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Follow-up of EU's recommendations on equal opportunities

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by
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Background

Low employment and high unemployment have been issues for intensive discussions within the European Union (EU). In June 1997 in Amsterdam, state and government executives took an important step toward co-ordinated policies and a common strategy for increased employment and they agreed on a special department for employment (*Amsterdam Agreement*).

As of 2002, the EU's *employment strategy* has been in force for five years and member states have thus agreed to evaluate the strategy and its effects on employment trends within the EU. The evaluation's primary purpose is to analyse effects that the strategy has had on formulation of national policies and on employment trends in member states. Results of the evaluation will contribute to further development of a future strategy to achieve common goals for increasing growth and employment in Europe.

The national evaluations intend to:

- A. Describe national policies after employment-strategy implementation and analyse the degree to which policies are aligned with the intentions of the EU recommendations.
- B. Determine the scope of initiated measures and their results.
- C. Estimate effects of measures taken and the degree to which the measures have contributed to fulfilling general, common goals of the EU's *employment strategy*.

Sweden's national evaluation is divided into sub-projects. The Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications commissioned the IFAU to follow up the EU's recommendations for

1. Labour market policies (Rapport 2002:3)
2. Integrating immigrants into the labour market (Rapport 2002:4)
3. Tax and benefit systems (Rapport 2002:5)
4. Equal opportunities (Rapport 2002:6).

The papers are display on the IFAU Web site www.ifau.se.

These people were involved in the follow-ups: Dr. Susanne Ackum Agell, Associate Professor Peter Fredriksson, Associate Professor Anders Forslund, Dr. Maria Hemström, Caroline Runeson, PhL Oskar Nordström Skans, Associate Professor Marianne Sundström (SOFI, Stockholm University), Dr. Olof Åslund, and Dr. Björn Öckert.

Follow-up of EU's recommendations on equal opportunities

The fourth pillar of EU's employment strategy concerns promoting equality between men and women in the labour market. Special emphasis is placed on adopting a gender-mainstreaming approach across all areas of the policy, to counteract differences between men and women in the labour market and increase opportunities to combine work and family life. This assignment calls for a description of implemented measures based on these guidelines since the introduction of the employment strategy. In addition, the development of unemployment and employment levels among men and women, gender segregation, the wage gap and access to childcare will be described and the effects of the implemented measures analysed.

A. Measures for greater equality in the labour market²

EU's recommendations on gender equality coincide with the policy Sweden has conducted for some time. This chapter describes, for each respective guideline, the measures implemented to promote gender equality in the labour market and important changes decided upon/implemented since the introduction of the strategy. Measures have been selected primarily on the basis of the Swedish national action plan. Throughout, we present the purpose of the measures and allocated funds. Due to the short timeframe allowed this assignment, it has not been possible to follow-up all incentives and go into detail as to what funds have been used for. Appendix A.5 includes a summary of the changes within the area reported in the Swedish national action plan. Investigations and proposals that have as yet not resulted in any concrete measure are also included.

A.1 Gender-mainstreaming approach

According to Guideline 16, Member States will adopt a gender-mainstreaming approach in implementing the Guidelines across all four pillars. This recommendation coincides with Sweden's ambitions that a gender-mainstreaming approach should permeate all segments of the policy. EU calls for an account of how the equal opportunities perspective is incorporated in selected areas.

² Unless otherwise noted, this section is based on information from NAP (1998-2001).

A.1.1 Access to labour market programmes³

Active labour market policies shall be made available for women and men in proportion to their share of unemployment. The past years, unemployment levels have been rather higher for men than for women and men have thus had access to a somewhat larger share of labour market programmes. However, many of the labour market programmes exhibit an uneven gender distribution. The past years, men have been over-represented in proportion to their share of unemployment, especially in recruitment incentives and programmes for newly started businesses and even special programmes for occupationally disabled persons. Women have been over-represented in computer/activity centres and municipal youth programmes. There is an even gender distribution in labour market training programmes, though there is still a substantial difference with regards to the choice of courses and vocations. (Labour market programmes are addressed in sub-project 1.1.) The majority of participants in the Adult Education Initiative (see sub-project 1.1 and 1.3), also available for unemployed persons, are women.

A basic task for employment offices is to break the traditional gender patterns in the labour market (see chapter A.5.2.1).

A.1.2 Tax and benefit systems

The regulations of tax and social insurance systems encourage work and a return to working life after a leave of absence. The insurance system is primarily related to loss of income and, in most cases, the individual and not the family constitutes the smallest unit in the tax and social insurance system⁴. In regards to unemployment insurance, the right to benefits is tested against the labour market's demands and, in the case of early retirement, against the individual's work capacity. A work condition must also be fulfilled in order to be entitled to unemployment benefits.

A number of reforms in the areas of tax and benefits have been decided upon/implemented since the introduction of the Guidelines and some may affect equal opportunities in the labour market. Income tax reductions and the introduction of a ceiling on childcare fees for pre-school activities and childcare diminish the marginal effects and stimulate participation in the labour market

³ The section is based on information from Ams (1999, 2000, 2001a), Ams (2001c) and NAP (1998-2001).

⁴ This does not apply to social welfare benefits, housing subsidies, B-income and net wealth.

and education. High marginal effects are most common among families with children, especially in single-parent families, often affecting women. The reform adopted in the parental insurance (see chapter A.5.3.2) means that the insurance is extended, more flexible and that two months are reserved for the mother and father respectively. (Reforms concerning tax and benefits are addressed in sub-project 2.)

A.1.3 Entrepreneurship

In 2000, women contributed to almost one-third of all newly started businesses, approximately the same proportion as 1997-1999⁵. Special programmes are available to stimulate women's entrepreneurship. Start-up grants offered job-seekers that start their own business are usually available for six months at most but may be extended to twelve months for women⁶. A few municipalities offer business counselling to women. More municipalities have resource centres for women that, among other things, work to stimulate women's entrepreneurship.⁷ Women can also apply for special business loans for newly started companies and businesses already in operation⁸. (See also sub-project 4 for entrepreneurship-stimulating measures.)

A.1.4 Work organisation

Legislation concerning working life includes an Equal Opportunity Act with the purpose of counteracting gender discrimination in the labour market (see chapter A.5.2.4). The Parental Leave Act increases flexibility and makes it easier to combine work and family life (see chapter A.5.3.2). Both these laws have been subject to changes since 1997. A female employee is entitled to reassignment to another job during pregnancy, immediately after giving birth, and while breast-feeding with employment benefits intact if she for medical reasons is prohibited from continuing her regular job⁹. The right to reassignment during pregnancy also applies to physically demanding work. If reassignment is not possible, the female employee is entitled to maternity pay during the last two months of pregnancy.¹⁰

⁵ ITPS (2001)

⁶ Ams (2000)

⁷ Nutek (2001)

⁸ Almi (2001)

⁹ Law 1995:584

¹⁰ National Insurance Office (2001)

In Sweden's national action plan, the equal opportunity perspective also applies for part-time work. According to Swedish law, parents with children under the age of twelve are entitled to work part-time, making it easier to reconcile work and family life. However, it is primarily women who work part-time and a relatively large share report that they involuntarily work part-time. Efforts are being made to reduce part-time unemployment (see chapter A.5.2.1). (The work organisation is primarily addressed in sub-project 3.)

A.2 Measures to reduce the differences in the labour market

Guideline 17 deals with reducing the differences between men and women in the labour market. The Member States will strengthen their efforts to reduce the gap in unemployment rates by actively supporting the increased employment of women. In addition, measures will take action to bring about a balanced representation of men and women in all sectors and occupations, promote equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, and strengthen women's position in the labour market.

There are no major differences in levels of unemployment and employment between men and women in Sweden. The labour market is however gender-divided and women are to a greater extent employed in temporary or part-time positions; a number of measures in these areas deal with these problems. On an average, women earn less than men. In regards to long-term unemployment, men run a greater risk of long-term unemployment than women.

The issue of the gender-segregated labour market has been brought to the fore by the EU, which issued a special recommendation in January 2001 and recommended that Sweden monitors and evaluates segregation within different occupations and sectors. A similar recommendation was issued in 2000.

A.2.1 Labour market measures for equal opportunities and reduced gender-based differences in the labour market.

One of the targets of the Labour Market Authority is to strengthen equal opportunities policies in the labour market and reduce gender-based differences. To achieve this, funding for regular measures and work placement are to primarily be used. In addition, every year funds are allocated to the "Break-through project", a project dedicated to developing methods and work strategies that con-

tribute to breaking down gender-based differences in the labour market¹¹. During the period 1997-2001 about SEK 30 million per year at most could be used for such project activities and to train personnel in equal opportunity issues¹². The Adult Education Incentive (see sub-project 1.1 and 3) has also set as one of its targets to break down the gender-based labour market through education and occupational counselling.

The equal opportunities work also focuses on reducing part-time unemployment since women are over-represented in this area. According to the agency restriction for 2000, the National Labour Market Board will collaborate with employers to reduce part-time unemployment among healthcare and medical care personnel. The restriction for 2001 includes the task of mapping those employers with a large portion of part-time employees and, through negotiations, influence them to organise work so that employees can be offered the working hours they request. The activity guarantee (see sub-project 1) introduced August 1, 2000 applies to both persons with long registration periods as well as persons with part-time employment who wish to extend their working hours. According to the report issued by AMV in August 2001, part-time unemployed persons are not a prioritised group for referral to the programme as the threat of being excluded from benefit rights is small for this group¹³.

A.2.2 Measures to break gender segregation in upper secondary schools and academic institutions

Since 1997, universities and other institutions of higher learning are obliged to work towards a more even distribution of men and women in such courses that show an uneven distribution of male and female participants, such as within the fields of science and technology and certain teaching and healthcare programmes¹⁴. Gender segregation is also an issue in upper secondary schools. In 2000 a new study programme in technology was introduced. On the basis of the fact that few girls study such topics, the course content has been designed to attract both girls and boys to the programme.

¹¹ Ams (2001c)

¹² AMV (2001)

¹³ Ams (2001b)

¹⁴ Bill 2000/01:1

A.2.3 Measures to increase the share of women in the field of research and promote equal opportunity research

Efforts to increase equality in the research sector began before the introduction of the employment strategy. Special resources have been allocated to employ post-graduates, research assistants and professors of the under-represented gender and for post-doctorate scholarships and guest-professorships for women. Gender research has also received expanded resources for professors, research assistants and post-graduate students.¹⁵

For the period 1997-1999, percentage goals were set for the share of women among newly recruited professorships at all universities and Mitthögskolan. The concept is that institutions for higher learning, in order to reach the goal, must increase the recruitment basis and take measures both within elementary and research education levels. New goals have been set for the period 2001-2004, which apply to more academic institutions. Universities and other institutions of higher learning have been assigned the task of setting their own goals for gender distribution of newly recruited teachers.

A national secretariat was founded in 1998 for gender research at the University of Gothenburg. The secretariat's assignment includes monitoring gender research in Sweden, presenting the results and working towards a greater awareness of the importance of the gender perspective. In the autumn of 1999 a new cross-science research team focusing on gender research was started at the University of Linköping¹⁶.

A.2.4 Equal Opportunities Act, etc.

Sweden has an Equal Opportunities Act that serves to counteract discrimination between men and women in the labour market. The law requires employers to take active measures in issues such as labour conditions, wages and recruitment to promote equality in the work place. An equal opportunities representative (JämO) is assigned the task of monitoring that the law is followed. In 1999, JämO's budget was increased by SEK 2 million to work with the matter of equal wages. The extra funding was used to start a project, Lönelots, to develop and spread methods for gender-neutral work evaluations combined with individual qualification assessments¹⁷.

¹⁵ Bill 1997/98:1

¹⁶ Bill 1999/2000:1

¹⁷ JämO (2000)

The Equal Opportunities Act was sharpened from January 1, 2001. This change entails that the act is to be co-ordinated with other legislation against discrimination in working life and that the reverse burden of proof shall apply so that the employer must prove that gender discrimination does not exist. Furthermore, the law entails that a prohibition against discrimination applies to the entire employment process and wage surveys will be mandatory.

A.2.5 The European Social Fund

The European Social Fund is intended as a supplement in implementing the employment strategy. There are special programmes within the action area *diversity, integration and equal opportunities* of Objective 3 (during the programme period 2000-06) intended to reduce gender segregation in the labour market. The community initiative, *Equal*¹⁸, also promotes activities within this action area. An equal opportunity perspective shall permeate all work with the programme. (See also sub-project 1.1.)

A.3 Measures to heighten the possibility of reconciling work and family life

Guideline 18 stipulates that the Member States will make efforts to make it easier to combine work and family life. A family-friendly policy will be designed that includes affordable, accessible and high-quality care services for children and other dependants, as well as parental and other leave schemes. Obstacles should be eliminated that prevent a return to the paid workforce after a leave of absence. EU's recommendation in this area coincides with the policy Sweden has long adhered to. Further reforms in this direction have also been implemented after the introduction of the Guidelines.

A.3.1 Care of children and the elderly

The municipalities are obligated to provide childcare to all children up until the age of 12 whose parents work or study or if the child has special needs. A place must be provided within three or four months after application¹⁹. The needs within both childcare and care of the elderly are as good as covered in regards to access to the services. However, as a result of the financial crisis in the be-

¹⁸ Swedish ESF Council (2000)

¹⁹ The Swedish Board of Education (2000)

ginning of the 1990s, the municipalities have had difficulty maintaining high welfare ambitions. As a result, government subsidies to municipalities and counties have gradually increased the past years. In 2000, subsidies amounted to SEK 16 billion more than in 1997²⁰. Government subsidies to municipalities and counties continue to increase also 2001²¹.

A number of changes have been decided upon/implemented in the area of childcare. As of July 1, 2001, municipalities are obligated to offer children to unemployed parents pre-school care at least 15 hours per week. Starting January 1, 2002, this obligation will be extended to include even children to parents on parental leave with another child. In addition, if the municipalities so decide, a ceiling on childcare fees for pre-school activities and schooling will be introduced January 1, 2002. Municipalities that decide to implement this system are entitled to government subsidies in compensation for lost revenue and may receive a portion of the annual government subsidy of SEK 500 million set aside for quality control measure within childcare. In addition, pre-school activities for 4 and 5 year-olds will be introduced on January 1, 2003. The general pre-school is to be free of charge and consist of 15 hours childcare per week.²²

A.3.2 Parental insurance and the right to parental leave

Parents are presently entitled to 450 days parental allowance, of which 360 days corresponds to 80 percent of the parent's wage (up to a ceiling of 7.5 basic amount²³). The remaining days are covered by the guarantee level at SEK 60 per day. Parents without income prior to the birth of their child qualify for benefits at the guarantee level for all 450 days. Both parents are equally entitled to parental benefits, with the option to transfer days not included in the so-called "father-month/mother-month" respectively. Parents can chose to take out benefits as full-time, three-quarter-time, halftime, or one-quarter time and parental benefits apply until the child's eighth birthday. In addition, men are entitled to ten days temporary parental allowance in connection with the child's birth.

²⁰ Bill 1998/99:1 and Bill 2000/01:1

²¹ Bill 2000/01:1

²² Bill 1999/2000:129

²³ 7,5 basic amount was SEK 276,700 in 2001. The highest parental allowance that can be paid is therefore SEK 221,360 per year.

The parental insurance is supplemented with the right to absence from paid employment. The parents are also entitled to full-time leave to care for a child below the age of 18 months. Parents are also entitled to reduce working hours by 10 hours per week at most until the child is 8-years old, though without compensation.

As of January 1, 2002, parental insurance was extended by 30 days with benefits equalling 80 percent of the parent's wage. The extension means in practice that there are now two months reserved for the mother and father respectively. At the same time a new benefit level will be added in the parental insurance making it possible to take out parental benefit as one-eighth time.²⁴

A.3.4 Other

In addition to the right of parental leave, employees are according to legislation entitled to a leave of absence for studies with the right to return to work after completed studies. Though law does not cover absence in connection with illness it does constitute a valid reason for absence from work.

In order to improve the economy for families with children, child allowance and study subsidies to young people attending upper secondary school has been increased the past two years. On January 1, 2000, these allowances were raised from SEK 750 to 850 per child and month²⁵ and on January 1, 2001, the benefits were raised by a further SEK 100 to SEK 950.

B. Development in the labour market for women and men

This section presents an overview of trends in unemployment, employment, gender segregation and wage differences for women and men. We discuss possible explanations for changes observed during the 1990s and to what extent these changes are associated with different policy measures. Unless otherwise stated, the data used comes from the Labour Force Surveys.

B.1 Unemployment

During the first years of the 1990s *open unemployment* among both women and men rose to levels unprecedented in Sweden since the 1930s. Initially the pri-

²⁴ Bill 2000/01:44

²⁵ Bill 1999/2000:1

vate sector was most affected by the recession, leading to rapid unemployment among men since this sector employs more men. Figure 1 illustrates that unemployment levels for men reached a higher level than for women, and culminating earlier than for women. Unemployment among women continued to rise around the mid-1990s when a number of cost-cutting programmes were implemented in the public sector. During the period 1998-2000, unemployment levels for both men and women declined on the heels of the economic upturn.

At the same time, as during previous economic downturns (compare Sundström 1987), we see an increase in *part-time unemployment*, that is, persons employed on a part-time basis, though preferring full-time employment. Figure 2 shows that the share of part-time unemployed persons was higher among part-time employed men than women throughout the 1990s but that in terms of numbers, part-time unemployed women considerably outnumbered men. Part-time unemployment dropped from 1997, but the number of part-time employed persons (that is, the denominator) had fallen earlier, see chapter B.5.2. On the whole, part-time unemployment follows open unemployment. However, this does not preclude that changes in the terms for unemployment benefits had an impact (see Persson 1997). In fact, the maximum benefit period for part-time unemployed persons was extended from 150 days to 300 days in 1993, but the rules were made more restrictive in 1995 so that persons who at the end of a benefit period continued a part-time employment were not entitled to a new benefit period.

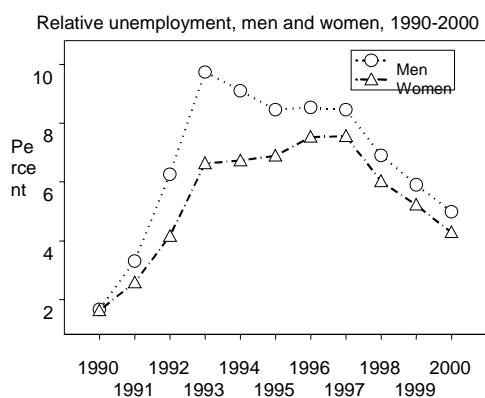


Figure 1.

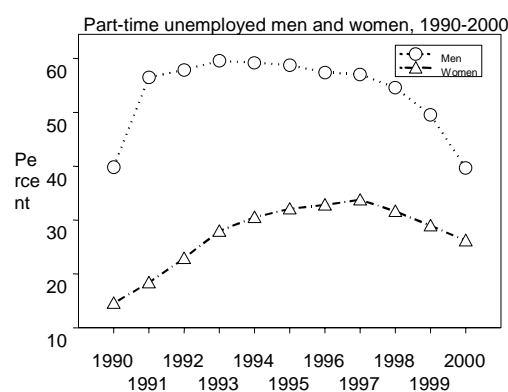


Figure 2.

B.2 Employment

The economic downturn of the early 1990s also led to a decline in the *proportion employed* among women and men (Figure 3). This occurred because the fraction studying rose among young people, while many of the older persons left the work force through early retirement. For the same reasons as presented for open unemployment, the fall was initially greater among men but employment levels also began to recover earlier for men than for women. During the economic upturn 1998-2000, employment levels rose for both women and men but currently remain considerably below the levels of the start of the 1990s.

The recession, with the resulting increased uncertainty about the future in businesses and organisations, also led to an increase in the fraction of employees with *fixed-term employment*. As illustrated in Figure 4, women had a higher fraction of fixed-term employment than men during the whole decade since this arrangement was more common in the public sector. During the year 2000, the share of employees with this type of employment fell somewhat, especially for women.

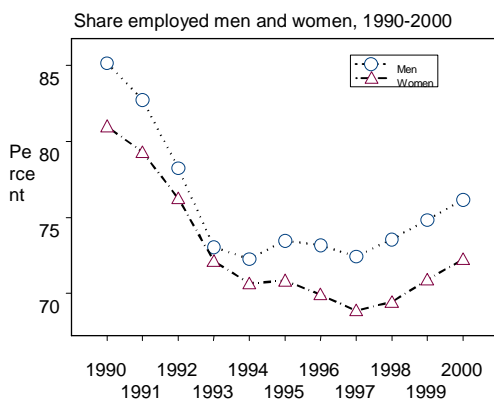


Figure 3.

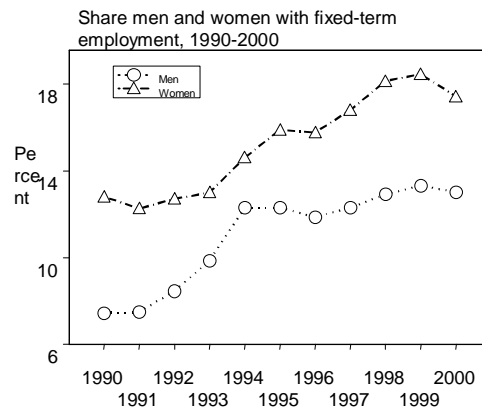


Figure 4.

The changes are interesting and dramatic in the proportion of employed persons on *full-time basis* and *part-time basis* (Figure 5). The fraction of men in part-time employment rose when the recession was deepest, which can be accounted for by the increase of part-time unemployed men in the same period. After 1994, the share of part-time employed men fell somewhat. For women however, the share of part-time employed women fell substantially during the

1990s, the decline began in 1993. (Note the different scales for women and men.) The increased level of full-time employment for women is probably associated with the higher levels of education and closer links to the labour market among younger women, which imply that they wish to work full time to a greater extent than older women (for further details, see Sundström 2001). A second contributing factor was that many older women with a part-time labour supply left the labour force. However, the decline in part-time employment is stronger than expected given a long-term change in the composition of employed persons. This leads us to search for more immediately operating factors, one of which is probably the reduction in household's disposable income during the 1990s (see Gustafsson & Palmer 2001) in combination with increased housing costs due to the tax reform 1990/91. This may have resulted in fewer women (families) being able to afford to work part time. Full-time labour supply probably started to increase in the early 1990s, which resulted in a rise of part-time unemployment.

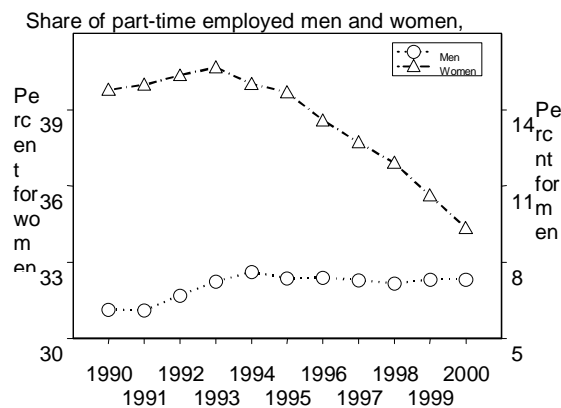


Figure 5.

B.3 Gender segregation in the labour market

We have chosen to illustrate gender segregation in the labour market and the change from 1990 to 2000 using the distribution of employed women and men by industry (Figure 6a and 6b). If women and men had the same distribution per branch, the curves/fields would be closer and more evenly distributed along the diagonal. We notice that gender segregation diminishes somewhat over the decade. This can primarily be attributed to a reduction of the share of women

employed in SNI 85 *Health and medical care, etc.* and a reduction of the share of men employed in SNI 45 *Building and construction work*; industries traditionally gender segregated. Instead, the share of employed women and men rose within SNI 70-74, *Property management, leasing firms, etc.*, which reported a greater gender-mix. Professional segregation has however dropped during previous decades, though slowly, see for example Neramo (1999), Jonung (1997). The *vertical gender segregation* remains in tact, meaning that the share of women in senior management is low.

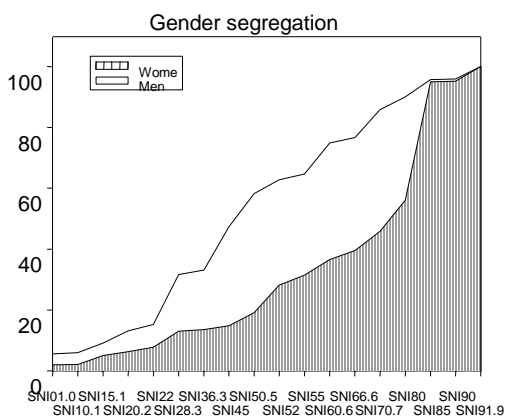


Figure 6a

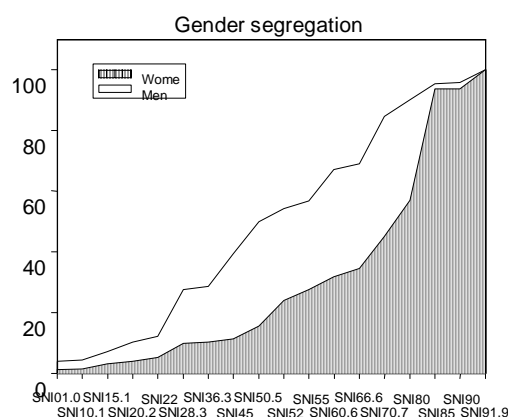


Figure 6b

B.4 Gender wage-gap development

Previous studies have shown that male-female wage differentials dropped significantly during the 1960s and 1970s and until the beginning of the 1980s. During the 1980s the gender wage gap increased slightly and has remained constant during the 1990s. The results in regards to the observed wage gap from different studies and time periods are summarised in Table 1. The results are remarkable since over the past two decades, women's work experience and education levels have risen significantly, closing in on men's experience and education levels. The studies indicate that these factors have contributed to reduce the wage gap but that they are counteracted by increased wage dispersion, given education and experience. Neither do the results of the standardised wage

gap indicate any reduction during the 1990s; instead the gap seems to have increased even in the public sector (le Grand et al. 2001). The growing wage spread is usually "explained" with the common practice of individual wage contracts, but this only raises the question of why such a wage setting structure would be unfavourable towards women. New research, indicating that the gender wage gap between high-income persons is greater in Sweden than in the USA, suggests that women have difficulties in seriously competing with men for the top wages (Albrecht et al., forthcoming).

Table 1. Women's wages in percent of men's 1960-2000 according to different studies

| Study and data | -60 | -68 | -74 | -80 | -81 | -91 | -92 | -95 | -98 | -00 |
|--------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Svensson (1997) | | | | | | | | | | |
| SOS (all employed) | 70.4 | | | 85.6 | | | | 84.6 | | |
| le Grand et al. (2001) | | | | | | | | | | |
| LNU (employed 19-65) | | 71.5 | 77.9 | | 83.2 | 82.4 | | | | 84.5 |
| Björklund et al. (2000) | | | | | | | | | | |
| LNU (employed 18-65) | | 72.0 | | | 81.5 | 80.5 | | | | |
| Albrecht et al. (forthcoming) | | | | | | | | | | |
| SOS (employed 18-65) | | | | | | | 84.1 | 84.6 | 82.4 | |
| Albrecht et al. (1997) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family survey, born 1949-69. | | | | | | | 87.8 | | | |

Source: Holmlund (2001). LNU = Levnadsnivåundersökningen (Level of living survey), SOS= SOS Wages.

B.5 Childcare

During the 1970s and 1980s childcare for pre-school children underwent enormous expansion, which levelled off at the close of the 1980s and then took off again in 1993 (Figure 7). Care for younger school children expanded heavily from the mid-1970s and stabilised at a relatively high level from 1990. Today (2001), municipalities in Sweden can basically meet the need for childcare of both pre-school children and younger school children. Childcare has however had difficulties in maintaining a high-quality level during the 1990s as the service keeps more children though without an increase in staff.

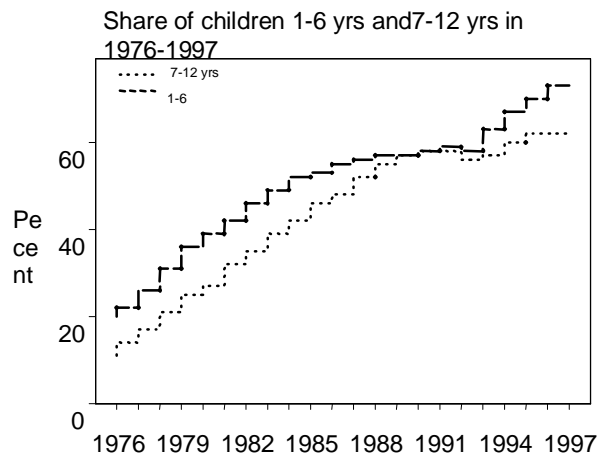


Figure 7.

C. Summary discussion

The 1990s entailed major changes for the Swedish labour market: unemployment rose, employment fell, wage setting was individualised and wage dispersion increased. How was equality between women and men affected? If we start with the positive outcomes for women we note that unemployment for women never exceeded the level for men, as was the case in other Member States. In addition, the fraction of full-time employed women grew considerably, by about 6 percentage points after 1993, probably the largest change in a more equal direction during the period. The fraction of part-time unemployed dropped for both women and men and the fraction of women with fixed-term employment fell somewhat towards the close of the period. Yet another positive point is the decline in gender segregation in the labour market.

As the negative outcomes, the unchanged gender wage gap seems remarkable, especially since high political priority had been given to reducing the gender wage gap. The fact that the employment level for women is still 10 percentage points lower than at the start of the 1990s is a cause for concern with regard to women's possibilities to support themselves and to achieve equality in working life. The constantly higher fraction of women in fixed-term employ-

ment is also worrying, and it also appears that women have great difficulties competing seriously with men for top positions and top wages.

Which effects have the implemented measures, especially those introduced after 1997, had? It is difficult to assess this for two reasons: first, a too short time has passed, and second, the implemented measures constitute the continuation of a policy Sweden has pursued for long. In addition, some measures were very limited. However, by comparing the point in time of the changes with those of the measures, we can draw some simple conclusions. Starting again with the positive outcomes, previous research indicates that the policy of individual taxation, expanded childcare, parental leave, measures to break gender segregation which have long been in force, have had long-term positive effects for women and equality (see Gustafsson 1992, Gustafsson & Stafford 1992, Jonung 1997, Rønsen & Sundström 2001). We have observed the greatest changes in the direction of equality in regards to the share of full-time employed women, though this result appears to have been achieved without any specific policy measures. The decline in part-time unemployment appears to have been achieved by the economic upturn and altered benefit regulations rather than by policy measures, especially since these were introduced in 2000 and 2001. Furthermore, the decline in gender segregation should primarily be seen as a result of the changes in the structure of employment and less as a result of active measures to break segregation. The constant level in the gender wage gap stands out as a policy failure.

To conclude, more in-depth studies and more research are needed to investigate how equality has developed and to assess the effects of political measures. More thorough studies of the mechanisms of the unchanged gender wage gap and the increase in the fraction of women working full time seems particularly urgent.

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Appendix A

Changes in the area of equal opportunities

Below follows a summary of the changes in the equal opportunities area presented in the Swedish national action plan. Investigations and proposals on measures not yet decided upon are also presented. Throughout, we present the government's intention in making the changes and do not comment on the actual fall-out.

A.1 Mainstreaming of the equal opportunities perspective

NAP 1999 Activities are taking place to incorporate an equal opportunities perspective within all policy areas and at all levels. At a central level, activities include training in equal opportunity awareness and the development of routines for handling cases. A similar effort is being made at regional levels. The government has initiated the task of developing a key ratio to follow-up how the equal opportunities perspective is integrated into different areas. At a local level, Svenska Kommunförbundet has developed a method for incorporating the equal opportunities perspective in the county councils' supporting documents for decision

NAP 1999 Statistics Sweden (SCB) has been commissioned to develop statistics to follow-up how the equal opportunities perspective has been considered in the Budget Bill.

NAP 2000 A study of the evaluation of the statistics reform indicates that most of the individual-based statistics are divided according to gender but that there are some insufficiencies. The investigative committee's report has been remitted.

NAP 2000 In September 1999, the National Audit Office (RRV) was given the task of reviewing how the equal opportunities perspective is reflected in the government's management of agencies and reports from the authorities. The task entails proposing possible changes and a report will be submitted no later than June 2000.

NAP 2001 The RRV accounted for the aforementioned assignment during 2000 and reported that the linkage between the overall equal op-

opportunities objectives and the formulated objectives for the agency in question is unclear.

NAP 2001 SCB has developed an equality index that covers all of Sweden's regions and municipalities.

NAP 2001 The government has appointed a committee to shed light on the feasibility of incorporating a system of voluntary equal opportunities branding of products and services. The committee has submitted its first report.

NAP 2001 The government's document A national action plan against racism, xenophobia, homophobia and discrimination has also a bearing on efforts to integrate an equal opportunities perspective in different policy areas.

NAP 2001 Work to develop the form for gender mainstreaming continues. The workgroup set up within the Government Offices will submit its report during 2001.

A.2 Measures to reduce the differences in employment

A.2.1 Work within the labour market policy for equal opportunities

NAP 1999 The government feels that AMV's efforts to break the gender-based differences in the labour market should focus more on counselling and guidance.

NAP 1999 During 1998, AMV initiated the development of a data system for in-depth information divided into men and women. This information will make it easier to see if the measures are used for breaking down or conservation purposes. A project is being set up to design a system in which costs for the measures are accounted for on an individual level.

NAP 2000 One of the objectives of the Adult Education Initiative is to break with the gender-based occupational choices through study and occupational counselling.

NAP 2000 The National Labour Market Board (AMS) has set aside so called "break through funds" for various equal opportunity projects. As of 1998 AMS has prioritised specific development areas, mainstreaming, gender perspective during counselling, counselling programmes in technology for women and more men engaged in teaching courses for elementary school

NAP 2001 This year Ams has also set aside break through funds towards the equal opportunity project. In December 2000 the government instructed AMS to account for the initiatives taken to break with the gender-based labour market. A report is to be made in August 2001.

NAP 2001 An intention of national IT programme introduced in 1998 for a two-year period was that priority should be given to underrepresented groups, such as women.

A.2.2 Measures to break gender-based differences at upper secondary schools:

NAP 1998 A new programme in technology was introduced at the upper secondary school level. The curriculum has been set with the objective of attracting both girls and boys.

NAP 1999 The new programme in technology will be introduced as of 2000.

NAP 2000 The government intends to appoint an investigative committee to review the programmes in upper secondary schools. The starting point is to reduce the social and gender recruitment distortions.

NAP 2001 The government has appointed the aforementioned investigative committee.

A.2.3 Measures to break gender distribution at institutions for higher learning:

NAP 1998 Institutions for higher learning are encouraged to heighten efforts to ensure a more even recruitment of female and male students.

NAP 1999 The institutions have submitted their reports and commented on the aforementioned assignment in the annual report for 1998.

NAP 2000 The academic institutions are to report to the government what efforts are being made to ensure a more even gender-distribution in education and recruitment. Högskoleverket is conducting several assignments and investigations to promote equal opportunities.

NAP 2000 At the start of 2000 Högskoleverket submitted an evaluation of how universities and other institutions for higher learning work towards equal opportunities, student influence and social and ethnic diversity. A follow-up on the evaluation will be carried out within two or three years.

A.2.4 Measures to increase the share of women with research:

- NAP 1999* The recruitment objective to increase the share of female professors was set for 1997-1999 for all universities and Mitthögskolan. Universities and other institutions for higher learning are to set their own targets for other work categories. The academic institutions presented their report in the annual report for 1998. The government expects an increase in the recruitment objectives. The objective is 25 percent female professors by 2008.
- NAP 2000* The academic institutions are to report to the government what efforts are being made to ensure a more even gender-distribution in research education and recruitment of post-graduates.
- NAP 2000* Högskoleverket was commissioned to investigate what efforts have been made in the area of equal opportunities and calculate new recruitment objective concerning the share of female professors. Högskoleverket will also analyse the significance of the promotion reform for equal opportunity objectives.
- NAP 2001* The government has set the goal for 2001-2004 regarding the share of women among newly recruited professors for most academic institutions.

A.2.5 Measures to promote equal opportunity research:

- NAP 1998* Gender research has been allocated new funds for research concerning the labour market and gender.
- NAP 1999* A national secretariat for gender research was founded in 1998 at the University of Gothenburg. The government has also allocated funds to establish a new cross-science research theme at the University of Linköping that focuses on gender research.

A.2.6 Incentives to support women's entrepreneurship:

- NAP 1999* During 1998 Nutek continued to finance and develop its work with business counselling for women.
- NAP 1999* In September 1998 the government gave NUTEK the assignment of presenting information relevant to women's entrepreneurship.
- NAP 2001* The opportunity for women, young people and immigrants to acquire loans for business purposes within the service sector especially is to be reflected in a report.

NAP 2001 The government is planning initiatives to promote entrepreneurship by women and immigrants and is making available SEK 9 million in 2002, SEK 14 million in 2003, and SEK 19 million in 2004.

NAP 2001 The Institute for Growth Policy Studies (ITPS) has been given the task by the government of reviewing whether it is possible to include data in business statistics broken down by gender and ethnic background. This is a result of the fact that it is difficult today to monitor women's participation in newly started businesses and thus difficult to provide supportive measures for women's entrepreneurship.

A.2.7 The Equal Opportunities Act:

NAP 1999 In 1998 the government appointed a committee to review the Equal Opportunities Act. The committee's task was expanded in December 1998 to include an analysis of the issues related to work value.

NAP 2000 During Spring 2000 the government intends to submit a bill to the Riksdag to sharpen the Equal Opportunities Act.

NAP 2001 The Equal Opportunities Act was sharpened as of January 2001. The change entails that the act is to be co-ordinated with other legislation against discrimination in working life and that the reverse burden of proof shall apply.

Furthermore, the law entails that a prohibition against discrimination applies to the whole of the employment process and that wage surveys will be compulsory.

NAP 2001 The question of allowing the equal opportunities experts at the county administrative boards to have supervisory responsibility pursuant to the Equal Opportunities Act is being analysed and is to be concluded during 2001.

A.2.8 Work to reduce wage differences:

NAP 1999 The Institute of Working Life (Arbetslivsinstitutet) and Statistics Sweden (SCB) have been given the task of developing wage statistics for use in in-depth analyses of wage differences. Statistics Sweden has been given the task of developing a better occupational data report.

- NAP 1999* In March 1999, state authorities presented efforts to map and reduce unjustified wage differences. The government will monitor these efforts.
- NAP 1999* The equal opportunities representative (JämO) was granted as of 1997 reinforced resources to address the issue of wage discrimination. JämO has worked with information and opinion building incentives to drive the issue of wage discrimination and map work evaluation systems existing in the labour market. As of 1999, further resources have been allocated to JämO. The objective is that JämO is to address cases concerning unjustified differences in pay.
- NAP 2000* JämO has worked to support and stimulate the development of methods for gender-neutral work evaluations and individual qualification assessment. These efforts include handbooks that offer advice to businesses and organisations.
- NAP 2000* The government has proposed the formation of a Mediation Institute. Among other things, the institute will be responsible for annually analysing wage development from an equal opportunities perspective.
- NAP 2001* The Mediation Institute was set up in June 2000.

A.2.9 Others:

- NAP 2000* The government has taken a decision on a new time utilisation study. The final report which is to be submitted to the government no later than June 30, 2002 may provide valuable information regarding the terms that govern occupational choices and on the possibility of breaking down the gender-based differences in the labour market.
- NAP 2000* The Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communication has initiated a multiple project to address issues concerning the gender-based differences in the labour market.
- NAP 2000* The government has highlighted the equal opportunities perspective in its work with the regional growth agreements. Funds have been allocated to three counties to develop methods to incorporate the gender perspective.
- NAP 2000* In autumn 1999 the government decided to establish a special council for equal opportunities issues within the transport and IT

sector (Jämit). The council shall in June 2000 submit its recommendations for measures for equal opportunities in the IT field.

NAP 2001 Jämit submitted its interim report in June 2000 containing an analysis and proposals for equal opportunities in the IT field. Jämit is to submit its final report in June 2001.

NAP 2001 The government continues its work to stimulate equal opportunity efforts within the business sector.

A.3 Measures to heighten the possibility to reconcile work and family life.

A.3.1 Changes in childcare and care of the elderly

NAP 1998 The Riksdag decided to allocated extra resources to municipalities and counties totalling SEK 16 billion. The Spring Budget Bill proposes a further SEK 4 billion be allocated to municipalities.

NAP 1998 The government announced in a bill for active ageing its intent to review the possibility of making use of the competence of unemployed persons and utilising the labour market measures to heighten skills within care for the elderly.

NAP 1999 A reservation was made for the introduction of a general pre-school and a ceiling on childcare fees. The reform will be introduced gradually and begin 2001.

NAP 2000 The government will submit a bill to the Riksdag on May 30, 2000 concerning public pre-school and a ceiling on childcare fees. As of 2002, SEK 500 million is to be set aside for measures that improve the quality of childcare.

NAP 2001 As of July 2001 the municipalities are obligated to provide pre-school activities to children with unemployed parents. As of January 2002, this obligation is to be extended to include children to parents on parental leave to care for another child. A ceiling on childcare fees is to be introduced in January 2002. Furthermore, all children will as of 2003 be offered a place in a public pre-school from autumn the year of their fourth birthday.

A.3.2 Changes in parental insurance:

- NAP 1999* The government gave the National Social Insurance Board the task of running an information campaign to increase the share of men utilising parental leave.
- NAP 2000* The government has proposed an extension of the parental insurance by 30 days. The extension means that the so-called "father month" and "mother month" are extended by one month.
- NAP 2001* The Riksdag decided in the spring to extend the parental insurance in line with the aforementioned proposal as of January 2002. It was also decided to increase flexibility in the parental insurance and make it possible to take parental benefit as an eighth-time.
- NAP 2001* The government has proposed that the guarantee level in the parental benefit scheme be increased from SEK 60 to SEK 120 per day as of January 2002. Additional increases are to be introduced as of January 2003 to SEK 150 and January 2004 to SEK 180 per day.

A.3.3 Financial support to families:

- NAP 2000* A committee has been appointed to review the financial support to families. The purpose is to analyse the total effects of child allowance, maintenance payment and housing subsidies for families with children. The report is to be submitted in February 2001.
- NAP 2001* The aforementioned committee submitted its report to the government in February 2001. The committee recommends more general types of support to families. The government will decide on the recommendations after the report has been submitted to interested parties for comment.
- NAP 2001* Child allowance and extended child allowance was increased by SEK 100 per child and month as of January 2001. The allowance for large families and the study allowance for young people attending upper secondary school have been increased correspondingly.