

# Gender-equal Policy



## Foreword

Our vision is for Stockholm County Council to set a good example from a gender equality perspective. We feel that power, influence and resources must be equally distributed between the sexes in order to create equitable conditions and prerequisites.

Active efforts are needed to achieve a more gender-equal county council. This is why we have developed this policy, the aim of which is to function as a guide for the county council's gender equality efforts.

The road to a gender-equal county council is a process, an important part of which is to integrate gender equality work into all county council activities in accordance with the principles laid down in this policy. Concrete strategies for the work should include the three cornerstones of education/training, development work and monitoring/follow-up. All county council co-workers and politicians must participate in the work to highlight and rectify the different conditions and prerequisites often faced by women and men and by girls and boys.

This policy can be seen as part of international efforts, in which agreements such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women constitute an important milestone in the work to promote greater equality between the sexes.

The policy has been drawn up under the guidance of a political steering group with representatives of all the parties in Stockholm County Council together with civil servants from the Centre for Public Health, the Central Healthcare Purchasing Office, the Department for Personnel Strategy and the Stockholm County Council Gender Equality Officer.

Gunilla Roxby Cromvall, Left Party, chairperson  
Margareta Herthelius, Liberal Party  
Pia Lidvall, Christian Democrats  
Elin Låby, Green Party  
Lena Cronvall Morén, Moderate Party  
Kristina Söderlund, Social Democrats

The policy for gender equality has been adopted by the County Council Executive Board in May 2006, but not yet adopted by the County Council Assembly.

The scope of the policy  
This policy applies to the entire Stockholm County Council, including SCC as an employer, all its committees, boards, administrations, companies and other actors with which SCC has an agreement.

The policy also covers SCC's activities in relation to the county's inhabitants.

The policy regulates how SCC units shall integrate gender equality issues into their activities, within all areas - healthcare, transport, community planning and culture.

# Introduction

The basis of all the activities of Stockholm County Council (SCC) shall be the fundamental principle that women and men are of equal value. Continuous gender equality efforts shall be integrated into all activities, on all levels including management and decision-making bodies. The aim of these efforts is to even out inequalities between girls and boys, women and men.

## What does gender equality mean?

Gender equality is part of the wider concept of equality, which in democratic contexts is based on the principle that all people are of equal value regardless of ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, education, financial situation, age and sex, etc. The concept of gender equality relates solely to the relationships between women and men.

Gender equality work, which e.g. workplaces have a legal responsibility to perform, is regulated under the Swedish Gender Equality Act and the Swedish Prohibition of Discrimination Act.

Gender equality work shall take into account the fact that the needs and preconditions of women and men are sometimes the same and sometimes different. This is due both to biological and to socially constructed differences, known as gender differences, between the sexes.

## The current situation in Stockholm County Council

SCC plays a key role in the county as a result of many of its activities being of central importance to society. Some of its main tasks - to provide healthcare, dental care and public transport - provide for many of the inhabitants' basic needs: to receive care in the event of illness and help to improve their health, as well as to be able to travel within the county. The Office of Regional Planning and Urban Transportation performs another central task. Through its community planning activities, it too promotes equal living conditions as part of its regional development work.

Since so many people in many different ways are affected by SCC activities, e.g. as employers, healthcare providers, public transport managers and community planners, it is important for the county council promotes gender equality in everything it does.

### The Swedish Prohibition of Discrimination Act (2003:307)

*“In this Act, the term “discrimination” refers to [...] an individual being disadvantaged by being treated less favourably than some other individual is, has been or would have been treated in a comparable situation, if this disadvantaging is associated with sex, ethnic origin, religion or other belief, sexual orientation or disability.”*

SCC has approximately 40 000 employees, 95 per cent of whom are employed in the health service (2005 statistics). This makes the county council one of the county's biggest employers. It also has business partners in the form of suppliers, private enterprises, government and municipal bodies, etc. The primary care services are in contact with about 1 million people on an annual basis, the secondary care services with about 800 000. Approximately 650 000 people travel by the county's public transport every day.

## Gender

The concept of “gender” relates to our cultural interpretation of the biological sex. That which is considered to be masculine and feminine is socially constructed by the values and attitudes that prevail in a certain culture. At the same time, ideas as to what is masculine and what is feminine induce certain attitudes and values, which in turn affect power structures in society, often in the form of male superiority and female inferiority. Examples of this may include the unfair distribution of resources between the sexes or women and men being treated differently in some way.

# SCC activities in relation to the county’s inhabitants

SCC shall help plan a society that is adapted to the needs of girls and boys, women and men alike. SCC shall also strive to even out inequalities caused by “manufactured” differences between the sexes. Not only should this be done for the sake of fairness and justice but also as part of ongoing quality improvement work and as a financial management tool. It is important for resources to be fairly allocated between girls and boys, women and men - an example being that all shall receive equal treatment by the health service. The procurement of products and services by the health service, transport services or other units shall be carried out from a gender equality perspective. Another example relates to AB Storstockholms Lokaltrafik (SL - Stockholm Transport), where women and men shall be given the same opportunities to influence transport services so that they fulfil the needs of both sexes. An important area for SL is to promote the security of its female passengers, e.g. by improving security in its ticket halls and underpasses and by collaborating with municipalities to create safer footpaths and bus-stops/train stations outdoors.

In all the services it provides for the benefit of the county’s inhabitants, SCC shall ensure that resources are fairly distributed between the sexes, that everyone has the same opportunity to access and utilise the services, and that everyone receives the same quality of service.

### SCC shall actively strive to:

- distribute resources fairly between the girls and boys, women and men who utilise SCC services
- SCC shall make demands that promote gender equality when procuring products and services
- knowledge shall be disseminated about the current situation as regards gender equality in the county as well as how it can be improved
- All SCC units shall treat its customers professionally so that girls and boys, women and men are not discriminated against on the basis of their sex.

# SCC as an employer

The overarching aim of SCC as an employer is to promote a work environment that gives women and men the same conditions and opportunities in working life. The county council shall also promote participation and influence at the workplace for both women and men. Active gender equality efforts shall be a natural part of the county council's personnel policy, and include the eradication of unreasonable salary differences between women and men. Work structures and working hours shall make it easier for employees to combine work with parenthood. It is important to combat involuntary part-time work. Another very important area is the active combating of abusive discrimination and sexual harassment.

## SCC shall actively strive to:

- ensure working conditions are suited for both women and men
- apply a gender perspective to the work environment in order to highlight differences in the working conditions of women and men
- eradicate salary differences based on sex
- ensure the work environment is free of abusive discrimination and sexual harassment
- ensure that work structures and working hours make it easier for employees to combine work with parenthood, and combat involuntary part-time work.
- ensure that the proportion of male and female managers reflects the sex distribution across the organisation as a whole. This shall also apply to the allocation of assignments, representation and working tasks
- ensure that women and men are given the same opportunities as regards education/training and skills/career development.

## Strategies

### Education, training and development

Through greater knowledge about prevailing inequalities between the sexes and the likely consequences of such inequalities for both the individual and society as a whole, we can create a more equal society. This is why SCC's gender equality work is important for both its personnel as well as the county's inhabitants. A gender-equal work environment is a precondition for gender-equal activities.

### Activity-focused strategies

All research, training and development activities must adopt a clear gender perspective and gender equality aspects must be integrated into all decisions taken. When distributing research and development funding, gender equality aspects shall be the deciding factors when applications are felt to be of the same scientific value. The county council shall also initiate, take part in and follow relevant gender equality research and development as well as promote the dissemination of the knowledge gained among the county's inhabitants.



## Personnel-focused strategies

Training programmes and other developmental efforts are important as regards the integration of a gender equality perspective within the county council and constitute a natural basis for greater gender awareness. All SCC co-workers shall therefore familiarise themselves with the content of this gender equality policy. In order to break prevailing trends of inequality, all employees shall be made aware of existing gender structures, that that a more “gender-aware” approach can pervade the organisation.

Examples of developmental efforts include encouraging the underrepresented sex to go on training programmes/gain qualifications and apply for certain posts. To encourage equal sex distribution within various professional groups, gender-equal work evaluation and salary-setting methods should also be developed. Current salary-setting methods should be studied from a gender-equality perspective and unreasonable salary differences between women and men shall be eradicated.

For gender equality work to be well supported and upheld, SCC managers need to prioritise the integration of gender-equality issues into day-to-day activities. One of the distinguishing characteristics of good leadership shall be the active promotion of a more gender-equal county council. When recruiting managers, experience in and knowledge of gender equality work shall be considered an additional qualification and if this knowledge is lacking, the employer shall ensure that training is provided.

SCC shall actively endeavour to:

- ensure all SCC co-workers are aware of the content of this policy
- ensure that all co-workers are made aware of existing gender structures
- develop gender-equal work evaluation and salary-setting methods
- eradicate unreasonable salary differences between women and men
- ensure managers work actively to integrate gender equality issues into day-to-day activities
- treat experience in and knowledge of gender equality work as an additional qualification when recruiting managers
- promote research and development in the gender equality field
- promote knowledge dissemination within the gender equality field among the county’s inhabitants
- ensure that research and development funding is reviewed from a gender equality perspective

## Monitoring/Follow-up

Gender equality work shall be an integral part of the annual plan of activities and be followed up each year in the annual report. Furthermore, it shall be possible to continuously monitor gender equality work within the county council. To this end, all units shall establish measurable targets. An important part of this is to have sex-disaggregated statistics for the various units. Sex-disaggregated statistics are compiled and presented by sex and are analysed from a gender equality perspective.

The aim of compiling and following up sex-disaggregated statistics is to define suitable measures and goals for gender equality work. A case in point is for sex-disaggregated statistics to be compiled on the care received by girls and boys, women and men in order to highlight any sex differences in the distribution of healthcare resources.

Needs analyses shall be performed and presented as sex-disaggregated so that they reflect the real needs of girls and boys, women and men. Based on these needs analyses, follow-ups shall be performed that present the measures implemented to, where necessary, even out inequalities between the sexes and outline the effects such measures have had. The needs analyses shall identify whether resources are fairly distributed between the sexes, whether everyone has the same access to and possibility to utilise the services, and whether everyone receives the same quality of service.

It is also important to perform regular qualitative surveys of those aspects of gender equality that are not possible to analyse using statistics. Examples of such aspects include how people feel they are received by the health service (the politeness of the staff, etc.), access to care and services, feelings of being abused, having one's rights violated, etc.

A fundamental principle as regards both follow-up and measures is that plans of activities and other policy documents adopt a gender equality perspective for all SCC activities, which applies to both employees and end-users alike, in other words, the gender equality perspective shall cover the entire organisation and all its activities. How gender equality work is regulated in policy documents shall be based on sex-disaggregated statistics and the gender equality perspective laid down in this policy.

As a result of its comprehensive activities, SCC can and shall make an invaluable contribution to the promotion of gender equality for the entire population of Stockholm County. Promoting gender equality and improving the living conditions of the county's inhabitants go hand in hand.

### Monitoring the county council's gender equality work involves:

- including it as part of the annual plan of activities for all units
- following it up in all annual reports
- all units having measurable targets for their gender equality work
- all statistics compiled within SCC being sex-disaggregated
  - needs analyses being performed and followed up
- a resource distribution index being developed and presented in annual reports
- qualitative surveys being conducted in order to highlight aspects of gender equality that cannot be analysed using statistics.

Stockholm County Council (SCC) is currently working within many areas to promote gender equality across the county. A large number of documents and programmes taking a gender equality perspective have been developed, including the Public Health Policy, the Personnel Policy, the Programme and Action Plan for the Care of Women Victims of Violence, the Environment Policy Programme, the Action Plan for the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and A Value Framework for the Provision of Health and Medical Care in Stockholm County Council.

Contact Details:

Stockholm County Council  
Gunilla Roxby Cromvall  
Politician The Left Party  
Phone: +46 73 966 12 92  
E-mail: [gunilla.roxby-cromvall@politik.sll.se](mailto:gunilla.roxby-cromvall@politik.sll.se)