



<b>Category</b>	<b>Family violence</b>
<b>Country</b>	<b>Sweden</b>
<b>Background</b>	<p><b>Relevant legislation</b></p> <p><b>Chapters 3 and 4 of the Swedish Penal Code</b></p> <p>Chapters 3 and 4 of the Swedish Penal Code contain general acts relating to crimes against life and health (Chapter 3) and liberty and peace (Chapter 4), for example murder, manslaughter, assault, causing bodily injury or illness and unlawful and gross unlawful threat. Sentences for these crimes range from fines to life imprisonment.</p> <p><b>Violation of peace and integrity – Chapter 4, Section 4a of the Swedish Penal Code</b></p> <p>On 1 July 1998, the crimes of gross violation of a woman's integrity and gross violation of peace were introduced into the Penal Code. The section refers to repeated criminal actions against persons who have a close relationship with the perpetrator, such as wives, children, siblings or partners in a same-sex relationship. The section on gross violation of peace covers those committing crimes regulated in Chapters 3, 4 or 6 of the Penal Code – i.e. crimes against life and health, liberty and peace or sexually related crimes – against a closely related person or previously closely related person, if each crime is part of a repeated violation of that person's integrity and the crimes were aimed at severely harming that person's self esteem. The penalty is imprisonment for at least six months and at most six years. Were the crimes committed by a man against a woman to whom he is or has been married or with whom he lives or has been living, the crime is instead referred to as gross violation of a woman's integrity. The penalty is the same as for gross violation of peace.</p> <p>The reason for the new sections in the Penal Code was the need to underline the seriousness of criminality directed towards persons in close relationships. Due respect is to be taken to the whole situation of the violated person. The main</p>

purpose of the sections was to emphasise the seriousness of persistent and repeated violation of a closely related person, even if each crime itself is not very severe, such as repeated cases of assault, molestation and violation of the privacy of the home. Criminalising repeated and systematic violation of women's integrity was also intended to make a valuable contribution to knowledge about the prevalence of men's violence against women in close relationships.

**A legal ground for imposing more severe sentences,  
Chapter 29, Section 2:8 of the Swedish Penal Code**

Since 1 July 2003, there has been a legal bases for imposing more severe sentences in cases where a crime aims at harming the security and trust in a child's relationship with a closely related person. The section aims to emphasise that crimes against children who are closely related to the perpetrator should often be regarded as more severe than other crimes, because the child is at risk of being deprived of its feelings of security and trust. The section is also applicable in situations where crimes are committed in the presence of a closely related child, such as when a child witnesses one parent assaulting the other.