



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
4 September 2007

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Pre-session working group

Fortieth and forty-first sessions

16-20 July 2007

List of issues and questions with regard to the consideration of periodic reports

Sweden

The pre-session working group examined the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Sweden (CEDAW/C/SWE/7).

Constitutional, legislative and institutional framework

1. Please provide information on the progress attained towards achieving the various objectives of the gender equality policy. This should include information about the policy's monitoring mechanisms, and the impact of the policy on the enjoyment by women of their human rights. In particular, please refer to the objectives that have been set in the new law that was passed on 16 May 2006, as delineated in the report (para. 7). Please also elaborate on the Government's intention to establish a public agency, as well as its commitment to study gender equality between different groups in society.
2. Please elaborate on the progress made towards achieving the gender equality objectives through the special plan for gender mainstreaming at the Government Offices, in light of the interim report referred to in paras. 13 and 14 of the report.
3. The report (paras. 17 to 19) refers to activities to disseminate information on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Please elaborate on the public information campaign that was to take place during 2006-2007, referred to in para. 18 of the report. Please indicate whether similar activities have been carried out concerning the Optional Protocol to the Convention.
4. The report refers to a number of legislative measures intended to eliminate discrimination against women. Please provide further information on the court cases that have been filed by women who faced discrimination, the decisions in these cases and compliance with those decisions. Please also provide information on the outcome of cases involving discrimination against women reported to the Equal



Opportunities Ombudsman and on the decisions of the Equal Opportunities Commission relating to discrimination against women, as well as of cases under the Equal Treatment of Students at Universities Act.

5. Please provide examples of what is envisaged under the exceptions from the prohibition against discrimination, referred to in para. 31 of the report, and how they are implemented in practice.

6. Please provide information on the implementation of measures taken to address discrimination against women under the national action plan for human rights 2006-2009 and the impact of those measures on the promotion of gender equality. Please describe any activities of the Delegation for Human Rights in Sweden to address discrimination against women.

Political participation and decision-making

7. Please provide information on the findings of the inquiry appointed to report on gender distribution in positions of power in Sweden and the actions taken in response to those findings (para. 166); as well as the 2005 report by Uppsala University on structural impediments and treatment in Swedish politics from a discrimination perspective (para. 172).

8. Please provide further details about the measures undertaken or envisaged by the Government, including any temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, to increase women's representation in decision-making positions in publicly owned companies and in other sectors where women are still underrepresented, such as in elected local bodies.

9. The report states that the Government appointed an inquiry to study "whether, and in which case how, provisions on gender quotas on boards of directors" of private enterprise could be introduced into Swedish law (para. 191). Please provide information on the findings of the inquiry and whether such quotas have been introduced and their impact.

Violence against women

10. The report describes a range of measures to address violence against women, involving the police, the Swedish Prosecution Authority, the courts and others, and addressing different forms of violence, such as domestic violence, female genital mutilation and honour crimes. Please provide further information about the impact of these measures, including with respect to women with disabilities and migrant and minority women. Please include an evaluation of whether more cases of violence against women are being investigated and prosecuted and perpetrators punished, particularly with respect of the conclusions of the analyses carried out by prosecution authorities in 2003, mentioned in para. 83 of the report.

11. Please provide more data on the nature and scope of violence against women in Sweden, as requested by the Committee in its 2001 concluding comments.¹ Please include information about any systematic collection of data on violence against women through, for example, national statistical offices or regular population-based surveys.

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/56/38)*, para. 353.

12. Please provide details on the findings of the inquiry appointed by the Government to review the social services support to women exposed to violence, which were expected to be presented by 30 June 2006, as well as the action taken on the basis of those findings (para. 72). With respect to the Governmental support mentioned in paras. 67-68 of the report, please state the amount provided (in local currency and US dollar equivalency), and indicate its relative share in the operational budget of the organizations. In addition, please indicate whether experience of violence in the family would qualify a migrant woman to seek an independent residence permit.

13. The report states that the Government appointed inquiry to evaluate the instructions and assignments given to public agencies in the Government Bill on Violence against Women reported in its findings that “the agencies have carried out some of their assignments but others have not been carried out or have been carried out inadequately” (para. 76). What steps have been taken to address these findings?

14. The report states that “the Government’s ambition is that in some cases restraining orders will be able to be combined with electronic monitoring” and that “the National Police Board has therefore been instructed to investigate various technical solutions that could be used for this purpose” (para. 80). Please provide details about the findings of this investigation, which were expected to be presented by 31 December 2006.

15. Please provide the text (in English) of the new and extended definition of rape, mentioned in para. 74 of the report.

16. Please provide more information, including statistical information, on the scope of female genital mutilation in Sweden and the outcome of measures taken for its prevention, including the findings of the National Board of Health and Welfare that were to be presented on 30 June 2006, as mentioned in para. 105 of the report.

Prostitution and trafficking

17. The report states that the Government is developing a National Action Programme for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (para. 163). Please provide information on the status of this programme, including whether it was adopted as well as on the activities under the programme and their impact.

18. The report refers to the possibility of issuing time-limited residence permits to victims or witnesses of trafficking “when it is deemed necessary in order to carry out a preliminary investigation or the main hearing in a criminal case” (para. 158). What support, assistance programmes and protection are available to women victims of trafficking, and in particular to those who are residing illegally in Sweden and who decide not to report the trafficking?

19. In its 2001 concluding comments, while welcoming the policy of criminalizing the purchase of sexual services, the Committee expressed concern that this might have increased the incidence of clandestine prostitution and encouraged the Government to evaluate the effect of the policy, especially in view of the lack of data on clandestine prostitution which could have incidental effects on the trafficking of women and girls.² Similarly, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, in its report of 6 February 2007, recommended, inter alia, “the commissioning of a comprehensive study, conducted by independent researchers, of the Swedish policy on prostitution and its impact on

² Ibid., paras. 354 and 355.

human trafficking and other types of violence often occurring in the context of prostitution”.³ The report states that “according to the annual situation reports by the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings, the prohibition of the purchase of a sexual service deters traffickers from establishing themselves in Sweden and functions as a barrier against trafficking in human beings” (para. 153). Please provide further details, if available, about the effect of the policy specifically on the incidence of clandestine prostitution. Please indicate whether any comprehensive study has been carried out on the policy and its effect on prostitution and trafficking, in Sweden and outside.

Stereotypes and education

20. The report refers to a number of projects to address the “sexualisation of the public sphere and the role of the media” (paras. 126 to 132). Please indicate whether any assessment of the impact of these projects has been made. Please provide information on the outcome of the FLICKA project that ended in June 2005 and the outcome of an envisaged inquiry into sexual discrimination in advertising (para. 127); as well as of passing of the Government Bill 2005/06:112 on public service radio and TV broadcast (para. 132).

21. In its 2001 concluding comments, the Committee recommended that the Government strengthen its efforts to eliminate gender stereotypes in educational curricula and consistently integrate awareness and understanding of gender equality in teacher training.⁴ The report refers to a number of activities to promote gender equality in the educational system, including the provision of reference material on gender equality to schools and municipalities, and training courses on gender equality for teachers. Please indicate whether these activities are ongoing and also provide information on whether any assessment of the impact of the activities has been made.

22. The report states that students’ study choices in higher education “are still heavily gender-related” and that the Government’s objective is to achieve equal gender distribution in educational programmes (para. 228). Please provide further information on the measures being taken to achieve this objective. Please also provide updated data on the numbers of women and men professors and senior lecturers in higher education institutions.

Employment and reconciliation of work and family life

23. Please provide more information about the proposals for new types of parental support, contained in the report of the National Institute for Public Health of January 2005, and what operative steps have followed it, in light of the Government’s instructions to the NIPH in 2006 (see paras. 140 and 141).

24. The report refers to a number of measures, in particular provisions in the Equal Opportunities Act, to address the wage gap between women and men. The report states that the Government submitted an action plan for equal pay in June 2006 (para. 286). Please provide information on the status of the action plan, including whether it was adopted and how, together with the other measures, it provides a comprehensive approach to eradicating pay discrimination against women.

³ A/HRC/4/34/Add.3, para. 71 (V).

⁴ Ibid., para. 343.

25. The report states that the Labour Market Board (AMS) has been tasked by the Government with counteracting gender segregation in the labour market (para. 261). Please provide information on the activities of the Labour Market Board and any assessment of their impact.

26. The report mentions the 2002 time-use study, and recognizes that unequal distribution between women and men of household and care work impedes gender equality in the labour market (paras. 121 and 122). Please elaborate on measures developed and undertaken to achieve equal distribution of unpaid work between men and women, which is one of the objectives highlighted in the Government's 2006 gender equality policy bill.

Health

27. The report refers to reports by the National Board of Health and Welfare which indicate that there are "shortcomings in gender equality in the health services" (para. 310). The report states that the "Government intends to work for greater dissemination of information on the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective into the work of the health services" (para. 312). Please provide further information on the actions taken to accomplish this and whether the shortcomings, which have been identified, are being addressed.

28. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its 2005 concluding observations, notes with concern the sharp increase in 2002 in abortions among teenagers. Please provide data, and explain what measures have been taken to confront this problem.

Minority, immigrant and refugee women

29. In its previous concluding comments, the Committee urged the Government to take effective measures to eliminate discrimination against immigrant, refugee and minority women, and encouraged the Government to be more proactive in its measures to prevent discrimination against immigrant, refugee and minority women, both within their communities and in society at large, to combat violence against them and to increase their awareness of the availability of social services and legal remedies.⁵ Similarly, the Human Rights Committee in its 2002 concluding observations noted with concern cases of female genital mutilation and "honour crimes" involving girls and women of foreign extraction. Please provide more details on the steps being taken to combat these phenomena and implement the committees' recommendations.

Forced and early marriage

30. The Human Rights Committee, in its Concluding Observations adopted on 1 April 2002, expressed its concern at the recognition of early marriage involving girls of non-Swedish nationality who are resident in Sweden.⁶ The report states that legislative changes have been made to better protect individuals from forced and early marriage. Please provide data, if available, on the occurrence of forced and early marriage in Sweden and the action taken in such cases.

⁵ Ibid., para. 357.

⁶ CCPR/CO/74/SWE, para. 9.