

TEMPLATE POLICY PAGE

Category:	Domestic Violence
Country:	Sweden
Year:	/

Action Plan:	Action Plan in attachments.
Main Policy page:	<p><i>Continued.....</i></p> <p>The Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority was established in 1994 and is a national centre for work concerning crime victims. One of the purposes of the Authority is to work reparatively by serving the needs and interests of crime victims so as to minimise the damage caused by criminal acts. The authority also has national responsibility for state criminal injuries compensation and the Fund for Victims of Crime. Criminal injuries compensation is financed by the state from tax revenue, while the Fund for Victims of Crime is financed by special fees from perpetrators and is used to provide annual grants for research, for other projects to develop or strengthen crime victim perspectives and for various information and education activities. Since its initiation in 1994, the Fund has financed more than a hundred research projects.</p> <p>In its role as an information centre, the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority holds conferences and seminars, and arranges training for groups in the criminal justice system and non-governmental organisations. One important task of the Authority has been to develop a research programme in victimology.</p> <p>The Authority publishes a range of information material, folders, leaflets and reports. These are available on the website (www.brottsoffermyndigheten.se), some of them in several languages. The Authority also has a crime victim portal on the Internet (www.brottsofferportalen.se). Through the portal, crime victims can find plain, clear information about their rights and ways of obtaining help and support. The Authority also has a special "Court School" on the Internet (www.rattegangsskolan.se).</p> <p><i>The social services</i> have overall responsibility for crime victims. Under the Social Services Act, the social welfare committee is required to ensure that victims of crime and their relatives receive the necessary support and assistance. The social welfare committee has to take into account the possibility of women who are victims of crime or violence in their homes being in special need of support and assistance in order to change their situation. The committee is also responsible for children who have witnessed violence in the family. Social services can offer a range of assistance, such as financial aid, protected housing or counselling support. They may often refer victims to non-profit organisations.</p>

The Swedish National Centre for Knowledge on Men's Violence Against Women (NCK) is a knowledge and resource centre at Uppsala University.

The NCK was established in 1994 and was a direct response to the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. Since then, the Centre has grown and developed – from a self-contained clinic at Uppsala University Hospital tasked with providing treatment, conducting research and developing methods in the field of violence against women – to a national centre of expertise with a wide range of assignments including capacity-building, professional training programmes, university courses, information and resource services, clinical research and methodology development in addition to running a regional 24-hour patient care service.

The NCK has been instructed by the Government to spread knowledge and information about men's violence against women in Sweden, and to

- develop methods for support and treatment of women who have been subjected to battering or rape,
- educate medical staff and other professionals who are liable to meet women subjected to violence,
- monitor, compile and spread research findings within the field of men's violence against women,
- conduct research within the faculty of medicine,
- function as a consulting resource for other organisations and agencies in the country,
- provide treatment and support to women subjected to violence and their relatives,
- provide a 24-hour national telephone helpline for women subjected to threats and violence.

Since 1994, the NCK has a clinical unit at Uppsala University Hospital where women subjected to violence are offered treatment and support. The clinical unit also runs Kvinnofridslinjen, a national telephone helpline for women subjected to threats and violence. The helpline is open twenty-four hours a day and is free of charge.

The centre has well-developed cooperation with the social services and the judicial system as well as with the healthcare services in general.

There are several *non-profit organisations* in Sweden to which women who are victims of crime can turn to obtain support and assistance. There are about 180 standby centres for women and girls and 107 for crime victims in general. They can provide support during trials and help in contacts with authorities, as well as in counselling support. Sometimes the organisations can also provide support groups.

Women who are victims of violence in close relationships can be offered a legal representative in court, *a counsel of the injured party*. This counsel's main task is to safeguard the general interests of the victim, but also to play a curative role. The Act concerning Counsel for the Injured Party requires that a counsel be appointed in family violence

related cases, if it is not obvious that the victim does not need a counsel. The counsel has an unconditional right to be present during the interviews at the preliminary investigation and the hearing. An important role of the counsel is to assist the injured party in claiming damages and to assess and arrange the evidential situation in this respect. Legal rules ensure that the police provide information to the victims of crime about their rights to a counsel for the injured party.

In 2005, an inquiry was appointed to review current legislation concerning counsel for the injured party. The inquiry presented its evaluation of the legislation and proposals to meet more effectively the needs of victims in criminal proceedings in 2007. The report is now being processed at the Ministry of Justice.

The *Restraining Orders Act* was introduced in 1988 as part of work to prevent men's violence against women. A restraining order means a prohibition against a person visiting, otherwise contacting or pursuing another person. The basic aim of the law is to prevent crimes, to create a secure basis for women and to protect people who are being pursued and harassed. The law offers protection for women who have been victims of crime or threats in a relationship and in situations in which a man continues to pursue or harass a woman after separation or after being released from prison.

In 2006, the Government appointed an inquiry to review measures that are most appropriate in strengthening the protection of people who are victims of repeated threats or stalking. The inquiry's remit included considering and proposing changes in the Restraining Orders Act to make the legislation more effective and adapted to its purposes; considering how to improve the protection of persons with protected personal information and to secure secrecy regarding home addresses etc. Another of its tasks was to consider how to strengthen the legislation regarding stalking, how to prevent stalking more effectively and how to improve the provision of support and assistance to its victims. The inquiry presented its report in October 2008.

The Government considers it necessary to strengthen the protection of, and support to, women and children who are the victims of violence committed by men. These types of crimes are often committed in the home and thus difficult to detect. Preventing and combating men's violence against women and children is a high priority for the Government. To succeed in this work, methods and instruments suitable for preventing this type of criminality need to be developed. Important in this context are cooperation between authorities and the development of effective support for victims of crimes in close relationships.

In 2008, the Government presented *an action plan for combating men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships*. The action plan is also directed at children witnessing violence in close relationships. The action plan covers six areas for measures and specific activities:

- 1) increased protection and support to victims of violence

	<p>2) greater emphasis on preventive work 3) higher standards and greater efficiency in the judicial system 4) better measures targeting violent offenders 5) increased cooperation and coordination 6) enhanced knowledge and competence.</p> <p>The action plan covers a wide range of activities in the various fields and is valid until the end of 2010. In total, the Government has reserved about SEK 800 million (about EUR 85 million) for covering the costs of measures in the plan (http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/108/a/98653).</p>
<p>Relevant legislation:</p>	<p>Chapters 3 and 4 of the Swedish Penal Code</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>Violation of peace and integrity – Chapter 4, Section 4a of the Swedish Penal Code</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 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.</p> <p>A legal ground for imposing more severe sentences, Chapter 29, Section 2:8 of the Swedish Penal Code</p>

	<p>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.</p>
<p>Trends:</p>	<p>Violence against women comprises many different categories of offences, which are presented in different sections of the official statistics. This makes it difficult to present and assess trends in this type of violence over time. The number of reported assaults against women older than 17 year committed indoor by someone in a close relationship with the women has recently been introduced in the statistics. The number of such reported offences was 11 605 in 2009. Counting all reports made to the police concerning assaults on women, regardless of whether the offender is reported as known or unknown or whether the assault occurred indoors or outdoors, there has been an increase of 43 per cent since 2000. The type of assault against women with the most marked increase over the period 2000–2009 is assaults by unknown offenders, both indoors and outdoors.</p> <p>From 1999, repeated assaults against women may also be included under the section "gross violation of a woman's integrity". In 1999, a total of slightly over 900 reported instances of gross violation of a woman's integrity were recorded. In 2009, slightly over 2 700 reports were made to the police. (For more information, see the website of the National Council for Crime Prevention (http://www.bra.se))</p> <p>There is no reliable way of assessing whether this increase reflects a real increase in the actual number of assaults committed against women over this period. However, a special study conducted by the National Council for Crime Prevention during the 1990s concluded that the actual number of cases of violence committed against women in the context of close relationships had in fact increased over the course of the decade, but not to the same extent as the increase noted in the number of reported offences. The increase in reported offences was thus partly an effect of more actual incidents of assault, partly an effect of an increase in the propensity to report incidents of assault to the police. A summary of the study is available in English in the report "Våld mot kvinnor i nära relationer" (Violence against women in close relationships) at http://www.bra.se</p> <p>The number of cases where partner violence has resulted in death has remained stable since the early 1990s. During the period 1990–2004, the average number of women (over the age of 15) dying from partner violence is 17 per year. Compared to the period 1971–1980, this represents a decrease from a yearly average of 21 cases per year. Partner violence resulting in death is often committed at home and under the influence of alcohol. During the period 1990 – 2004, almost 40 per cent of the offenders were diagnosed as alcoholics and 35 per cent</p>

of the victims were under the influence of alcohol at the time of the crime. Most offenders committing fatal violence against female partners undergo psychiatric assessments, of which 93 per cent are diagnosed with mental illness or some other psychological problem. Twenty-five per cent of the offenders committed suicide in connection with the crime. For more information, see *“Utvecklingen av dödligt våld mot kvinnor i nära relationer”* at <http://www.bra.se>

In 2005, the National Council for Crime Prevention introduced an annual study on victimization, fear of crime and public confidence in the criminal justice system, the Swedish Crime Survey. Twenty thousand individuals are asked to answer the survey each year, with a response rate of over 70 per cent. Among women responding to the two survey (telephone interviews) in 2009, 1.5 per cent reported that they had been the victim of physical violence during the past year. The singularly largest group of offenders consists of men whom the victim reported as acquaintances (38 per cent), most often superficially and known to the victim in connection with work. The surveys also show that the offender is a previous or current partner in 28 per cent of the reported incidents of violence against women. There is no trend showing increase or decrease since 2005. However, the National Council for Crime Prevention considers the rate of partner victim to be higher, in view of the complexity of partner violence phenomena. For more information, see the “Swedish Crime Survey 2007” at <http://www.bra.se>

Data are also available from another series of national interview Surveys by Statistics Sweden, in which a random sample of approximately 3 500 women (and a similar number of men) were questioned among other things about their experiences as victims of violence. As a rule, however, the surveys have not compiled information on the nature of the relationship between the women exposed to violence and the perpetrators of these offences. The proportion of women reporting that they had been exposed to some kind of violence over the previous year was 3.0 per cent both in the mid-1990s (1994–1995) and in 2005.

According to Statistics Sweden, the proportion of women reporting that they had been exposed to violence causing some form of bodily injury or leaving some kind of mark was 1.9 per cent in the mid-1990s (1994–1995) and 1.7 per cent in 2005. Furthermore, the proportion of women reporting that they had been exposed to violence or threats in their own or someone else’s dwelling was 2.0 per cent in the mid-1990s (1994–1995) and 1.8 per cent in 2005. Thus data from this source contain nothing to suggest that the number of female victims of different types of violence should have increased over the decade in question. In sum, the data suggest that the increase in reported offences in total is an effect of an increase in the propensity to report such cases to the police.

In addition to violence against women in their own or someone else’s dwelling, the number of women reporting violence in connection with their work has increased since the early 1980s. In 1982, almost 1.5 per cent reported violence in connection with work, while in 2005 more than 4 per cent of the women reported work-related violence. The National

Council for Crime Prevention considers this to be particularly common among women working in healthcare services. Moreover, the National Crime Prevention Council considers that the increase in work-related violence is connected with changes in legal practice and a stronger propensity not to accept work-related violence as “part of the job”. For more information, see <http://www.scb.se> and the “Swedish Crime Survey 2009” at <http://www.bra.se>

Contacts:

National organisations:

The Swedish National Centre for Knowledge on Men’s Violence against Women (NCK)

Address: Akademiska sjukhuset (Uppsala University Hospital)
SE 751 85 Uppsala, Sweden
Phone: +46 18 611 27 93
Fax: +46 18 50 73 94
<http://www.nck.uu.se>

The National Authority Cooperation Project for Women’s Peace is a joint venture run by central authorities in Sweden. One of the first results of this cooperation is the creation of **the National Clearinghouse on Violence against Women**, an information centre on the Internet providing facts on knowledge development and practical work concerning violence against women.

The National Clearinghouse on Violence against Women contains links to available material on violence against women, i.e. the material that has been published online by the authorities and organisations in the project.
<http://www.kvinnofrid.se>.

The National Organisation for Women’s Shelters and Young Women’s Shelters in Sweden (ROKS)

is the largest member organisation for women’s and young women’s shelters in Sweden.

Address: Hornsgatan 66, SE 118 21 Stockholm, Sweden
Phone: + 46 8 442 99 30
Fax: +46 8 612 73 25
Email: info@roks.se
<http://www.roks.se>

The Swedish Association of Women’s Shelters (SKR)

is a national organisation for local women’s shelters and other organisations working against men’s violence against women.

Address: Bondegatan 40, SE 116 33 Stockholm, Sweden
Phone: + 46 8 642 64 01
Fax: +46 8 642 64 07
Email: info@kvinnojour.com

<http://www.kvinnojour.com>

The Swedish Association for Victim Support (BOJ)

is a voluntary organisation that has been in existence since 1988. BOJ has more than 8 000 members. There are local victim support centres in more than one hundred places around the country. These centres are intended to

complement action by the public authorities.

Address: Box 110 14, SE 100 61 Stockholm, Sweden

Phone: +46 8 644 88 00

Fax: + 46 8 644 88 28

Email: boj.riks@boj.se

<http://www.boj.se>

Children's Rights in Society (BRIS)

is an NGO that supports children in distress and is a link between children, adults and the community. The core of the support services is the Children's Helpline and the BRISmail, which children and young people from around the country can use up to the age of 18 to call and email adults at BRIS safely, anonymously and free of charge.

Address: Karlavägen 121, SE 115 26 Stockholm, Sweden

Phone: +46 8 598 888 00

Fax: +46 8 598 888 01

Email: <mailto:info@bris.se>

<http://www.bris.se>

Save the Children Sweden

is an NGO whose aim is to exert an influence on decision makers – from local authorities to the United Nations – to see to the best interests of the child. The basis of work is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights.

Address: SE 107 88 Stockholm, Sweden

Phone: +46 8 698 90 00

Fax: +46 8 698 90 10

Email: info@rb.se

<http://www.rb.se>

The Swedish Association of Men's Shelters (SMR)

is a national organisation for local men's shelters. Seven local shelters are at present affiliated to the association.

Address: Mariestadsvägen 71, SE 541 45 Skövde, Sweden

Phone: +46 500 48 32 00

Fax: +46 500 48 32 00

<http://www.mansjouren.nu>

The Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority

	<p>is responsible for assessing state compensation, administering the Fund for Victims of Crime and acting as an expert centre.</p>
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