

# Action plan for combating men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships



REGERINGSKANSLIET

Government Offices of Sweden

## The Government presents this Communication to the Riksdag.

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## Brief summary of the Communication

In this Communication, the Government sets out its views on how men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships should be combated, and describes the main elements in its work against such violence during the present term of office. The Action Plan contains a wide range of measures in a variety of policy fields. These measures will be elaborated and specified more closely step by step. The Government intends to report back to the Riksdag on how work in this area has been conducted.

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## Action plan for combating men's violence against women

### Introduction

Sweden is in many respects a pioneer in the gender equality field, not least in terms of how it views men's violence against women. The situation nevertheless remains serious. There is broad political agreement on the need to give men's violence against women high priority, but a cohesive strategy for dealing with the problem has long been lacking. Men's violence against women is a widespread problem affecting the whole community, both women and men. Ultimately, it is a question of gender equality and women's full enjoyment of all human rights to which every citizen is entitled. Sweden's commitments within the framework of UN and Council of Europe efforts in this area, therefore, represent an important basis for national action.

Men's violence against women is unacceptable. So, too, is men's violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. The Government's aim is to put a stop to such violence. Women and men, girls and boys, shall have equal rights and opportunities in terms of physical integrity. All citizens must be able to live their lives free from the fear of being exposed to violence and abuse. If this goal is to be achieved, preventive and other measures targeting both potential and actual perpetrators must be strengthened and improved. Violence and oppression in the name of honour is one area covered by the Action Plan. This type of violence differs from others due to its collective nature, which means a number of perpetrators of both sexes may be involved and the victims may be either women or men, girls or boys.

The Action Plan further extends to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people exposed to violence by their partners. All citizens at risk are entitled to the same kind of protection, support and assistance, regardless of their sexual orientation.

Action to combat men's violence against women must proceed from a judicial, social, economic and health-related perspective, and also from a gender equality perspective. In cases where children are the victims of a criminal offence or are affected by the violence in some other way, special attention must be given to their particular needs, rights and capabilities.

All measures to combat men's violence against women must proceed from the needs of the victims. The responsibility for supplying the necessary support and protection to those exposed to such violence lies with central and local government authorities. The activities of voluntary organisations are an invaluable complement to public activities

in this respect. Closer cooperation among the various actors is essential if efforts to contain this type of violence are to be forceful and effective.

A number of government agencies are already committed to working against such violence. In the Government's view, however, further measures of limited duration will be required over the next few years. To a great extent, these will be measures designed to raise awareness and enhance knowledge and competence. The Government takes the view that the measures set out in the Action Plan will lead to a higher level of ambition in the fight against this type of violence, and that this improvement will be lasting.

The Action Plan contains a range of proposals affecting a number of government agencies as well as municipalities, county councils and NGOs. In the course of work with this Action Plan, public authorities, organisations and individuals have contributed valuable views and opinions.

The Action Plan proposes a range of measures, of which a number have already been approved. The remaining measures will be implemented by the Government during the present term of office.

### 1.1 Areas for measures and specific activities

Men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships are all unacceptable and must stop.

The aim of the Action Plan is to present the Government's intentions in all three areas in a single policy document and to describe how the work is to proceed during the present term of office. The plan covers six areas for measures and specific activities, each of which is important in its own right but which also complement and reinforce one another.

#### These areas are:

- increased protection and support to victims of violence
- greater emphasis on preventive work
- higher standards and greater efficiency in the judicial system
- better measures targeting violent offenders
- increased cooperation and coordination
- enhanced knowledge and competence

#### Increased protection and support to victims of violence

All citizens are entitled to live in safety and security. People exposed to threats and violence must have the right to protection and support. This must be of a high standard, adapted to the individual and available to those who need it. People exposed to violence must be given public support so that they may lead normal lives in freedom. Public efforts must seek to prevent those who practice violence from committing such crimes and thereby threatening the safety and security of others. These perpetrators must have their freedom curtailed, while the freedom of those exposed to violence must be safeguarded.

All crime victims are to be treated in a professional manner, whoever they may be and wherever they may live in the country. Sweden's municipalities are obliged by law to offer crime victims the help and support they need. The municipalities must particularly bear in mind that women who are or have been exposed to violence or other forms of abuse by someone close to them may require help and support in changing their situations. Children, too, who have witnessed violence or other forms of abuse by or against adults close to them are defined as crime victims and may be in need of help and support. It is important to bear in mind that children's needs may differ from those of adults.

It is vitally important that people who are exposed to crime dare report this to the

police and follow up their complaint. If people exposed to crime are to feel safe and secure, they must be kept informed about how the case is proceeding and what support is available during the judicial process. The authorities must provide adequate protection both during and after legal proceedings.

#### Greater emphasis on preventive work

Active and effective prevention involves both taking steps to prevent violence and stopping violence already occurring. Broad-based preventive efforts target both women and men, including those who are not personally affected by it in their everyday lives. Initiatives targeting both potential and actual perpetrators are a crucial part of this work. Children and young people are another important target group. It is essential, therefore, to take early action both in schools and in other contexts where children and young people are to be found.

The agencies responsible for the judicial system, the health and medical services, the social services and the education system all have an important part to play in this respect, due to their close contact with people in everyday life. People exposed to violence and people living under threat of violence stand a better chance of obtaining the right kind of help if professional treatment, documentation and procedures are available and if there is greater awareness of what men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships involve. The police must be able to respond and take rapid action when crimes are committed.

If the crime prevention aspect is considered in spatial and community planning – especially as regards the vulnerability of women – the risk of exposure to crime in the outdoor environment can be reduced.

#### Higher standards and greater efficiency in the judicial system

Combating men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships is a responsibility and challenge for the judicial authorities. The legal chain – and in particular the police and prosecutors – must function efficiently so that crimes in this area are investigated and legal proceedings instituted with due dispatch.

The penalties for crimes of violence must be reasonable and proportionate. By their response, the authorities must clearly show how seriously they view the violation of personal integrity that such crimes represent to the victim.

Legislation relating to marriage, registered partnerships, divorce and the division of matrimonial property must be framed in such a way as to guarantee the rights of

people exposed to violence. This also applies to the rules regarding custody and access. Everyone living in Sweden must be protected by the law. People's rights must not be curtailed on the grounds of religion or tradition.

People exposed to violence must be able to feel secure in their contacts with the judicial authorities. When children come into contact with the judiciary, due attention must be paid to their specific needs and capabilities.

It is important, therefore, to ensure that awareness of these issues is present throughout the legal chain. Also, those who report crimes must be treated in a professional manner by all actors in the chain.

#### **Better measures targeting violent offenders**

Programme activities must be available to violent offenders in the penal care system, and this must apply throughout the system. Such activities are also needed outside the system. Initiatives targeting men who use violence are to be evaluated, improved and quality-assured. The safety of women and children must be a key consideration in all activities directed at men in this category.

#### **Increased cooperation and coordination**

Many actors, both public and voluntary, come into contact with people exposed to violence. Closer cooperation and better coordination between and within agencies and other actors who are in touch with victims and perpetrators of violence is essential if people exposed to it are to receive the help they need.

A distinguishing feature of cooperation in this area must be an understanding of and respect for each individual agency's mission and competence. Regulations, procedures and differing agency methods must not without good reason stand in the way of deeper and broader cooperation.

#### **Enhanced knowledge and competence**

Greater knowledge, awareness and competence are crucial to the success of all efforts to combat men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. Through research and by other means, awareness and understanding of these issues will be enhanced, as well as the competence of agencies and NGOs in contact with the victims and perpetrators of violence. Learning from the experiences of other countries and working with them to develop knowledge and effective measures is also important. The monitoring and evaluation both of agency activities and of special initiatives in this area is a key part

of the quality assurance and competence enhancement process.

#### **Basic premises**

In preparing the Action Plan, the Government has sought to work across all areas of policy, overriding ministry and agency lines, with the perspective of those at risk as the point of departure and based on the knowledge available on the areas concerned.

Freedom from violence and abuse is a basic human right. The Government's definition of men's violence against women is based on the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, adopted by the General Assembly in 1993. Article 1 defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life." This implies that the violence refers to physical, sexual or psychological violence whether in the home or in the community at large.

Violence and oppression in the name of honour has much in common with men's violence against women. As the Declaration notes, violence and oppression against women cannot be justified by invoking custom, tradition or religious considerations.

Violence also occurs in relationships between people of the same sex. The problems associated with violence in same-sex relationships have much in common with men's violence against women but until now have seldom been brought to the fore. The Government has decided that this type of violence is also to be included in the Action Plan so as to focus attention on the needs of those at risk and not on their sexual orientation or their choice of partner.

In some countries, violence against women is accepted by the state; violence and oppression in the name of honour, for instance, may not be properly investigated and prosecuted in the courts. The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women also defines such violence as violence against women.

Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children are entitled to protection against all forms of violence, both physical and psychological. Children who witness violence on the part of or against adults close to them are also crime victims. In cases where children are the victims of a criminal offence or are affected by the violence referred to in this Action Plan in some other way, special attention must be given to their needs, rights and situations.

## Problem analysis

### 3.1 Men's violence against women.

Men's violence against women is a widespread problem in society and a serious crime. Most of the violence is perpetrated by a man with whom the woman is having a relationship or has had a relationship (intimate partner violence). It leads to physical and mental suffering and often affects the woman's life as a whole. Violence directed at a woman by a man with whom she is having or has had a relationship occurs in all social groups.

Restricting women's lives, limiting their freedom and eroding their safety and security is unacceptable in a society. Although Sweden has made considerable progress towards gender equality, the exposure of women to violence by men remains a major social problem.

Children are severely affected by men's violence against women in the home. According to Swedish Save the Children, the number of boys and girls in Sweden who witness and thereby experience domestic violence is between 100 000 and 190 000. According to the National Board of Health and Welfare, a number of Nordic studies have shown that in the majority of cases of domestic violence, the children were present at the time.

Children with same-sex parents risk remaining even more 'invisible' than children in heterosexual families. One reason for this is that violence in same-sex relationships does not always receive proper attention since homosexuality continues to be surrounded by prejudice.

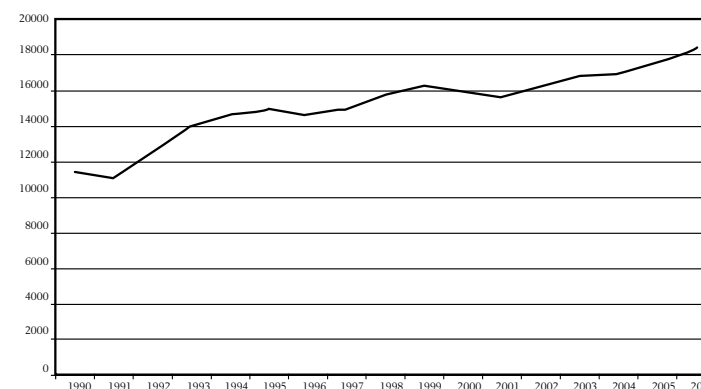
Initiatives targeting abusive and violent men have been neglected, in terms both of resources and of quality (see *Mäns våldsutövande – barns upplevelser/How Children Experience Men's Violence*, 2006). More research is needed into the question of why certain men are abusive and violent. So, too, is research into more sophisticated methods for helping violent men to desist from such behaviour. The fact that many men are under the influence of alcohol or drugs when they assault women does not mean that intoxicants can be blamed for the violence. Drug and alcohol abuse may, however, constitute a contributing factor in these men's use of violence. If the fight to end men's violence against women is to succeed, men must be involved in preventive and corrective action to a far greater extent than at present. This must be achieved without jeopardising the safety and security of crime victims and others in any way. All initiatives targeting violent men must adopt a risk-and-security perspective in respect of the women and children involved.

### Statistics on men's violence against women

Information concerning the extent and direction of men's violence against women has definitely improved in recent years. In a recently published study on security in Swedish society (Nationella trygghetsundersökningen 2006, Brå-rapport 2007:14), 1.8 per cent of all women aged 16–79 stated that they had been assaulted at some point over the past year. In terms of the total population in this age group, this translates into some 60 000 women, of whom an estimated 70 per cent were exposed to violence by a family member, by someone else close to them or by an acquaintance. While in some cases it is a woman who is responsible for the violence, the great majority of perpetrators are men. Since the early 1990s, the proportion of women who state that they have been exposed to violence or threat has increased. In 2006, reported cases of assaults on women aged 15 or over numbered 25 491.

The figure below shows the number of such cases where the perpetrator was known to the woman, during the period 1990–2006.

#### Number of reported cases of assault on women aged 15 or over known to the perpetrator



Source: National Council for Crime Prevention

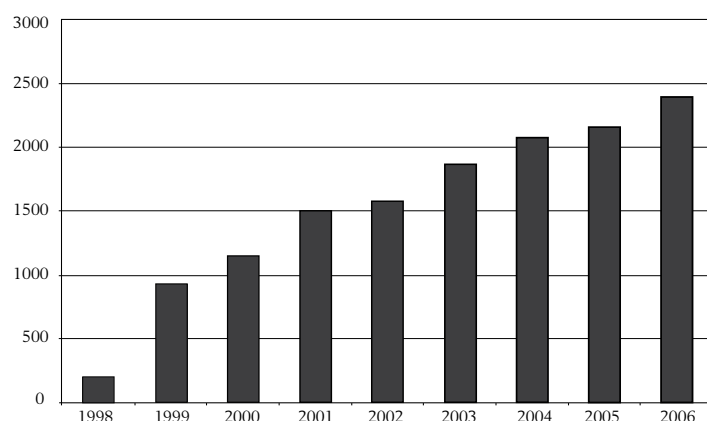
Since 1990, the number of reported cases has increased by an average 400 per year. According to the National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå), people's propensity to report has probably increased during this period, but a reasonable assumption is that actual violence against women in close relationships also increased in the 1990s.

The term men's violence against women includes rape and other sexual offences committed by men. Reported cases of sexual crime have more than doubled since 1990. In 2006, some 12 500 sex-related offences were reported to the police, of which 4 200

involved rape. The number of reported rapes has increased significantly in recent years, due in part to the fact that the definition in the Swedish Penal Code was broadened in 2005 to embrace other acts as well.

Statistics relating to the crime of gross violation of a woman's integrity give a clearer picture of the relationship between victim and perpetrator. This offence consists of repeated acts such as assault, unlawful threat and certain types of sex-related crime where victim and perpetrator are or were previously married or co-habiting. As the figure below shows, the number of reported cases of gross violation of a woman's integrity has increased markedly since the offence was introduced in the Swedish Penal Code in 1998.

#### Number of reported cases of gross violation of a woman's integrity, 1998–2006



Source: National Council for Crime Prevention

The fact that violence against women is increasingly classified as gross violation of a woman's integrity is partly due to the fact that police and prosecutors have become better at investigating whether violence and threats were previously a feature of the relationship.

Both Swedish research and studies from other countries (including Brå-rapport 2001:3) show that women exposed to violence from someone close to them often suffer such violence repeatedly. About half of the women who state that they have been exposed to violence say this has happened on more than one occasion. Almost a third of the women who report that they have been assaulted by someone close to them lodge a further complaint with the police within 12 months.

Every year, an average of 30 women die in Sweden as a result of lethal violence. Of these, some 17 are killed by a man with whom they have or have had a close relationship.

Crime statistics on men's violence against women, however, only reflect what has been reported to the police. For all types of crime, there are generally a large number of unreported cases, especially when they involve violence on the part of someone with whom the victim has or has had a close relationship. The more serious the violence and the less close the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim is, the more willing people are to report crimes. Official crime statistics, therefore, must be combined with other types of knowledge and research, such as the findings of victim surveys, if a clearer picture of the extent of men's violence against women is to be obtained.

#### Costs of the violence

In a 2006 report (*Kostnader för våld mot kvinnor*), the National Board of Health and Welfare estimated that men's violence against women in Sweden costs approximately SEK 3 billion per year, in terms of direct and indirect costs to various public sectors. Direct costs totalled approximately SEK 2–2.5 billion for such things as medical care, the judicial system and social services, while indirect costs, including production losses and the value of voluntary work, were estimated at approximately SEK 720–76 million. Over and above direct and indirect costs, transfers totalled an estimated SEK 690 million, of which about half comprised sickness benefit. The National Board of Health and Welfare points out that some calculations were less reliable than others and that certain aspects could not be included in the study. Consequently, the figures should be seen as a cautious estimate of the costs to society.

#### 3.2 Violence and oppression in the name of honour

The cultural perceptions that surround men's violence against women in general and violence and oppression in the name of honour are rooted in gender, power and sexuality. This is confirmed by the reports of the UN's Special Rapporteur on violence against women (see for instance 'Cultural practices in the family that are violent towards women' [E/CN.4/2002/83] and 'Intersections between culture and violence against women' [A/HRC/4/34]). There are many similarities in the structure and mechanisms of the violence, including the fact that it often occurs within the family and that the victim is in one way or another dependent on and has strong emotional ties to the perpetrator or perpetrators. The different ways in which women's and men's sexuality are perceived is crucial to an understanding of the structure and mechanisms of the violence, both as regards men's violence against women in general and violence and oppression in the name of honour.

In the case of the latter, control over girls' and women's sexuality is a key aspect and is strongly linked to family and community norms. In the honour concept, the focus is on

virginity and chastity, and the family's reputation and prestige are perceived to depend on the actual, alleged or suspected behaviour of girls and women. This may be explicit to a greater or lesser degree, and family control may range from everyday forms of constraint on girls' and women's lives regarding aspects such as choice of dress, social life and freedom of movement, to limiting life choices such as education and employment, marriage and divorce. In its most extreme form, the honour concept leads to threats of violence and actual violence, including lethal violence.

The collective nature of this type of violence indicates that a number of perpetrators of both sexes may be involved, and that the victims may be either women or men, girls or boys. It may also mean that the violence is sanctioned by the family and its immediate circle, and that this may include other women. As a result, special measures for combating violence and oppression in the name of honour may be required in certain cases. A familiarity with both such practices and with special procedures for dealing with them are required, for instance in connection with police investigations, when assessing risks, and when deciding what kind of support the victim should be given.

The honour concept may take different manifestations depending on cultural perceptions and religious considerations, but is not associated with any particular culture or religion. The concept is also found in non-religious contexts.

Forced marriages and female genital mutilation are specific phenomena that stem from the perception that both family and male honour are dependent on the sexual behaviour of women and girls. Arranged marriages often have a strong element of family influence, and it is difficult to determine whether or not coercion is involved. For the individual girl or young woman – and also for young men – going against family tradition and the wishes of parents and other relatives may be such a sensitive course that in practice it is not viable.

Violence and oppression in the name of honour also affect LGBT people.

In 2004, Swedish county administrative boards estimated that between 1 500 and 2 000 girls and young women were exposed to violence and oppression in the name of honour, and that 10–15 per cent of them required sheltered accommodation. In a 2006 report from the National Board of Health and Welfare (Frihet och ansvar), young people in their second year of upper secondary school were asked to what extent they felt free to decide over their own lives. One of the questions, designed to indicate the prevalence of violence and oppression in the name of honour, was whether the students were worried that they themselves would not be allowed to choose their future partners in life. Five per cent of the girls and three per cent of the boys replied in the affirmative.

### 3.3 Violence in same-sex relationships

All citizens are entitled to the same kind of protection, support and assistance in relation to their vulnerability or risk situation, regardless of their sexual orientation. Violence in same-sex relationships and men's violence against women in close relationships have much in common. They have similar patterns whereby one party seeks to restrict the other person's life, to exercise control, to threaten violence and to actually use violence. The power relationship between perpetrator and victim may be seen both as a cause of the violence and as a consequence of it. But there are also dissimilarities, which means that specialised knowledge of violence in same-sex relationships is required.

The sex of the perpetrator and the victim impacts on how others around them perceive the violence, how willing the person exposed to the violence is to report the matter and seek help, and how he or she is treated by the authorities. The heterosexual norms of the community at large mean that violence in same-sex relationships often goes unperceived or is deemed to be of no great consequence. This in turn means that the community may have difficulty seeing, understanding and dealing with the violence, and thus providing adequate support and assistance.

A Swedish study of violence in same-sex relationships (Våldsam lika och olika 2005) and past experience both show that homosexuals and bisexuals do not seek help to the same extent as heterosexuals. They seldom report violence in couple relationships to the police, for instance. This may be because many people in this category have previously experienced unfavourable treatment by various public authorities, and do not expect to receive the same kind of help as people in heterosexual relationships. Experience from both Sweden and other countries shows that homosexual and bisexual women and men are reluctant to contact regular crime victim emergency services as to do so presupposes a degree of openness. According to the above study, nor are they inclined to contact emergency services that have homosexual and bisexual crime victims as their target group, since they are unsure whether they can remain anonymous when doing so.

Today, men exposed to violence in either same-sex or heterosexual relationships have virtually no access to sheltered accommodation, and this deficiency needs to be addressed. There are, however, a handful of operations in Sweden that people can contact where staff have extensive knowledge of violence in same-sex relationships. Also, a number of women's emergency shelters have embarked on training programmes that will enable them to deal with the special needs of lesbian women exposed to violence. The activities of the women's shelters need to be expanded so that homosexual and bisexual women can receive the help and assistance they require.



All this underlines the importance of acquiring a better understanding of violence in same-sex relationships and of ensuring that public authorities in the judicial, social service, health care and other fields have the knowledge and means to focus attention on, treat and support homosexual and bisexual women and men exposed to violence.

### 3.4 Particularly vulnerable groups

Certain groups of women are particularly at risk from violence. Many who have personal experience of violence state that people focus more on their disabilities, their foreign background, their substance abuse/addiction or their age than on the fact that they have been assaulted. National minorities experience similar problems. The Government views this situation with concern and wishes to make clear that all women exposed to violence must be given the requisite support and protection based on their needs, whoever they may be and whatever background they may have.

Efforts to combat violence and abuse directed at women with mental and physical disabilities need to be intensified. A number of studies of this kind of abuse (including *Vi är många – övergrepp mot kvinnor som använder psykiatrin. En omfångsstudie*, Utredningsinstitutet HANDU, 2007) show that disabled women are more vulnerable than other women. People with disabilities are often more dependent on others and may have difficulty defending themselves against violence and abuse, especially when the perpetrator is the victim's carer. Perpetrators of violence can include the woman's contact person, teacher, superior, municipal transport service driver and relative. The Swedish Disability Ombudsman has noted that people with disabilities are often viewed primarily as disabled persons or objects of care. Disabled women and their families describe how this kind of objectification causes sexual abuse to be overlooked since people do not perceive women with disabilities as individuals with the same right to physical integrity as everyone else.

Women with substance abuse/addiction problems, especially homeless women, are at heightened risk of exposure to violence and other forms of abuse. Women who abuse drugs and alcohol can become dependent on men and exploited by them. The causal connections are sometimes the reverse; a woman may for instance abuse alcohol to allay the deep anxiety she feels as a result of the violence and abuse to which she is exposed. Battered women with abuse/addiction problems may find it harder to obtain help with sheltered accommodation and the like. In their contact with the authorities, they are not always treated with the respect that a crime victim is entitled to.

Older women exposed to violence are more likely than other women to be in a dependency situation. According to a 2001 study by the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority (*Ofrid – våld mot äldre kvinnor*), 16 per cent of these older

women were exposed to some form of violence or abuse after the age of 65. The study showed that significantly more older women than men were at extreme risk, i.e. that they were exposed to several types of assault and that the number of attacks increased with age. These women may also find it difficult to seek help and protection due to the fact that people do not take their accounts seriously. Violence by older men is often kept hidden and excused on the grounds that the perpetrator was raised in a different era and/or a different kind of society, or that he shows signs of illness and therefore cannot be held accountable for his actions.

Young women, too, are particularly at risk. According to the above-mentioned study by the National Council for Crime Prevention of security in Swedish society, women aged 16–24 are the group most exposed to sex offences (4.9 per cent compared with 1.6 per cent of women in general). Exposure to assault and threats is also greatest among this group of women, a situation confirmed by Statistics Sweden's surveys of living conditions.

Immigrant women tend also to be particularly at risk, due to factors such as a poor command of Swedish and a lack of awareness of the country's laws and regulations. Newcomers to Sweden often have a limited social network, which gives violent men greater opportunity to strengthen their hold on a woman and keep her isolated from the community.

### Measures during the present term of office

The Government is adopting a broad-based approach in the fight to stop men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. Through the measures outlined in this Action Plan, the Government is creating the potential for a higher and more enduring level of ambition at national, regional and local level, on the part of government agencies, county councils and municipalities.

NGOs operating in the areas dealt with in the Action Plan also have an important role, and measures will therefore be instituted to better enable their involvement in the future. Funding, however, will only be provided to NGOs that have a democratic structure and that undertake activities which promote national interests and goals.

The Action Plan covers a range of measures in different policy areas. The initiatives outlined in the plan comprise both measures already adopted and measures that the Government will be developing and specifying more precisely as time passes. Implementation of the Action Plan is to be followed up. The Government intends to provide the Riksdag with regular accounts of how implementation is progressing and will also

be reporting on the outcome of the follow-up in 2010.

In preparing the Action Plan, the Government invited the relevant agencies and organisations to attend two separate hearings. In addition, one of the meetings of the Council of Equality Issues was devoted to enlisting views and opinions concerning the Government's Action Plan. Prior to embarking on its evaluation, the Government will invite these actors to attend a follow-up seminar to assess progress and discuss the implementation of the Action Plan.

## 4.1 Increased protection and support to victims of violence

### Amendments to the Social Services Act

Measure 1: On 1 July 2007, Chapter 5, Section 11 of the Social Services Act (2001:453) was amended to clarify the obligation of social welfare committees regarding the provision of help and support to crime victims.

The amendment is intended to clarify the responsibility of municipalities to help and support crime victims. The revision specifies that a municipality shall – rather than should – give special consideration to the needs of women exposed to violence and of children who have witnessed violence.

### Funding to municipalities to develop and strengthen sheltered housing for battered women

Measure 2: The Government has decided to allocate funding to the municipalities to enable them to realise the higher level of ambition proposed by the Government in its bill, Social Service Support for Women Exposed to Violence (Govt Bill 2006/07:38). The National Board of Health and Welfare is, together with the county administrative boards, responsible for following up and evaluating this initiative at national level. A final report is to be delivered no later than 1 June 2009.

The purpose of this initiative is to strengthen and improve the quality of support to battered women and their children at local level, through the work with women's shelters and crime victim programmes etc. The funding is distributed by the county administrative boards on application from the municipalities.

### Improved knowledge-based support to the social services

Measure 3: The Government has instructed the National Board of Health and Wel-

fare to improve knowledge-based support to the social services for their work with battered women and with children who witness violence. The board is to present its report no later than 1 December 2009.

The aim is partly to support the municipalities in their implementation of the amendments to the Social Services Act (2001:453), but also to meet the need for knowledge support to social service staff working in this field. A further aim is to find ways of disseminating information concerning knowledge, method development, experience and good practices on an ongoing basis. In its instructions to the National Board of Health and Welfare, the Government emphasises that the funding should be used both to help social service staff adapt their work to meet individual needs and to make it accessible to all who need support. This includes women with abuse/addiction problems, women with disabilities, women with foreign backgrounds, older women and women exposed to violence in the name of honour.

### Intensified supervision of the social services

Measure 4: The Government has decided to intensify supervision of the social services' work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence. The National Board of Health and Welfare is responsible for delivering a report on the county councils' supervisory activities in December 2009.

The purpose of the assignment is to achieve an actively critical and inquiring supervision focusing in particular on the social services' work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence, including support to the municipalities. It is particularly important to examine how the social services deal with the vulnerability of women with disabilities, women with abuse/addiction problems, women with foreign backgrounds and older women exposed to violence, and how the authorities deal with the special challenge posed by violence and oppression in the name of honour. As part of the task, common assessment criteria are to be drawn up for supervision in this area so that it may become more distinct and more uniform across the country.

### Quality assured assessment instruments for social service measures

Measure 5: The Government has instructed the Institute for Evidence Based Work Practice (IMS) at the National Board of Health and Welfare to identify and assure the quality of assessment instruments for use in the social services' work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence. A report is to be delivered on 1 December 2009.

The purpose of the assignment is to improve the social services' work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence and to reduce discrepancies between municipalities in this respect. A further aim is to achieve a more uniform assessment of what measures should be made available to the women and children. By using a national assessment instrument, in the form of a scientifically based questionnaire, it will become possible for the social services to assess the situation and needs of these women and children in a systematic and standardised way. Part of the assignment involves addressing the special needs that particularly vulnerable groups of women have, for example older women, women with abuse/addiction problems, women with foreign backgrounds and women with disabilities.

#### **Funding to develop the social services' work with risk assessment in connection with cases of custody, residence and access**

*Measure 6: The Government has instructed the National Board of Health and Welfare to compile a report on the current state of knowledge concerning risk assessments relating to custody, residence and access, and to report on how methods in this area might be improved. A report was presented on 30 November 2007. The Government intends to give the board a mandate to initiate development work in this area.*

In view of the changes introduced into the Children and Parents Code (Chapter 6, Section 2 a), which has been assigned to compile knowledge on risk assessments in connection with custody, residence and access reports. These changes will clarify the responsibility of social services to assess the risk of a child or someone else in the family being exposed to abuse. Such cases may for instance concern women who are exposed to violence or children who witness violence.

#### **Evaluation and development of social service work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence**

*The Government intends to instruct the National Board of Health and Welfare to evaluate methods and procedures used in the social service's work with battered women and children who have witnessed violence. When this assignment has been completed, the Government intends to give the board a further mandate to initiate development work based on the evaluation findings.*

The purpose of the evaluation is to initiate development work in the social services aimed at enabling improved and more knowledge-based work with battered women and with children who have witnessed violence. It is important that the evaluation includes an analysis of how safety aspects are considered in the various services in relation to battered women and, where applicable, also to children exposed to violence.

If the evaluation identifies shortcomings in risk and safety assessments, the National Board of Health and Welfare is to propose measures to improve the situation. In this assignment, the board is to observe how the methods and procedures used meet the special needs that women in this category have, due to such factors as abuse/addiction problems, disabilities, foreign background and age.

The mandate also includes disseminating the knowledge acquired so that services targeting battered women and children who have witnessed violence are able to avail themselves of the evaluated methods and procedures.

#### **Rights of children who have witnessed violence**

*Measure 8: The Government intends to initiate a general review of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act (1978:413) during the present term of office. This review is to consider in particular whether the support currently available to children who are forced to live with violence in the family is adequate. In addition, the Government intends to evaluate whether these children are sufficiently well protected.*

The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act regulates the extent to which crime victims can be compensated for injury. A general review of the law is needed to ensure for instance that it is having the desired effect. As the result of an amendment that became law on 15 November 2006, children who have witnessed violence against a family member may be granted this type of compensation. One of the purposes of the amendment was to spotlight the situation of such children. The Government intends to set up an inquiry to analyse and consider whether access to criminal injuries compensation for children in this category has meant that they have received better support.

#### **Evaluation and development of voluntary women's shelter work with battered women**

*Measure 9: The Government intends to provide funding for the evaluation and development of work at voluntary women's emergency shelters.*

The voluntary women's emergency shelters are today an invaluable complement to the work undertaken in the municipalities on behalf of battered women. The aim of this evaluation funding, as in the case of the mandate relating to social service-related women's shelter activities (see 4.1.7), is to facilitate and initiate development work in these voluntary shelters, with a view to increasing the potential for better, more knowledge-based efforts in this field. The evaluation and development work is to be undertaken in collaboration with participating women's emergency shelters.

#### **Extended assignment to develop programmes for the care of victims of sexual crimes**

**Measure 10:** The Government intends to provide Uppsala University with funding so that the National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence against Women (NCK) can develop its mandate to draw up a national programme for the care of victims of sexual crimes.

NCK at Uppsala University was assigned in February 2007 to draw up a national programme for the health care service focusing on care to victims of sexual crimes.

The purpose of the mandate is to improve the care of victims of sexual crimes in the health care service. A further aim is to develop procedures for testing (taking specimens) and documentation to ensure that the data available to the judiciary is as comprehensive and expedient as possible.

There is currently too little available knowledge and information on sexual violence in same-sex relationships. Also, people in these groups are less inclined to seek help. The mandate, therefore, should be broadened to encompass violence in same-sex relationships and violence and oppression in the name of honour. In order to implement the programme in the health care service – and also to enhance knowledge and awareness about both violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships – the Government intends to allocate further funding.

#### **Assignment to the county administrative boards to counteract violence and oppression in the name of honour**

**Measure 11:** The Government has assigned the county administrative boards to provide funding for measures to prevent violence and oppression in the name of honour. The Östergötland County Administrative Board, in addition to its regional mandate, is to provide funding for action at national or supraregional level against violence and oppression in the name of honour. A final report on the funds requisitioned in 2007 is to be delivered no later than 31 March 2009.

It is vital that the county administrative boards maintain their efforts to improve sheltered accommodation, knowledge enhancement and preventive work. The aim of this initiative is to provide the means for the relevant authorities to integrate long-term, sustainable work in this area into their regular work, and also as far as possible to coordinate work against violence and oppression in the name of honour with general work on combating men's violence against women. The county administrative boards are to provide consultative assistance, especially to social services working with these issues. The boards in metropolitan areas are to continue providing funds for the development of sheltered housing. Special consideration is to be given to the needs of abused persons following their placement in such accommodation.

#### **Training for staff providing support and services to people with disabilities**

**Measure 12:** The Government intends to instruct the National Board of Health and Welfare to produce training materials focusing on the problem of violence directed at women with disabilities.

This training material is to be used in introduction and in-service training for personal assistants and other care staff working with those who provide support and services to people with disabilities. The aim of such training is to raise awareness of the heightened risk of violence and abuse to which people with disabilities are exposed. The mandate includes taking appropriate steps to ensure that the existence of the training material is made known to and can be used by education providers.

#### **Support to disability organisations**

**Measure 13:** The Government intends to allocate funds to the disability organisations to better enable them to detect and prevent violence against people with disabilities and to support those who are exposed to violence. The National Board of Health and Welfare will be instructed to distribute and follow up this targeted funding.

Many people with disabilities belong to one or other of the disability organisations. The Government takes the view that a targeted grant to certain specific organisations will give these bodies a better chance of addressing the problem of violence against people with disabilities. This may include addressing and preventing violence against women and men with disabilities in a more systematic way, for instance by improving current information on places to which the disabled can turn for help.

#### **Enhance knowledge about violence against women in substance abuse/addiction care**

**Measure 14:** The Government intends to instruct the National Board of Health and Welfare to compile and disseminate current knowledge on women exposed to violence to those working in the substance abuse/addiction care field. The aim is to enhance knowledge about the specific needs of women in this situation and about the forms of treatment required.

Research shows that women with abuse/addiction problems are more prone to assault than other women. A survey of outpatient substance abuse care in five Swedish counties, however, shows that only four per cent of the measures taken by the municipalities to help people with abuse/addiction problems specifically address women's needs. The purpose of enhancing knowledge in substance abuse care is to encourage the development of forms of treatment that correspond to the specific needs of women, such as working through their experience of violence.

### Increased support to women's shelters and crime victim support centres etc

**Measure 15:** The Government intends to increase the organisational funding distributed by the National Board of Health and Welfare to organisations involved in combating violence against women.

The work undertaken by voluntary women's shelters, crime victim support centres and other voluntary organisations are a valuable complement to the support services provided by the municipalities. Also, these organisations work across a broad spectrum to raise awareness in the community about issues relating to men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. The Government considers it necessary to increase the organisational funding distributed by the National Board of Health and Welfare to such bodies.

### Funding for the development of work on violence in same-sex relationships

**Measure 16:** The Government intends to set aside special funding in 2008–2010 for crime victim emergency services and women's shelters working against violence in same-sex relationships. The funds are to be available for use in such areas as skills enhancement and the adaptation of activities so that homosexual and bisexual women and men exposed to violence in close relationships may receive proper consideration.

A small number of voluntary women's shelters and crime victim emergency services have improved their understanding of violence in same-sex relationships and integrated this knowledge into their activities. Today, a limited number of women's shelters have special qualifications in this area and offer support to women exposed to violence by a partner of the same sex. The Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights also operates an emergency service for crime victims, including people from the LGBT community. They can seek help for all forms of exposure to violence, including both hate crimes perpetrated by persons unknown to them and partner violence. The Government considers that a higher level of preparedness and skills enhancement are both needed in this area, and therefore intends to encourage such a development.

### Improved protection for people exposed to threats or persecution

**Measure 17:** The current government inquiry into stalking (Min. of Justice 2006:09, ToR. 2006:84) is reviewing the question of what measures need to be taken to strengthen protection for people exposed to threat or persecution. A report is to be delivered no later than 30 September 2008.

The current government inquiry into stalking is reviewing the question of what

measures need to be taken to strengthen protection for people exposed to threat or persecution. The committee of inquiry will also consider whether there is a need for supplementary economic support in certain cases where people are exposed to persistent and serious threat or to some other form of serious criminal behaviour. The mandate includes reviewing compliance with the rules on protection orders, and preparing and presenting proposals for a legal solution that would enable such orders to be monitored by means of electronic surveillance. The inquiry will also present proposals designed to make day-to-day life easier for people with protected identities. In addition, it will consider whether legislation should be amended so as to strengthen protection against stalking, i.e. persistent harassment and persecution.

### Inquiry into right of access and protection of address information etc in legal proceedings

**Measure 18:** The Government has decided to appoint an inquiry (ToR. 2007:120) into access and confidentiality in certain parts of the judicial system etc. The mandate includes considering how the suspects' right of access should be regulated. A report is to be delivered no later than 1 September 2008.

One of the purposes of the inquiry will be to establish the extent of a suspect's right of access during preliminary investigations and trials, and after a court verdict has been delivered. A question of particular significance in this connection is how the right of access is viewed in relation to the need to keep protected personal data secret. Hitherto, it has been unclear whether the right of access to which a defendant is entitled under the Code of Judicial Procedure extends to address and telephone data etc that refers to the injured party, witnesses or co-defendants and which is subject to confidentiality at court hearings. According to the Personal Safety Commission (SOU 2004:1), current regulations do not prevent sensitive address data from being kept secret from the defendant, on condition that it is not of importance to the case. The inquiry will consider whether the present regulations give the courts sufficient power to uphold confidentiality of address data etc.

### Enhanced security in courts

**Measure 19:** The Government has instructed the National Courts Administration to evaluate certain changes in the Act on Security Checks at Court Hearings (1981:1064). A report was delivered in October 2007.

All persons visiting a law court must be able to feel safe there. This applies in particular to people who have been exposed to threats or violence. The increasingly tough

social climate in Sweden means that greater priority must be attached to safety and security in courts. In December 2006, the Government entrusted the National Courts Administration with the task of evaluating certain changes in the Act on Security Checks at Court Hearings (1981:1064). The mandate included assessing developments in respect of security risks and threats against courts, and considering whether the regulations in the above act were appropriately worded. The National Courts Administration presented its findings in a report (Allmän säkerhetskontroll i domstol – en utvärdering, DV-rapport 2007:1) in October 2007. This report will serve as a basis for the Government's continuing work on safety and security in Swedish courts.

#### **Better information to crime victims**

**Measure 20:** The Government decided in the spring of 2007 to introduce statutory amendments so that both women exposed to crime and other crime victims could receive information about when a person serving a prison sentence is in custody and when that person is outside prison, and about the possibility of applying for a protection order.

The right of injured parties to information about an internee's parole periods, date of release and the like, previously regulated only by the Act on Correctional Treatment in Institutions (1974:203), should as a matter of course also apply in cases where the convicted person is in custody (Ordinance [2007:102] amending the Ordinance on the Treatment of Detained and Arrested Persons etc [1976:376]). Similarly, defendants have a justified interest in information about decisions whereby sentences are served by means of electronic surveillance (Ordinance [2007:103] amending the Ordinance on Intensive Supervision with Electronic Monitoring [1994:1060]). The two amendments introduced here mean that defendants' right to information is now viewed in a more cohesive manner.

#### **Inquiry into municipal responsibility for those staying in the municipality**

**Measure 21:** The Government intends to appoint an inquiry to review the provision in the Social Services Act on the responsibility of municipalities to provide services to those staying in their area. ..

The Inquiry on Social Services' Support for Women Subjected to Violence calls attention in its final report (SOU 2006:65) to the cost implications of the provision in the Social Services Act concerning the responsibility of the municipality in which a person is staying to provide services and support to that person, and how this affects cooperation between municipalities. Conflicts arise as to which municipality is required in

a given situation to provide support under the Social Services Act (2001:453). The report notes that such disputes may adversely affect others besides women exposed to violence, including witnesses exposed to threats.

#### **Inquiry to review the Social Services Act and the Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act (1990:52)**

**Measure 22:** The Government intends to appoint an inquiry to review the provisions concerning the protection and support of children in vulnerable situations (announced in Govt Bill 2006/07:129 Utveckling av den sociala barn- och ungdomsvården m.m.).

It is vitally important to ensure that the legal basis for social services measures to help and support children who either are or risk being neglected, abused or maltreated is brought into line with developments over the 25 years that have passed since the Social Services Act first came into force. The committee of inquiry's mandate may include the question of whether it should be possible to start an investigation into the situation of a child or young person – termed a child care investigation – without the knowledge of his or her custodian.

## 4.2 Enhanced preventive work

### Methods for detecting people's exposure to violence

**Measure 23:** The Government intends to instruct NCK at Uppsala University to further develop methods for including issues relating to personal experience of violence into case histories in the health care service.

The purpose of the assignment is to enable health care staff to discover at an early stage when women or children, or partners in same-sex relationships, are being or have been exposed to violence.

The assignment will build on the method development project undertaken by the National Board of Health and Welfare in 2001, whereby women visiting either midwives at antenatal care clinics or youth guidance centres were routinely asked whether they had been exposed to violence. This procedure – previously called screening but now more commonly referred to as questions concerning personal experience of violence as a part of individual case histories – proved a valuable way of detecting the presence of exposure to violence. On completion of the project, a majority of both patients and staff felt the procedure should be maintained as a regular feature of work at the clinics. The Government takes the view that the knowledge thus acquired in antenatal care should be used as a basis for the introduction of such procedures in the health care service as a whole.

### Virtual youth centre for sexual and reproductive health

**Measure 24:** The Government has instructed the National Board of Health and Welfare to provide funding for the development of a virtual youth centre for sexual and reproductive health. A report is to be delivered on 31 March 2009.

The overall purpose of a virtual youth centre is to strengthen and support young women and men in their personal development by furthering their chances of establishing sound relationships with others, by improving their health situation through information provision, and by making available reliable and easily accessible information in areas that they may find sensitive or difficult to discuss in their regular contact with health services. This youth guidance service is to offer advice on sexual and reproductive health matters and on relationships and mental health. The centre is to be an integral part of the medical guidance service (Sjukvårdsrådgivningen SVR AB) offering nationally coordinated and quality assured health consultation and advice on the Internet. The mandate also includes informing the public about this new service.

### In-service training on violence and oppression in the name of honour

**Measure 25:** The Government intends to instruct one of its agencies to offer school heads in-service training on the problems surrounding violence and oppression in the name of honour.

Head teachers, teachers and other staff must be able to interpret signals if they are to detect problems. A government agency will therefore be charged with offering school heads at both compulsory and upper secondary level in-service training on the problems surrounding violence and oppression in the name of honour.

### Further skills development for young women's shelters

**Measure 26:** The Government has instructed the National Board for Youth Affairs to take steps to combat violence and oppression in the name of honour via the activities of the country's young women's shelters. The board is to deliver its report on 28 February 2008.

Girls and young women exposed to violence and oppression in the name of honour must have access to support via the activities of young women's shelters. The aim of the current initiative is to equip staff at the shelters with a better understanding of how honour-related violence and oppression works and how they can reach women exposed to such practices. Measures are to focus on enhancing the skills of staff at young women's shelters through the provision of national training programmes and local seminars – bringing together the shelters, schools, youth guidance centres, the police and social services – and also on the provision of funding for an Internet forum where young people can obtain information about violence and oppression in the name of honour.

### New priority areas for the Swedish Inheritance Fund

**Measure 27:** The Government has proposed new areas of priority from 2007 for the funding provided by the Swedish Inheritance Fund in connection with men's violence against women and violence and oppression in the name of honour.

One such priority is projects aimed at preventing violence, bullying and harassment and strengthening support to crime victims in the Swedish Inheritance Fund's target groups. Particular attention is to be paid to projects aimed at combating violence, bullying and harassment due to gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability. The Government also considers it important to support projects designed to develop new

methods for helping and supporting children and adolescents exposed to violence or who have witnessed domestic violence, and to projects aimed at combating men's violence against young women and women with disabilities. This includes projects concerned with preventing or combating violence and oppression in the name of honour.

The Swedish Inheritance Fund distributes project funding for the benefit of children, young people and people with disabilities. Non-profit organisations and other voluntary associations with innovative projects may apply. In 2006, the Swedish Inheritance Fund granted funding totalling SEK 20 million to projects concerning violence, crime, bullying and harassment directed at its target groups.

#### **Greater security for women in urban environments**

**Measure 28: The Government intends to allocate funds for the intensification of work aimed at creating a more secure local environment.**

City and other urban environments must be designed and built in such a way that people are able to lead good lives and feel both trust and a sense of community. Many urban areas have environments that encourage crime, either because they are in out-of-the-way places or because they are poorly lit. By their design, certain environments create fear and insecurity among those who live in them. Fear of attack is a problem for many people, particularly for girls and women, and can restrict their chances of a good life since they dare not use certain urban environments. With the aim to promote gender equality, a number of municipalities have established a dialogue with local residents and organisations by means of what are termed security walks. These involve police, social service staff and citizens of different ages and backgrounds meeting to discuss people's feelings of insecurity and the reasons for them, thus paving the way for changes in the local environment and consequently a greater sense of security in the community as a whole. The work of improving security for women in urban environments should be led by municipal staff concerned with the preparation and implementation of plans. If this is to succeed, both staff working with technical services in the municipality and local housing managers/providers should also be involved. The Government intends to set aside funding during the present term of office for following up and supporting such a development. Urban planning with a more pronounced gender equality perspective can liberate people from the limitations and constraints that many of them experience today.

## **4.3 Higher standards and greater efficiency in the judicial system**

### **Intensified police work to combat men's violence against women**

**Measure 29: The Government has instructed the National Police Board to further intensify its efforts to combat men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships. The mandate is to run from 1 September 2007 to 31 December 2009.**

The measures undertaken are to cover training and education, information dissemination and other courses of action deemed likely to strengthen regular police activities in this area in the long term. The aim is to improve the ability of the police to proceed in this work from the perspective of the crime victim. The purpose of the assignment is to enhance police skills and capacity in respect of such issues, and to strengthen public faith in the police so that more crimes may be reported. The assignment is to be undertaken in consultation with the Swedish Prosecution Authority and others. The Government also intends to review the need for allocating additional resources to other agencies in the judicial system, including the Swedish Prosecution Authority and the National Courts Administration, in connection with this mandate.

### **Improving police capability to prevent and investigate men's violence against women**

**Measure 30: The Government has instructed the National Police Board to ensure, in consultation with the Swedish Prosecution Authority, that each police authority has access to the expertise it needs for the purpose of preventing and investigating men's violence against women and violence directed at children, e.g. in the form of special family violence units. The board is to report its findings when presenting its annual report for 2007.**

Improved skills and know-how will give the police a better chance of preventing and investigating crimes of violence in this category.

### **Improving police capability to provide crime victims with relevant information**

**Measure 31: The Government has instructed the National Police Board to take steps to ensure that each police authority has access to the expertise it needs for the purpose of providing crime victims with relevant information on the public support measures available to them. The board is to report its findings when presenting its annual report for 2007.**

Improved police ability to supply crime victims with relevant information will give



this group a better chance of obtaining help and support.

#### **Improved police capability to prevent, detect and investigate criminal offences in the name of honour**

Measure 32: The Government has instructed the National Police Board to take steps to enhance police skills and capability to prevent, detect and investigate violence and oppression in the name of honour. The board is to report its findings when presenting its annual report for 2007.

Improved skills and know-how will give the police a better chance of preventing, detecting and investigating this type of criminal offence.

#### **Improving the ability of prosecutors to attend to crime victims**

Measure 33: The Government has instructed the Swedish Prosecution Authority to report on the measures it has taken to develop the knowledge and skills of prosecutors and other prosecution authority staff with respect to crime victim issues, especially as regards the treatment of victims. The Swedish Prosecution Authority is to present its findings in conjunction with its annual report for 2007. Measures in respect of victims of sexual crimes are to be reported.

Professional treatment of crime victims and witnesses creates the potential for safer and more secure providers of evidence. It is important, therefore, to ensure that both victims and witnesses are treated correctly during preliminary investigations and in court. Prosecutors have an important role to play in this respect. In its appropriation directions for 2007, the Government instructed the Swedish Prosecution Authority to report back on the measures it has taken to develop the knowledge and skills of prosecutors and other prosecution authority staff with respect to crime victim issues, especially as regards the treatment of victims.

#### **Better treatment in courts**

Measure 34: The Government has instructed the National Courts Administration and the courts in its appropriation directions for the 2007 financial year to report what measures they have taken to ensure that parties litigant, defendants and witnesses are treated correctly. This applies in particular to crime victims, including women exposed to sexual crimes of one kind or another.

Measure 35: The Government has appointed an inquiry to examine communication between courts and citizens (Utredningen om förtroende och kvalitet i domstolarna,

Min. of Justice 2007:08, ToR 2007:93). A report is to be delivered no later than 30 November 2008.

The way people are treated in court must not deter them from contacting the courts or attending court proceedings to give evidence. Issues such as how parties litigant and others are treated in court are crucial to public faith in the court system. In June 2007, the Government appointed an inquiry charged with analysing communication between courts and citizens, particularly as regards the treatment issue. Based on its findings, the committee of inquiry is to consider how such communication may be improved. The committee will then report its analysis, considerations and recommendations in such a way as to provide a basis for the courts' continuing work with these issues.

#### **Training programme for the improved treatment of sex crime victims**

Measure 36: The Government has instructed the Criminal Victim Compensation and Support Authority to draw up and, in consultation with other relevant agencies, provide a training programme aimed at improving the treatment of victims of sexual crimes and targeting police authorities, public prosecution offices and courts of law. The Criminal Victim Compensation and Support Authority will deliver a report on the assignment no later than 1 October 2009.

The purpose of the programme is to give a clearer picture of victims of sexual crimes and improve the way they are treated in connection with complaints to police, preliminary investigations and court proceedings. In the case of children exposed to sexual crimes, the programme will focus in particular on clarifying both the particularly vulnerable position they are in and their needs as victims.

#### **Evaluation of the provisions concerning gross violation of a woman's integrity**

Measure 37: The Government intends to evaluate current provisions concerning gross violation of integrity and gross violation of a woman's integrity in Chapter 4, Section 4a of the Swedish Penal Code.

The provisions concerning gross violation of integrity and gross violation of a woman's integrity in Chapter 4, Section 4a of the Swedish Penal Code have been in force since 1 July 1998. To determine how the provisions have been applied and whether they have had the desired effect, and also whether the law needs changing, the Government intends to initiate an evaluation of the application of the provisions.(JU/L5)

### Evaluation of legislation on sexual crimes

**Measure 38:** The Government intends to appoint an inquiry in 2008 to evaluate the legislation on sexual crimes.

On 1 April 2005, new and reformed legislation on sexual crimes entered into force, containing a series of important changes, including stronger protection against exposure to sexual violations. In connection with the introduction of this legislation, emphasis was placed on the need to monitor its impact and to determine whether it was being applied in an appropriate and effective way. To determine how this new legislation has been applied and whether it has had the desired effect, the Government intends to appoint an inquiry in 2008 to evaluate its application. Part of the mandate will involve considering the question of lack of consent.

### Stricter view of serious crimes of violence

**Measure 39:** The Government has instructed an inquiry (ToR. 2007:48 and ToR. 2007:137) to consider and propose changes to current penal legislation so as to establish a meeting out of punishment that reflects a stricter judicial view of serious crimes of violence. The inquiry is to look at a number of areas, including assault and violation of integrity. An interim report on an appropriate scale of punishment for murder is to be delivered no later than 30 November 2007. A final report on the mandate is due on 31 July 2008.

As a society changes and develops, the seriousness with which courts view various crimes changes with it. The rules governing the meeting out of punishment should reflect how reprehensible the offence is. A stricter view of serious violations of personal integrity has already developed in Sweden, e.g. regarding sexual crimes. The laws regarding serious physical abuse, however, have not been subject to any general reforms. The Government considers that there is reason for a stricter view of such offences in the meeting out of punishment.

### Child marriages and forced marriages

**Measure 40:** An inquiry has been instructed to analyse whether current legislation offers adequate protection against child and forced marriages in terms of penal sanction (ToR 2005:152, 2006:78 and 2007:88). A report is to be delivered no later than 30 April 2008.

In Sweden, actions against child and forced marriages has been discussed for some

time. The situation of young people leading lives characterised by lack of freedom, coercion, threats and violence has received growing attention in recent years. Some are promised away in arranged marriages while they are still children, or are forced to marry, while others are exposed to threats and coercion when they try to live like other young people around them.

### Longer statutory limitation period for female genital mutilation

**Measure 41:** A ministry memorandum (Ds 2007:1) proposes that the statutory limitation period for female genital mutilation be extended so that it only commences once the defendant turns or would have turned 18 years of age. The proposal has been circulated for comment and the Ministry of Justice is preparing legislation in response.

Genital mutilation of girls is carried out at some point between infancy and puberty, usually at the initiative of someone in the family. Since the statutory limitation period is ten years for moderately serious breaches of the Act Prohibiting the Circumcision of Women (1982:316), the offence may be statute-barred before the girl comes of age. For a variety of reasons, many cases of genital mutilation are not detected until a considerable time has passed. To ensure that crimes against the above act reach the courts, they must come to the attention of prosecutors before the statutory limitation period has elapsed.

### Improved legal provisions on the division of property

**Measure 42:** New rules concerning the division of matrimonial property became law on 1 July 2007.

On 1 July 2007, an amendment to the Marriage Code (SFS 2007:184) was introduced whereby compensation awarded to a spouse for a personal injury or degrading treatment/abuse may be exempted from the division of property. A spouse must also be compensated when property is divided if the other spouse has run into debt or has reduced his/her marital property. The purpose of the amendment is to avoid undesirable effects when property is divided, especially when one spouse has received criminal injuries compensation as a result of violence on the part of the other.

### Follow-up of new arrangements for the issuing of medical certificates

**Measure 43:** The Government aims to follow up the reform introducing a new system for the issuing of medical certificates.

Medical certificates and the medical examinations that precede them are crucial to the

detection and investigation of criminal offences and the institution of legal proceedings. In order to improve the quality of crime-related medical certificates, a new system for their issue was introduced on 1 January 2006 (lagen [2005:225] om rättsintyg i anledning av brott). Under the new arrangements, the National Board of Forensic Medicine is primarily responsible for this activity. When the new system has been in place for a few years, there may be grounds for reviewing how it has worked and what impact it has had.

## 4.4 Better measures targeting violent offenders

### Evaluation of methods and procedures used in social service work with violent male offenders

**Measure 44:** The Government has allocated funding to the IMS at the National Board of Health and Welfare for the purpose of evaluating and improving current social service-related measures targeting men who use violence. The IMS is to present its report no later than July 2010.

The purpose of the evaluation is to determine impact, i.e. whether male violence and threatening behaviour has diminished. The study is to include how the women and children involved experienced the threats and violence. It will also contain an analysis of how and to what extent the various operations ensure the safety of the women and children concerned. In addition, the report is to show how documentation, follow-up and evaluations are dealt with. A further requirement is an analysis of how the operations live up to the goal of persuading men to assume responsibility for and understand the consequences of their actions, and, where the man is a parent, of making him realise that the violence he commits against the woman also affects the children.

### Development of social service work with violent male offenders

**Measure 45:** The Government intends to instruct the National Board of Health and Welfare to develop methods and procedures for social service-related measures targeting men who use violence. The assignment is to be coordinated with the above-mentioned evaluation assignment (Measure 44).

The outcome of the evaluations in 4.4.1 is to provide a basis for a better, more uniform level of methodology in social service-related measures targeting men who use

violence. The purpose of the evaluations is to launch development work in the social services and pave the way for better, more knowledge-based measures in this area. If the evaluations reveal shortcomings in risk and security assessments, the National Board of Health and Welfare is to propose corrective measures. The board is also required to disseminate the knowledge acquired in the process.

### Investment in the work of the Prison and Probation Service targeting violent men

**Measure 46:** The Government intends to instruct the Prison and Probation Service to introduce a special set of measures targeting men convicted of sexual crimes and those convicted of violence in close relationships. The measures should be designed to ensure that all men convicted of this type of crime are asked, when the sentence is to be served, to take part in an appropriate programme. In addition, the Prison and Probation Service is to intensify its efforts on behalf of these client groups in terms of risk assessment, methodology, controlled release into society and collaboration with other principals.

To combat men's violence against women in a sustainable way, measures will be needed targeting the men who use such violence. The Prison and Probation Service has been working for some years with scientific, quality-tested programmes directed at offenders convicted of sexual crimes and those convicted of violence in close relationships. These programmes must be scientifically shown to have an impact on recidivism. If further offenders of the type to which the Action Plan refers are to be reached with such activities, these must be made available to a wider circle of prison service clients, including those with a mother tongue other than Swedish. Programme activities targeting men convicted of sexual crimes and of violence in close relationships must also be developed further, along with risk assessment methods in respect of these clients, which also affect parole and release decisions etc during their incarceration. Collaboration between the Prison and Probation Service's various branches of activity and with other agencies and principals is to be intensified. In this connection, special attention should be given to improving opportunities for controlled release into society, combined with support measures on behalf of such inmates to combat recidivism.

### Improved conditions for the Prison and Probation Service's programme activities

**Measure 47:** In a bill amending penal care legislation, the Government has proposed making changes in the Prison Treatment Act (1974:203) concerning the right of inmates to possess personal property (Govt Bill 2006/07:127). These changes authorise the Prison and Probation Service to ban the possession of books, newspapers and

magazines deemed to have a detrimental effect on the treatment an inmate is undergoing. It is proposed that the amendments enter into force on 1 April 2008.

If the Prison and Probation Service's efforts to combat recidivism are to have the desired effect, it is self-evident that the rules regarding possession of property must not run counter to them. It must be possible, therefore, to forbid inmates to possess books, newspapers and magazines deemed to obstruct the treatment they are receiving. Such a regulation makes it possible to prevent inmates convicted of sexual crimes, for instance, from having pornographic magazines in their possession.

## 4.5 Increased cooperation and coordination

### Support for the coordination of regional initiatives

Measure 48: The Government has instructed the county administrative boards to initiate and support, within their areas of responsibility, regional coordination of efforts both to combat men's violence against women and on behalf of children who witness violence. A report is to be delivered no later than 1 May 2009 .

The aim is to ensure effective and legally secure support for women exposed to violence and children who have witnessed violence. Exchanges of knowledge and good practices should be encouraged. Important actors are to be found in the judicial system, the social services and the health care service, and among voluntary organisations.

### Support for local cooperation to counteract violence against women

Measure 49: The Government intends to allocate funds for local cooperation to counteract violence against women at municipal level.

In several parts of the country, government agencies and voluntary organisations that come into contact with the problem of violence have developed models for joint action to combat men's violence against women. These models are based on a comprehensive, integrated approach to the problem: the woman is given the support and protection she needs, the children are given the opportunity to work through their experiences, and the man is offered programme measures to help him deal with his violent behaviour. This collaboration is undertaken at local level.

The Government intends to allocate funding both to municipalities that have already initiated such joint efforts, to enable them to evaluate progress, and to municipalities

that are in the process of developing similar models.

These funds may be used to develop models for cooperation that also include efforts to combat violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships, and additionally for cooperation to combat violence against particularly vulnerable groups of women.

### Development of physical environments for the investigation of violence against women

Measure 50: The Government intends to instruct the National Police Board to take steps to develop a physical environment that is specially adapted to the investigation of crimes of violence and other forms of abuse directed at women. The location, design and furnishing of such premises, and the choice of technical equipment and other aids, is to be based on and adapted to the requirements deriving from the situation of women at risk. Since the overall aim of the assignment is to develop a model for nationwide use, an important part of the work will involve disseminating information about the work and receiving study visits. The work is to be undertaken jointly with the police authority in Skåne, and activities are to be based on the collaboration between the police authorities of Skåne and the City of Malmö initiated as part of the Programme for Combating Violence against Women.

A woman who is exposed to violence is in a highly vulnerable and dangerous position. If public efforts on her behalf are to be effective and helpful, the woman herself must be given every opportunity to contribute. This means that in addition to effective legislation, adequate staff resources and individual skills, an appropriate physical environment must be available where premises and technical equipment for interrogation etc are adapted to the woman's situation and the working methods in use. Extensive collaboration between relevant authorities and organisations is crucial to a successful outcome in this respect.

### Dissemination of knowledge and information concerning issues relating to violence and oppression

Measure 51: The Government intends to strengthen the financing of the NCK at Uppsala University to enable it to disseminate knowledge and information concerning violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships.

One of the tasks of the NCK is to disseminate knowledge and information about men's violence against women, to provide training on this subject, not least to health care staff and other staff categories, to monitor, compile and disseminate research findings and to analyse the need for further research in this area, to conduct research asso-

ciated with clinical activities, and to act as a source of support for government agencies and organisations on issues relating to men's violence against women.

The NCK has a key role to play as regards the dissemination of knowledge and information about men's violence against women. There is a need for this work to be widened to encompass violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships.

## 4.6 Enhanced knowledge and competence

### Establishment of a research programme

**Measure 52:** The Government intends to establish a research programme encompassing men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships.

Further knowledge is needed concerning men's violence against women. The Government intends, therefore, to establish a research programme aimed at improving knowledge in this area, by such means as developing research-based working methods for action targeting both women exposed to violence and children who have witnessed violence, and interventions targeting violent men. In order to prevent and combat violence against women in the long term, more knowledge is required not only concerning the impact of such crimes on the victim but also concerning the perpetrator. Consequently, closer study is needed both of those who commit the violence and of methods and developments relating to their treatment. The research programme will also cover violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships.

### Survey of violence and oppression in the name of honour

**Measure 53:** The Government has instructed the Living History Forum to conduct a nationally representative survey of the extent to which teachers at compulsory school (Years 6–9) and upper secondary school are aware of violence and oppression in the name of honour directed at children and young people, especially girls and young women. A report is to be delivered no later than 31 March 2008.

The Living History Forum has initiated a nationally representative survey of teachers, undertaken in cooperation with the Centre for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations at Stockholm University and with Statistics Sweden. The princi-

pal aim is to determine what experience the teachers have of holocaust education and how in their opinion it is viewed by students. The survey also examines what values teachers hold and their attitudes in respect of other community matters. The Government considers it important that a study be undertaken in connection with this survey focusing on teachers' level of awareness concerning violence and oppression in the name of honour. This study would examine the extent to which teachers are aware of violence and oppression in the name of honour in their particular student groups. The questions concerning this form of violence are to be included as a part of the larger teacher survey. The purpose of this mandate is to enhance the knowledge on which future efforts in this area may be based.

### Survey of arranged marriages

**Measure 54:** The Government intends to initiate a survey into the prevalence in Sweden of marriages arranged against a person's will. The mandate will also include assembling an overview of the knowledge available in this field among relevant agencies. The report is to include proposals for preventive action

Not all young people are able to decide for themselves when and who they will marry. Marriages arranged against a person's will may have cultural, social or economic causes. In such circumstances, family formation, marriage and divorce may be a collective matter that leaves little scope for individual choice on the part of the person concerned. Such practices affect girls and boys, women and men, but girls and women are particularly exposed. Defying family tradition and the wishes of parents and other relatives may be such a sensitive course for young women – and for young men – that in practice it is not a viable alternative.

Enhanced knowledge on the extent of arranged marriages against a person's will is needed, and also information on the underlying causes. The level of competence among agencies that come into contact with people who risk being exposed to such marriages needs to be reviewed, and recommendations on preventive action are also needed.

The Government will assign the National Board for Youth Affairs to conduct such a survey. The assignment should be carried out in consultation with relevant agencies and with organisations possessing specialised knowledge in this field.

### Training mandate for the National Board for Youth Affairs

Measure 55: The Government has instructed the National Board for Youth Affairs to provide training programmes targeting staff charged with coordinating and developing leisure-time activities, social services and education at municipal level. Other groups may also be affected. A report is to be delivered on 31 March 2009.

Staff working with the provision of out-of-school services, social services and education must have adequate knowledge about men's violence against girls and young women and about violence and oppression in the name of honour, which mainly affects girls and young women but which can also affect boys and young men. To this end, they should have access to training in such matters. The purpose of this training is to ensure that the participants are aware of issues relating to men's violence against girls and young women, and especially of the situation of people exposed to violence and oppression in the name of honour. The training programmes should also provide knowledge on how those affected by such violence can be strengthened and given access to the support available. In addition, the programmes are to discuss current methods in connection with youth work for preventing men's violence against women. Such training must focus in particular on the question of which preventive measures and methods are appropriate and applicable.

### Inquiries concerning women who died as the result of a crime in a close relationship

Measure 56: The Government intends to instruct the National Board of Health and Welfare to investigate and analyse the prospects for introducing inquiries that focus on women who died as the result of a crime in a close relationship.

The purpose of such inquiries is to analyse whether and if so how the public safety net has failed. By systematically analysing cases where women have died as the result of a criminal offence in a close relationship (intimate partner violence), the board can draw the kinds of conclusions that are essential to the task of supporting and protecting women in close relationships. Such inquiries can, for instance, review both the extent to which certain agencies have been aware of the situation and what measures have been taken or could have been taken as a result of this awareness.

## Organisations and agencies that have taken part in hearings

When developing the Action Plan to combat men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships, the Government invited a number of organisations and agencies to contribute their views at an early stage in the proceedings. The following took part:

### Hearing with NGOs, 7 May 2007

Forum – Women and Disability in Sweden (Forum Kvinnor och handikapp)

Men for Gender Equality (Män för jämställdhet)

National Association for International Immigrant Women

(Riksförbundet internationella föreningen för invandrarkvinnor, RIFFI)

National Association of Swedish Crisis Centres for Men

(Riksorganisation Sveriges professionella kriscentra för män)

National Organisation of Women's and Girls' Shelters in Sweden

(Riksorganisationen för kvinnojourer och tjejjourer i Sverige, ROKS)

Swedish Amnesty

Swedish Association for Victim Support

(Brottsofferjourernas riksförbund, BOJ)

Swedish Association of Women's Shelters

(Sveriges kvinnojourers riksförbund, SKR)

Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights

(Riksförbundet för homosexuellas, bisexuellas och transpersoners rättigheter, RFSL)

Save the Children Sweden (Rädda Barnen)

Terrafem

Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (Riksförbundet för sexuell upplysning, RFSU)

Uppsala Reception Centre for Men (Mansmottagningen i Uppsala)

**Hearing with government agencies, 28 May 2007**

Children's Ombudsman (Barnombudsmannen)  
 Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority (Brottsoffermyndigheten)  
 National Agency for School Improvement (Myndigheten för skolutveckling)  
 National Board for Youth Affairs (Ungdomsstyrelsen)  
 National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen)  
 National Centre for Research into Men's Violence against Women  
 (Nationellt kunskapscentrum för frågor om mäns våld mot kvinnor)  
 National Council for Crime Prevention (Brottsförebyggande rådet)  
 National Courts Administration (Domstolsverket)  
 National Institute of Public Health (Statens folkhälsoinstitut)  
 National Police Board (Rikspolisstyrelsen)  
 Prison and Probation Service (Kriminalvården)  
 Public Prosecution Service (Åklagarmyndigheten)  
 Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions  
 (Sveriges kommuner och landsting, SKL)  
 Swedish Disability Ombudsman (Handikappombudsmannen)  
 Östergötland County Administrative Board (Länsstyrelsen Östergötland)

**Meeting with the Council of Equality Issues, 23 May 2007**

Business and Professional Women Sweden  
 Equal Opportunities Ombudsman (Jämställdhetsombudsmannen)  
 Foundation of Womens Forum (Kvinnoforum)  
 Fredrika Bremer Association (Fredrika Bremer förbundet)  
 Green Women (Gröna kvinnor)  
 Haro, National Association for Freedom of Choice, Gender Equality and Parenthood  
 (Haro – riksorganisationen för valfrihet, jämställdhet och föräldraskap)  
 Liberal (Party) Women (Liberala kvinnor)  
 Men for Gender Equality (Män för jämställdhet)  
 Moderate (Party) Women (Moderatkvinnorna)  
 National Association for Home and Society (Riksförbundet Hem och samhälle)  
 National Association for International Immigrant Women  
 (Riksförbundet internationella föreningen för invandrarkvinnor, RIFFI)  
 Swedish Sami Association (Svenska samernas riksförbund)  
 National Organisation of Women's and Girls' Shelters in Sweden  
 (Riksorganisationen för kvinnojourer och tjejjourer i Sverige, ROKS)  
 Soroptimist International  
 Swedish Association for Sexuality Education (Riksförbundet för sexuell upplysning, RFSU)  
 Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions  
 (Sveriges kommuner och landsting, SKL)  
 Swedish Association of Women's Shelters (Sveriges kvinnojourers riksförbund, SKR)  
 Swedish Women's Europe Network (Svenska kvinnors Europa nätverk)  
 Swedish Women's Left Association (Svenska kvinnors vänsterförbund)  
 Swedish Women's Lobby (Sveriges kvinnolobby)  
 The 'Women Can' Foundation (Föreningen Kvinnor Kurdistan)  
 The 1.6 Million Club (1.6 miljonersklubben)  
 The Centre Party (Centerpartiet)  
 The Christian Democratic Party (Kristdemokraterna)  
 The Green Party (Miljöpartiet de gröna)  
 The Liberal Party (Folkpartiet)  
 The Social Democratic Party (Socialdemokraterna)  
 Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Swedish section  
 (Internationella kvinnoförbundet, IKFF)  
 Women's International Zionist Organisation

## Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality

### Extract of the minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 15 November 2007

Present: Prime Minister Reinfeldt, Ministers Olofsson, Odell, Ask, Husmark Pehrsson, Larsson, Erlandsson, Torstensson, Hågglund, Björklund, Carlsson, Littorin, Borg, Malmström, Sabuni, Billström, Adelson Liljeroth, Tolgfors and Björling.

Presentation: Minister Sabuni

The Government adopts Communication 2007/08:39 Action Plan for combating men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships.

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