

# Sweden

## About



The implementation of gender mainstreaming has a fairly long history in Sweden.

Gender mainstreaming has been the Swedish government's overarching strategy for gender policy since its 1993 bill Shared Power, Shared Responsibility. The first plan of how to implement the strategy in the Government Offices was adopted in 2004. In 2011 the government adopted a platform on how gender mainstreaming is to be conducted at central, regional and local level.

In 2006, an Equality Policy Bill was confirmed as the main strategy for achieving the gender-equality policy objectives, and it reinforced that each ministry and each policy area is responsible for gender equality within its areas of responsibilities. Ministries should formulate customised objectives to be reached, designate assignments to agencies, and require follow-ups, reports and evaluations of these objectives and assignments.

Gender mainstreaming remains the main strategy used to achieve gender-equality policy objectives in Sweden, together with specific measures and legal provisions. In 2012, the Strategy for the Work on Gender Mainstreaming in the Government Offices was issued, covering the period 2012–2015. The strategy includes an organisation for rules, responsibilities and accountability for the civil servants and the political government officials, defines that the work in the government should be evaluated yearly by an external evaluator and reported to the Gender Equality minister. The strategy also states that work with EU should be evaluated separately. A comprehensive evaluation will be done in 2015 regarding the implementation of gender mainstreaming at the Government Offices based on this strategy.

In 2008, the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research was commissioned by the government to set up a program to support governmental agencies in their work with gender mainstreaming. The Program JÄMI was set up and lasted until the end of 2010. In the Government's instructions to the Secretariat, four assignments were specified: to develop methods, create forums, inform, and create opportunities for support structures. As a response, the Secretariat outlined JÄMI, a programme consisting of a wide range of activities, studies, workshops, seminars, round-table discussions, forums, networks, national and international conferences, a summer school, an undergraduate course, various publications, websites, databases, and newsletters. The work was conducted in consultation and collaboration with various organizations and experts from academia, government offices, NGOs, and consultants worldwide.

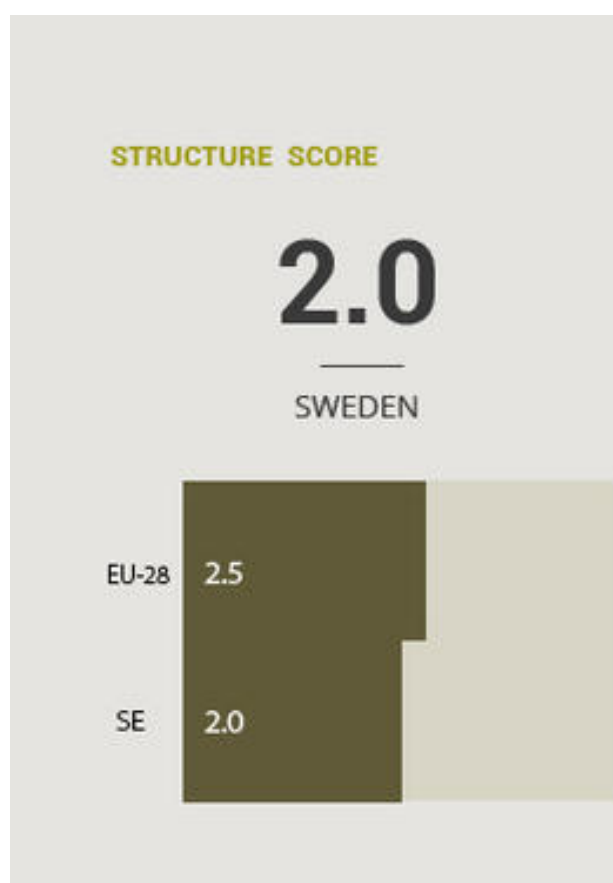
The Swedish government has assigned 41 of its agencies to work actively with gender mainstreaming in 2015-2018. The aim of the GMGA programme, Gender Mainstreaming in Government Agencies, is for the participating agencies to integrate a gender equality perspective in all aspects of their work. The Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research has been assigned by the government to support the agencies in the planning and implementation of their development work.

After the 2014 national election Sweden's Government is a coalition Government made up by the Social Democratic Party & the Green party. Sweden's Government as of 2014 has declared itself a feminist Government and has made a clear commitment to promoting gender equality in all policy making. The commitment has been defined as striving to combat inhibitive gender roles and structures and to let gender equality have a formative impact on policy choices, priorities, and in allocation of resources. Gender mainstreaming as a strategy to achieve gender equality is a

priority for Sweden's Feminist Government.

Gender budgeting, as an application of gender mainstreaming in the budget process, has been given renewed focus within the Government, and an extensive effort to further develop gender budgeting in the state budget is now under way in Sweden. The purpose of this development work is to strengthen the application of a gender equality perspective in the budget process so that policy reforms are based on gender equality impact analysis, and policy is implemented with a gender-sensitive approach. The aim is to further develop sustainable mechanisms for gender budgeting by improving internal management and control, training, methodology, support and coordination. These improvements should result in more advanced gender equality impact analysis and a systematic use of statistics disaggregated by sex, so that the budget bill reflects the objectives and commitments of a feminist Government. The gender budgeting work has also entailed work on new objectives for gender equality within selected strategic policy areas, as a way to concretize how other policy areas can contribute to implementation of the gender equality policy goals. Customized policy objectives and actions for gender equality, with indicators to follow up the result, have been formulated, to contribute to implementation of Sweden's gender equality policy goals and the Government feminist aspirations. Selected policy areas are labour market, health and social policy, education, foreign and development policy, and juridical policy.

## Structures





The Division for Gender Equality at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is responsible for developing, managing and coordinating the gender-mainstreaming work within government offices. The Division also provides various forms of support activities with the Government Offices, such as tailor made trainings for line ministries. Sweden has appointed a Minister for Gender Equality, responsible for policy implementation as well as development. This minister is currently located within the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.

In each ministry there is an appointed Gender Equality Coordinator, and together they form an Inter-ministerial Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming. According to the gender-mainstreaming strategy, each ministry must have an action plan on how to conduct and implement gender mainstreaming. The Division of Gender Equality is responsible for annual external quantitative follow up of work in the government offices undertaken by Statistics Sweden. The results from this follow up is reported to the minister in charge of gender equality. Each ministry receives feedback from the external evaluation via their gender coordinator.

Government agencies – semi-autonomous central administrative bodies – are also in charge of gender mainstreaming, having been the target of a development programme since 2013.

The Swedish government has a Council for gender equality led by the Minister for Gender Equality. This Council is a forum that since 1983, brings together specially invited representatives of various organizations, including political parties and NGOs in the gender equality field. The Council meets four times a year and discusses important issues of gender equality policy, exchange information and ideas. Today, the Gender Equality Council consists of 56 organizations or networks.

The Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research at the University of Gothenburg was inaugurated in 1998 as part of a major Swedish parliamentary initiative for research with a gender perspective. In July 2008, the Secretariat was assigned by the Swedish Government to work, within the Gender Mainstreaming Programme (Jämi), to promote integration of gender equality in the state. This assignment came to an end on 31 December 2010. The Nordic Council of Ministers has decided to place NIKK (Nordic Information on Gender) as a Nordic cooperative body at the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, University of Gothenburg, Sweden. NIKK's assignment is to gather and share knowledge about policy and practice, facts and research related to gender and gender equality in the Nordic region. The assignment is ongoing.

Government agencies – semi-autonomous central administrative bodies – are also in charge of gender mainstreaming, having been the target of a development programme since 2013. In 2013-2014 the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research was given the task to support government

agencies with their work with gender mainstreaming.

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## Laws and policies

In Sweden, gender mainstreaming is seen as the main strategy for achieving the gender equality policy objectives. The portal [www.includegender.org](http://www.includegender.org) was created in 2009 to support gender mainstreaming efforts in the public sector, providing concrete tools to facilitate make gender mainstreaming in practice. Includegender.org is a Swedish national resource for gender equality. The portal offers information and news about gender equality as well as practical examples of and concrete tools for gender equality work. Includegender.org was launched in December 2009 and is a unique Swedish cooperative venture involving the European Social Fund, the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, the County Administrative Board, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) and the Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems (VINNOVA).

In a government bill of 2006, the government proposed new policy objectives for gender equality policy, with the overarching goal that women and men shall have the same power to shape society and their own lives. In addition to the overarching goal, four underlying sub-goals guide the gender equality policy: equal distribution of power and influence; economic equality between women and men; equal distribution of unpaid care and household work; and men's violence against women must come to an end. The strategies for achieving these goals are continued gender mainstreaming and the establishment of a government agency with the task of contributing to the development of efficient equality policies. As a consequence of the 2006 government bill, the new Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality was established in 2007, before being dissolved in 2010, with gender-equality competencies moving to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.

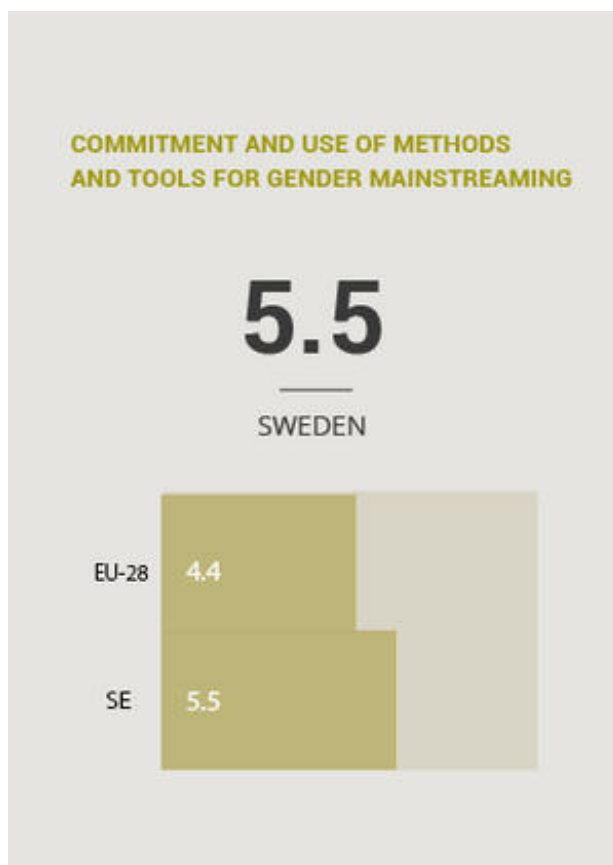
In 2011, the Swedish government decided to strengthen efforts for gender equality by creating a national platform to further gender mainstreaming at the municipal, regional and national levels. The platform comprises five different parts: a Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming in the Government Offices; a development programme for government agencies; support for gender mainstreaming at regional level; quality control vis-à-vis the development of gender mainstreaming in municipalities and county councils; and initiatives to gather and share experience and knowledge about the practical implementation of gender mainstreaming. In particular, the new strategy adopted for 2012–2015 outlines the overall framework for gender mainstreaming within government offices for the period 2012–2015 and aims to provide the government with the best

government offices for the period 2012 – 2019, and aims to provide the government with the best possible conditions to ensure a gender-equality dimension in all areas of government policy.

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## Methods and tools



Over the years, many methods and tools have been developed in Sweden aimed at covering different stages of a gender-mainstreaming process. The most recent collection of methods is available at [Includegender.org](http://Includegender.org). The Swedish version of the web portal lists approximately 36 different methods, models and tools. These methods, models and tools are categorised into the following sections: the 'complete process' i.e. comprehensive approaches to set up a gender-mainstreaming process; checklists; preparation; surveys; analysis; monitoring and evaluation; steering and management; personnel and organisation; and exercises.

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# Good practices

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