

# Men's Violence Against Women

## Are men in Sweden violent against women?

Women and men,  
girls and boys, must  
have the same right and  
access to physical  
integrity.

Over the years, the number of reported cases of violence against women in Sweden has risen significantly as more women speak out. In 2015, approximately 28,700 cases of violence against women over the age of 18 were recorded in Sweden (a 2 percent increase compared to 2014). In 85 percent of these cases the perpetrators were men and in three out of four cases the perpetrator was known to the woman.

Apart from the suffering caused, the bill for health care, sick-leave, police investigations, trials and imprisonment amounts to SEK 45 billion a year. That is more than the entire annual budget for the Swedish judiciary or for the Swedish defense.

## What happens to men who abuse women?

Sweden's current Act on Violence against Women came into force in 1998. Each physical blow and/or instance of sexual and psychological degradation against the woman is taken into account.

The maximum sentence for a gross violation of a woman's integrity is six years' imprisonment.

## It has to stop – now!

On February 20th, 2014, the Swedish government decided to appoint an expert group to propose a national strategy for reaching the political gender equality goal to end violence against women and girls.

Research shows there is a strong correlation between men's view on gender equality and violence. When the views on masculinity and femininity are stereotypical, violence is prevalent. That is why the strategy involves preventive work and education, at all levels, from primary school up to higher education.



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## Men for Gender Equality

Men for Gender Equality Sweden was founded in 1993 and is a Swedish non-governmental, non-profit organization, engaging men and boys in gender equality and violence prevention. Men for Gender Equality focuses on social norms of masculinities and how they can be reformed to better contribute to gender equality and freedom from violence. Men for Gender Equality is a member of the global alliance MenEngage and a partner in the international MenCare Campaign for the promotion of men's and fathers' engagement in care work.

## There is help



The National Organization for Women's and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden (ROKS) is the largest Swedish member organization working against male violence towards women. There are around 100 women's and young women's shelters within the organization. Each shelter is independent, with its own work methods, but all of them have an emergency helpline. These women's shelters offer support based on the individual needs and wishes of each woman. Many shelters also offer sheltered housing for women and their children.

## It takes a...

After several years of debate in Sweden, proposals for stricter legislation on sexual crimes may be introduced in 2018. One of the proposals is the law of sexual consent, stating that while it is currently considered rape if the victim has said no, the new rule would mean that rape has occurred if the person has not said yes. Another proposal is that sexual abuse which happens online – where perpetrators and victims do not have physical contact – should be assessed as seriously as other sexual abuse.

# YES!