the disabled population. Karin Barron (1997) deals with the transition from adolescence to adulthood for physically disabled young women and men. She concludes that young men, more often than young women, identify with non disabled men around social interests. These men do not identify themselves as disabled (understood as feminine), instead they identify themselves in a way that traditionally is interpreted as manly (Barron 1997, 2004).

Research is lacking around institutionalised forms of racisms and on the Swedish born population from a perspective of ethnicity: especially the relations between “immigrant” and “native” populations where the Swedish born population need to be problematised from a perspective of ethnicity. There is a general need for an “intersectional” focus on social exclusion. Areas that need to be focused upon from a gender perspective are men and age, disabled men, drug
abuse, homelessness and (immigrant) men, Swedish men’s practices in relation to prostitution and trafficking in Sweden and other countries.

5. Violences

Studies and research on violence against women have appeared from the 1980’s and the 1990’s; attention to violence especially increased during the 1990’s. Doctoral theses, reports, essays have been produced in various disciplines such as psychology, psychiatry, medicine, sociology, criminology, law and social work (Steen 2003). However, at the same time academic interest in violence against women is described as low, also within the field of women’s studies. Male researchers have until now paid little attention to the area (Folkesson 2000). The sociologically oriented perspective has had a strong influence on the understanding of men’s violence against women alongside the individual psychological point of view (Eliasson, 1997: 91, 92). Eva Lundgren et.al (2001) concludes that the absence of research-based knowledge concerning violence against women should be interpreted to mean that such violence is treated as a marginal phenomenon. There is a long established view of the perpetrator of violence as a deviant, exceptional man, and violence as a phenomenon occurring in special, socially deprived milieu (Lundgren et. al 2001:11-15).

Mona Eliasson (1997) has written one of the first overviews on men’s violence against women. Her book gives a picture of what the violence looks like, its causes and consequences drawing on international research. Another comprehensive report on research, statistics, prevalence and what is done to prevent and stop violence against women in Sweden has been put together by Amnesty International (2004). Anne-Lie Steen (2003) writes about the production of knowledge about women abuse in a Swedish context. She explores what understandings are expressed in different texts concerning men’s violence against women, based on approximately 150 texts, produced by academics as well as those who meet with the problem in their different professions.

Professor in sociology Eva Lundgren’s research is often described as central to the knowledge of violences in Sweden. She, among others, points to that men’s violence against women must be interpreted in a cultural and social context that ranks men higher than women. This violence is interpreted as an expression of a gender power hierarchy and a means of upholding it. Different forms of violence, violence exercised in different types of arenas and relationships are understood as interconnected (Lundgren 2004, SOU 2004:121). Eva Lundgren et al conducted the first major national enquiry to be carried out in Sweden with the object of studying the extent of men’s violence against women. The study Slagen dam, (Captured queen) is based on a postal survey sent to 10 000 women between 18-64 years of whom about 70 % responded. It provides statistical information, such as prevalence of violence and threats in sexual relationships, violence outside sexual relationships, most recent violent incident, sexual harassment and women’s perceptions of the effect of violence and shows how widespread men’s violence is in Sweden. The results show that 46 % of the respondents have been subjected to violence by a man since their fifteenth birthday. Over half of the women have been sexually harassed; out of these women 31 % have been subjected to sexual or physical violence prior to their fifteenth birthday (Lundgren et. al 2001).

Lena Widding Hedin (1999) has investigated the prevalence of physical and sexual abuse by an intimate partner before and during pregnancy in Sweden. The study was carried out between 1996-1997
with Swedish born women married or cohabiting with Swedish born men. Questionnaires as well as interviews were used, 207 women were interviewed. The results show that a considerable number of pregnant women are exposed to threats and actual acts of violence: 27.5% of the women reported abuse some time by a intimate partner and 24.5% during the last year. (See also Prevalence of gender violence, carried out by Katarina Swahnberg)

Sociologist Carin Holmberg (1993) approaches women’s subordination and men’s power among equal young couples from a social psychological perspective. In her research men’s power and violence is in focus, as well as women’s lack of power. In her recent work, she elaborates why women in violent relations don’t leave their partner (Holmberg & Enander 2004). In her work with Christine Bender (1997, 2001, 2003) the agendas of the Swedish men’s and women’s shelters are analysed, as well as how municipality politicians interpret and deal with issues of men’s violences. Holmberg (2004) has written the first investigation in Sweden to focus men’s violences directed to animals in violent relations. By exposing pets to violence or threatening to hurt or kill the family pet men uses violence directed against animals to control or/and hurt their partner. In an ongoing project Holmberg and Stjernqvist conduct the first Swedish survey on violence in same-sex couples (Holmberg & Stjernqvist 2004).

**Democracy and militarism.** In her thesis Maria Wendt Höjer (2002) argues that men’s violence, and women’s fear of violence, constitutes a central problem for democracy. She investigates how men’s violence to women has been dealt with and depoliticised in Swedish politics from the 1930s to the 1990s. She concludes that political discourse to a large extent rejects the definition of violence in terms of gender power. Maud Eduards (2004) writes from a political science perspective on the connections between military, peace-war and men’s violence against women (Eduards 2004:262). Eduards also analyses a major Swedish campaign and training program on preventing men’s violence to women and the following debate, this addressing of societal power relations caused (Eduards 2002). Anna T. Höglund (2001) aims in her doctoral thesis to develop a critical feminist analysis of ethical theories of war and peace. She analyses ethical arguments for and against the use of military violence and the construction of gender in these theories. Basically she makes links between patriarchy, militarism and ethical theories that justify the usage of military violence.

**Violence against children.** During the later part of the 1990s children’s situation in families where the mother was exposed to violence by the father/stepfather has become more noticed. The organisation Save the Children’s work has been important for this attention (i.e. Arnell & Ekbom 2000). However, Swedish research on children’s situation has not been much developed. Sociologist Maria Eriksson’s doctoral thesis concerns the handling of father’s violence in the context of separation and divorce in Sweden. Eriksson relates age, gender and kinship to each other with the help of three interlinked studies of what constructions of age, gender and kinship mean for the handling of fathers violence against mothers and children. Violent fathers neither exist as a concept nor as a policy problem in the professional handling of father’s violence. Barbro Metell (Metell et al. 2001) and Birgitta Lyckner focus on children who are witnessing violence in their parents’ partnership and their needs as abused indirectly by this violence. Studies most often focus on grown ups interpretations and statements about the children witnessing violence (Hällberg 2004, see also Arnell & Ekbom 2000, Ungmark 1996). In one of a very few

Maltreatment against children has been discussed actively since the 1950s but very few studies have been performed. It is not possible to tell the prevalence and how outspread maltreatment against children is in Sweden today. (SOU 2001:18) In a qualitative study by Keith Pringle (2002), age, ethnicity and gender is analyzed in relation to the Swedish child welfare system. Pringle (2005) interviewed a range of “actors” in the Swedish child welfare system including welfare managers, welfare practitioners, local and central government politicians from a range of parties, governmental and non-governmental policy-makers and some key academics. He found a considerable number of these respondents seemed to use relatively weak research evidence to support arguments which diverted attention away from the problematic aspects of men’s practices in relation to children and women; especially the practices of some men from the white Swedish majority ethnic group. At the same time, some respondents would ignore relatively strong research evidence which highlighted those problematic aspects.

Sexual abuse of children is focused in Kerstin Rathsmans (2000) thesis about experiences of incest in childhood. From a symbolic interactionist perspective she interprets interview statements from 15 women who have been subjected to incest by their biological fathers or stepfathers.

Nea Mellberg (2002) deals with the situation of mothers, when they got to know or suspected that their children had been sexually abused by fathers, biological or social, with whom they had an intimate relation. She has conducted interviews with 13 ethnic Swedish mothers around their process of interpreting this experience in relation to the husband or ex-husband. (for presentation on research on child sexual abuse see also Edgardh 2001; Martens 1989; Svedin & Banck 2002)

There is little research made around sexual harassment in schools. This is most often not described in terms of gendered violence even though girls are most frequently exposed to this kind of violations. There are numerous researches on bullying (“mobbning”), but seldom from a gender perspective or from the perspectives of ethnicity or sexuality. Eliasson & Menckel (2003) study gendered practices around verbal aggression and physical violence, the student’s reactions and experience of safety. They conclude that mainly boys expose girls and other boys to verbal aggression and physical violence.

“Honour” related violence. From being practically non-existent in Swedish vocabularies of science, politics and media the concept of “honour killing” has become a common concept in Sweden during the late 1990’s (Eldén 2003). Åsa Eldén (2003) focus on discussing honour related violence beyond the paradigm of culture and avoids constructing culture as different frames through which men’s violence against women can be interpreted. Astrid Schlytter (2004) takes another point of departure. She focuses on young girls/women coming from cultures with a so called honour related patriarchal cultural background and studies their life space and ability to choose their own identity and way of life in Sweden. Her starting point is situations where families and relatives, mainly men, force young girls to obedience.
through threats and maltreatment. Schlytter discuss threats and violence conducted by the family and relatives as being neglected and looked upon as an aspect of the cultural norms in the family’s former home-countries. (See also Aylin Akpinar, 1998) NGOs from Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands have put together a Resource Book from European projects regarding honour related violence (Kvinnoforum 2003). Honour related violence is in the report described mainly as an indicator of social exclusion and poverty, not explicitly in terms of culture.

Not only girls and young women are discussed in terms of HRV, also boys and men are highlighted as suffering from honour related violence and needed to be involved when addressing these problems. Paulina de los Reyes (2003) focuses on what patriarchal values mean at an individual level when they are strengthened by institutional practices and structural conditions in a gender segregated and ethnically differentiated society. Families with immigrant background are looked upon as patriarchal, and their daughters as victims, which can mean a hindrance to understand and prevent specific forms of oppressions. de los Reyes concludes that research on gender and ethnicity as an integrated perspective is lacking in Sweden; knowledge on how different forms of men’s power relations to control women intersect has not gained much interest among Swedish researchers. Pringle (2005) has tried to provide a more nuanced and complex picture of the place of “culture” (defined as beliefs and practices) in the context of men’s violence. On the one hand, he does not dismiss the idea that “culture” may sometimes mediate the precise forms which men’s violence takes. On the other hand, he also emphasises that men’s violence and indeed patriarchal relations more generally characterise both the majority ethnic group in Sweden as well as minority ethnic groups. Following Maria Eriksson, he also suggests that where men’s violences occurs within minority ethnic groups in Sweden, one should not assume that such violence is simply an “import” to Sweden from an outside culture. Instead, researchers should investigate how far such violence reproduces the “meeting” between patriarchal relations in the “home” culture (i.e. the minority ethnic group culture) and patriarchal relations in the “host” culture (i.e. mainstream white Swedish society).

**Prostitution.** In most of the studies on men as sex buyers, men are discussed from various point of views, but only a few discuss men from a gender perspective (Kuosmanen & Johansson 2003). Research around prostitution has mainly been done from a psychological, sociological and historical point of view; however, not much has been done at all and rarely from a gendered perspective on men. Yvonne Svansström (2004), writes from a gender-perspective about how men as sexbuyers has been described and looked upon from 1800 to 2000. It wasn’t until the 1990’s that men became visible as buyers of sex in debates alongside women as prostitutes. Göran Sandell et. al (1996) interviewed men that buy sex in order to be able to analyse their life situation and to understand why they do it and how to prevent it. The authors conclude that prostitution is a problem for society with many aspects to it, for example: lack of equality, sex roles, access to power and family-relations (Sandell et al 1996, p.270, See also ex Hydén 1990, Andersson-Collins 1990).

More than 800 000 Swede’s, mostly men, consume sex on the internet, according to a study made by Sven-Axel Månsson (2004) and Peder Söderlind. The study focus on contacts, meeting places and chat rooms as well as what the relations between the providers, distributors and consumers looks like.
The study of criminologist Tove Pettersson (Pettersson 2002), comprises three aspects on criminal networks focusing on hooligans, ethnicity and gender. The material on ethnicity and gender consists of violent offences reported in the Stockholm police district over the course of 1995; the hooligan study comprises information from the police on violent male supporters of Stockholm. The objective of the gender study was to examine the significant of violent crimes for girls and boys in terms of enacting gender. Boys employ violence as a means of constructing gender considerably more often than girls. However, the study shows that the structure of the registered violent crime committed by boys and girls respectively is quite similar. (See also Lander et al. 2003 were the criminological field is described from a gender perspective)

Lacking research: men’s violence and its connections to dominant forms of construction of masculinity need to be researched more. There is a lack of good recent prevalence surveys of the extent of child sexual abuse in Sweden and its offenders. Also lacking is research on institutional/ised violence, violence to disabled, gender and ethnicity as an integrated perspective, the impact of men’s violence on children, sexual harassments in schools, Swedish men’s practices as sex buyers in Sweden and elsewhere.

6. Health

Gender and health. There are relatively extensive data on the health of the population from registers and surveys. Maria Danielsson (2002) has studied the average life expectancy for men in Sweden from a gender and social-medicine perspective. This text gives a relevant perspective on the position on men “from the cradle to the grave”, concerning death risks during childhood, youth and adulthood. She points to the fact that the average life expectancy of men in Sweden has rapidly approached that of women over the past twenty years. Lower levels of alcohol and tobacco consumption as well as decreased levels of suicide have contributed to level out gender differences.

Örjan Hemström (1998) has studied gender differences in mortality using literature and data from official statistics in Sweden 1945-1992. Men’s behaviour, such as smoking, heavy alcohol drinking and risk-taking, contribute to excess male mortality. He also analyses what impact economical growth, marital break up and working conditions have on mortality among men and women. Hemström concludes by pointing at behavioural factors which best explain excess male mortality, sometimes in interaction with biological factors. Survey data from Sweden indicate that men’s habits are on average unhealthier than women’s with regard to vitamin intake, dietary fat, use of vegetables in the diet and physical activity (Manderbacka et al., 1998). The book Gender Inequalities in Health. A Swedish Perspective (Östlin et al. 2001) examines how current health patterns in Sweden has developed and changed in relation to gender, class and age groups. In one of the chapters the frequently hidden health problem of violence against women is described, underlying factors is highlighted as for example society’s view and treatment of violence against women. Although gender violence is a significant cause of female morbidity and mortality, it is seldom seen as a public health issue. The book Gender and Social inequalities in Health (Wamala & Lynch 2002) focuses on a gender perspective in the frame of health inequalities. Focus is on gender and its role in producing health inequalities as well as difficulties in integrating research on gender and social inequalities in health.

Body appearance. Carita Bengs (2000) has studied how social and cultural norms regarding body and appearance are
perceived and interpreted by young people. Based on a questionnaire to 167 young girls and boys aged 13, 15 and 17 years of old she focuses on the body as problematic, controlled, co-modified and social. Boys expressed a greater satisfaction with their bodies than girls did. Friends, together with mass media, mainly visual media and magazines, are regarded as the strongest source of influence of how the respondents perceive their bodies. Nathalie Koivula (1999) has studied how beliefs of gender-appropriateness results in categorizations of sports as feminine and masculine, she also investigate the media sports coverage from a gender perspective.

**Suicide.** Susanne Ringskog (2001) provides an overview of the empirical research and theory on the field. One explanation as to why twice as many men commit suicide compared to women in Sweden is lack of diagnosis and treatment to men’s depressions (Ringskog 2001). Among men suicide is more common in the country-side compared to women. The number of young men (age 15-24 years of old) subjected to hospital treatment due to attempted suicide has increased somewhat during the last years (Socialstyrelsen 2003). Statistics show that completed suicide has long been considered more prevalent in all of the Nordic countries than in the rest of Europe but this difference is no longer as great as in earlier times. There is a high mortality rate among boys in Sweden; more than twice as many boys in the age of 15-24 years of old die compared to girls in the same age group. This is explained by higher rates of completed suicides and accidents (motor-accidents mostly) leading to death (Danielsson 2002: 24, 35).

The most commonly used method to commit suicide is through hanging and poisoning. The next most common method is to shoot oneself or use car exhaust fumes, methods almost exclusively used by men. Men do also use drugs as a way of committing suicide - a method often referred to as commonly used by women – however; women commit more suicide attempts than men do using drugs (Danielsson 1996, p. 13, 14).

**Men in traffic.** If the risk for men and women of being killed or badly injured is compared, the statistics show that men face a 1.8 times higher risk of being killed compared to women, allowing for how much time men and women are out in traffic. However, the risk of being badly injured is the same for both men and women. Among drivers of a private car the risk of being killed is 1.7 times higher for men compared to women (Statistiska Centralbyrån 2004d, p. 40). It is very unusual to discuss the above average male death rate from a gender perspective or in relation to, for example, risk behaviour. Instead the problem is highlighted from a socio-economic perspective; explanations are found in various risk-groups related to positions on the labour market or in relation to social exclusion. The numbers of deaths caused by accidents are decreasing, which among other factors contributes to level out the gender differences in average length of life between men and women (Danielsson 2002: 34, 35).

**Sexuality and age.** There is an extensive research on young people and sexuality mainly from a sexologist and youth culture point of view. A critical discussion on young men and sexuality is often missing, early research in young people focused mostly on young women’s sexuality. But in the beginning of 2000, there has been an increased interest to problematise how young men “do gender” and sexuality (Kuosmanen & Johansson 2003:214, see for example: Hammarén & Johansson 2002, Johansson & Lalander 2003).

**Gay men and health.** Men who engage in sex with other men consist of 40 % of all HIV positive in Sweden. Some enquiries
have been done with the aim of preventing the spreading of HIV. Enquiries around lifestyles and sex has been done, for example Ronny Tikkanden & Sven-Axel Månsson’s questionnaire Förhandlad säkerhet och kalkylerade risker (1999), (Negotiated safety and calculated risks) and Mats Hilte’s Drogrus och sexlust (Drug rush and sexual desire). In his doctoral thesis Risk Factor Love, Benny Henriksson (1995) examines two contexts for risk behaviour: casual sexual contacts gay- and bisexual men have in erotic “oases”, such as public toilets, parks, video clubs etc; and on the other hand the sexual experiences the men have in their relations.

Research is lacking on men’s violence as a public health issue for women, children and other men. Men’s health problems in relation to hegemonic ideologies of masculinity need to be studied more, as well as young men subjected to crime. Heterosexual men’s sex life is not covered much from a gender perspective. More research is needed with an international perspective.

7. Discussion

As the report has noted, there has been a large amount of research on aspects of gender - including specifically on men’s practices - carried out in Sweden compared to many other European countries. Within the Nordic countries, the intensity of Swedish research on men is also relatively high, perhaps being slightly less than in Norway but being more than in Finland and markedly higher than the relatively low output in Denmark. However, this productivity does not refer to gendered studies of men’s violence. And the absence of men scholars’ involvement in the field of studying men’s violence in Sweden is especially striking. Yet, from the research which has been carried out (mainly by women scholars), it is clear that men’s violence against women is a very significant problem in Sweden. The research silence on this topic, therefore, does not arise from insignificance of the problem. The problem is certainly there in Sweden but it gets researched relatively little, especially by men scholars. In the case of research on child sexual abuse, it is not even possible to say whether the same applies. For the relative absence of research on child sexual abuse in Sweden is very marked and especially problematic; indeed in this specific field even Denmark has more to offer than Sweden in terms of some forms of research such as prevalence surveys.

How can this lack of research on men’s violence in Sweden be explained? No doubt the explanations are multiple and complex. Nevertheless, we pick out one particular partial explanation for emphasis. Pringle (2005) has recently suggested that the cultural dynamics which make Sweden stand out in terms of a societal and welfare commitment to the eradication of poverty and class difference may also be responsible for a resistance to acknowledging and challenging some social divisions based on gender and/or ethnicity and/or age: social divisions which he characterizes (following Maud Eduards) as being associated with “bodily integrity” rather than labour in the home or the market place.

One aspect of a gendered social division associated with “bodily integrity” is men’s violence to women and children. The state welfare project in Sweden - since at least the 1930s - has been directed at poverty alleviation and the narrowing of class differences based on the social principles of consensus and collectivism. And those principles still heavily mark many of the key social institutions of the state. It is suggested that consensus and state collectivism have both promoted the historical commitment in Sweden to the idea of “welfare” (in the form of poverty alleviation) AND at the same time have inhibited a recognition of other social
divisions based on different aspects of disadvantages such as gender, ethnicity, age, disability and sexuality.

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EU FP6 Coordination Action on Human Rights Violations

Sweden National Report on Statistical information on Men’s Practices

1. Key Points

a. There is a very large amount of statistical information available in Sweden, much of it produced by Statistics Sweden and other government authorities. Gender statistics are part of the official statistics.

b. There are lots of statistics divided by gender on the Swedish population regarding gender segregation in for instance labour market, salaries and income, health, education, time use, childcare, care of the elderly, influence and power.

c. Gender divided statistics on social exclusion are available, measuring living conditions as indicated by education, income, work, age, country of birth, social contacts, victimisation, political resources, leisure time and health. These statistics are also published in special reports.

d. The official statistics in Sweden concern reported violence to the police; Statistics Sweden also provides data from interviews with victims of violence. There is in some aspects a quite large amount of statistics on violence. This together with prevalence studies and criminal statistics gives a picture on the character and prevalence of violence in Sweden. In statistics concerning violence the perpetrators are characterised as known or unknown to the victim and whether the crime was committed indoors or outdoors. Gender is differentiated in statistics on violence. As important, however, there are few statistical measures in the area of children subjected to violence.

e. There are statistics disaggregated by gender and age on the both perceived and registered prevalence of illness and poor health in Sweden. But the gendered aspect of these data needs to be focused more.

2. National Background

Rich statistical information on numerous aspects of population is available in Sweden, much of it produced by Statistics Sweden (Statistiska Centralbyrån, SCB). There is a lot of statistical information available on the Statistics Sweden website database, annual yearbooks and CD-ROMs. In their annual yearbook, Statistics Sweden summarises information on much of the statistics produced in Sweden. The majority of the texts are translated into English and available on the website (www.scb.se) The Statistics Sweden organisation is divided into 4 departments: Labour and Education, Population and Welfare, Economic Statistics, Environment and Regional Statistics. The section dealing with statistics around gender equality is located in the department of Population and Welfare. In 1984 the first edition of “Women and Men in Sweden” was released, updated every other year. In this booklet, statistics showing the

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development of gender equality in Sweden are presented.

In 1994 the Swedish Parliament decided on a new national action plan to implement equality policy, including that all statistics on individuals should be divided by gender. Swedish official statistics are divided into 22 subject areas, and there are 25 government authorities responsible for producing these statistics. There is a distinction in Sweden between official statistics and other public statistics. In 2001 gender statistics were made part of the official statistics. The official statistics are produced according to the statistical act and ordinance, published as required by official regulations. The Swedish Official Statistics Act states that official statistics are statistics for public information, planning and research purposes in specified areas produced by appointed public authorities in accordance with the provisions issued by the Government (http://www.svenskstatistik.net/eng/index.htm).

Time Scale. The focus is on statistics concerning home and work, social exclusion, violences and health, collected from the late 1990’s until 2005. Some of the studies include earlier time series.

3. Home and Work

In 1994 the government decided to set up a commission of inquiry on mapping out and analysing the distribution of economic power and resources between men and women. The commission was called Kvinnomaktutredningen [Investigation on the distribution of economic power and resources between women and men] and delivered 13 volumes between 1997 and 1998. The investigation was research based, with the aim to give a collected picture on the distribution of economic power and resources between women and men. In these anthologies gender divided statistics are presented in a comprehensive way around three areas: family, working life/labour market and the welfare state during the last decades of the twentieth century. (see for example: SOU 1998:3, SOU 1998:6, SOU 1998:4, SOU 1997:83)

Work: Den könsuppdelade arbetsmarknaden [The gender divided labour market] is a research based investigation commissioned by the government to present new knowledge on the gender divided labour market. It provides statistics on the various dimensions of gender segregation, horizontal, vertical as well as internally. There are statistics on the period between 1990 and 2002 relating to forms of employment, wages, occupation and gender, regional gender segregations. Besides describing what is done to counter the gender segregated labour market, it provides facts and figures on compulsory schooling and Universities. The report also presents a survey of what young people want to work with when they grow up. The investigation shows that the gender segregation on the labour market to some extent decreased during the 1990s. Women have widened their choice of career which has led to a decreased segregation; men on the other hand have not to the same extent widened their choices of careers (SOU 2004:43). But segregation is still relatively great, both horizontally as well as vertically. In the research-based governmental report Mansdominans i förändring (2003) [Male dominance in change] Wahl et al. present statistics showing that men continue to dominate leading positions in large organisations in public as well as in the private sector, but the organisations are engaged in efforts to bring about change to create a more even representation of the sexes (SOU 2003:16).

Work, labour force participation and employment sectors: The booklet Women and Men in Sweden, facts and figures is a compilation of data on gender equality and demographic analysis. It is a very handy booklet and comes in an English version.
Its content includes figures and statistics divided by gender over the Swedish population regarding health, education, time use, child care, care of the elderly, gainful employment, salaries and income. In 2003 the population in age-group 20-64 contained of 2, 60 million women and 2, 68 million men, out of these 79 % of women and 84 % of men were in the labour force. Men are to a higher extent employed than women although the difference is small; 80 % of men and 76 % of women were employed in 2003. 91 % of all men aged 20-64 were employed full-time and 9 % part-time. The corresponding figures for women were 67 % full-time and 33 % part-time.

A greater proportion of women were outside the labour market compared to men, 21 % of women and 16 % of men. The rate of men’s gainful employment has remained at the same level between 1979 and 1990 but is subsequently decreasing. In 2003 men in the age group 20 – 64 had an economic activity rate of 84 % and an unemployment rate of 4 per cent. Men’s labour force participation at age 25-54 have dropped since the 90’s, the same applies for men aged 16-19 years for which the economic activity rate has fallen. Among Swedish born men in the age 25-44 the economic activity rate is 91 out of 100, for men born in Europe except the Nordic countries 85, and for men born in other countries outside Europe the activity rate is 77. In the age group 45-64 the economic activity rate is lower; the economic activity rate is 84 out of 100 for men born in Sweden, men born in the Nordic countries has a rate of 71, the rate for men born in Europe except the Nordic countries is 69, and for men born in other countries outside Europe it is 71 (SCB 2004, p. 43, 45, 47, 48, 51). The labour market is gendered by branch and by public or private sector. Only three occupations out of the thirty largest have an equal sex distribution: teachers in secondary education, cooks, and accountants. The labour market is both hierarchally and horizontally gender segregated. Men dominate in technical and commercial sales branches as for example as system designers, lorry drivers, carpenters, stock clerks, storekeepers, machine-tool operators, building caretakers, mainly in the private sector. Women work in the public sector as much as in the private, for example as assistant nurses, home-based personal care, office clerks, administrative personnel and primary school teachers. Women have to greater extent temporary employment contracts compared to men. Managers are to great extent men in the private sector; in the private sector 81 % of managers are men and in the public sector 44 %, in total 76 % of managers in Sweden are men (SCB 2004, p. 56, 94).

Time use: Tid för vardagsliv [Time for the everyday life] is a study that Statistics Sweden made to relate how women’s and men’s time use has changed between 1990/91 and year 2000/01. Apart from a gender perspective, a family cycle perspective is discussed. The statistics show that women and men are closing in on one other when it comes to work; today’s women do unpaid home-work 40 minutes less per day and men do paid work outside the home 20 minutes less per day. Due to women working less in the home this has led to a more equal distributed workload in the home, all together this means that the “productive time” (working for pay) has decreased somewhat. Even though men’s and women’s time use has become more alike, men’s work is to a larger extent paid work outside the home, women’s work is more equally distributed.

4 The main activities for women and men outside the labour market were housework; 2 % of women and 0 % of men; studies 5 % for both women and men; pension 2 % of women and 1 % of men; other 12 % of women and 10 % of men (SCB 2004, p. 43).
between paid work outside the home and unpaid work in the home (SCB 2003b).

**Wage gap:** Men generally earn more than women do; in total women earn 83 % of what men do (year 2002). This figure has remained more or less the same since the 1990s. If one accounts for differences between men and women in age, education, full-time/part-time, sector and occupational group women earn 92 % of men’s salaries (year 2002) (SCB 2004, p. 72).

**Parental leave, temporary allowance and parental allowance:** In 1974 parental allowance was introduced. Since 1998 the benefits comprise 80 % of the wage for 480 days including 30 sickness benefit days. Since 1995 there is a “mummy/daddy month” - 30 days must be used by the mother and 30 by the father. Since 2002 the amount of days reserved for each parent are 60 days. If the father (or the mother for that part) does not utilize his reserved days they are lost to the family. The remainder can be used by either parent. Fathers have since 1980 the right to 10 days leave immediately after the birth of a new child. The amount of days for which parental leave have been utilized by men have slowly increased since the introduction in 1974; in year 2003 men’s share was 17 % of the total. This means that men do not take much more parental leave than their reserved days. In 2003 men utilized 36 % of the total of temporary allowance days (days to care for sick children). Statistics on insured persons claiming parental allowance show that men’s part has increased. The percentage of allowance days claimed by men has increased from 23 % in 1985 to 43 % 2003. (SCB 2004, p. 38, 39).

4. Social Exclusion

**Living conditions and welfare:** Statistics Sweden provides statistics on living conditions among individuals and households, called; *Undersökningar av levnadsförhållanden* [Study of living conditions]. A large package of social indicators is used as measures of living conditions: education, income, work, transports, social contacts, victimisation, political resources, leisure time and health. The statistics are divided by gender, social economic class, generation, type of family, country of birth, region and occupation.

After the 1990s the unemployment rates rose simultaneous with cut downs in official spending, resulting in increased welfare gaps in Sweden. Some of the tendencies in this development are covered in the report *Välfärd och ofärd på 90-talet* [Good times and hard times in Sweden during the 90s]. The report gives an overview of Sweden as a welfare state, regarding income, living conditions, distribution of welfare, developments in health, victims of violence, the welfare of elderly and democracy. One example of how the welfare state in relation to aspects of democracy is that political participation has declined during the 80s and 90s. There are great differences in participation between different groups: Men, middle aged, with high income, working as officials, being native Swedes and politically interested are more likely to participate in politics than any other group. Younger generations experienced a worsened economic situation since the 1990’s, but the situation for elderly persons has on the other hand improved (SCB 2003).

The report *Perspektiv på välfärden 2004* [Perspectives on welfare 2004] shed light on actualities in welfare reporting on economy, employment, income, living conditions and health. There are descriptions of the labour market during the resent decades in terms of employment for men and women divided by age (SCB 2004c, 106, 133). The Swedish government and the Department for Social Issues assigned in 1999 a
commission to investigate and summarize the development of the welfare system during the 1990s. Groups that are exposed to generally low levels of welfare, and that have gone through a particularly non-favourable development during the 1990s, are young people, single mothers, disabled, elderly and people born outside of Sweden and children to some extent (SOU 2001:79 p. 55-59).

The situation of immigrants: Approximately 20 % of the Swedish population has a background in immigration; 1, 9 million are either born abroad or have one or both parents born abroad. Most immigrants to Sweden come from the Nordic countries and Europe, where persons from former republic of Yugoslavia and Asia constitute a considerable share. There are two levels of stratification among immigrants. Immigrants from the richer world (Nordic countries, western Europe and North America) reach the same living conditions as its “twin-group” of Swedes after a short time in Sweden. Immigrants from the Balkans, Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and South America form a group who has essentially poorer living conditions lasting over many years. The profile of welfare for these groups is on all points worse compared to native ethnic6 Swedes and immigrants from richer countries (SCB 2003, p.11).

5 This comment should be seen in the light of the fact that "Swedish born" Swedes who have 1 or both parents born outside Sweden are often referred to in public discourse as "invandrare" (immigrant) or "second-generation immigrant". Until 2002, Statistics Sweden (SCB) also formally used the terminology of "second generation immigrant". It is only after 2002 that SCB has abandoned that term. The new term is "born in Sweden with both parents born abroad". A person born in Sweden with one of the parents born in Sweden is no longer considered as having "foreign background" (http://www.scb.se/Grupp/Metod/_Dokument/X11 OP0203.pdf).

6 Swedish born person by Swedish born parents.

Differences in unemployment rates were high between ethnic Swedish men and immigrant men regarding the period of 1993-2000. While 4, 1 % of the ethnic Swedish men were unemployed, 9, 8 % of all men born abroad were unemployed. Men from south Europe and former republic of Yugoslavia (10, 10, 5 %), and the Middle East (14, 9 %) showed the highest rates of unemployment. Differences in health conditions follow the two levels of stratification between immigrants from the richer countries and “others”. Men from the Nordic and west EU countries show little differences in health compared to ethnic Swedes, the well-being of immigrants from war zones and outside EU are considerable worse (SCB 2002, p. 98, 153).

People born outside of Sweden are more exposed to fluctuations in the labour market in Sweden. This is primarily true for immigrants who have stayed in Sweden for a shorter period of time. The situation for men born in the Nordic countries, EU/EES, Latin America or Asia is that they have between 5-10 percentage units’ lower employment rates than ethnic born Swedish men. The lowest level of employment is among men born in a country in Asia who have been in Sweden 0-4 years. In this group 24 % had a job in 2001, being over 50 percentage units lower than ethnic Swedish men. Swedish born young people with parents born outside of Europe have lower rates of employment and higher rates of unemployment compared to Swedish born young people with Swedish born parents; even though they have the same level of education, the same average grades and grades in the Swedish language. A conclusion drawn in the report (Integrationsverket 2004, p. 135) is discrimination is one important explanation to differences in the employment rates between Swedish born persons and persons born outside of Sweden. However, knowledge is lacking about how common the prevalence of

The level of relative earning income is lower for immigrants born outside of Europe compared to ethnic Swedes. Between 1978 and 1999 the relative income trends for immigrant men born outside of Europe or in the south/eastern parts of the world are decreasing (SOU 2004:21, p. 32-36). Levels of social assistance are somewhat higher for children of immigrants, but levels of income and disposable income are more or less in accordance with Swedes with one or two Swedish parents (SCB 2002 p. 46-48).

**Early retirements** are more common among women with immigrant background than among immigrant men and among ethnic Swedish men and women. Knowledge about the causes is lacking; more research is needed on gender and ethnicity perspectives on sick-leave (Akhavan & Bildt 2004, p. 74).

**Living conditions and health:** During the beginning of 1990’s measures were taken to control the crisis in the economy, which affected the health insurance policy. Lower benefits and a day of qualifying before benefit could be claimed were introduced. Nevertheless, since 1997 the public spending on sick leave has increased dramatically. Men are found to be less frequently on sick leave than women (SCB 2004c, 106, 133). *Folkhälsa och sociala förhållanden* [Public Health and Social Conditions] is a report from the National Board of Health and Welfare concerning living conditions and health. Descriptions on social and economic conditions based on statistics on households are not divided by gender, but most data are; for example comments on labour market and the welfare system. Groups in the population who are more likely to have a weak economic situation are single parents, young people between 18-22 years of age, and immigrants from southern Europe or the Middle East that have been living in Sweden for less than 20 years (Socialstyrelsen 2003b).

The sick leave periods of long duration have increased from 3, 2 per cent by the end of the 1980th to 4, 5 per cent for men in 2002. The corresponding figures for women are higher; 4, 6 per cent by the end of the 1980th to 8, 4 per cent in 2002. The knowledgebase around these phenomena are described as poor. Sick leave for periods over 1 year have increased the most; from 55 000 cases in year 1990 to over 126 000 cases year 2002 (Socialstyrelsen 2003b).

Long-period epidemiological data on children’s and young people’s mental health are not available in Sweden. The National Board of Health and welfare have made pilot studies in 21 municipalities with over 10 000 school pupils. The results show that boys in 8th grade (14-15 years of old) with parents born outside of Sweden suffer from psychosomatic problems twice as often as the boys with Swedish born parents (Socialstyrelsen 2005, p. 9, Asplund et al. 2005).

**Homelessness:** An estimate is that there are 8 400 homeless persons in Sweden (4 out of 5 are men). 3 out of 4 homeless men are born in Sweden; among those born outside of Sweden Finnish men are over-represented. The proportion of people living in crowded housing has increased from 2 % in 1998/1999 to 2, 7 % in 2001. (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/02/42/04/81d24d2b.pdf)

**Social assistance:** The National Board of Health and Welfare report *Ekonomiskt bistånd årsstatistik, 2003,* [Yearly statistics on Economic assistance 2003] present’s statistics on the number of individuals and households receiving social assistance.

7 More than 30 days sick-leave
Recipients are categorized by gender, age, country of birth, employment status and the length of assistance period. The report shows that 6 % of all households received social assistance, that is nearly 229 000 households. If compared with year 2002 the number of recipient households increased by 8000, or 3 %. The largest group (22 %) consists of single mothers with children. Single men without children comprised the second largest category (9 %) of households receiving social assistance (Socialstyrelsen 2003).

**Children, young people and family:**
Official statistics on children and young people towards whom social service’s measures were directed 2003 is presented in the statistical report *Barn och unga – insatser år 2003*. It contains information on institutional and non-institutional care of children and young people. Measures are taken by age and gender depending on statistics; other measurements are person with custody and parent’s country of birth. The number of children who were subjects to measures the November 1 2003 were 15 000 children; 10 400 with support from the social service act (SoL) and 4300 due to The Special Provisions Act. The number of children and young people taken into custody for a 24 hour period some time during 2003 amounted to 20 000 (Socialstyrelsen 2004:9).

*Familjerätt år 2003* [Family Law 2003] is a report on Social services work related to family law. In recent decades “the best interests of the child” have been implemented in Children and Parents Code as a guideline. In practice, this means that the child’s “need” to engage in a close relation to both parents is codified. According to the report the number of mediation talks in 2003 were 20 477, an increase of 2 % compared to 2002. The number of children involved in investigations on custody, living conditions and relations to parents were 6 484; a decrease of 2 % since 2002 (Socialstyrelsen 2004:6, p. 4). In 2002, family law services held co-operation talks with parents about custody and contact arrangements concerning more than 20,000 children. This led to more than 4,000 legally binding agreements on custody, accommodation and parental access (Socialstyrelsen 2004c).

**Disabled:** The report *Persons with Certain Functional Impairments – measures specified by LSS 2003* provides a review of statistical data on disabled who have received services specified by the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with certain Function Impairments. Tables are presented on the number of individuals in Sweden who received support services from municipalities in 2003, and the statistics are divided by gender and age. The total number of individuals who received service during 2003 is estimated at somewhere between 53 000 and 55 000 persons, 0.6 % of the population (Socialstyrelsen 2004:2, p. 28, 60). Disabled men more often get service from society in terms of work and allowances than women do, mostly due to the construction of the Swedish social welfare system and its relation to achievements on the labour market (SOU 1998:138 p.17).

**5. Violences**
*Official statistics* in Sweden only reflect reported violence towards women and men. Since 1981 gender is distinguished in statistics on violence; however, children under the age of 14 years of old are not characterised by gender (Brottsförebyggande rådet 2004a). In statistics on violence, the perpetrators are characterised as known or unknown to the victim and whether the crime was committed indoors or outdoors (Steen 2003). Deadly violence, meaning homicide, attempted homicide and maltreatment accidentally leading to death are separated out in the statistics (Nilsson 2001).
Violence and welfare: An estimated number of threats and acts of violence are 1, 3 million per year in Sweden. According to the report Välfärd och ofärd på 90-talet [Welfare and lack of welfare in the 90’s] only one fourth out of these crimes were reported to the police. There is a high risk for young people to be affected by violence; 20 per cent of men and 14 per cent of women (16-24 years of old) were affected by violence or threats of violence between 2000-2001 (SCB 2003).

Crime wave in Sweden 2001-2003: The National Council for Crime Prevention describes and analyses the development of various types of crimes in Sweden. This series of reports has been available since 1976. Crimes accounted for in the reports are either large scale or often highlighted crimes. In this report (Brottsförebyggande Rådet 2004a), different forms of violence are reported, namely violence directed against persons, such as lethal violence, assault or sexual crimes. The analyses are mostly based on official statistics, police data, statistics on legal proceedings, victim studies based on interviews, self reporting studies focusing crimes from the perpetrators point of view, and statistics on causes of death. The majority of all crimes of a violent character reported in Sweden are crimes of maltreatment (misshandel). In year 2003 there were 65 177 crimes reported to the police; 34 % were registered as directed against women, 54 % against men and 12 % against children up to 14 years of old. According to the statistics a little more than 22 000 cases of violence against women were reported; in 3 out of 4 cases the perpetrator was known to the victim. Crimes of a violent character seem to have increased rapidly during the last 10 years, the escalation of reported crimes are explained by more ability to report rather than an increase of the level of actual violence (Brottsförebyggande Rådet 2004a, p. 65).

The report Dödligt våld mot kvinnor i nära relationer (The National Council for Crime Prevention) gives an overview on deadly violence directed to women in Sweden. It is mainly based on police reports and registers, verdicts and examinations conducted by a forensic psychiatrist. The report includes gender separated statistics on prevalence, where and by whom and under what circumstances the felony is committed. Since 1990 an average of 16 women per year are killed by a man known to the victim. However, deadly violence against women has decreased by 30 % during the 1990’s compared to the 1970’s statistics. This is explained by greater awareness, juridical changes and more effective medical care preventing death as consequence of the violence. It is common that the perpetrator suffers from mental illness or disturbance; 80 per cent are mentally ill or mentally disturbed according to the report. In 25 per cent of the cases the perpetrator commits suicide in relation to the crime; these men are said to be suffering from mental illness twice as often as other perpetrators. Alcohol is less evident in playing a role in deadly violence against women in close relations than in deadly violence in general. In the report it is stated that there is a lack of information in official statistics and research on deadly violence against women in close relations. This makes it close to impossible to extract the exact development on violence against women in close relations over a longer perspective (Brottsförebyggande rådet 2001b).

Crime surveys
To make visible the numbers of violent acts committed, victim surveys or prevalence surveys, give a more accurate overview picture. Prevalence studies are described as difficult to perform. Statistics Sweden points out that extensive subjection to violence is, for various reasons, not mentioned by respondents to the police or to the interviewee. As an example Statistics Sweden points to sexual
assault and men’s violence against women in close relations (Amnesty 2004). It is worth noting that children are not included in the prevalence studies on maltreatment of children in Sweden; they have to be over 16 years of old to participate (Brottsförebyggande rådet 2004a, p. 43, 67).

**Victim-surveys:** The most quoted Swedish crime victim survey, included in Undersökningar av levnadsförhållanden (ULF) [Investigation in living conditions], has been carried out by SCB since 1978. In total, 165,000 persons have been interviewed during this period. In the survey questions about exposure to violence are asked, as well as questions about anxiety and health consequences. Other questions concern criminality, exposure to theft, unemployment, and economic situation. It provides statistics about the number of violent acts reported in the interviews: according to gender and age, family conditions, regional divisions, nationality (immigrants), where the violence takes place and when. Three risk groups are pointed out: young men 16-35 years of age active in night life; single mothers exposed to violence in their own home; and people working within certain professions. The last category concerns the police, local traffic personnel and personnel in the social and health care system.

Statistics Sweden provides a charting of victims of violence and crimes against property between 1978-2002 (SCB 2004b) based on statistics and interviews on living conditions. Questions about increased criminality, consequences of violence, what groups are subjected more than others and the relation to the perpetrator are covered. Situations experienced as worrying and threatening are also included. Around 7.5% of the population between 16 and 84 stated in the interviews that they had been subjected to some sort of violence or threats of violence during 2000-2001. This means 520,000 persons, but the exposure varies depending upon gender, age and region. Out of men between 16-24 years of old 14,3% have been exposed to some sort of violence, 10% have been subject to violence leading to visible injuries. Out of the women in the same category 7.9% have been subject to some sort of violence and 5.8% to violence resulting in visible injuries. The data shows how young women’s exposure to violence increased 3,4% since 1992-93. A comparison between men and women subject to violence leading to some sort of injury shows that the violence has increased. The figures about subjection to any kind of violence show that violence against women increases more than violence against men. This trend is evident in the 2002 measurement. In the age class 16-74, nearly 8% of the men, but almost 10% of the women, have reported threats or violence directed against him/her during the last year. Data on single parents, mostly women, show that 24% of these women have been subject to some form of violence or threats between 2000-2001. In this group 8% (5000 single women and parents of small children) were subject to repeated incidents of violence leading to injuries. According to SCB this is the highest figure of any of the groups that are mapped out in the report. In relation to young men, 16-24 years of old, nearly 4% have been subjected to repeated forms of violence. Single mothers are often exposed to violence in their homes by a perpetrator closely related to them (implicitly this point to men, an implication which in some descriptions is made explicit). Men are to a higher extent exposed to violence in public spaces, often by an unknown perpetrator. There are small differences between “native” and “immigrant” Swedes, with an

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8 Since the beginning of the 1990s 3.4% of the men are subject to severe violence which means +0.4%. Since the beginning of the 1990s 2.1% of the women are subject to severe violence which is an escalation of +0.7%.
overrepresentation of men with foreign born parents; 12 % have reported some sort of violence or threats in public spaces (SCB 2004b, 33-79).

Slagen dam. Mäns våld mot kvinnor i jämställda Sverige [Captured Queen, Men’s violence to women in equal Sweden] is a prevalence study carried out as a result of the Act 1997/98:55 on violence against women. The study was conducted as a commission from the Government to the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority and external researchers. The survey was based on answers from 7000 (out of initially 10 000) randomly chosen women of the population between the ages of 18 to 64 years of old. The study was conducted between October 1999 and January 2000. The women were asked about their experiences of physical violence, sexual violence, exposure to threats and controlling behaviour and sexual harassment. Of the respondents, a total of 46 per cent of all women have experienced violence by a man since turning fifteen. Twelve per cent of women have been subject to violence in the last year. The results show that one woman in four, i.e. 25 per cent, has experienced physical violence on the part of a man since turning fifteen. 18 per cent has experience of being threatened by a man since her fifteenth birthday and 4 per cent have been threatened in the last year. Over half of the women have been sexually harassed, i.e. 56 per cent. The violence starts early; according to the survey 30 % of the women have experience of violence prior to their fifteenth birthday (Lundgren et al. 2002, p 8).

Våld mot kvinnor i nära relationer. En kartläggning [A Mapping of the Violence to Women in Close Relations]. This study builds on surveys sent to women working at randomly chosen workplaces in four counties in Sweden. It was answered anonymously by 3 300 women. 0.9 percent of the women said they had been subject to physical violence by their boyfriend/former boyfriend. None of them had reported the crime (Brottsförebyggande rådet, 2002).

Violence among young people: The report Theft, drugs and violence among ninth grade boys and girls, describes the prevalence of delinquency among ninth grade pupils. Three surveys were distributed in 1995, 1997 and 1999, to a total of 16 884 pupils. The response rate was between 85 and 90 per cent. The majority of the pupils were 15 years of age. Three in twenty boys have engaged in an act involving violence against a person, as compared with one in twenty girls. Almost half of the acts of violence to which young people in the ninth grade fall victim take place on school premises (Brottsförebyggande rådet 2000).

Men’s violence of a racist or xenophobic character: Crimes of a racist or xenophobic nature, is according to the report Hets mot folkgrupp [Threats Towards Ethnic Groups], very much dominated by young men (The National Council for Crime Prevention). Fully 98 per cent of those convicted of agitation against a national or ethnic group are males. Looking at the age of those who are convicted, the offence is very much a youth crime; almost half of those convicted during the 1990s were under 20 years of age. Among those convicted of agitation against a national or ethnic group, there is a large group with a history of serious criminal conduct according to the report (Brottsförebyggande rådet 2001). Statistics shows that reported crimes with a racist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic ground, has increased rapidly. In 1999 the amount of reported crimes was 2363 compared with 1752 in 1997. In 1999 a total of 207 crimes of homophobic character were reported. (Brottsförebyggande rådet 2004b)
The report *Intolerans, antisemitiska, homofobiska, islamafobiska och invandrarfientliga tendenser bland unga* [Intolerance. Anti-semitic, homo-phobic, Islama-phobic and xenophobic tendencies among young people] aim at providing a picture of young peoples attitudes towards minority groups (Brottsförebyggande rådet 2004b). The study builds on a survey handed out to young people between the ages of 14 and 19 in compulsory schooling as well as young people attending upper secondary school. The response rate is 76.2 per cent (10 600 students answered the survey). In the study patterns show that boys are less tolerant than girls; a little more than 60 per cent of the boys and 82 per cent of the girls are sympathetic to minority ethnic groups and homosexuality. 10 per cent of the boys and 2 per cent of the girls are characterized as bearing a high level of intolerance.

**Violence against children:** Statistics on intentionally inflicted violence against children are discussed in the report *Statistik över avsiktligt våld mot barn* [Statistics on intentionally inflicted violence against children]. During the period 1997-2001 3030 children 0-17 years of age died. According to the report 36 out of these died following assault by another person. Another 21 children died due to unclear causes. The statistics are divided by gender, age and region. Girls are more subject to sexual violence than boys according to the report; one third of the violence directed to girls is of a sexual character (Socialstyrelsen 2004b).

**Child sexual abuse:** There have been a few victim surveys carried out in Sweden, however rather a long time ago (1983 and 1985). In 1992 Karin Edgardh carried out a study of 2000 Swedish 17 year olds; 12 per cent of the girls and 4 per cent of the boys responded that they had been the victims of sexual abuse/molestation/flash. Among young people not attending upper secondary school, attending the municipality’s alternative education, 26 per cent of the girls and 4 per cent of the boys responded that they had been the victim of sexual abuse (excluding flashing). 25 per cent of the cases were cases of an intra-familial abuse (Edgardh 1992, see also Edgardh 2001).

A study conducted by Jansson (2001) showed that out of 200 respondents 8 % of the women and 2 % of men had been subject to sexual abuse in childhood. *Sexual abuse of children, Definitions and prevalence*, published by the National Board of Health and Welfare, gives an overview over the statistics on child sexual abuse in Sweden. Sexual crimes against children have been reported separately in the statistics since 1965. The occurrence of child sexual abuse is divided into figures of incidence and prevalence. Around 1-2 per 1,000 children under the age of 15 are annually reported to the police because they are suspected to be the victims of child sexual abuse. The proportion of these cases resulting in prosecution and guilty verdict is very small. Figures on the number of suspected crimes against children aged 0-15 reported to the police between 1975-1997 shows that the quantitatively largest increase concerns sexual coercion. This means in practice cases where the suspect was a man and the child a girl. The annual incidence defined as suspected sexual crimes against children under the age of 15 reported to the police is in this report estimated to 2400 reports per year, based on figures for 1992 and 1996. Since 1987 suspected crimes of the type sexual coercion of children have been separated in the statistics according to the type of relationship between the suspect and the victim. The proportion with a close relationship varies between 51 % and 67 %. The changes are largely attributable to the group with a close relationship between the suspect and the victim, i. e. abuse within the family. The Swedish prevalence figures are described as relatively low in international terms (referring to Rönström
According to criminal statistics the numbers of reported child pornography offences have increased. Escalating from 239 reported crimes in year 2000, 274 crimes were reported in 2001 and 396 in 2002. The year 2000 is the first year when child pornography, as an offence, was accounted for separately in criminal statistics. All together 180 men were convicted and held accounted for a total of 950 reported offences (Brottsförebyggande rådet 2003).

Rape: The number of reported cases of rape increased from 800 in year 1975 to over 2100 in year 1993. Between year 2001 and year 2003 the number of reported rapes increased to over 2500, this is an increase of 23 per cent. Between 30 and 60 of these are group rapes. However, the number of convicted of crimes of a sexual character have decreased during the 1990s. In year 2003 the number of convicted to imprisonment amounted to one third of a total of 731 convicted for sex-crimes. Out of the convictions for the crime of rape; 78 per cent were sentenced to imprisonment (Brottsförebyggande rådet 2004a, p. 85, 90, 91).

Gender divided statistics are lacking on verdicts in relation to victims of crime. In Swedish criminal statistics it is not possible to extract how many prosecutions of men’s maltreatment to women or child sexual abuse came to court and the proportion where a prosecution was achieved or not. Another deficiency is that the age group 15-18 is not included in the sexual crimes against children. The statistics focus on suspected perpetrators and not the victim; i.e. children and young people. There is also a lack of statistics and knowledge when it comes to young perpetrators of sexual abuse, abuse which takes place in institutions and abuse of the disabled (Svedin 2001, p. 30-31). Worth noting is that children are not included in the prevalence studies on maltreatment of children in Sweden built on reports by victims; they have to be over 16 years of old to participate (Brottsförebyggande rådet 2004a, p. 43, 67). Statistics on how many children are living in families where the mother is subject to violence by the father or stepfather are lacking. Information is needed on the extent to which men who are violent partners are also directly violent physically and/or sexually to the child in the home.

6. Health

The Yearbook of *Health and Medical Care 2002* (National Board of Health and Welfare, SCB et al) is the eighth report on health care conditions in Sweden. Statistics are gathered from official statistics as well as other sources. The report includes statistics divided by gender and age on the prevalence of illness and poor health in Sweden, both perceived and registered. It also includes figures on the use of health and medical care services and pharmaceuticals, as well as statistics on mortality and socio-economic consequences of illness and poor health (Socialstyrelsen 2002). In the report *Dödsorsaker 2002* [Causes of Death 2004] Swedish official statistics are presented on the causes of death in Sweden in 2002. The main variables included in the register are social security number, sex, home district, noting whether autopsied or not; if so what kind, noting what injury/poisoning, if alcoholic or narcotic related. The most common causes of death for men and women are diseases of circulatory organs. Almost half the deceased population had such a disease as the underlying cause. The second most common cause is tumours. The mortality trend is falling; the level of decrease is
higher for men than for women. Figures for causes of death divided by gender and age are shown in the publication (Socialstyrelsen 2004).

Suicide: Suicide rates of men have declined to some extent during the period 1980 to 2002; however the rates of suicide have not declined in the age-group 15-24 years. Since the beginning of the 1990s there is an increase of “definite” suicide by 27 % and by 77 % among the “uncertain” suicides in this age group. In 2002 in total 1077 committed suicide; 110 men in age group 15-24; 314 men in age group 25-44; 419 men in age group 45-64; 234 in age group 65+ (data regarding certain and uncertain suicides). The gender quota in Sweden is 2.7:1, meaning that for every suicide committed by a woman 2.7 were committed by a man. (http://www.ki.se/suicide//stat_sverige_sm_man_99.html, 7 mars 2005) Men are more likely to “succeed” in committing suicide; women on the other hand, are more likely to attempt suicide. Suicide is more common among men living in the countryside compared to women. (Socialstyrelsen 2003b) According to the National Institute for Public Health up to 48 % of the suicides committed in Sweden are related to alcohol consumption (Statens folkhälsoinstitut 2005, p. 4).

Alcohol and narcotics: The current consumption of alcohol is described as the highest of all times since statistics begun to be collected on the subject in the 1950s (Folkhälsa och sociala förhållanden) [Public Health and Social Conditions]. Information on gender differences in alcohol consumption is gathered through interviews and surveys. According to the report both men and women drink more, and more often. Gender differences are rather appreciable in statistics on mortality and alcohol. Men are up to four times more likely to suffer from alcohol related deaths compared to women. Statistics from Dödsorsaksregistret [register on Causes of death] shows variations due to age groups, gender, consumption and region (Socialstyrelsen 2003b). Narcotics: The number of heavy misusers increased between 1992 and 1998 from 19 000 to about 26 000, 3 out of 4 of these were men. The number of drug-related deaths increased from 143 in year 1990 to 353 in year 2000, which is an increase of more than 100 %. The percentage of young men reporting for military service who stated that they had tried drugs has tripled in the 1990’s to 18 % in 2002. (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/02/42/04/81d24d2b.pdf)

Cancer and myocardial infarctions: Cancer Incidence in Sweden 2002 gives statistics from the Cancer register. The prevalence and cumulative probability to develop cancer is divided by gender (Socialstyrelsen 2003:11). The National Board of Health and Welfare also provide a national register for regional variations, for example in the handling of prostate cancer in Sweden. Prostate cancer is the most common form of cancer for men, constituting 30 per cent of all forms of cancer affecting men. However, there are great variations between countries and regions and the knowledge about its causes are not well mapped out. Sweden is one of the countries where this form of cancer is most common (Socialstyrelsen 2001). Myocardial infarctions in Sweden 1987-2000 describe Swedish statistics of Acute Myocardial Infarction. In total for all ages above 20 years of old, men had an age standardized incidence which is twice as high as women in the year 2000 (Socialstyrelsen 2003c).

Sex in Sweden: The purpose of the study Sex in Sweden [National Institute for Public Health] is to provide a basis for public health work. The study focus on the sphere of sexuality, interpersonal relationships, norms, values and identity patterns. It also aims at identifying risk groups as consequences of sexual activity. The
material is based on a population-based gross sample of 5,200 individuals aged between 18 and 74; out of these 2,810 participated in the study. The data show that for women the risk of being forced into sexual activity increases with the number of sexual partners. Each new sexual partner increases the risk to some extent. For adult men there is no such increase in risk related to number of sexual partners; the majority of cases of forced sexual activity directed at men are directed at prepubescent boys. The report contains lots of statistical data on Swedes’ sex life; i.e., 13% of the Swedish men have at some time paid to be together with someone sexually (400,000 Swedish men). Most prostitution contacts take place abroad, in connection with business travel or holiday, most sex purchasers were found among the best-situated in society. According to the study there are signs indicating that the lifestyle of sex purchasing can be risk-filled due to sexually transferrable diseases (Lewin et al. 1996, p. 250, 251, 288). According to Epidemiologisk årsbok 2003 [Epidemiological Yearbook 2003] (The Swedish Institute for Infectious Disease Control) the number of sexually transferrable diseases such as chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis have risen during the past five years. The increased numbers of gonorrhoea and syphilis are explained by more cases where men who engage in sex with other men take higher risks having unprotected sex. The higher numbers of chlamydia is explained by greater risk behaviour by younger heterosexual men and women. Approximately 3,500 persons are living with HIV in Sweden (2005). There were 425 persons reported with HIV-infection in Sweden 2004, 259 men and 166 women. This is the highest number of reported cases during one year since 1985-1986 when these reports were initiated (Smittskyddsinstitutet 2005).

**Car-accidents:** If the risk for men and women of being killed or badly injured is compared, the statistics show that men face a 1.8 times higher risk of being killed than women. This is if consideration is taken into account of how much time men and women are in traffic situations. However, the risk of being badly injured is the same for both men and women. Among drivers of a private car the risk of being killed is 1.7 times higher for men compared to women. The risk of being killed on a bike or by foot is 4.0 and 1.8 times higher respectively for men compared to women. The risk of being badly injured is approximately the same for both genders. Among motor-cyclists the risk of being killed are 1.5 times higher for men, and among moped riders the risk of dying in traffic is 3.5 times as high compared to women (SCB 2004d, p. 40). Out of those killed in traffic at the age of 15, more than 3 out of 4 are men (period 1995-2002) (http://www.vv.se/templates/page3wide__8413.aspx, 7 mars 2005).

### 7. Discussion

Gaps in the data available have been noted throughout the report. Compared to statistics available, for instance, on gender and the labour market, data on gender and violence is quite under-reported in official and semi-official reporting. Perhaps the most striking of many aspects is the lack of recent, thorough prevalence studies of child sexual abuse in Sweden. This particular absence and the absence of data on gender and violence more generally, have to be seen in the context of the fact that Sweden is one of the most statistic-collecting states in the world – with an elaborate state and semi-state machinery for each type of data collection.

Within the Nordic countries, Sweden is generally ahead in the sphere of men’s violence compared to Denmark even if it lags behind some west European countries such as the UK. However, within the
specific field of child sexual abuse, even Denmark is in advance of Sweden in terms of some statistical data available.

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- Swedish official statistics available on the internet
http://www.svenskstatistik.net/eng/index.htm

www.scb.se
- Statistics Sweden

www.sos.se
- The National Board of Health and Healthcare

www.bra.se
- The National Council for Crime Prevention

www.regeringen.se
- The Swedish Governments homepage

www.integrationsverket.se
- The Swedish Integration Board

www.ali.se
- The Swedish Institute for Working Life

www.brottsoffermyndigheten.se
- The Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority
http://www.fhi.se/
- The National Institute for Public Health

www.sika-institute.se
- The Swedish Institute For Transport and Communications Analysis

www.ki.se/suicide/index.html
- National Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention of Mental Ill-Health
1. Key Points

a. The official gender equality policy in Sweden proceeds from an understanding that unequal distribution of power between men and women is sustained by the gender-based power structure in society. The fundamentals of the gendered power structure are seen as the separation of the male and the female in all possible ways and the normative superiority of men and maleness to women and womanliness. In contrast, the policy goals are for women and men to have the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities in all areas of life. National legal and governmental policy is characterised by a mixture of gender-neutrality and gender-explicit communication depending on policy area and sender.

b. Men are getting explicit attention in policy areas such as violence, working and family life. Men and gender equality projects are implemented through a consensus strategy, where gender equality is to be reached through information, consciousness raising, legislative initiatives and social benefits.

c. The Swedish Act on Equality between Men and Women in working life came into force in 1980. The Act is gender neutral, meaning that it serves to prevent discrimination by women as well as men. But its ultimate aim is to improve the situation for women in working life.

d. There is an inclination by Swedish authorities to ignore men’s violence against women. More research and education in the matter are needed and more demands and support need to be directed toward the perpetrators of violence.

2. National Legal, Policy and Political Background and context

2.1 Historical background to laws and policies. Industrialisation came late to Sweden. Sweden has moved from poverty to be one of the wealthiest modern welfare states in the world in less than one hundred years. After World-War II, in which Sweden did not participate, the welfare-state was to be built. The welfare state was created through democratic and economic developments that lasted from the beginning of the 20th century until the end of the century. This process was made possible through cooperation between the state and industry. At the time Sweden was a male-dominated industrial society and the welfare-model was linked to a male breadwinner ideal. Due to the agenda and relative success of the Swedish welfare state social differences are generally smaller in Sweden compared to other European regions. (Holter 2003) The type of welfare state established in Sweden has been a social democratic one (see Esping...
Andersen 1990). The Social Democratic party has held power alone or in coalitions for the most part of the 20th century. After the 1990s the unemployment rates rose together with cut downs in official spending, resulting in increased welfare gaps in Sweden.

2.2 The political and governmental system. The Swedish Constitution calls for a parliamentary form of government, a constitutional monarchy and strong municipality independence. The parliamentary form of government was introduced in 1917, since then the king of Sweden is the Head of State but wields no political power. Sweden has four fundamental laws which together make up the Constitution; these are the Instrument of Government, the act of Succession, the Freedom of the Press Act and the Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression. The principle of public access to official documents is incorporated into the Freedom of the Press Act. This means that Government and other public offices must supply public documents and information requested by the public, including the media. As a member of the European Union, Sweden is also covered by the EU acquis communautaire.

Since 1994 the election periods to the Parliament’s 349 seats are 4 years. In 2002 the percentage of women in parliament was 45% (SCB 2004). The Prime Minister since 1996 is a Social democrat Göran Persson, leading and coordinating the work of the Government. Besides the Prime Minister there are 22 other ministers out of which 10 are heads of ministries that direct government business in their respective field. The number of ministers or ministries is not subject to regulation; it is rather up to the government to decide how the duties are to be divided.

The Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communication deals with working life issues to promote well-functioning employment conditions and the Labour market policy. The Ministry is responsible for the National goal of halving sickness absence. The overall aim of the ministry is to create conditions for improved welfare and increased employment. One area of responsibility is gender equality besides issues relating to business development, competition, electronic communications, forestry, IT, primary industries, tourism, transport and state-owned companies.

The Ministry of health and Social Affairs deals with policies on alcohol, disability, elderly, health and medical care, narcotic drugs, psychiatry, child policy, public health and social insurance.

The Ministry of Justice handles matters relating to democratic issues such as human rights, integration and minority issues, NGOs, metropolitan affairs and international cooperation against cross-border crime. It is responsible for legislations concerning the Constitution and general administrative law, civil law, procedural law and criminal law.

The Ministry of Education, Research and Culture is responsible for matters regarding education, schooling and youth policy concerning young people in spheres...
such as work, housing, education, health, leisure time and their opportunity to exert an influence.

The Ministry of Finance is responsible for economic policies, housing and the County administrative boards. These boards are government agencies that represent the Parliament and Government in the counties.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for promoting international law and respects for human rights. The ministry also handles Migration and asylum policy, including refugee, migration and integration policy.

2.4 Legislation
The legislative powers are exercised by the Parliament. According to the Constitution the courts are guaranteed independence. No authority is entitled to decide how a court may rule in any case. The courts can be divided into general courts and special courts, organised as a triple instance system. The general courts consist of district courts, courts of appeal and the Supreme Court; handling criminal cases and civil disputes between individuals. The general administrative courts consist of country administrative courts, administrative courts of appeal and the Supreme Administrative Court. These courts deal with cases relating to matters between public authorities and a private individual. Besides these courts there are a number of special jurisdictions, for example the Labour Court, where a need for specialist knowledge is needed in order to dispense justice within a given area. (The Swedish Judiciary)

An Ombudsman is elected by the Parliament (Riksdag) to ensure that Courts of law and other agencies such as public official’s employees comply with laws and statutes. (www.jo.se)

Legislation is passed by the Parliament. The powers of the Parliament are exercised by the government which shall have the confidence of the Parliament. Most legislative proposals are laid before the Swedish Parliament by the Government (over 200 annually), but bills can be based on suggestions put forward by the Parliament or by private citizens, interest groups or public authorities. Before the Government can draw up a legislative proposal, the matter in question is analysed and evaluated by the ministry concerned or a commission of inquiry resulting in a report stating its position. A report that then is referred for consideration to the relevant bodies, central government agencies, special interest groups or other authorities for feedback. This allows the Government to gauge the level of support it is likely to receive. Then the ministry responsible drafts the bill that will be submitted to Parliament, and refers proposals to the Council on Legislation to ensure that it does not conflict with existing legislation. The parliamentary process for approving new or amended legislation include that the legislation should be dealt with by one of the parliamentary committees. When the committee has completed its deliberations and the bill is approved and adopted by the Parliament, then the bill becomes a law. Any of the parliament’s 349 members can table a counter-proposal to a bill introduced by the Government. (http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/2854/a/19197, The Swedish Judiciary)

2.5 Social insurance model
The Swedish Social Insurance Agency is responsible for the administration of the social insurance system since 1 January 2005. The new Agency is formed with the objective of an “optimal use of public resources” where halving the rate of ill health in working life is a central goal. Swedish social insurance is individually based and is to compensate loss of income when a person is unable to support her/himself by working. The social insurance provides financial security in the
event of disability, illness and old age as well as for families with children. There are means-tested benefits (housing allowance, housing supplement for pensioners and maintenance support) and universal benefits paid to everyone at the same rate (child allowance). (http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3829/a/37467, http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3829/a/22665)

2.6 Equality law and policy
In Sweden the women’s movement has been one of the decisive factors behind the official debate on women’s and equality issues. The Swedish political parties’ women’s associations have had a major significance for equality politics. The equality issues were established in the public state administration at an early stage. But also research on women as well as gender has had a great impact. There is, and has been, an interaction between research and politics, on issues like representation, conditions in working life, work and family, men’s violence against women and regarding prostitution. (Dahlerup 2004)

The official gender equality policy in Sweden proceeds from an understanding that the unequal distribution of power between men and women is sustained by a gender-based power structure of society. The fundamentals of the gendered power structure are seen as the separation of the male and the female in all possible ways and the normative superiority of men and maleness to women and womanliness. The policy goals are for women and men to have the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities in all areas of life. (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/04/01/23/5a20887c.pdf)

The Swedish Act on Equality between Men and Women came into force in 1980. Sweden was, together with Finland, the last of the Nordic countries to implement a law on Equality between men and women in working life. The act has since then been revised 1994, 1998 and 2001. In 1998 the gender equality law was strengthened concerning sexual harassment, in 2001 strengthened with regard to gender equality analyses of salaries. The government also works to get more women into leading positions and for an equal representation of women and men in government. The Act is gender neutral, meaning that it serves to prevent discrimination by women as well as men. But its aim is to improve the situation for women in working life. It also aims at promoting equal possibilities for advancement and the ability for both men and women to combine work and parenting. Employers are to strive to employ persons of the gender represented to a lesser extent than the other in order to gain gender equality.

The Act is in three parts; the first requires all employers, public as well as private, to strive actively and in a goal oriented manner for equality between women and men at the workplace. This means to create a working environment free from sexual harassment for example. The second part prohibits sex discrimination in working life in connection with recruitment, work management, wage setting and remuneration of employment. The third part of the Act contains provisions relating to damages liable in the event of breaches of the law as well as to the monitoring of compliance with the law and to litigation in discrimination disputes.

The Equal Opportunities Ombudsman is responsible for supervising compliance by employers and universities/colleges with the legal provisions. All employers with ten or more members of staff are required to draw up gender equality plans and plans of action for equal pay on an annual basis. The Ombudsman requisitions several hundreds of these plans every year. They are then scrutinised by administrators specialising in guidance, development and supervision to goal-orienting gender equality at work. The staff of the Ombudsman has the right to visit workplaces in order to check compliance
with the law. Only very rarely do employers refuse to cooperate once asked to send the gender equality plan to the Ombudsman. However, the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman is also legally empowered to order employers to send in their documents, or they can be subjected to a fine. The Ombudsman also deals with claims of discrimination from individual employees/job applicants or students (What are the duties of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman?, www.nationalencyclopedien.se).

Besides the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman there is The Equal Opportunities Commission which is a governmental authority under the auspices of the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications. The commission can order an employer to comply with the requirements set forth in the Equal Opportunities Act under penalty of a fine. The Council on Equality Issues is a forum for the exchange of ideas of current equality issues. The Regional Experts for Gender Equality are since 1995 to be found at each County Administrative Board to support the implementation of the national policy for equality at a regional level. (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/01/81/06/3de887a4.pdf)

Gender equality issues are dealt with at the Ministry for Industry, Employment and Communications. Part of the ministry is The Division for Gender Equality with the task of processing gender equality matters. The Office of the Equal Ombudsman comes under the Minister for Equality Affairs, as do questions concerning legislation and equality between men and women in the workplace.

Gender equality policy objectives set in the Programme of the present Government include the implementation of gender mainstreaming on all central government bodies. This means that a ministry or other governmental body is required to introduce a gender perspective into that activity. Focus areas for the current electoral period are representation; equal access to positions of power and influence, equal pay for work of equal value, violence committed by men against women, prostitution and trafficking of women. Men and gender equality are focused upon as well as the sexualization of the public sphere. It is stated that every minister in the Government is responsible for analysing, following up and presenting proposals concerning equality between women and men in their respective spheres of responsibility. (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/02/01/44/7043280d.pdf)

The co-operation on a governmental level in the Nordic Council and Council of Ministers has affected the Swedish gender equality politics through various initiatives. The Nordic co-operation on gender equality aims at supporting national initiatives and pan-Nordic projects that help develop methods promoting equality. It is developed through cooperation with civil organisations. In the work for gender equality 2001-2005 the Council focuses on including equality aspects in the budget, aspects about men and equality as well as to prevent violence against women (http://www.norden.org/gender/n-jam-arb/sk/index.asp).

In the Nordic Councils of Ministers gender equality program 1995-2000 the Council included an action plan concerning men and gender equality; focusing on fatherhood; men and work; studies on men and men and the military (Hearn, et al 2001). In 2002 there were 8 campaigns on trafficking in women in the Nordic countries and in the Baltic. The initiative was taken in 2001 by Sweden’s former minister on Gender Equality, Margareta Winberg. Sweden as well as Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway participated in the campaign. The Nordic countries also participate in the DAPHNE-programme to
challenge violence against children, young people and women. Its aim is to raise these questions and to establish networks.

2.7 Men’s politics and organisations
During the years that men and equality issues has developed there have been several attempts to form a pro-feminist men’s movement in Sweden. Social scientist Tomas Wetterberg has investigated this issue on behalf of the government. He concludes that there is a movement among men but not a men’s movement. There are several networks and initiatives that might be called a Swedish pro-feminist men’s movement, but nothing that really made any impact (Wetterberg 2002, p. 160). There is for instance Manliga Nätverket [the Male network] working for equality and against men’s violence. The organisation has initiated projects on Men and equality, funded by the government. Other Swedish organisations focusing on men are Crises Centres for men which are established in 6 cities. At the centres men can get therapeutic help from professional therapists, the focus is mainly on men in crises but also on men and violence. There are shelters focusing on men, but on a non-professional basis. These shelters are not like the Women’s shelters focusing on victims of violence, but rather on men in different forms of relational crises (Holmberg & Bender 1998). Some of these organisations claim to act on a pro-feminist platform or from a critical perspective, however this has been contested from a feminist standpoint. Others, like for instance the Men’s shelter federation, take more of anti-feminist positions (Balkmar 2004). Man i Västernorrland [Men in the western part of northern Sweden] is a project led by the County administrative board focusing on widening the “male role”. There are projects where the focus is on fatherhood and fathers relations to their children, led by child health centres. The White ribbon Campaign has not yet been able to break through in Sweden. However, there are other local initiatives, for example MANSSVAR and REVOLT, where men have taken a feminist standpoint discussing and contesting men’s privileges in a masculinised society (Wetterberg 2002, p. 23-36).

2.8 Timescale
The focus is on governmental initiatives ranging mainly from 1995-2004. This report concentrates on four main themes: home and work, social exclusion, violences and health.

3. Home and Work
The Policy goals of the current election period are of equal distribution of power and influence between men and women. This implies working for the same opportunities for both men and women to achieve economic independence, equal conditions in respect of jobs, terms of work, advancement, shared responsibilities of children and the home, equal access to education/training and equal opportunities for developing personal ambitions. Other focus areas are representation – equal access to positions of power and influence and equal pay for equal work of equal value, and Men and gender equality. (http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/4096/a/26327)

Parental leave, temporary allowance and parental allowance: In 1974 parental allowance was introduced. Since 1998 the benefits comprise 80 % of a wage for 480 days including 30 sickness benefit days. Out of the 480 days, 60 are reserved for each parent and cannot be transferred. These are possible to use until the child is 8 years of old. The remainder can be used by either parent. Fathers have since 1980 the right to 10 days leave in relation to birth. The amount of days for which parental leave has been utilized by men has slowly increased since parental leave for fathers and mothers both was introduced in 1974. In year 2003 men’s share was 17 % of the total parental leave taken (SCB
2004, p. 38, 39). According to the gender equality law (§ 5, 1991:433) employers are to facilitate men and women in sharing working-life and parenthood. There have been nation wide information and education projects focusing on supporting and making it easier for daddies to take parental leave. Between 1994 and 1996 there have been so called daddy-training programs administrated by county-councils. During the 1990’s governmental supported projects to increase the proportion of men working in the child-care system was introduced (Näringsdepartementet 1999).

**Parental custody and paternity:** The basic rules regarding paternity are regulated in the Swedish Code of Statutes (SFS 1995:974, amended in important respects regarding custody, residence and contact by SFS 1998:319). If the child’s mother is married when the child is born, her husband is automatically considered to be the father of the child. When not married or if the paternity of the lawful husband is revoked, paternity must be specially determined by an acknowledgement or by a judgment. If the child’s parents are married to each other when the child is born, the parents automatically have joint custody. This continues if divorced if not requested to be dissolved due to incompatibility with the best interest of the child¹⁰ that joint custody continues. A court can decide on joint custody or refuse to dissolve joint custody, even if one of the parents opposes this. However, this has to be in the best interest of the child. The starting point is that it is important for the child to have contact with both parents even if they don’t live together. The court can decide on contact. The court may not decide to enforce visiting rights for one parent if the child opposes being handed over to either parent but the child ‘must have attained the age of 12 or such maturity that his/her wishes should be taken into account. However, even if the child opposes, a decision may be made for enforcement if the court considers this is in the best interest of the child. This can be refused if there is a more than a trivial risk that the psychological or physical health of the child may be harmed (http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c4/33/50/841de2e6.pdf, p. 28-36).

In 1994 the government decided to set up a committee on mapping out and analysing the distribution of economic power and resources between men and women. The research based investigation was called Kvinnomaktutredningen [Investigation on distribution of economical power and resources between women and men]. According to the investigation men take more responsibility for their children today than earlier. Research on unpaid labour in the home shows that men take more responsibility in the home when unemployed compared to when they are fully employed. However, they do not do more than half of the workload even when the female partner works fulltime. It is also shown that when reorganisations are made at workplaces in order to break gender segregation it is most often men that gain from it. Men are for example more often successful in work-places dominated by women than the other way around. The results of the investigation show that Sweden is not a country were gender equality prevails and that working life does not work in a rational way. This picture can be described as a counter picture to the United Nation’s description in 1995 of Sweden as the world’s most gender equal country (SOU 1998:6, see also: SOU 1998:3, SOU 1998:4, SOU 1997:83).

**Work:** Den könsuppdelade arbets-marknaden [The gender divided labour market] is an investigation commissioned

¹⁰ The concept of "the best interest of the child" is a problematic one both in terms of what criteria should be used as the basis for it; also who should decide those criteria and make judgments using them.
by the government to present new knowledge on the gender divided labour market. It elaborates on various dimensions of gender segregation, horizontal, vertical as well as internally (SOU 2004:43, see also Sweden National Report on Statistical information).

In the research-based government report Mansdominans i förändring (2003) [Male dominance in change] Wahl et al. conclude that men continue to dominate leading positions in large organisations in the private sector, but the organisations are engaged in efforts to bring about change to create a more even representation of the sexes. Even though there has been some consciousness raising of the matter the proportions of women among young managers is low. Both support and resistance to change has increased, and visibility in the public arena has sometimes had the effect of making issues of equality less visible within the organisations (SOU 2003:16). The government has instructed the National Labour Market Board (AMS) to end gender division on the labour market as a basic task of providing the unemployed with jobs and employers with labour. There has also been extra financial support for women entrepreneurs in order to support women to start and run companies. (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/01/81/01/98865a9c.pdf)

The equal representation in positions of power outside the public sphere has developed very slowly. Legislation on quotas is under consideration. The relative number of women at senior management level in Governmental Offices and central government has increased to 32 % in 2000. The gender segregated labour market is argued to be the cause of income gaps, where public sector and care are particularly low-paid “female occupations”. Structural pay differentials remain due to value discrimination, where male- or female dominated jobs are rated differently. This wage formation is said to be a matter for the parties in the labour market to change by following the gender equality act in order to level out gender-based pay differences. (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/02/01/44/7043280d.pdf)

4. Social Exclusion

The National Institute for Working Life is a national centre of knowledge for issues concerning working life. The institute carries out research commissioned by The Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications. The term “Social exclusion” is defined by the Institute as when an individual or groups of people are not full worthy members of a society, for example through uneven distribution of education and work. The Institute runs the project Working life in the City (“Storstad”) where processes of social inclusion and exclusion are focused around aspects of class, gender, ethnicity, race and sexual orientation. (www.arbetslivsinstitutet.se/storstad)

According to the inquiry Homo på jobbet – vem bryr sig? [Gay at work – who cares?] many individuals with non heterosexual orientation experience discrimination through harassments and through subtle daily discrimination. (The National Institute for Working Life) Based on 13 773 answers the enquiry shows that half of all Lesbian, Gay, Bi- and Transsexual persons experience or have experienced prejudices. More than every fourth person chooses not to be open with their sexual orientation (Bildt 2003, see also Tiby 2000). In the Swedish Constitution it is stated that the public should prevent discrimination of people due to the person’s sexual preference. Since 2003 there is new legislation to enforce the prohibition on discrimination due to sexual preference. The new law covers the following areas: working life, business activities, practising one’s profession, membership, participation in union activities, employer organisations as well
as the areas of goods, services and housing (http://www.manskligarattigheter.gov.se). The National Institute for Public Health provides an overview of lesbian and gay persons health and situation in Sweden including how the institute works with these issues. The overview focus on ethnic Swedes, immigrants, violence and threats, lesbian and gay persons with children (Statens Folkhälsoinstitut 2003).

The institute has also made a qualitative investigation on the situation of gay immigrant men and lesbian women. This is a research area almost untouched in Sweden. The study is based on interviews with immigrants from South America, The Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe, in total 21 persons from 11 different countries. The results point to that their experiences are excluded from the community. A majority of the interviewees have experienced discrimination and other forms of violations in Swedish society (Haansbaek 2002, 10, 11, 37, 48, 67, 75, See also Tiby 2000).

The government has initiated work on furthering its knowledge in relation to children living in financially vulnerable families. The objective of the financial family policy is to reduce disparities in the financial situation of families with or without children (http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3827). The policy for elderly persons states that elderly shall be able to lead active lives and be able to grow old in security with independence preserved (http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/2197/a/15498).

The Swedish migration policy is based on a holistic approach including refugee, migration and integration policies. Policies on integration include introduction into the community to promote equal rights, where opportunities and responsibilities for everyone irrespective of ethnic background are pronounced. Metropolitan policy promotes integration and the prevention of segregation in metropolitan areas (http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/2188). There is a national target for reducing ill health in working life. Absence from working life due to illness shall be halved by year 2008 compared to 2002. The target of the policy is the sharp rise in sickness absence in the last five years (http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3828).

Sweden has in recent years prepared action plans relating to social inclusion; on older persons policy; health care policy; disability policy; alcohol and drugs policy and measures to combat racism, xenophobia, homophobia and discrimination. (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/02/42/04/81d24d2b.pdf, p. 16)

Sweden’s action plan against poverty and social exclusion 2003-2005 (ministry of Health and Social Affairs): The starting point is eight “core challenges” identified by the EU: developing a inclusive labour market, adequate income, tackling educational disadvantages, preserving family solidarity and protecting the rights of children, ensuring good accommodation for all, equal access to quality services, regenerating areas of multiple deprivation. The point of departure is that welfare depends on the extent to which individuals can take control of their lives. The action plan presents data on social marginalisation as an effect of the economic crises during the 1990’s. Areas such as employment, income, pensions, health and ill-health, disadvantages such as misuse of alcohol and drugs are described in a gendered way by facts or/and figures. Crime trends, violence against women and prostitution are described in a way not focusing on the gender of the perpetrator. Even though employment among immigrant men has increased since 1997, the differences between persons born outside and in Sweden are large (See also Sweden Report on Statistical Information, http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/02/42/04/81d24d2b.pdf).
In 2003 the Parliament passed provisions to strengthen the **protection of children at risk**; through measures to strengthen collaboration between schools, the police, pre-schools, the health service and the social services. The duty to report cases to the social services were extended and the supervision of child and adolescent care services further developed. The penalties on offences committed by close acquaintances that threaten a child’s safety were strengthened (i.e. children witnessing physical abuse of one parent by the other).

**Crowded housing and homelessness:** An estimation is that there are 8,400 homeless persons in Sweden (4 out of 5 are men). The Government has allocated a total of SEK 90 million during 1997-2004 to local authorities and organisations to combat homelessness. In order to create a **drug-free society** national action plans against drugs was implemented during 2000 and 2005. Opinion raising, strengthening and coordinating measures at the national, regional and local level are financed through additional funding. There is an overall goal of reducing the medical and societal effects of **alcohol**. Measure on behalf of young people is mentioned as especially important. **Policy goals i.e.:** reduce the proportion of women and men (regardless of ethnic background) whose income is lower than basic social assistance allowance; reduce the number of girls and boys who leave compulsory school with incomplete grades; increasing employment; reducing the proportion of girls and boys who have experimented with drugs; increase the number of women and men with substance abuse problems who undergo treatment and to reduce homelessness (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/02/42/04/81d24d2b.pdf).

**Acts and areas overseen by the Ombudsman with the purpose of preventing discrimination:** Since 1 July 2003 there is new legislation on discrimination regarding ethnicity, religion, handicap and sexual preference. Reports on these matters are dealt with by respective ombudsman. According to the new law it is not only the victim of discrimination that has to prove whether discrimination has taken place or not, the reported also need to prove himself/herself innocent from discriminatory acts.

**Measures to Counteract Ethnic Discrimination in Working Life Act (SFS 1999:130)** regulates matters concerning work, conditions of employment and equal rights and opportunities irrespective of ethnic background (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/01/99/57/b98945ab.pdf). The work of the **Ombudsman against ethnic discrimination** is based in the law (1999:130) on measures against ethnic discrimination in working life.

The **Prohibition of Discrimination in Working Life of People with Disability Act (SFS 1999:132)** aims at combating discrimination in the working life of people with disabilities (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/01/99/59/827e1939.pdf). A national Action plan for disability policy was adopted in 2000. The plan involves all social sectors and agencies to take a disability perspective into account. The Office of the **Disability Ombudsman** has the task of overseeing matters relating to the interests of disabled persons.


**The Children’s Ombudsman’s** duty is to promote the rights and interests of children and young people in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
In 1995 a law on lesbian and gay persons’ right to enter registered partnerships was passed. In 2003 lesbian and gay persons in registered partnerships were allowed to apply for permission to adopt children in the same way as heterosexual married couples. In 2005 a new law will be passed allowing women in same-sex couples to inseminate donated sperms at public hospitals.

5. Violences
The 1980’s and 1990’s were decades when studies and research of violence against women were undertaken in Sweden; among the actors in the new millennium are also the authorities. One of the policy goals of Sweden’s gender equality policy for women and men is the freedom from sexual (gender-related) violence. Focus areas are violence committed by men against women, prostitution and trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/04/01/23/5a20887c.pdf). The Freedom from Violence against Women Commission performed pioneering work which resulted in the report Violence against Women (SOU 1995:60) and the Government Act on Freedom from Violence against Women Reform (Prop. 1997/98:55[1]). The main report of the Commission represents a sea change in Swedish political thinking. The Commission starts out from women’s experiences of violence, and such violence is understood as a matter of a lack of gender equality (SOU 2004:121). The act took three main points of departure: to improve legislation, to prevent violence against women, and to ensure that women are well treated and received by the authorities. Via the Act of 1997/98:55 the government has assigned several authorities the task of contributing knowledge generally and knowledge from certain working groups. These agencies are the National Courts Administration, the Office of the Prosecutor-General and all regional public prosecution offices, the National Council for Crime Prevention, the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority, the National Prison and Probation Administration, the National Board of Health and Welfare and the county administrative boards. The authorities have through government commission become activated within the research area. The government explicitly describes the violence as committed by men, against women, children and other men (Näringsdepartementet 1999).

The Act has resulted in initiatives directly towards men, through financing men’s shelters and organisations working contra violence against women (Steen 2003, SOU 2004:121). A national resource centre within the healthcare sector was established in 1994, aiming at developing methods and research in preventing men’s violence against women. (Rikskvinno-centrum info) Plans are now presented by the government to expand the activities to a national level.

Since these assignments were issued the government initiated an investigation (in 2003) to draw up new guidelines for work on preventing men’s violence against women. The commission points to the conflicting interpretations of men’s violence against women i.e.: a deviation-based interpretation of the violent man; expressed as powerless or mentally ill, his use of violence is socially determined; or that the violence is seen as a phenomenon more common outside Sweden. The investigation point out that in some respects the agencies have failed to

[1] The Act “Freedom from Violence against Women” is mainly based on the considerations made in tree investigations: Kvinnofrid [Women’s peace] SOU 1995:60, the investigation on prostitution regarding prostitution and buying of sexual services (SOU 1995:15), and the overview on the law on equality and regulations around sexual harassments (Sexuella trakasserier och arbetsgivarens ansvar A97/3077/JÄM)
perform tasks issued by the Government. In some respects, the agencies have performed the tasks to all agencies in a satisfactory manner. This is by establishing practice which gives women subjected to violence priority as victims of crime. In some respects, the agencies have performed the assignments in an unsatisfactory manner from a gender power perspective (SOU 2004:121 p. 22-24).

In 2000 the government initiated the National Council on Violence against Women as an advisory council on the issue of violence to women, explicitly focusing men. In its final report the council stated that the inclination to deny men’s violence against women is still prevalent among Swedish authorities. More research and education in these matters are needed. More support and demands need to be directed to the perpetrators of violence. The barriers are identified to be lack of equity, men’s lack of awareness and responsibility for the violence and lack of knowledge of the nature of violence. Other barriers pointed to are when victims are being poorly treated by the legal institutions and that authorities’ trivialize the problem of violence. (Råd för Kvinnofrid till regeringen, 2003, http://www.kvinnofrid.se/, the council have published a number of reports regarding the issues focused upon, see reference list) As a result, from the Act 1997/98:55 the National council for Crime Prevention commissioned a range of reports covering aspects from a gender perspective. The material often builds on crimes reported to the police which only cover a part of the violent crimes taking place (SOU 2004:121 p. 97-103, see reference list; Brottsförebyggande rådet 2000b,c, 2001b, 2004a).

Methods of treating men convicted of violence against women have been mapped out and evaluated. The Swedish Prison and Probation service work with two national programmes concerning men’s violence against women. One concerns violence in close relations and has been developed in collaboration with the British Prison and Probation service. The other concerns crimes of a sexual character based on a Canadian program (SOU 2004:121).

“Honour” related violence: In 2002 the government initiated a range of efforts to support vulnerable young women in so called patriarchal families. The same year the country administrative boards mapped out the need for protected shelters for girls and young women who risk being subjected to violence by relatives. Other efforts had the aim of changing men’s and boys’ attitudes to prevent honour related violence. The Swedish integration board was requested (in collaborate with other governmental authorities) to present best Practice to prevent conflicts between the individual and family where the cause of conflict may be patriarchal norms. These examples of best Practicing were to be distributed to organisations based on ethnic grounds, governments and religious communities (Integrationsverket 2002). In 2003, the government initiated a national action plan to prevent so called “honour related violence” and this is to be continued until year 2007. A relatively large amount of money is put into prevention activities and shelters for young people, in total 180 million SEK over the period 2003-2007. Critics have pointed out that focusing on “honour related” violence tends to put the focus on cultural difference, where violent men tend to be constructed specifically as victims of their culture. The violence that the Swedish majority ethnic group men (i.e. white Swedish-born men) use against women is thereby made into something general and as not having anything to do with Swedish mainstream culture (SOU 2004:121, p. 182, 183).

The government convened an international expert meeting and international conference on the subject “Combating
Patriarchal Violence against Women” in 2004. In the budget for 2005, additional funding is granted for protected shelters and action taken to change attitudes (Länsstyrelsen i Stockholms län, see also: Sandén, Per & Engström, Bo 2004 http://www.manskligarattigheter.gov.se/). The issue of “honour related” violence is often discussed as a question of integration or lack of integration into the Swedish “equal” society. For example, there are extra funds added to the women’s shelters for addressing the need of women with immigrant background (as well as women with drug problems and disabled women). The Swedish Association of Local Authorities has been asked to make a survey about knowledge focusing on relations between the individual and the family in the context of minority ethnic group cultures. The point of departure for this survey is the role the family plays as a carrier of culture and its influence on the ability of the individual to meet the “values and demands of the new country”12 (Ju 04.17).

**Maltreatment of children:** Violence against children has been subject of increased interest during the late 1990s. The National Council for Crime Prevention (BRÅ) has shown that the number of incidents reported to the police involving assaults on children has risen up to four times since the beginning of the 1980s (SOU 2001:71, SOU 2001:18, see also ECPAT Sverige 2001). In 1998 the government appointed an investigation on maltreatment of children (SOU 2001:72). Its official report constituted the ground for the proposition “Stärkt skydd för utsatta barn” (prop. 2002/03:53) [Improved protection for abused children]. Extended obligations to report for actors in the social services were made statutory. This includes children at risk of maltreatment: not only through physical maltreatment, but also in other forms of violence. The government has assigned The National board of Health and Welfare the task of developing support to the social services work with crime victims, foremost children and young people exposed to crimes (Socialstyrelsen 2005).

The government appointed in 2003 a committee into knowledge concerning sexual exploitation of children in Sweden. This was to make an inventory of, and compile knowledge about, sexual exploitation of children. The Commission also considered the need for additional measures on the part of the Government to fulfil the work against sexual exploitations of children in accordance with previous undertakings (SOU 2004:71).

**Custody:** Family law preparatory on custody and relations states that custody is inappropriate when one parent has maltreated or in other ways assaulted the other. However, in the National Board of Health and Welfare general advice on the handling of custody and relations, there is not a complete ruling out of creating a dialogue on collaboration between parents where one of them has committed such acts (SOU 2004:121, p. 116-117). In 2002 a committee on custody started its work, concerning questions on custody, housing and relations between children and parents or custodians. The committee focuses among other issues on how the best interest of the child can be provided for in cases where a parent has committed crimes of a violent character against the other parent. Another issue is whether there should be probation automatically in cases where the person/s who have custody commit

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12 Authors’ note: This wording seems to ignore the fact that violence to women is a relatively common occurrence in the Swedish majority ethnic group as evidenced by the Swedish prevalence survey “Slagen dam” (Lundgren et al 2001). In other countries – such as the United Kingdom – wording like this in a public document would be unusual and might well be regarded there as ethnically discriminatory. This difference between Swedish and British public approaches to ethnicity is worthy of note.
criminal acts against the other custodian (dir 2002:89).

Save the Children have campaigned to implement changes in the Swedish constitution in the matter of child pornographic material on the internet. The debate on the issue has led to changes in the constitution in 1999. Crimes concerning child pornography are now regulated in the criminal code instead of the constitution on media regulating freedom of speech. (Åström 2004) The National board of Health and Welfare has initiated the first national mapping of young sex offenders in Sweden. A considerable proportion of all reported sexual offences are committed by young persons, almost exclusively boys (Socialstyrelsen 2002).

**Prostitution and trafficking:** In 2001 the National Organization for Women’s Shelters and Young Women’s Shelters in Sweden organised an international conference on men’s violence against women focusing upon prostitution and trafficking. The conference was financed by the government (Holmgren & Lindström 2002). The National Board of Health and Welfare have compiled information on prostitution, its extent and what is done to prevent it since 1998. In the report from 2003, locally initiated efforts are focused upon. Both men and women prostitutes are included (Socialstyrelsen 2003).

**Legislation:** One of the measures taken to prevent violence against women is new legislation introduced in 1998. Gross Violation of a Woman’s Integrity was introduced into the penal code, dealing with repeated punishable acts of violations and offences against women, children and other persons in close relations. The new legislation also broadens the crime of rape. Some of the criminal acts that prior to the Prop. 1997/98:55 was sentenced as sexual coercion are to be judged as rape. This means that certain acts, such as for example so called fist fucking, which under the previous legislation were defined as sexual coercion, now will be considered as rape. Neglecting to report sexual offences such as rape, aggravated rape, aggravated sexual exploitation or a minor or grave procuring, has been made a punishable offence. The language in central regulations was made gender neutral. In the law prohibiting circumcision the term “genital mutilation” replaces “circumcision”. In 1999 purchase of sexual services was made illegal by the new law, criminalizing the buyer but not the seller. Efforts to raise consciousness and knowledge on these issues were also made. The police, prosecutors, judges, and personnel within the social service sector, health- and care were to take further education on these matters. The parliament passed additional provisions to the Visiting Ban Act in 2003, in order to protect women and children who are subjected to threats and violence by close acquaintances. A perpetrator may be prohibited from going to the area where he used to live with the victim (Swedish report to CEDAW, Brottsförebyggande rådet 2000, b, c).

Legislation to regulate sexual exploitation of children for commercial interest is regulated in several laws. Crimes to be defined as sexual exploitation of children for commercial purpose are regulated under laws on seduction of youth, procuring, and child pornography offence which was criminalised in 1999. Since 2002 trafficking with the purpose of sexual purposes is regulated by law and is used to regulate these kinds of criminal activity (SOU 2004:71, 225f). In 2003 Parliament passed provisions whose purpose is to draw attention to the perspective of children and to strengthen the protection of children at risk. Severer penalties were imposed for offences committed by close acquaintances that threaten a child’s trust and safety. This provision point to the role
of children as crime victims and are to provide a better guarantee for their safety. (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/02/42/04/81d24d2b.pdf)

In 2005 new legislation on violations of a sexual character is about to be implemented by the national assembly. The government intends to enforce and strengthen the rights of individuals to their bodies and sexuality through this law. A wider range of actions are going to be judged as rape, for example sexual abuse. One explicit purpose with the new law is to enforce the protection of children and young people against being abused in a sexual way. Special penalty regulations are implemented for the of crimes rape, sexual abuse of children, and exploitation of children for posing for sexual purposes (http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/1381/a/26270).

In Sweden it is the municipalities that have the uppermost responsibility for women and children exposed to violence. The National Board of Health and Welfare conducted an investigation on the outcomes of juridical changes in the social service act. The changes stated that the social services would act to help women who have or are exposed to abuse to change their situation. The changes have only to a limited extent affected the work conducted by the social services with abused women. According to The National Board of Health and Welfare most municipalities rely on the non-profit work carried out by the women’s shelters. There are women’s shelters in 150 out of 289 municipalities. There are 68 municipalities out of the 289 that do not give any economical support at all to their local shelter (SOU 2004:121 p. 112-113, 116).

6. Health

The National Committee for Public Health has been charged by the government with setting national goals for public health and strategies for achieving these goals. In its report the committee has chosen not to define what health means. Instead health is defined as something subjective where each individual has his/her own view. The ultimate criterion for the future of health policy outlined by the committee is the consequences of ill health in terms of “limitation on freedom” (SOU 2000:91 p. 29).

In the report 18 national goals for public health are posted. These concern solidarity in society, supportive social environment for the individual, safe and equal conditions in childhood, high level of employment, healthy working environment and safe and confident sexuality, among others. There are goals which were widely defined; i.e. social relationships at the societal level, at an organisational level and in the family. Aspects causing ill-health in relation to poverty, segregation, isolation, unemployment, safe home environments are focused upon. These issues are discussed in relation to gender and lack of equality between men and women. Violence is discussed in relation to public health. It is stated that women and children face a significant risk of coming to harm through violence and being attacked in their own homes. It is stated that violence against women is considered a large-scale public health problem. Men are explicitly mentioned as the major group of perpetrators in relation to women killed by a close relative. However, men are seldom pinpointed as perpetrators elsewhere in the report. One example is in relation to violence as an expression of discrimination against lesbian/gay persons and immigrants. Violence between men is discussed as the most common type of violent crime, mainly described as caused by their living conditions as well as by men’s role in society which therefore needs to be changed (SOU 2000:91, p. 87-88). The Swedish Institute on Health and Welfare has started to raise consciousness around the question of men’s violence as an issue of general health. In 2003 the institute held a conference on how to work
against violence in society. One purpose of the conference was to present the WHO-report "World report on violence and health".

The national action plan for gender equality states that the general policy and mission statements should emphasise awareness of gender equality issues during the reception, care and treatment of patients. Gender equality issues are to be placed at the centre of future public health measures. In order to promote gender equality the National Board of Health and Welfare has been instructed to monitor gender differences in the health care sector. Efforts will be made to improve care of children, adolescents and elders with mental disabilities through improving the health service for socially vulnerable groups. The action plan for children’s environments and health takes a broad interpretation on health, including children’s security and diets (http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/02/42/04/81d24d2b.pdf).

7. Discussion

It is clear that in recent years the Swedish government has begun to take some very significant consultative and legislative steps regarding men’s violence against women and, to some extent, men’s violence against children. There clearly still are massive gaps in government attention – especially in fully naming and recognising the problem that some fathers may present to children before, during and after parental separation in terms of violence to the children’s mother and/or to the child herself/himself. More also needs to be done to effectively address sexual abuse of children which is predominantly a crime committed by men and boys. Nevertheless, the recent record of the Swedish government in the field of men’s violence is encouraging for the future – if this positive trend continues.

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http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/02/42/04/81d24d2b.pdf
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http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/2854/a/19197
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http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/3829/a/37467,
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http://www.regeringen.se
- The government’s official website

http://www.riksdagen.se
- The Swedish Parliament official website

http://www.kvinnofrid.se/
The website of the Commission on Violence against Women

www.jo.se
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http://www.nationalencyklopedin.com
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http://www.norden.org
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http://www.norden.org/gender/n-jam-arb/sk/index.asp

www.ali.se
- The National Institute for Working Life
www.arbetslivsinstitutet.se/storstad

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Kvinno- och genusvetenskap. Företeckning över grundutbildningskurser vid centra/fora


