

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS

A working party in the delegation to the Council of Europe has requested a list of Sweden's international agreements, laws and studies in the field of domestic violence against women, a report of work carried out by government agencies and a description of government agency support to voluntary organisations working in the field and how this support is distributed.

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Summary

Violence against women in close relationships has, especially in the last ten years, been an area given particularly high priority in Sweden. These issues will probably also continue to occupy a position of high priority on the political agenda. Several legislative amendments have been implemented to alleviate the situation for threatened and abused women in close relationships. The main emphasis of this memorandum is on current regulations and the amendments that have been made to legislation during recent years. Current regulations for penalties and procedures relating to family issues are presented as well as rules relating to the protection of personal data. The new legislative measures that are being planned are mentioned and the Government is currently working on an action plan to combat men's violence against women, which it is estimated will be presented during the autumn of 2007.

Many different agencies and organisations have carried out studies in the area of men's violence against women in close relationships. These include the National Council for Crime Prevention, the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority, the Police Service, the Prosecution Authority, the National Board of Health and Welfare and the County Administrative Boards. A general summary is given of the surveys carried out by the agencies and organisations.

Sweden's international undertakings are examined, both in connection with overall agreements on human rights and in various legal and political documents that deal more directly with domestic violence against women.

Sweden's international undertakings

Sweden's international undertakings regarding domestic violence against women are expressed partly in overall agreements on human rights and partly in various legal and political documents dealing more directly with the issue. Sweden's main international undertakings are described in the summary that follows.

Of all the types of existing agreements – conventions, declarations, action plans, resolutions, statements of opinion and recommendations - only the conventions are legally binding. Resolutions and other agreements are however politically and morally binding and often express clear objectives, both nationally and within each particular international forum.

Agreements on human rights

The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights

In 1948 the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration establishes for example that everybody, without distinction or discrimination, has the right to life, liberty and security of person and that no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Articles 2, 3, 5 and 7).

The European Convention

The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (the European Convention) was drawn up by the Council of Europe in 1950. Sweden ratified the Convention in 1952 and it was incorporated into Swedish law in 1995 (Instrument of Government, Chap. 2, Art. 23). The European Convention is the only convention that has been fully incorporated into Swedish law. The provisions of the Convention regarding for example everybody's right to life, the prohibition of torture and inhuman treatment, the right to liberty and personal safety and prohibition of discrimination thus apply in Swedish law (section 1, Articles 2, 3, 5 and 14).

The EU Charter

In December 2000, the European Council adopted a charter on fundamental rights in the EU (the EU Charter). The charter gives a cohesive account of the rights and principles that the institutions and member states of the EU have to respect in the application of EC Law, including the right to life, liberty and security, the prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment, and non-discrimination and equality between women and men (chapters 1, 2 and 3). The Charter emphasises that human rights also apply to the EU, even though the Union itself is not connected to any convention of this kind.

Agreements on domestic violence against women

The UN

In 1979 the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Sweden ratified the Convention in 1980. The Convention highlights the

Government's obligation to, in legislation and in practice, abolish all discrimination against women and assure them of political, civil, legal, economic, social and cultural rights on the same conditions as for men (sections 1-4). The states parties to the Convention undertake, every four years, to submit a report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (the CEDAW Committee), which monitors compliance with the Convention.

There is no provision in the Convention that expressly deals with violence against women, but the CEDAW Committee has, in general recommendations concerning the application of and compliance with the Convention, expressed that the Convention requires the states to act to protect women against violence of any kind, including violence occurring within the family (recommendation no. 12, 1989), and it is stated that gender-based violence is a form of discrimination that violates women's rights (recommendation no. 19, 1992). However, these statements made by the Committee are, in contrast to the Convention, not legally binding.

In 2003, Sweden also ratified an optional protocol added to the CEDAW. The protocol, which was drawn up in 1999, allows individuals and groups of individuals to submit complaints to the Committee (Article 2). An important rule is that the Committee may only deal with complaints once national legal remedies have been exhausted (article 4). The optional protocol also allows the Committee to investigate, on its own initiative, serious and systematic violations of the rights laid down in the Convention (article 8).

In 1993, the UN General Assembly adopted a Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. The Declaration defines violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life and declares that it constitutes a violation of women's human rights (articles 1, 2 and 3). The states are urged to condemn and with all appropriate means combat violence against women and not to invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination. The states are also urged to take measures to rehabilitate women subjected to violence and to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of women and men (article 4).

At the Fourth UN Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the Beijing Declaration was adopted, in which the member states undertake to implement the Platform for Action that was decided on at the Conference to strengthen the position and rights of women globally. Twelve critical areas of action are identified, including violence against women. The Platform for Action establishes that violence against women encompasses any act of gender-based violence, including battering and rape within marriage and genital mutilation of women, and that such violence derives from a lack of equality and ideas of women's subordination (D 113 and 118).

The Action Platform contains a whole range of concrete measures to combat violence against women. The states undertake, for example, to enact legislation in order to stop all acts of violence against women and to urge that such legislation is enforced, to protect and support women subjected to violence, to work actively to ratify and implement all international agreements concerning violence against women, to promote a gender-based perspective in all measures to combat violence against women, to take all appropriate measures to modify the social and cultural patterns of men and women and allocate financial resources for the implantation of action at all appropriate levels (D 124).

In 2000, the UN General Assembly held a special session on the theme “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century” as a follow-up of the Beijing Platform. At the session a resolution was adopted that essentially repeats and emphasises the importance of the undertakings made in Beijing (General Assembly Resolution S-23/3).

The UN General Assembly has also repeatedly during the last few years adopted resolutions on combating family-related violence against women and “violence in the name of honour”. In the resolutions on combating violence against women, the member states are urged to take measures including supporting campaigns designed to raise awareness of violence and its social costs, supporting the work of voluntary organisations in this area, and to promote the participation of men and boys in preventive efforts (see for example General Assembly resolutions 55/68, 57/181, 58/147 and 59/167).

The resolutions on combating violence in the name of honour call upon member states to intensify efforts to prevent and combat violence in the name of honour and provide effective protection and care services for women at risk (see for example General Assembly resolutions 55/66, 57/179 and 59/165).

The Council of Europe

Since 1995, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers has adopted a series of recommendations on combating family-related violence against women. The recommendations contain concrete measures to prevent and combat family-related violence against women (see for example Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers to Member States 4/1985, 2/1990 and 5/2002). In the recommendation from 2002 the member states are recommended to review their legislation and policies and take necessary measures to guarantee women’s enjoyment of their basic human rights and freedoms, support the work of voluntary organisations to combat violence against women, promote research and education in the field, and encourage a long-term approach and cooperation between the actors involved.

The issue of violence against women, including domestic violence, has also been the subject of discussion at several ministerial and summit meetings in the Council of Europe, and has resulted in declarations and action plans with

calls to the member states. At the Council of Europe Conference on Equality between Women and Men in Rome in 1993, a declaration on combating violence against women was adopted and it was followed up with a plan of action in 1998. The plan of action recommends several strategies for combating domestic violence, including legal reforms, and emphasises the importance of preventive work, education and support to women at risk and treatment of the perpetrators (EG-S-VL (98)1).

At the Council of Europe Conference on Equality between Women and Men in Istanbul in 1997, the ministers adopted a declaration on equality between women and men, which emphasises such aspects as the role of men in efforts to achieve gender equality. The governments are invited to counteract violence in the home for example by supporting practical and therapeutic initiatives aimed at violent men (MEG-4 (97) 18).

In connection with the Council of Europe Conference on Equality between Women and Men which was held in Stockholm in 2006, a resolution was adopted on human rights, economic development and gender equality. The member states are encouraged to take measures including the establishment of national action plans to combat violence against women, provide women who are the victims of violence with secure accommodation, medical care and legal assistance, set up and support institutions or bodies working with victims or perpetrators, provide violent men with rehabilitation, organise systematic collection of data concerning violence against women, and launch national campaigns to combat violence against women (MEG-6 (2206) 2).

At the Council of Europe Summit in Warsaw in 2005, the Heads of State and Government adopted a declaration in which they affirm that they are committed to eradicating violence against women and children, including domestic violence.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has adopted a series of resolutions and recommendations on combating family-related violence against women, genital mutilation and violence in the name of honour (see for example resolutions 1247, 1327 and 1512 and recommendations 1450, 1582, 1681 and 1759).

The EU

In the EU it is the member states themselves who have to draft national legislation and prepare measures to combat violence against women, but various initiatives may also be taken at EU level. For example, it can be mentioned that in February 2006 the European Parliament adopted an own-initiative report on how violence towards women should be combated (A6-0404/2006). The Parliament urges the member states for example to recognise marital sexual violence as a crime. The Parliament further calls for a harmonised methodology and the appointment of national rapporteurs to gather, exchange and process statistics on men's violence against women. The Parliament also states that member states should regard violence against women as a violation of human rights.

Current regulations and new legislative measures

Regulations in criminal law

As regards regulations in criminal law, there is a brief summary of the provisions in penal law that apply to domestic violence against women and what they contain.

Crimes against life and health

Chapter 3 of the Penal Code contains provisions concerning life and health. Taking the life of a person and inflicting bodily injury upon a person, etc. is punishable as murder or manslaughter or assault, see Sections 1, 2 5 and 6.

Genital mutilation

According to the Act Prohibiting the Circumcision of Women (1982:316), incision into the female outer genitals is punishable regardless of whether consent has been given.

Crimes against liberty and peace

Chapter 4 of the Penal Code regulates crimes against liberty and peace. Carrying off a person or confining a person with intent to injure him or her in body or health is punishable as kidnapping, see Section 1. Depriving a person of his or her liberty in a way other than kidnapping or trafficking is punishable as unlawful deprivation of liberty, see Section 2.

A person who by assault or otherwise by force or by threat of a criminal act compels another person to do, submit or omit to do something is sentenced for unlawful coercion, see Section 4. An unlawful threat is defined as threatening someone with a criminal act that is intended to evoke a serious fear for the safety of the person or another person, see Section 5.

Unlawfully intruding or remaining where another person has his or her *living quarters* is breach of domiciliary peace, see Section 6, first paragraph. Protection of domiciliary peace thus applies to living quarters while intrusion into other premises may be regarded as unlawful intrusion, see Section 6, paragraph 2. Breach of domiciliary peace presupposes that the intrusion has occurred unlawfully. However, the designation breach of domiciliary peace cannot be employed if, for example, a spouse intrudes into or remains in living quarters that are common for both spouses/cohabitees, even if the act is against the will of the other spouse/cohabitee. Unlawful intrusion also presupposes that the act has been carried out without authorisation. A person who goes to meet somebody in premises to which the public has access is not guilty of unlawful intrusion even if the person has said that he or she does not wish to be contacted there.¹

Molestation can include acts of very different kinds, see Section 7. In the preparatory materials, special mention is made of the fact that somebody may intentionally push another person, or pull or tear another person's

¹ The provisions concerning breach of domiciliary peace were introduced into the penal code and came into force in January 1965, see Govt Bill 1962:10. See NJA 1962 p. 130.

clothing. Further mention is made of molestation of women with pats or caresses of various kinds. An essential reason for prescribing this as a punishable offence in the first place was the intension to protect women from violence on the street and in public places. Telephone terror is also regarded as molestation.² Chapter 4 of the Penal Code also includes provisions concerning gross violation of integrity and gross violation of women's integrity, see below.

Sex offences

The most relevant provisions concerning sex offences in Chapter 6 of the Penal Code concern rape, that is by assault or other forms of violence or by threatening a criminal act, forcing a person to have sexual intercourse, see Section 1. Concerning the requirement of violence, such violence that can be termed violence towards a person is now sufficient for this definition. A threat need no longer be a threat of directly imminent violence, but also less serious threats may be sufficient to establish liability for rape.

Exposing oneself or through word or deed molesting a person in a way that is intended to violate the person's sexual integrity is punishable as sexual molestation, see Section 10. An example of an act that is included in this provision is briefly touching another person's breasts or genital organs for sexual purposes.

Gross violation of integrity and gross violation of a women's integrity

Chapter 4 of the Penal Code, which concerns crimes against liberty and peace, contains provisions on *gross violation of integrity* that are directed at repeated punishable violations against people with whom the perpetrator has a close relationship. Chapter 4, Section 4a of the Penal Code stipulates that a person who commits criminal acts as defined in Chapters 3, 4 or 6 against another person having, or having had, a close relationship with the perpetrator shall be sentenced for gross violation of integrity, if the acts form a part of an element in a repeated violation of that person's integrity and the acts are intended to severely damage that person's self-confidence. If the acts were committed by a man against a woman to whom he is, or has been, married or with whom he is, or has been cohabiting under circumstances comparable to marriage, he shall be sentenced for gross violation of a woman's integrity.

Restraining orders

According to the Restraining Orders Act (1988:688), a prohibition order may be issued to prohibit a person from visiting or in any other way making contact with another person, or following this person; this is known as a *restraining order*. Such a prohibition order may be issued if, due to special circumstances, there is a risk of a crime being committed, or of persecution or other serious forms of harassment. Special attention should be paid to whether the person to whom the order is intended to apply has committed crimes against the other person's life, health, liberty or peace, see Section 1.

² See Govt. Bill 1962:10. NJA II 1962 p. 133. See also Govt Bill 1987/88:137 p. 9..

In September 2003, the Restraining Orders Act was extended. A restraining order may now also apply to common living quarters and larger geographical areas, see Sections 1a and 2. Restraining orders pertaining to common living quarters may only be issued if the reasons for such orders carry considerably more weight than the intrusion or other disadvantage for the person for whom the order shall apply. In addition to this, the person whom the order is intended to protect should undertake to help to enable the person to whom the order applies to gain access, within reason, to his personal belongings.

If a restraining order is not sufficient, it may be extended in order to apply to prohibiting a person from remaining in the vicinity of the home or workplace of another person or any other place where the person tends to spend time. This is known as an extended restraining order. A person who has breached an extended restraining order may be prohibited from entering an even larger area, see Section 2, paragraphs 2 and 3.

In the preparatory materials to the extension of the Restraining Orders Act, the Government declared that it is not acceptable that people have to flee from their homes in order to be able to protect themselves. The Government stated that the law should instead be based on the fact that the abuser should be the one on whom a restriction is imposed. The Government stated further that one important circumstance that would support the necessity for issuing a restraining order in cases where the parties in question live together is the fact that women in particular do not often succeed in breaking out of destructive relationships. Often violence gradually becomes a normal part of everyday life in the relationships in which it occurs. Men's control over women becomes increasingly strong whilst the women's self-esteem is undermined. The Government also stated that by means of a restraining order pertaining to common living quarters both the victim and possible children living at home are protected and continued criminal activity can be prevented and a woman can be afforded relief and the chance to separate from the man.³

Other relevant sections of the Penal Code

Special mention may also be made of the provisions concerning infliction of damage and obstruction of justice. A person who destroys or damages property is sentenced for inflicting damage, see Chapter 12, Section 1 of the Penal Code.

Chapter 17, Section 10 of the Penal Code states that a person who, by violence or threat of violence, assaults someone because he has filed a complaint, pleaded a cause, testified, etc. or has prevented him from doing so, shall be sentenced for *interference in a judicial matter*. The same shall apply to a person who by some other act or threat of such an act assaults someone because the latter testified, etc.

³ Government Bill 2002/03:70, pp. 30-31.

Regulations relating to family law

The Marriage Code and the Parental Code

If a man has hit his wife and the wife asks for a divorce (files an application for divorce), there are special regulations relating to family law to support and protect the woman affected and the children. Chapter 14, Section 5 of the Marriage Code states that in cases of application for divorce the court may examine matters relating to child custody, children's living conditions, access to the children, the right to remain in the spouses' common living quarters pending division of property and prohibiting the spouses from visiting each other.

When determining matters relating to custody, residence and access, the best interests of the child shall be the determining factor, see Chapter 6 Section 2a of the Parental Code. In the assessment of what is in the best interests of the child, since 1 July 2006 particular attention shall be paid to the risk that the child or anyone else in the family may be exposed to abuse or that the child may be unlawfully abducted or held or be otherwise mistreated, and the child's need for good and close contact with both parents.

In the preparatory materials for the regulation the Government stated that a child must have an absolute right not to be subjected to violence, abuse, or other abusive treatment and when information concerning violence is supplied in a case concerning custody, residence or access, the information must be duly examined and a risk assessment must be made. In cases where the court comes to the conclusion that there is a risk that the child may be mistreated, this should be given special consideration in the overall assessment of all circumstances that should be made. The Government also stated that if a parent subjects the child or anyone else in the family to violence, harassment or other violations, it is best for the child in the majority of cases that this parent does not have any part in the custody. The examination may also result in the fact that there should be no contact with the child whatsoever.⁴

The question of who has the right to remain in the home is closely connected with the question of custody of the children. The person who is granted custody as a rule also has the right to continue living in the home. The court may after application of either of the spouses also in the interim decide which of the spouses should have the right to remain in the spouses' common living quarters and prohibit the spouses from visiting each other, see Chapter 14, Section 7 of the Marriage Code. If anyone breaches such a decision regarding a restraining order, the regulations concerning breach of the law as provided in the Restraining Orders Act (1988:688) shall apply.

The spouse whom the court has permitted to remain in the spouses' common living quarters has the right also to use the other spouse's property that remains in the home, see Chapter 14, Section 8. If one of the spouses has been permitted to remain in the home, the other spouse is obliged to move from the home immediately.

⁴ Govt. Bill 2005/06:99 pp. 42-43.

If a divorce case has been concluded but no decision has been made regarding the right to remain in the home or the imposition a restraining order, the court may, following application, decide on this, see Chapter 18, Section 2 of the Marriage Code. If a person breaches such a restraining order, the penalty regarding breach of restraining orders shall apply.

The Cohabitees Act

The Cohabitees Act (2003:376) also contains provisions on division of property and taking over of the joint home, the right to remain in the home and prohibiting the spouses from visiting each other, see Sections 16, 22 and 31.

The Aliens Act

The provision on refugees can be applied in connection with violence against women in close relationships, see Chapter 4, Section 1 of the Aliens Act (2005:716).⁵ The new Aliens Act also specifies that women, for example, who risk genital mutilation or violence in the name of honour can be granted refugee status.⁶

The regulation on ‘persons otherwise in need of protection’ is also applicable here, see Chapter 4, Section 2. A ‘person otherwise in need of protection’ is an alien who feels a well-founded fear of for example being subjected to corporal punishment or other inhuman or degrading treatment, even though the person does not come into the category of refugee status. In the preparatory materials the Government stated that the intention was to emphasise the fact that the special manifestations of grave violation that women can be subjected to are included in the regulation on persons in need of protection. These violations need not necessarily originate from a state authority, but are just as likely to have been committed by an individual person. The Government stated further that the violations may be in the form of physical abuse, sexual abuse, social isolation or other forms of harassment when they are of a more serious nature but are not considered to be sufficient grounds for the granting of residence according to the section on refugee status.⁷

When applications for residence permits are examined on grounds of marriage or a cohabitee relationship with a Swedish man, particular attention shall be paid to whether it can be assumed that the woman will be subjected to violence or some other violation of her liberty or peace, see Chapter 5, Section 17 of the Aliens Act. The Government stated that the provision is mainly intended to apply to cases where men repeatedly enter into relationships with foreign women whom they then violate or mistreat. The Government emphasised that if it transpires that the man in Sweden has been guilty of violent crimes towards family or close relatives or of sexual

⁵ It has been stated that persecution of relatives shall be taken into account in an individual risk assessment concerning a well-founded fear. See SOU 2004:31, p. 32.

⁶ Government Bill 2005/06:6.

⁷ Govt. Bill 2004/05:170 p. 178.

offences, it may generally be assumed that the applicant or the applicant's children will be mistreated.⁸

When a foreign woman has been granted a temporary residence permit because of a relationship with a Swedish man, it may happen that the woman is subjected to violence or other violations. In this case it is possible for the woman to be granted a residence permit even though the relationship has terminated, see Chapter 5, Section 16. The Government stated in the preparatory materials that the provision first and foremost should apply to cases where foreign persons or the children in their relationship are subjected to physical violence or to acts that include serious violations of their liberty or peace. The Government stated further that if any kind of violent act or violation to which the applicant or applicant's children have been subjected were to entail an unconditional right to being granted continuation of their residence permit(s), the regulation could easily be misused in order to evade immigration regulations. The Government therefore considered that individual less serious violent acts should not in themselves automatically entail that the applicant be granted continuation of her residence permit.⁹

Discrimination

An employer may not discriminate against a person seeking work or an employee in the form of harassment on grounds of gender or of sexual harassment, see Section 16a of the Equal Opportunities Act (Act on Equality between Women and Men)(1991:433). Harassment on grounds of gender is a form of abusive behaviour on grounds of gender. Sexual harassment is a form of abusive behaviour of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes many different forms of behaviour. It can be a question of unwanted physical contact, for example touching, patting, pinching or fondling of another body, and can also be applied to acts that are as serious as rape or attempted rape.¹⁰ An employer who becomes aware of the existence of such harassment is also obliged to investigate the said harassment and implement appropriate measures, see Section 22a.

The Prohibition of Discrimination Act (2003:307) contains prohibitions against harassment and sexual harassment in connection with discrimination on grounds of gender, ethnic origin, religion or other belief, sexual orientation or disability.

The police

The police play an important role in efforts to combat violence in close relationships, both in their work to investigate crime and by providing protection for women at risk in order to prevent new offences, see the Police Act (1984:387). Violence against women and others in close relationships has been a priority area for the police for a number of years. One way of protecting people at risk is by providing them with a special security

⁸ Govt. Bill 2004/05:170 p. 284.

⁹ Govt. Bill 1999/2000:43 p. 53..

¹⁰ Govt. Bill 1997/98:55 pp. 139-140.

package, consisting of a bag containing, for example, telephones and alarm devices.

The tasks of the police also include cooperating with other authorities and organisations in matters relating to domestic violence, see Section 3. The police should, in particular, cooperate on an ongoing basis with the social services and immediately inform them of any circumstances requiring some form of measures. Other authorities should also support the police in various ways.

On 1 July 2006 a new provision was introduced to the Police Act enabling the police to take special personal safety measures to protect witnesses and other threatened persons, see Section 2a. A person may be the subject of special personal safety measures if there is a palpable risk of a serious crime being directed at his or her life, health, freedom or peace, or that of a person with whom he or she has a close relationship. Such safety measures are intended, primarily, to protect persons who supply information in connection with an investigation into a serious offence, such as injured parties, witnesses, etc. The measures may include pure safety measures, such as moving the individual concerned to sheltered accommodation or installation of alarms, but they may also be designed to deal with practical situations, such as help with contacts with various authorities etc. The possibility of applying the provision to cases involving exposure to very serious violence in a close relationship has also been raised.¹³

The health services

The Health and Medical Services Act (1982:763) and the Act on Professional Activities in the Field of Health and Medical Care (1998:531) contain general provisions. The Health and Medical Services Act regulates the responsibility born by the health and medical services as regards violence against women, and the Act on Professional Activities in the Field of Health and Medical Care contains provisions on the obligations of staff in these services. The responsibilities of the health and medical services include identifying people at risk of violence, making medical assessments, providing treatment and following up measures taken. The health and medical services are also responsible for referring women who are exposed to violence to the social services and others who can help to provide any assistance they and their families may need.¹⁴

Another important task involves issuing “legal certificates”. These can be of great significance in the event of criminal proceedings. According to Chapter 2, Section 3 of the Ordinance on Professional Activities in the Field of Health and Medical Services (1998:1513), a doctor who works for the public health and medical services is, with certain limitations, obliged to carry out a medical examination and to issue a statement on the results.

¹¹ See SOU 2002:71, p. 46 ff.

¹² See Section 3 of the Ordinance on Special Personal Safety Measures (2006:519).

¹³ See Gvt bill 2005/06:138, p. 35. See also SOU 2004:1 and Dir. 2006:84.

¹⁴ SOU 2002:71, p. 50.

According to Chapter 2, Section 4 of the Act on Professional Activities in the Field of Health and Medical Care, a person who, in his or her professional activities in the health and medical services issues a certificate on the medical condition of another individual is obliged to draft it with care and accuracy.¹⁵

The Act on Legal Certificates (2005:225) came into force in January 2006. According to Section 5, paragraph 1 of the Act, legal certificates may normally not be issued without the consent of the individual concerned. According to the preparatory materials, it is not entirely uncommon for an injured party, for example a woman who has been battered, to be willing, initially, to cooperate in a crime investigation but later to change her mind. This applies in particular to cases of domestic violence. In many situations, this means that the preliminary investigation has to be discontinued. If a police authority has been given consent to access an injured party's case book with information about the latter's injuries, a doctor can issue a legal certificate without obtaining new consent from the injured party, see Section 5, paragraph 2, point 4.¹⁶

The social services

The responsibilities of the social services in connection with domestic violence against women are regulated by the Social Services Act (2001:453). Chapter 5, Section 11 of the Social Services Act states that the social welfare committee should also work to ensure that crime victims and their families receive support and help. In particular, they should be aware that women who are or who have been exposed to violence or other violations in the home may need support and help.

This provision was introduced in 1998 on the grounds that issues relating to violence against women were sometimes accorded low priority in the social services, that the social services had difficulties in reaching and supporting women who had been exposed to violence, and that there was a need for greater awareness of the problem of domestic violence.¹⁷ It is not necessary for the perpetrator to have been sentenced or reported to the police previously. The idea is that the social welfare committee should be able to offer assistance of various kinds from an early stage to the woman if she needs it. This may, for example, involve arranging temporary accommodation for a woman who has been assaulted in her home, and who cannot return home without the risk of continued assault. It may also involve help in the form of advice or a support person, during the course of the police investigation or court proceedings.¹⁸

Chapter 2, Section 2, paragraph 1 of the Social Services Act sets out a general and ultimate responsibility for ensuring that those residing or staying in a municipality receive the support and help they need. This

¹⁵ SOU 2002:71, pp. 49-50.

¹⁶ Gvt bill 2004/05:64, p. 33.

¹⁷ The Commission on Violence Against Women SOU 1995:60 Violence Against Women.

¹⁸ Gvt bill 1997/98:55, pp. 137-138.

includes various forms of support to women who are exposed to violence in close relationships. Chapter 3, Section 1 of the Social Services Act can be interpreted as part of the social services' responsibility to provide support to women who are exposed to violence. It states that the municipality shall provide care, service, information, advice, support and health care, financial and other assistance to families and individuals who need it. Violence in close relationships is a social problem that also affects the men and children in a family.¹⁹ There is no particular obligation to report to the authorities incidents of violence against women, as there is in the case of children, see Chapter 14 of the Social Services Act.

Release of information to prosecutors and the police by authorities concerning suspicion of a criminal offence

Most authorities are entitled to release information about substantiated suspicions of crime – despite secrecy regulations – to prosecutors and the police, if a sentence of imprisonment is prescribed for the offence and it can be assumed to result in another sanction than a fine, Chapter 14, Section 2, paragraph 4 of the Secrecy Act (1980:100). Authorities in the field of health care and social services are an exception in this respect.

As from 1 October 2006, the health care and social services have had greater freedom to release information to the police and prosecutors. Today the health and medical services can release information concerning suspicion of a criminal offence for which a minimum penalty of imprisonment of one year is prescribed, see Chapter 14, Section 2, paragraph 5.

The Government noted in the preparatory materials that care and support measures must be drawn up in cooperation with the individual concerned and that it is important that the individual has confidence in the health and medical services as well as the social services, and is not afraid to supply information. The Government considered that the principal rule in the case of violent crimes against adults should continue to be that it is up to the person who has been assaulted to decide to what extent health and medical staff may release information to which secrecy applies to the crime investigation authorities. In cases where the health and medical services or the social services suspect, for example, that a person is regularly being assaulted by his or her partner or by someone else with whom he or she has a close relationship, the Government considered that they should work to encourage the individual concerned to report the crime and to support the individual to complete the report. If the individual exposed to violence does not want to file a police report, however, the health and medical services and the social services should, as a principal rule, respect this and not file a report against the wishes of the individual. The Government stated that there is a risk, otherwise, that the individual will avoid seeking care or other support measures.²⁰

The Government considered that there are strong reasons for the health and medical services and the social services to be able to release information

¹⁹ SOU 2002:71, p. 52.

²⁰ Gvt bill 2005/06:161, p. 77.

concerning suspicion of gross assault to the police and prosecutors. Regarding the risk that an assault victim will avoid seeking care if health and medical staff are able to file a report with the police, the Government considered that this risk was smaller in the case of gross offences with extensive and, perhaps, life-threatening injuries than in regular cases of assault. Furthermore, the Government stated that it may be that the assaulted person really wants the perpetrator to be called to account for what he has done, but that the victim is afraid to file such a report her/himself, and does not want the report to state that she/he has agreed to the release of information. If the health and medical services or the social services, in such a situation, are recorded as having filed the report themselves, it may be regarded as a relief for the victim and as an act of support from the part of society. The Government also noted that demands from society that the victim should have the courage to stand up against the perpetrator in the case of gross violent crimes may lead to all too few reports being filed with the police which, in turn, may mean that perpetrators, for example, in relationships involving repeated cases of assault, may believe that their actions can go unpunished. The Government especially stated that in cases where there is reason to believe that the patient has been assaulted by a partner over a longer period of time, it is important that the safety of the woman and any children she may have is taken into account. In such cases it may, for example, be appropriate to contact the social services to check whether they are able to arrange a place in sheltered accommodation or that the social services can arrange such a place with a non-profit organisation before a decision is taken on whether a report should be filed with the police.²¹

Legal procedure etc.

Detention

The Swedish Code of Judicial Procedure's regulations on coercive measures are often applicable to cases involving violence in close relationships. According to Chapter 24, Section 1 of the Code of Judicial Procedure, any person suspected on probable cause of an offence punishable by imprisonment for a term of one year or more may be placed in detention if, in view of the nature of the offence, the suspect's circumstances, or any other factor, there is a reasonable risk that the person will flee or otherwise evade legal proceedings or punishment, impede the inquiry into the matter or continue his criminal activity. If the minimum punishment for the offence is two years' imprisonment, the suspect is to be detained unless there is clearly no reason for detainment. Also a person who is only reasonably suspected of an offence may, under certain conditions, be detained, see Chapter 24, Section 3 of the Code of Judicial Procedure. 3 § RB.

Arrest

If there are grounds for detaining a person, he may be placed under arrest pending the court's determination of the detention matter, see Chapter 24, Section 6 of the Code of Judicial Procedure. Even in the absence of full

²¹ Gvt bill 2005/06 :161, p. 78-79.

grounds for detention, a person reasonably suspected of an offence may be arrested if it is extraordinarily important that he be placed in custody pending further investigation. If there are grounds to arrest a person, a police officer may in the case of urgency apprehend the suspect without a decision for arrest, Chapter 24, Section 7 of the Code of Judicial Procedure.

Injured parties' counsels

The Act on Injured Parties' Counsels (1988:609) came into force in 1988. An injured party's counsel should be appointed when the preliminary investigation has been initiated in the case of certain offences set out in the Swedish Penal Code. In the case of offences of the kind referred to in Chapter 6 of the Penal Code, an injured party's counsel shall be appointed, unless it is clear that he or she does not need such a counsel. If the preliminary investigation concerns an offence set out in Chapter 3 or 4 of the Penal Code and for which imprisonment is a possible penalty, an injured party's counsel shall also be appointed if, with regard to the injured party's personal relationship with the suspect or on account of other circumstances, it can be assumed that the injured party is in need of a counsel. An injured party's counsel shall also be appointed in the case of other offences for which imprisonment may be prescribed, e.g. violation of a restraining order, if, with regard to the injured party's personal circumstances and other circumstances, it can be assumed that the injured party is in especially great need of such a counsel, see Section 1 of the Act on Injured Parties' Counsels.²²

The injured party's counsel shall protect the injured party's interests in relation to the case and provide help and support to the injured party. The counsel shall also help the injured party to plead in favour of specific claims in connection with the crime, if this is not done by the prosecutor, see Section 3 of the Act on Injured Parties' Counsels. The counsel is entitled to attend hearings with the injured party during the preliminary investigation, see Chapter 23, Section 10 of the Code of Judicial Procedure. The injured party's counsel is often a lawyer or assistant lawyer.

Support persons

Chapter 20, Section 15 of the Code of Judicial Procedure prescribes that an injured party who is heard in aid of the prosecution's case may be accompanied by a *suitable person* who provides personal support during the trial (a *support person*). A support person known to the court shall, if possible, be given notice of the trial. According to Chapter 23, Section 10 of the Code of Judicial Procedure, a support person is entitled to attend when the injured party is being heard during the preliminary investigation, provided his or her presence is not of detriment to the investigation.

As grounds for the introduction of the provision on support persons, the Government stated that injured parties often perceive the trial as a severe strain, especially if the offence has involved a serious personal violation, for

²² Gvt bill 2000/01:79, pp. 39-40.

example, in the case of sex offences and assault.²³ Besides being “suitable”, there are no specific requirements as regards support persons.

Hearings not attended by the defendant

According to Chapter 36, Section 18 of the Code of Judicial Procedure, the court may prescribe that a party or listener be excluded during a hearing, if there is reason to assume that a witness, owing to fear or any other reason, will feel inhibited to speak the truth on account of the presence of the said party or listener. The same applies if the party or listener interrupts or obstructs the witness when he or she is speaking. The provision is also applicable to hearings with injured parties, see Chapter 37, Section 3 of the Code of Judicial Procedure. “Listening-in” is also possible. This means that the defendant sits in another room and is able to listen to what the injured party etc. says.

Notification in cases of leave

If an inmate is serving a sentence for a crime directed at someone’s life, health, freedom or peace, the injured party shall be asked whether he or she wants to be notified, for example, when the inmate is granted leave, is spending time outside the institution, or is released, see Section 35 of the Act on Penal Care in an Institution (1974:203). A woman whose husband or partner has been convicted of assault or another form of violation against her will, in other words, be notified when he is granted leave. Notification of an inmate’s release must be provided in good time before the release, and in other cases, as early as possible. An inmate can also be denied a telephone call with a person outside the institution if the call is intended to harm the other person, see Section 30.

Damages and compensation for criminal injuries

The Tort Liability Act

A person who intentionally, or through negligence, causes personal injury or damage to property shall compensate the damage in accordance with Chapter 2, Section 1 of the Tort Liability Act (1972:207). An injured party who is the victim of a violent crime is also, in principle, entitled to compensation for violation. According to Chapter 2, Section 3 of the Tort Liability Act, such compensation is to be paid by a person who seriously violates somebody else through a crime involving an attack on his or her person, freedom, peace or honour. Compensation to a person who has suffered personal injury includes compensation for physical and mental suffering of a temporary nature (pain and suffering), of a long-term nature (incapacity or other permanent injury), medical costs and loss of income. Damages arising from a violation are determined according to what is reasonable with regard to the nature and permanence of the act. Special consideration should be taken of whether the act was of a demeaning or infamous nature, was intended to provoke serious fear for the person’s life or health, was directed at someone who had special difficulty in protecting his or her personal integrity, or involved misuse of a position of dependence or confidence.

²³ Gvt bill 1983/84:105, p. 62 ff.

The Criminal Injuries Act

The Criminal Injuries Act (1978:413) contains rules on compensation from public funds for injuries arising from crime (criminal injury). According to Section 2 of the Criminal Injuries Act, compensation for criminal injury is paid in the case of personal injury. Compensation is also paid for damages to clothing, glasses and similar objects worn by the injured person at the time of injury. In cases where someone has seriously violated somebody else through a crime involving an assault on his or her person, freedom or peace, criminal injury compensation is paid for the injury caused by the violation. Criminal injury compensation is determined according to the rules set out in the Tort Liability Act. When the compensation is being determined, any damages that have been paid or may be paid to the victim on account of the injury are deducted. Cases concerning compensation for criminal injury are tried by the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority.

Protection of personal data

General confidentiality regarding addresses and other data in cases of persecution

As from 1 October 2006 a special minimum level of protection has been introduced as regards certain information pursuant to the Secrecy Act, if it can be assumed that an individual or another person with whom he or she has a close relationship may be at risk of violence or other serious injury should this information be disclosed, see Chapter 7, Section 1 a of the Secrecy Act. Secrecy in such cases applies to information retained by an authority about an individual's home address or other information that could reveal where the individual lives, as well as telephone numbers, e-mail addresses or other information that could be used to come into contact with the individual. Secrecy also applies to corresponding information about relatives.

As grounds for the introduction of this provision, the Government referred to a gap in existing secrecy legislation that meant that the address of a person being persecuted could be made public. This, it said, could have serious consequences for the person in question, which in certain cases could be devastating. Disclosure of a protected address can often mean that a victim of persecution feels that he or she must move. This can mean breaking established social contacts for the person in question and, where relevant, other family members. The Government therefore maintained that it is crucial all address information and other comparable information concerning victims of persecution be given full protection in the law.²⁴

General comments on protected personal data in the population register

To ensure that data contained in the population register are not misused, there are currently three levels of measures in the system aimed to protect threatened persons. The first level of protective measures involves *marking to indicate a need for special secrecy clearance* ("restricted-access

²⁴ Gvt bill 2005/06:161, p. 49.

marking”). This is followed by *registration in one’s former place of residence* and *fictitious personal data*.

Restricted-access marking

According to Chapter 7, Section 15 of the Secrecy Act (1980:100) secrecy applies, for example, to population registration activities or other similar registration of the population. Secrecy applies to data relating to an individual’s personal circumstances if, for some particular reason, it can be assumed that the individual or someone with whom he or she has a close relationship will suffer injury if the data are disclosed.

As grounds for the introduction of this provision, the Government stated that in certain cases it may be suspected in advance that data will be requested for use in a way that could cause injury to the individual, for example, that information about an address is used as part of someone’s persecution of another individual. In such cases the Tax Authority can enter a *secrecy marking* or *restricted-access marking* in the register. The marking indicates that special caution should be taken when assessing whether the data concerning the person in question should be released, since the data may be subject to secrecy regulations.²⁵

If the Tax Authority has decided to enter a secrecy marking and submits secrecy marked data to another authority, the Tax Authority is obliged to notify the other authority of this marking. If the secrecy-marked data are then requested, the receiving authority will have special reason to assess the potential damage should they be released. If a person who is being persecuted supplies personal data to an authority, it is up to the individual him/herself to inform the authority that he or she has a secrecy marking in the population register if he or she wants to be sure that the circumstances underlying the secrecy marking are taken into account if the data are requested. This can, for example, be done by the individual enclosing a copy of the Tax Authority’s decision on secrecy marking to the authority.²⁶

Registration in a former place of residence

Section 16 of the Population Registration Act (1991:481) states that a person may be granted permission to be *registered in the place in which they were formerly registered*. This applies to persons who, when moving for special reasons, can be assumed to be at risk of crime, persecution or another serious form of harassment. Registration in a former place of residence can only be granted if the individual’s need of protection cannot be ensured by means of a restraining order or in some other way. Registration in a former place of residence can also apply to the accompanying family of the person at risk. Registration in a former place of residence is conditional on there being a concrete risk of persecution.²⁷

²⁵ Gvt bill 1997/98:9, p. 34 ff.

²⁶ Gvt bill 2005/06:161, p. 55.

²⁷ Gvt bill 1997/98:9, p. 45.

Fictitious personal data

In accordance with Section 1 of the Act concerning Fictitious Personal Data (1991:483), a person entered in the population register who risks exposure to serious crime against his/her life, health or freedom may be permitted to use personal data that are not the real data, "*fictitious personal data*".

Permission to use fictitious personal data may not be granted if the person can be given adequate protection by means of registration in his/her former place of residence as described above or in some other way. Permission to use fictitious personal data may also be granted to family members.

In the preparatory materials, the Government stated that serious crime refers to deeds with a minimum penalty of 6-8 months of imprisonment. In cases of repeated crime, a somewhat lower penal value may be accepted, for example, if the crime has been especially damaging for the injured party. To be granted consent to use fictitious personal data, it is not necessary for the person wishing to use the data to have been exposed to crime, even if this is the most common situation. The Government also stated that when the question of fictitious personal data is raised, the applicant for consent has normally been exposed to an offence set out in the law, and that there should not be any difficulty in assessing the risk of further offences against this person. Should the perpetrator continue to harass or seek contact with this person, this should be sufficient grounds for granting consent.²⁸

Change of surname

If a woman who has been exposed to violence wants to start a new life in a new location unknown to the perpetrator, she is entitled to change her own and her children's surname. By notifying the Tax Authority she can, for example, take the surname of one of her parents before marriage, see Section 5 of the Names Act (1982:670). Notification to the Tax Authority of a change of surname for children under the age of 18 is done by the child's custodian, see Section 48 of the Names Act. This means that if both parents have custody of the child, both parents must report the change of name jointly. If just one parent has custody, he or she represents the child when notifying the Tax Authority of a change of surname. However, consent from the other parent is needed if the child has his or her surname at the time of the change, see Section 6. If consent is not given, the custodian can go to court to obtain a declaration that the change of name is in the best interests of the child.

A person wanting to change their surname to a newly-created surname or to a surname that cannot be acquired according to certain other provisions in the Names Act, they can file an application for permission for the change with the Swedish Patent and Registration Office. A person who has once changed their surname after applying in this way, can only change their surname again in this way if there are special reasons for doing so, see Section 11. If the application concerns a child under the age of 18, the Patent and Registration Office may require that the court has found that this is in the best interests of the child. This is, however, not a compulsory

²⁸ Gvt bill 1997/98:9, p. 56 ff.

requirement and the Patent and Registration Office is not obliged to enforce any such conditions.

Planned legislative measures

Action plan to combat men's violence against women

The Government is currently drawing up an action plan to combat men's violence against women. It is expected that the action plan can be presented during the autumn of 2007. The action plan is to include measures for improved support to women who are exposed to violence, programme activities with the aim of stopping destructive behaviour among men who subject women and children to violence, measures to increase knowledge among the police and judges of the violence that women are exposed to, increased research into men's violence against women, a review of the ways in which community planning can give women greater security in their immediate environment and proposals aimed to improve the financial situation of women who have been exposed to violence.²⁹ The Government has also stated that it plans to launch a reform of the prevailing system of sanctions, among other things, to stress that society takes a serious view of crime. Sanctions relating to men's violence against women will be part of this review.³⁰

The social services

In January 2007 the Government proposed that Chapter 5, Section 11 of the Social Services Act be made more stringent in order to express more clearly the responsibility of social welfare committees for providing support and help to victims of crime. One consequence of the amendment is that the social welfare committee must (previously: should) especially take into account the fact that women exposed to, and children who have witnessed, violence may be in need of support and help. It is proposed that the amendment come into force on 1 July 2007. In the opinion of the Government, a woman who has been exposed to violence must be able to receive the support and help she needs regardless of which municipality she lives in. Even though the social services' work to support and help women who have been exposed to violence has developed in a positive direction in recent years, there are still considerable shortcomings. In the opinion of the Government, the level of ambition needs to be raised and a holistic approach needs to be taken. The Government has set out measures for quality improvements and improvements in the support offered by the social services to women who have been exposed to violence, as well as children who have witnessed violence.³¹

²⁹ Reference Tomas Wetterberg, Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality.

³⁰ See Minister Nyamko Sabuni's answer to Josefin Brink's interpellation 2006/07:5. The answer is available at <http://www.riksdagen.se/webbnav/index.aspx?nid=101&bet=2006/07:14#{77CA3A42-ECAA-4F8D-AD91-4E9050326B85}>.

³¹ Gvt bill 2006/07:38.

The Commission on Injured Parties' Counsels

In January 2007 the Commission on Injured Parties' Counsels proposed a clarification in the Act on Injured Parties' Counsels that decisions regarding the appointment of injured parties' counsels during preliminary investigations should be made by prosecutors and that such decisions should be made promptly. According to the Commission, it has emerged that injured parties' counsels have not been appointed to the extent the legislators had intended or at the time intended in the case of serious sex offences. The Commission has also proposed that victims of sex offences should have an obligatory right to an injured party's counsel. Needs-testing should only be necessary in cases of sexual harassment. The Commission has proposed that the amendments come into force in 2008.³²

The Discrimination Commission

In February 2006 the Discrimination Commission proposed a new law prohibiting and containing other measures against discrimination. The Commission has found that it has been difficult, until now, to gain an overview of the situation, with a number of laws against discrimination which could be described as a patchwork. The Commission's intention has been to make the legislation more effective and comprehensive. The new law is intended to replace the current discrimination laws including the Equal Opportunities Act. The Committee has proposed that the law come into force in 2008.³³

The Commission on Greater Protection for Threatened and Persecuted Persons

An one-man committee of inquiry has been appointed to improve the protection of people who are threatened or persecuted. The inquiry will also consider whether there is any need for supplementary economic support in certain cases where people are exposed to repeated, serious threats or other serious offences. The task includes highlighting how the Restraining Orders Act is applied and proposing changes that may lead to a better, more expedient use of restraining orders. The inquiry will also consider measures that can help the daily lives of people with protected personal data. Furthermore the inquiry will analyse whether the legislation needs to be amended to strengthen protection from repeated harassment and persecution – "stalking".³⁴

The Aliens Act and women who are exposed to violence

The Riksdag has given the Government the task of examining the way in which the Swedish Migration Board applies the rules in the Aliens Act designed to protect foreign women who are exposed to violence in Sweden and, if the protection proves to be insufficient, to come back with proposals

³² SOU 2007:6 The Injured Party's Counsel, An Active Support in the Legal Process.

³³ SOU 2006:22.

³⁴ Ebba Sverne Arvill, Deputy County Police Commissioner, Uppsala Police Authority has been appointed chair of the inquiry. The terms of reference for the inquiry can be found at: http://www.sou.gov.se/kommitteedirektiv/dir2006_84.pdf.

for amendments to the law.³⁵ The Government is currently at the planning stage with this task, but has not yet decided how it is to be carried out. The Government will take a decision on this matter in the not too distant future.³⁶

³⁵ Committee report 2005/06:SfU8, Written communication from the Riksdag 2005/06:190.

³⁶ Reference, Johanna Peyron, Ministry of Justice.

Work done by public agencies etc.

In the survey and review of what various public agencies have done in this area we have used the website "Kvinnofridsportalen" [The National Clearinghouse on Violence against Women]³⁷ along with other sources. This gateway should be regarded as an Internet centre with factual information about both knowledge and research and also practical work in the area of men's violence against women. It is a joint website run by seventeen central government agencies.

The publications there are from the websites of the relevant agencies, and are mainly from 2002 and later. The survey does not include NGOs or studies of prostitution or trafficking in human beings.

The National Council for Crime Prevention

Domestic violence against women. A survey and review
(2002)

Domestic violence against women is a social problem that has been receiving more and more attention in recent decades. Particular attention has been paid to the violence that takes place within the family, that is to say violence committed by a man with whom the woman in question has or has had a close relationship (husband, live-in partner, boyfriend or ex). In public debate and legislation this violence has come to be regarded as more and more a social problem rather than a private one. At the same time there has been a marked increase in reports to the police involving these crimes.

The survey's general purpose is to raise public awareness of this type of crime and of the perpetrators and victims. Another purpose is to try and assess how common this problem is and to find reasons for the marked increase of reports to the police during the 1990s.

Fatal domestic violence against women
(2001)

This report deals with the most extreme form of men's violence against women, fatal violence. Specifically, it deals with the fatal violence that occurs in close relationships, that is to say when a current or former husband, live-in partner, fiancé or boyfriend kills his partner. The report is based on a review of all cases of fatal domestic violence against women in the 1990s. On the basis of this material, factors like the perpetrator's motives, mental state and previous criminal record were analysed, as well as whether the relevant authorities were aware that a threat existed.

Crime trends in Sweden 2001-2003
(2004)

The types of crime discussed were selected because they either occur in large numbers or are frequently featured in the media. The report devotes a relatively large amount of space to various forms of crime against the person, fatal violence, assault and sexual crime.

³⁷ <http://www.kvinnofrid.se/>

Preventing domestic violence against women
(2002)

This document gives examples of various initiatives to prevent and combat the violation of and violence against women. The survey gives both examples of activities aiming to prevent the occurrence of violence in close relationships and of activities whose purpose is to prevent such acts being repeated.

Restraining orders. An evaluation of the Act and its application
(2003)

This report presents an evaluation of the Restraining Orders Act. Its general purpose is to illuminate the Act's effects on security and crime and the way the legal system has applied it. The application section describes partly the target group reached by the Act, and partly the efforts made by the legal system when restraining orders are issued or violated. The evaluation was partly funded by the National Police Board.

New rules regarding restraining orders
(2005)

This interim report presents the first part of the National Council for Crime Prevention's evaluation of the recently tightened Restraining Orders Act. The general objective of the report is to illuminate any need of amendments in the Act or its application.

Restraining orders. Those concerned and their experience
(2007)

The National Council for Crime Prevention has studied those who are affected by the Restraining Orders Act, their life situation and their experience of the Act, and clarified their need of support and help.

Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority

Captured Queen. Men's violence against women in a gender equal Sweden

(2001)

In 1998 the Government and the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority appropriated funds to carry out a volume survey of men's violence against women. It is the first Swedish study of its kind. Initially a questionnaire was drawn up, and after a pilot test it was sent out to 10,000 women. Sampling, distribution and collection were done in cooperation with Statistics Sweden. After this the answers were processed statistically, and the figures were collated and interpreted. This first report presents the principal results of the study.

"There's something special about this issue". Discussing men's violence against women in local politics

(2003)

This study is a research report about local political discussions on men's violence against women in municipalities without sheltered accommodation for battered women. It shows that notions of cross-party consensus on

this issue have frequently led to a lack of political discussion about it. In many places, men's violence against women has been interpreted in terms of a problem concerning health and welfare rather than a political issue.

The National Courts Administration

The new Act on Gross Violation of a Woman's Integrity
(2001)

Reprint of a series of articles in the journal Nämndemannen [lay assessor] in cooperation with the National Courts Administration.

The courts and men's violence against women
(2001)

Teaching materials for staff working in the legal system, health care, the social services, and the prison and probation services.

Office of the Disability Ombudsman

Protection against discrimination. Strengthen the individual's legal rights
(2003)

The Disability Ombudsman's report to the Government on achieving the targets of disability policy deals among other things with the issue of the support available for women with functional disabilities who become crime victims. The relevant section presents the results of a questionnaire sent by the Disability Ombudsman to shelters for victims of crime and battered women with the aim of obtaining an overview of their accessibility and readiness to receive women with physical or mental functional disabilities. To sum up, the Disability Ombudsman is very critical with regard to the way municipalities fulfil their double responsibility of both giving support to women exposed to violence and planning measures for people with functional disabilities.

The Swedish Prison and Probation Service

Men's violence against women. Educational materials for staff in the Prison and Probation Service
(2000)

The purpose of the materials is to give support in daily work tasks. However, it also aims to stimulate discussions about more effective working methods and about seeking more knowledge of the efforts and measures that the Swedish Prison and Probation Service can cooperate in to prevent its clients committing repeat crimes.

Supervised visiting procedure for crime victims ("brottsoffersluss")

The Swedish Prison and Probation Service in the western region (region Väst) is to receive SEK 200,000 from the Fund for Victims of Crime to create a special visiting procedure for crime victims at the Skogome and Johannesberg facilities. This involves a safe "lock" (Swedish: "brottsoffersluss" cf the airlock on a space station, or the locks in a canal) for women who wish to visit the men who have raped or abused them. The procedure entails that if a crime victim says she wishes to visit the criminal, she will first be interviewed by a psychologist at the facility. If in the psychologist's opinion the woman does not really want to meet the

perpetrator but is coming because she is afraid or feels under compulsion, then further visits will be prevented or will only take place if a psychologist is present.

Treatment programmes for perpetrators of violence against women

This document is about IDAP (Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme), a treatment programme for men who beat the woman they live with or have lived in a close relationship with.

County Administrative Boards

For publications about violence in the name of honour, see the heading “The National Board of Health and Welfare”.

Local government action plans for women exposed to violence
(2005)

In their appropriation directions for 2005 the National Board of Health and Welfare and the County Administrative Boards have been given the remit of together preparing an overview of the extent to which the municipalities have action plans for working with women exposed to violence. The report contains an account of those municipalities which have action plans, the date of adoption, and who decided to adopt the plan. Municipalities which have an action plan were asked to send it in. After reviewing the plans, the general impression is the variety of purpose and content in them. It is our hope that the report will help to increase understanding of what such an action plan is and what its objectives are.

The work of the social services with women exposed to violence and their children

(The Stockholm County Administrative Board, 2005)

The County Administrative Board has catalogued the work of the social services in helping women exposed to violence and their children, on the basis of the Government’s remit. A questionnaire (annex 1) was sent to the county’s forty-four municipalities and districts in the spring of 2004 and answers were received from all except four of them. There is some variety in the frequency of answers given to each individual question in the questionnaire. The review shows that the social services in the county are aware of a total of just over a thousand women exposed to violence. At the same time the social services have in their care 151 girls exposed to so-called violence in the name of honour, of whom just under half are under 18. The most common provision for women exposed to violence is sheltered housing. The shortage of housing is a great problem in the work of the social services. However, the organisation is often prepared for emergencies where it is necessary to take care of and work face-to-face with the women and children involved.

Operation Violence against Women. Combat violence against women

(Stockholm County Administrative Board and others, 2003)

A folder published in a cooperative effort by the Stockholm County Administrative Board, Stockholm City, the Stockholm County Police Authority, Stockholm County Council, the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority, the Stockholm regional office of the National Prison

and Probation Administration, the National Institute of Public Health, the Stockholm Regional Public Prosecution Office, The National Council for Crime Prevention, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities in Stockholm County, and the county's municipalities

Measures taken by the social services for women exposed to violence and their children

(The County Administrative Board in Blekinge County, 2005)

Blekinge County undertook a review of the way the social services in all the municipalities in the county were working with women exposed to violence and their children.

Violence in close relationships and cooperation interviews

(County Administrative Board in Gävleborg County, 2005)

A method development project at the family law services in Gävle, March 2002-October 2005.

Measures taken by the municipalities for women exposed to violence and their children

(The County Administrative Board in Kronoberg County, 2006)

In the Government's appropriations directions for 2006 the County Administrative Boards are required to report on what the municipalities are doing to support women exposed to violence and their children. This report describes the result of the supervision undertaken by the county administrative board arising from the remit.

The County Administrative Board's final report concerning the general agency remit regarding men's violence against women 1998-2002

(The County Administrative Board in Skåne County, 2005)

In December 1997 the Government took the decision to issue a general agency remit concerning men's violence against women, and in 1998 the Riksdag adopted the Violence against Women Act. In this way all government agencies coming into contact with women exposed to violence were given a three-year remit to improve their support to women exposed to violence and to counteract the violence taking place. In the framework of their supervisory responsibility for the social services, the county administrative boards were required to monitor and draw attention to issues relating to men's violence against women and to encourage regional cooperation in relation to these issues. This report describes the efforts made within the framework of this remit.

Violence against women. Follow-up of the survey in the municipalities

(County Administrative Board in Värmland County, 2004)

In December 1997 the Government gave a general remit to the relevant agencies at national and regional level with the aim of combating violence against women. As part of this remit and in conjunction with the introduction in 1998 of the current version of Chapter 5, Section 11 of the Social Services Act, the county administrative board in Värmland County carried out a survey and review in 1999 of municipal efforts for women exposed to violence. To get an idea of how the work of the social

services committees with these issues has progressed since 1999, the county administrative board decided to follow up the above-mentioned report with a questionnaire. This report presents the result of the board's follow-up.

Men's violence against women. Efforts made by the social services in Västmanland County for women exposed to violence

(The County Administrative Board in Västmanland County, 2003)

In 1997 the Government decided on a general remit to the relevant agencies for measures with the aim of combating men's violence against women. For the social services function of the county administrative board, the remit meant that in the framework of its supervisory responsibility for the social services, it should monitor and draw attention to issues that involve men's violence against women, and encourage regional cooperation in these issues. To examine the measures taken by the social services to combat men's violence against women, a questionnaire was sent out to the heads of all individual and family care units in the county in November 2002. Replies were received from nine municipalities and one municipal district. The result of the scrutiny is presented in the report.

Final report: The Protection of Women against Violence project. Östergötland

(The County Administrative Board in Östergötland County)

This report describes the general agency remit in accordance with the Protection of Women against Violence Bill and the activities which the county group for Protection of Women against Violence in Östergötland County undertook to carry out the remit. The report ends with a presentation of the Östergötland model "Frideborg" [stronghold against violence].

Women exposed to violence and their children. A follow-up

(The County Administrative Board in Östergötland County, 2006)

In early 2006 the county administrative board decided to make an in-depth study of local government work in the county in relation to women exposed to violence and their children. The objective of the study was partly to get a clearer idea of how the Östergötland municipalities were working with the issue of women exposed to violence and their children, and partly to provide factual materials to use in distributing the relevant central government grant, which in the case of Östergötland amounted to SEK 3.6 million. In the spring of 2006 interviews were conducted with the county's thirteen municipalities and some other organisations.

The Swedish Migration Board

An overall analysis of the asylum process in 2000-2005

As the national agency dealing with aliens, the Swedish Migration Board comes into contact with women who have been exposed to violence or are at risk of being exposed to violence. The inquiries and assessments carried out by the agency include examining the need women have of protection and other reasons for granting residence permits. This document contains a description of how the Swedish Migration Board works within the

asylum process to meet women's needs in relation to protection against violence.

National Knowledge Centre for Men's Violence against Women³⁸

National Centre for Battered and Raped Women - educational activities 1994-2004

(2004)

This document is a brief overview of the Centre's educational activities in relation to men's violence against women over a ten-year period. These educational activities have targeted various categories of staff in health care, among others.

Women exposed to violence. A retrospective archival study of women who have been treated at the National Centre for Battered and Raped Women (Rikskvinnocentrum, RKS) from January 1995 to July 2002 (2004)

A descriptive compilation of the information about women exposed to violence that is in the Centre's day book archive.

Description and analysis of the telephone advice provided by the National Centre for Battered and Raped Women over the period January–June 2003

(2004)

The report describes and analyses the content of the Centre's telephone advice as an element of its development and quality assurance work.

The work of the Swedish health care sector in the field of men's violence against women. Nations survey and review

(2006)

A national survey and review of the work of the health care sector with women exposed to violence showing that the efforts made vary greatly in volume both within and between county councils.

The Health and Life Situation of Women Exposed to Violence. A longitudinal descriptive study

(2006)

A study based on a questionnaire given to care receivers at the National Centre for Battered and Raped Women (RKC) describing the life situation of women seeking care due to partner-related violence and how this situation is transformed over time. The study shows that the violence women are subjected to leads to long-lasting and far-reaching consequences for health, children, accommodation, financial circumstances and the use made of society's resources and support. Nine months after the women's first contact with the RKC their health had improved and the physical and sexual violence had decreased for most of them, while the threats made against them remained to a large degree.

³⁸ The National Centre for Battered and Raped Women was reorganised on 1 October 2006 to the National Knowledge Centre for Men's Violence against Women.

The National Police Board

Collaborating in relation to men's violence against women.

(2002)

In these course materials, addressing staff in the legal system, health care, the social services and the prison and probation services, experiences are reported from research and collaborative projects both in the field of men's violence against women and on projects involving collaboration in other matters. An annex to the course materials also contains discussion material on cooperation as support for local work.

Investigating men's violence against women.

(2002)

The course materials, which address the needs of Police and Prosecutor, have the purpose of raising public awareness of how criminal investigations regarding men's violence against women should be done to increase the in these types of targets. In cases involving men's violence against women particular problems arise, such as the burden of proof and the risk of continued crime during an ongoing investigation, and these must be taken into consideration to reach a good result in inquiries into these crimes. Besides the written materials, each police authority has received a video showing how a video interrogation should be conducted in cases involving men's violence against women.

Police efforts to combat men's violence against women

(2003)

The National Police Board's report to the Government about police efforts to combat men's violence against women.

Threats involving the police and risk assessments. The National Police Board's guidelines and procedures in relation to matters concerning violence in close relationships and matters concerning restraining orders

(2005)

The report gives an account of the National Police Board's work in this area along with that of certain other central government agencies. It further considers what is known as the SARA model in relation to threats involving the police and risk assessments, and the work of the police authorities with matters involving restraining orders. Finally it presents the National Police Board's guidelines for threats and risk assessments in matters concerning violence in close relationships together with guidelines and procedures for dealing with matters involving restraining orders.

Manual on female genital mutilation (FGM) for police and prosecutors

(The National Police Board, the National Board of Health and Welfare, and the Public Prosecution Office 2005)

This document is a status report regarding genital mutilation, with respect to such matters as legislative regulation and occurrence in Sweden, together with a guide for staff in the Social services and the legal system.

The National Board of Health and Welfare

General remit to agencies concerning men's violence against women
(2002)

This report is the National Board of Health and Welfare's final report on the Protection of Women against Violence project

"Thank you for asking". Screening in relation to men's violence against women
(2002)

An evaluation of the National Board of Health and Welfare's screening project in relation to men's violence against women. Within the framework of a Government remit concerning men's violence against women, the National Board of Health and Welfare has conducted a method development project in which, as a matter of routine, women visiting midwives and youth guidance centres have been asked about exposure to violence. The objective of the project was to test screening for violence as a method.

Female genital mutilation
(2002)

A factual booklet about female genital mutilation drawn up by the National Board of Health and Welfare and the Swedish Association for Sex Education (RFSU) in collaboration. The booklet has been translated into English, Somali, Tigrinya, Amharic and Arabic.

Women exposed to violence. Teaching materials for social services staff

(Revised version, 2003)

The materials describe such things as the responsibilities of the social services in this area, the occurrence and discovery of the abuse of women and rules on professional secrecy. In addition, they clarify the documentation of matters involving women exposed to violence, and provide guidance on how to interact with women exposed to violence, and the various measures that are required.

You have the right to say no! A brochure on female genital mutilation
(2004).

A factual booklet addressing young women who are at risk of or have suffered genital mutilation.

Men's violence against women with mental functional disabilities. Occurrence, interaction and access to support
(2005)

A compilation of information about the vulnerability of women with mental functional disabilities exposed to violence.

Local government action plans for women exposed to violence
(2005)

See above under the heading County Administrative Boards.

The efforts of county administrative boards to combat violence in the name of honour, interim report 2003-2004

(2005)

A situation report to the Government on the efforts of county administrative boards against violence in the name of honour. A working group with representatives from the National Board of Health and Welfare and the county administrative boards designed two questionnaires for county administrative boards to find out how the funds set aside by the Government in 2003 were used. The report describes their efforts and the results and considers the need for future efforts. It notes that the various county administrative boards are in different phases of their work, and that too little time had passed to be able to draw any conclusions as to how the efforts against violence in the name of honour worked out.

National counselling support for the social services and other activities working against violence in the name of honour

(2005)

A situation report within the framework of a Government remit to study how national counselling advice and support for staff working in the social services and education against violence in the name of honour might be designed within the existing agency structure. The report reviews the state of knowledge and needs within social services and education, and considers how support might be organised.

The costs of men's violence against women: A macro-economic analysis

(The National Board of Health and Welfare 2006)

The study calculates the cost to society of men's violence against women in close relationships. The analysis is intended to raise awareness in relation to the occurrence and volume of violence. In the light of the assumption and in many cases great uncertainty, the macro-economic costs – direct and indirect – are estimated to fall between SEK 2.7 and 3.3 billion per year.

The outcome and effects of social service methods for women exposed to violence in close relationships. A systematic overview

(2006)

A survey and review commissioned by the Government on effective methods and approaches in social services work with women exposed to violence. This compilation of information is intended to support consistency in the development of work in this field.

Follow-up of funds allocated to measures against violence in the name of honour. Interim report regarding funds allocated to county administrative boards in 2004–2005

(2006)

A situation report to the Government on the efforts of county administrative boards against violence in the name of honour. A working group with representatives from the National Board of Health and Welfare and the county administrative boards designed two questionnaires for county administrative boards to find out how the funds set aside by the Government in 2004 were used. The report describes their efforts and the results and considers the need for future efforts.

Efforts to combat violence in the name of honour. Performance evaluations in other countries

(2006)

The Institute for Evidence-Based Social Work Practice, IMS, had a Government remit to identify well-functioning methods used against violence in the name of honour. A central task was to look for empirical studies in other countries which have documented the results achieved using different methods. The report is a summary of a Danish study in this field.

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions

Domestic violence against women. An overview of knowledge in the area

(2006)

This document is an overview of knowledge in the area and is intended to provide a knowledge bank and a tool to inspire and guide further work. The document has the objective of covering the whole of the complex set of problems constituting domestic violence against women, from the distribution of violence and the forms it takes, to the responsibilities of society, the causes of violence, and the possibilities of doing preventive work. It also presents a number of best practice examples of successful work combating violence against women.

The Public Prosecution Office

Gross violation of a woman's integrity. Scrutiny report

(2006)

Scrutiny report on the handling by prosecutors of crimes involving the violation of a woman's integrity. This report is an element in the Government remit to the Public Prosecution Office in its appropriation directions in 2005 to ensure that the prosecutors' crime fighting is made more effective, particularly in relation to crimes of violence and sex crimes, especially against women and children. The examination comprises 48 cases involving gross violation of a woman's integrity. The scrutiny reports the observations that have been made and the points of view expressed.

Violence in the name of honour. Manual

(2006)

The manual comprises information and teaching materials for the prosecution service based on an analysis of its handling of some fifty matters involving violence in the name of honour. The document was prepared in the framework of a Government remit to agencies to take measures to increase the competence of prosecutors working with honour-related crimes against young people.

Handling cases involving the violation of a woman's integrity. Manual

(2006)

The manual comprises an element of the work of the Public Prosecution Office to improve the quality of its preliminary inquiries with the aim of achieving an increase in legal proceedings and long-term sustainable

rulings. The manual is intended to provide a guide to prosecutors in their operative work with cases involving the violation of a woman's integrity, which present special difficulties with regard to proof, since they are usually committed in the home.

The Government Offices

Men's violence - a child's experience. A survey and review of interventions, knowledge and development needs

(Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications 2006)

This research report, compiled by commission of the Government Offices, surveys activities in the country trying to assist violent men in changing their behaviour, and activities working with children who live with domestic violence. The report proposes a development programme for documentation, follow-up and evaluation, and forms for the exchange of experience and supplementary training in this area, to deal with the shortcomings revealed by the survey.

Patriarchal violence as a threat to human security

(Ministry for Integration and Gender Equality/Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2006)

A clearly presented survey and review, commissioned by the Government, of measures – national and international – against patriarchal violence and the oppression of women, homosexual, bisexual and transsexual people. The survey is a follow-up of an international conference on patriarchal violence against women hosted by Sweden in December 2004.

Other material

Criminal law and men's violence against women

Dissertation by Monica Burman, Umeå University 2007.

In this dissertation, which is partly based on feminist theory, the author questions the feasibility of achieving gender equality using criminal law. In Burman's view, penal law has traditionally been oriented towards safeguarding the violent man's legal interests. Crucial to the study is the way in which violence, the perpetrator and the victim of the crime are presented in penal law. Burman illustrates and analyses how responsibility for the violence is handled and examines the discussion on the use of criminal law to counteract domestic violence against women.

NGOs and central government grants

The account below is principally concerned with the distribution of central government grants to shelters for battered women and girls.

The National Board of Health and Welfare annually distributes central government grants to non-profit organisations working to counter violence against women.³⁹ In 2006 SEK 16 million were distributed to the two national organisations for non-profit shelters for battered women, and SEK 2.5 million to other NGOs working for the same goals, including organisations working to get violent men to give up their violence. These funds were increased by SEK 4 million in 2006 and will also be made available in 2007.

In the Budget Bill for 2006 it was decided to launch a special initiative with the aim of supporting women exposed to violence and their children (Expenditure area 9). In 2006 SEK 81.5 million were allocated to women's shelters. County administrative boards distributed SEK 77.5 million of these funds to municipalities and non-profit shelters for women, girls and victims of crime, which partly in common, and partly on their own, had requested funds to develop the reception and care of women exposed to violence and their children. In the country's 290 municipalities there are around 160 shelters for battered women and girls. Most are affiliated to one of the two national organisations, ROKS (the National Organisation for Shelters for Battered Women and Girls in Sweden) and SKR (Sweden's National Organisation for Shelters for Battered Women). The National Board of Health and Welfare is to collaborate with county administrative boards to follow up and evaluate how the funds are used and is expected to submit a report on this not later than 1 March 2007.

In the Budget Bill for 2007 additional funds have been allocated. Work at shelters for battered women will receive a boost of SEK 30 million during 2007 (Expenditure area 9, Appropriations 18:1).

In its bill Social services support for women exposed to violence (Government Bill 2006/07:38), the Government sets out how raised quality and improved social services support for women exposed to violence (and also to children who have witnessed violence) may be achieved. The Government's view is that the level of ambition in this area needs to be raised. It further notes that the NGOs' valuable work and knowledge must be supported.

³⁹ See the special ordinance (1998:1814) on central government grants to certain organisations within the social services sector. The ordinance stipulates the conditions for central government grants to non-profit organisations doing voluntary work in the field of men's violence against women, for instance, see Par. 2. The National Board of Health and Welfare decides on the grants, see Par. 5. See also ordinance 2005:1089 on central government grants for organising women. See further Government Bill 2005/06:4 Central government support for organising women

The higher level of ambition entailed by the various proposals in the bill means that extra resources will be required for municipalities and concerned government agencies. To support the implementation of the proposed initiatives, the Government estimates that the municipalities should be allocated special development funds of SEK 109 million annually during 2007 and 2008. These funds will be distributed by the county administrative boards. To benefit from the funds the municipalities must submit an application meeting certain demands, including submitting a plan for how they intend to develop their work with women exposed to violence. Together with the county administrative boards the National Board of Health and Welfare is to produce a joint application procedure to be used throughout the country.

The Government is setting certain conditions a municipality must meet to be able to benefit from the funds. The funds must be used to reinforce and enhance the quality of shelters for battered women at the local level, for instance by supporting shelters for women and crime victims which support women exposed to violence and children who witness violence. A municipality will be expected to support the NGOs' normal activities within the framework of the initiative, but also encourage these activities to be developed. It is also to stimulate new NGOs to start activities where these are not present today. It is also about demands for better documentation, follow-up and evaluation, as well as quality development to improve support and assistance to women exposed to violence and their children.

The Government will carefully monitor developments and analyse how well the municipalities handle their responsibilities. At national level the National Board of Health and Welfare in collaboration with the county administrative boards will be responsible for following up and evaluating the initiative on the basis of the targets that have been set.

The National Centre for Battered and Raped Women was reorganised on 1 October 2006 to the National Knowledge Centre for Men's Violence against Women.

See the special ordinance (1998:1814) on central government grants to certain organisations within the social services sector. The ordinance stipulates the conditions for central government grants to non-profit organisations doing voluntary work in the field of men's violence against women, for instance, see Par. 2. The National Board of Health and Welfare decides on the grants, see Par. 5. See also ordinance 2005:1089 on central government grants for organising women. See further Government Bill 2005/06:4 Central government support for organising women.