

SWEDEN

Recommendations to improve data collection on intimate partner violence by the police and justice sectors



The recommendations were developed after an in-depth analysis of data collection in the police and justice sectors. The relevance and feasibility of the recommendations were discussed with national professionals whose work is closely related to the topic at the national meeting on 7 September 2017 in Stockholm, Sweden. The suggestions were revised upon participants' feedback. The recommendations aim to improve administrative data collection on intimate partner violence to better inform policies and to help the Member States meet the monitoring requirements outlined in both Directive 2012/29/EU (the Victims' Rights Directive) and the Istanbul Convention.

1. Legislative and policy recommendations

Strengthen commitment to introduce improvements to administrative data collection

The Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (*Socialdepartementet*) has commissioned the National Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) to implement and follow up on the proposed measures on data collection, in consultation with relevant authorities⁽¹⁾. The assignment consists of 10 sub-assignments, which are complementary to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)'s current project on improving data collection on intimate partner violence. Within this assignment, the National Board of Health and Welfare also takes into account Sweden's commitments under the Istanbul Convention. The responsibility to implement, coordinate and follow up on the strategy will be shared with the Swedish Gender Equality Agency which came into force in January 2018. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (*Brå*)⁽²⁾ will also function as a body of expertise for the chain of justice (excluding the courts) and be responsible for issues of quality control in the future.

The adoption of the national strategy is evidence of Sweden's strong commitment to combating violence against women in the country through the development of policies in accordance with international instruments. This pivotal work requires expertise in many areas — legal, statistical, medical, political, scientific and practical.

It is recommended to ensure continued commitment by all services involved. In particular, commitment to the changes detailed below would further improve the already high-quality process of data collection in Sweden and ensure full availability of data on intimate partner violence against women.

Take steps to align Swedish definitions with EU and international definitions through new codes for data collection

In Sweden, there is no legal framework to regulate data collection on intimate partner violence and violence against women. Police and public prosecutor data is recorded using a specific national code list (the Swedish Crime Classification System). This code list is developed in cooperation with *Brå* and other concerned public authorities under the Ministry of Justice. The codes mirror the relevant legal sections and some additional information on the circumstances of the offence (such as the sex and age of the victim, the use of a weapon or the place of the offence). New codes are added when the law is changed. While the police and the public prosecutor use the national code list, the courts have their own classification based on the Swedish Criminal Code. Work is ongoing to change the classification system in order for the police, the public prosecutor and the courts to use the same classifications. This work is greatly encouraged to ensure more reliable and comparable data throughout the judicial chain.

It is recommended that Sweden make some changes in the classification system used by the police and the public prosecutor in order to meet EIGE's definitions of femicide, intimate partner violence and rape⁽³⁾. In particular, coding must allow the recording of the intimate partner relationship for key offences of physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence. These changes could be made in line with the overarching policy set by the government in the national strategy which focuses on male perpetrators and children's rights.

Consider collecting data on referral to victim support services and restorative justice

The proposed national statistics for the social welfare and healthcare system must be in line with the Istanbul Convention, the Victims' Rights Directive and the Grevio questionnaire⁽⁴⁾, which is not the case today. Regarding the Victims' Rights Directive, Sweden cannot today provide data on the number of referrals by police to victim support services or on the number of victims that request, receive or do not receive support or restorative justice. As for the Grevio questionnaire, some of the data asked for cannot easily be provided at present.

(1) Regeringsbeslut 2017-02-23, S2017/01221/JÅM (delvis).

(2) <https://www.bra.se/bra-in-english/home.html>

(3) *Brå* stated on 16 June 2017 that work on new codes for femicide had been initiated.

(4) The Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Grevio) is the independent expert body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. The questionnaire was adopted to support this process.

It is recommended to make changes in the data systems, for example by including the number of complaints made by victims and the number of reports by third parties, in order to remedy this situation.

Take steps to improve the recording of gross violation of a person's/woman's integrity

The statistics show a decrease in the numbers of reported and processed cases and convictions of gross violations of a woman's integrity since 2008. The Swedish government has commissioned *Brå* to investigate the reasons for this development, and the findings of the investigation are due to be submitted to the government by 1 November 2018. The potential explanations highlighted by *Brå* are variations in the application of the law between the actors in the chain of justice; the existence of closely related crime codes (e.g. assault); or that it is a consequence of fewer crimes committed. Another reason could be that judges do not easily recognise that all the elements of this offence (repetition and aggravated violence) are present when the case goes to court. In anticipation of this, police and public prosecutor officers may already classify the violence under other offences (such as assault) as it is easier to win such cases in court than cases on gross violation of a woman's integrity.

It is recommended that the causes behind the decrease be thoroughly analysed and addressed through concrete action such as targeted training, guidelines or clarification of concepts. In addition, the recording of the victim–perpetrator relationship information for key offences of physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence would ensure that data reflects all forms of violence that would otherwise fall under the offence of gross violation of a woman's integrity.

Consider assessing the costs of intimate partner violence

There are currently no unified models to estimate the national costs of violence, meaning that Sweden cannot gauge an accurate reading of the societal costs of such violence. An estimate was made in 2006 by the National Board of Health and Welfare that, depending on the factors included and methods used, landed between SEK 2 695 million and SEK 3 300 million per year. In the national strategy, EIGE's 2014 study ⁽⁵⁾ is referred to for possible methods for cost estimation to apply in Sweden. The government has commissioned the National Board on Health and Welfare to develop guidelines for local and regional social services and the healthcare sector in order to facilitate the calculation of the costs. The guidelines would focus on the costs incurred by municipalities and would not include costs for the police and the judicial system. The Swedish government has commissioned *Brå* to conduct a mapping of the existing studies on the cost of crime and the advantages of prevention work, and to assess the need for additional studies in Sweden in this area.

It is recommended that Sweden take advantage of the models developed by EIGE in establishing a model for the costs of intimate partner violence, using the purpose-built economic model and the workload model as a starting point, while aiming to build up sufficient data for the event model or the eclectic model.

2. Data collection infrastructure and cooperation between different authorities

Take steps to ensure national coordination of data across all relevant sectors

Brå functions as the Swedish government's body of expertise within the law enforcement system ⁽⁶⁾. *Brå* is responsible for the collection and diffusion of European statistics within the justice sector and for data sent to Eurostat. *Brå* participates in the EU's Working Group on Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics. The national strategy points out the importance of collaboration and the coordination of data collection between concerned public authorities and stakeholders. This is essential both for defining indicators and for the technical aspects of collection. Currently, data collection between police and the public prosecutor is integrated insofar as the same classification system is used. The police and public prosecutor data systems are also interlinked. Work is ongoing to also link the courts' data system to those of the police and the public prosecutor. This will enable the traceability of cases and data throughout the judicial system. It is expected to be established in 2022-2023.

It is recommended that, as far as possible, data collection by the police, the public prosecutor and the courts also be coordinated with the proposed national statistics in the healthcare sector.

⁽⁵⁾ European Institute for Gender Equality, *Estimating the costs of gender-based violence in the European Union*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2014.
⁽⁶⁾ *Brå*, <http://www.bra.se/bra/bra-in-english/home/about-bra.html>.

3. Technical recommendations

3.1. Recommendations on data recording systems

Take steps to record information on the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim for sexual offences

Information on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator is not provided in the codes for sexual offences. The numbers of sexual offences occurring in the context of intimate partnerships are thus not registered separately. Today the Swedish classification system only includes breakdowns for attempted/completed and in/outdoors ^(?) for sexual offences. These breakdowns, while statistically important, are less relevant for awareness of intimate partner violence. It is strongly recommended that the relationship information be added to this information in the form of a code.

It is recommended that steps be taken to ensure a systematic recording of the victim–perpetrator relationship for sexual offences to ensure reliable and standardised recording of sexual violence in intimate relationships. This data should be disaggregated into the categories of spouse, ex-spouse, partner and ex-partner, with or without cohabitation.

Take steps to collect data on femicide and collect information on the victim–perpetrator relationship for homicide, murder and manslaughter offences

In Sweden, femicide is not recognised as a separate crime. The codes for murder and manslaughter have no indicators to collect data on the murders of women by an intimate partner. Data on ‘intentional femicide’ or ‘attempted intentional femicide’ could only be provided through a manual review of the data on homicide. It is strongly recommended that intimate relationship information be recorded for homicide or that codes for intimate femicide be included in the classification.

It is recommended that data on homicide, murder and manslaughter include information about the perpetrator (sex and age) and their relationship to the victim. This step is key to making this form of violence against women visible, and there is ongoing work to change the codes.

Take steps to collect data on psychological and economic violence

There are currently no codes for psychological violence within intimate partner violence. This data is not available or published in national statistics. Data on intimate partner violence in Sweden is limited to three codes: assault, gross assault and gross violation of integrity — of a person or of a woman. Economic violence in intimate partner relationships has been included in the section of the law on gross violation of a person’s/woman’s integrity in Sweden since 2013. This means that the number of incidents of economic violence is not separately registered within the scope of intimate partner violence.

It is recommended that data on the sex of victims and perpetrators and victim–perpetrator relationship information also be collected for offences related to psychological and economic violence (see table below).

Take steps to have the courts collect victim and perpetrator information as well as relationship information

Courts record data based on sections of legislation and on convictions. Currently the following information is registered by the courts: age and sex of the perpetrator; and age and sex of the victim if they take part in the court hearing. Information on the victim–perpetrator relationship is not registered by the courts and thus not available. This information can only be retrieved manually (usually from copies of the court decisions).

It is recommended that data on the age and sex of the victim, as well as the victim–perpetrator relationship, be recorded in relation to cases of intimate partner violence or as a minimum that cases related to intimate partner violence be flagged as such by courts.

^(?) For the Swedish classification of crime offences, ‘Indoors’ crime locations means places where the crime cannot be affected by police monitoring or patrols (for example inside houses, workplaces, shops or restaurants) and ‘Outdoors’ crime locations means places which police can monitor and control through patrols (for example streets, parks or means of transportation).

3.2. Recommendations on the indicators proposed by EIGE

Indicator 1 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of intimate partner violence ⁽⁸⁾ committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police

Sweden can partially populate this indicator. In Sweden, intimate partner violence is covered by the indicators/codes 'assault', 'gross assault' and 'gross violation of integrity', which form the bases for statistical calculations. 'Gross assault' and 'gross violation of integrity' are populated with data from a number of offences that refer to individual criminal acts, for example physical, sexual or economic violence, threat, harassment or breach of domiciliary peace. In the context of gross assault and violation of integrity, these acts are considered to be integrated in intimate partner violence. Homicide/manslaughter of a woman in an intimate relationship is not included in gross assault and gross violation. In the same vein, different types of violence such as sexual, psychological and economic violence cannot be populated separately in Sweden. This creates a limited scope for the recording of intimate partner violence.

It is recommended that indicator 1 be populated using the following suggested offences to create the general category of intimate partner violence.

General category for indicator	Existing offences — statistical classification
Physical intimate partner violence	Intentional homicide, attempted intentional homicide, non-intentional homicide, assault (physical) against a woman/man by an unknown person outdoors (0355/0357) or by a known person indoors (0356/9351), assault against a woman/man indoors with whom she/he is or has been married, cohabits or has cohabited, or has common children with indoors (9349/9351) or with a person otherwise related or acquainted indoors (9350/9352), gross assault (physical) against a woman/man by an unknown person outdoors (0375/0377) or indoors (0385/0387), gross assault against a woman/man outdoors by a known person (0376/0738) or indoors by a person with whom she/he is or has been married, cohabits or cohabited or has common children with (9353/9355) or indoors with a person otherwise related or known to her/him (9354/9356), gross violation of (a person's) integrity (over 18) (0424/0425), gross violation of woman's integrity (0412)
Sexual intimate partner violence	Rape and aggravated rape completed against a girl/boy of 15-17 outdoors (0688/0690) or indoors (0689/0691) or against a woman of 18 years and older outdoors (0660/0662) or indoors (0661/0663), attempted rape against a girl/boy of 15-17 outdoors (0684/0686) or indoors (068/0687) or against a woman/man over 18 outdoors (0648/0650) or indoors (0649/0651), sexual coercion, exploitation or abuse of a dependent person or sibling (woman/man) (0613/0614)
Psychological intimate partner violence	Threat, coercion, harassment, stalking, defamation or insult
Economic intimate partner violence	Forced labour for domestic services, theft of personal property or damage against personal property, all included in gross violation against a person's integrity (0424/0425) and gross violation against a woman's integrity (0412), inflicting damage (1203)

Indicator 2 — Annual number of reported offences related to intimate partner violence against women committed by men (aged 18 and over)

Indicator 2 is quite similar to indicator 1 apart from the unit of measurement being the number of crimes, as opposed to the number of female victims. Sweden is expected to partially populate this indicator insofar as it would include physical violence and gross violation of integrity.

It is recommended to make the necessary changes in the data collection process to include data on murder and homicide as well as the offences related to sexual, psychological and economic violence.

⁽⁸⁾ Any act of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occurs between former or current spouse or partner, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim (EIGE, *Terminology and indicators for data collection: Rape, femicide and intimate partner violence*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2017).

Indicator 3 — Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) perpetrators of intimate partner violence against women (and percentage of male population that are perpetrators)

Sweden currently collects and publishes sex- and age-disaggregated data on persons suspected of assault/aggravated assault against a woman with whom they are or have been in an intimate relationship and on persons suspected of gross violation of a woman's integrity.

It is recommended that data collection include fields to record information on the perpetrator in relation to all cases of intimate partner violence in order to fully populate this indicator.

Indicator 4 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of physical intimate partner violence ⁽⁹⁾ committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police

Sweden is able to populate this indicator.

Indicator 5 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of psychological intimate partner violence ⁽¹⁰⁾ committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police

Sweden is currently unable to populate this indicator. Psychological violence does not have a separate code, but is included in the offence of gross violation of integrity. Separate data does not exist as no victim–perpetrator relationship information is collected for such offences. The only exception is the offence of inflicting damage under Chapter 12, sections 1-3 Criminal Code when the act is committed within the context of an intimate partner relationship, where this information is recorded.

It is recommended that Sweden take the necessary steps to include the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator in the classification codes. This data should be disaggregated into the categories of spouse, ex-spouse, partner and ex-partner, with or without cohabitation.

Indicator 6 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of sexual intimate partner violence ⁽¹¹⁾ committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police

Sweden is currently unable to populate this indicator. On the one hand, sexual violence is included in the offence 'gross violation', 'sexual violence', under which the information on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator is implicit. On the other hand, regarding the sexual acts regulated in Chapter 6 sections 1-10, sexual offences, the information on the perpetrator and the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator is not collected. Therefore, there is no separate data on sexual violence in intimate partner violence.

It is recommended that Sweden take the necessary steps to include the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator in its classification codes.

Indicator 7 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims of economic intimate partner violence ⁽¹²⁾ committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police

Similarly, for economic violence, which is included in the offence of gross violation of integrity, Sweden is currently unable to populate this indicator. Economic violence committed within the context of an intimate partner relationship is recorded within the wider offence of gross violation of integrity. However, no separate collection of data exists as there is no separate code.

It is recommended that Sweden take the necessary steps to include the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator in its classification codes.

⁽⁹⁾ Any act which causes physical harm to the partner or former partner as a result of unlawful physical force. Physical violence can take the form of, among others, serious and minor assault, deprivation of liberty and manslaughter (EIGE, 2017).

⁽¹⁰⁾ Any act or behaviour which causes psychological harm to the partner or former partner. Psychological violence can take the form of, among others, coercion, defamation, verbal insult or harassment (EIGE, 2017).

⁽¹¹⁾ Any sexual act performed on the victim without consent. Sexual violence can take the form of rape or sexual assault (EIGE, 2017).

⁽¹²⁾ Any act or behaviour which causes economic harm to the partner. Economic violence can take the form of, among others, property damage, restricting access to financial resources, education or the labour market, or not complying with economic responsibilities, such as alimony (EIGE, 2017).

Indicator 8 — Annual number of women (aged 18 and over) victims reporting rape ⁽¹³⁾ committed by men (aged 18 and over), as recorded by police

Sweden collects data on rape with information on victims and therefore is able to populate this indicator.

Indicator 9 — Women victims of intimate femicide ⁽¹⁴⁾ (aged 18 and over) committed by a male intimate partner (aged 18 and over), as a share of the women victims of homicide (aged 18 and over)

Sweden does not collect data on femicide and therefore cannot populate this indicator. Data on women victims of murder/manslaughter in intimate relationships is not separated from other women victims, therefore no data is available.

It is recommended that a code for femicide be included in the classification system or that the victim–perpetrator relationship be recorded for offences of murder and manslaughter.

Indicator 10 — Annual number of protection orders applied for and granted in cases of intimate partner violence against women by type of court

Sweden is currently unable to populate this indicator. Data on protection orders exists but there is no information on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator or the sex of victims/perpetrators.

It is recommended that the necessary changes be made to the system to allow the recording of this information.

Indicator 11 — Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) prosecuted for intimate partner violence against women

Sweden currently only collects and publishes data regarding the number of men prosecuted for assault/aggravated assault against a woman with whom they are or have been in an intimate relationship and for gross violation of a woman's integrity.

It is recommended that Sweden make the necessary changes to the courts' recording system to allow the population of this indicator with the specific offences mentioned above.

Indicator 12 — Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) sentenced for intimate partner violence against women

Sweden would potentially be able to populate this indicator if victim and relationship data was available.

It is recommended that Sweden make the necessary changes to the courts' data collection system to record information on victims and on the victim–perpetrator relationship.

Indicator 13 — Annual number of men (aged 18 and over) sentenced for intimate partner violence against women and held in prison or with a sanction involving a form of deprivation of liberty

Sweden would potentially be able to populate this indicator if victim and relationship data was available.

It is recommended that Sweden make the necessary changes to courts' data collection system to record information on victims and on the victim–perpetrator relationship.

⁽¹³⁾ Sexual penetration, whether vaginal, anal or oral, through the use of object or body parts, without consent, using force, coercion or by taking advantage of the vulnerability of the victim (EIGE, 2017).

⁽¹⁴⁾ The killing of a woman by an intimate partner and death of a woman as a result of a practice that is harmful to women. Intimate partner is understood as former or current spouse or partner, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim (EIGE, 2017).



<http://eige.europa.eu>

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