



European
Commission

Gender-balance in decision-making in the context of COVID-19

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**Gender balanced decision making
in the light of Covid-19: the
outcome within Swedish public
administration**

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Justice

The framework

- Feminist government
- Overarching objective: women and men shall have the same power to shape society and their own lives
- Sub-goal 1: An equal division of power and influence → includes decision-making
- Goals and sub-goals are set and do not change in times of crisis

Statistics

- Committees and Commissions of Inquiry appointed within the Government Offices (2018):
 - Overall: 54 % women and 46 % men
 - Chairs: 48 % women and 52 % men
- Parliamentary committees (bigger and more influential)
 - Chairs still a majority of men (18 men and 10 women)
- Members of Boards in Government Agencies:
 - Overall: 52 % women and 48 % men
 - Chairs: 51 % women and 49 % men

Covid-19

- The ways in which official appointments are made have not been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

How?

- 1988 targets: 30% women in the Boards of Government Agencies and Commissions of Inquiry by 1990, 40% by 1992 and 50% by 1995. Followed-up every year by Statistics Sweden.
- 2015: Formal lunch including all State secretaries → a new routine for appointment
- Agreed goal: a gender equal distribution in Committees, Commissions of Inquiry and Boards of Government Agencies by 2018.

How?

- Each appointment of a Chair, Main investigator or Member of Board has to be approved by the Division for Gender Equality.
- Each Ministry has to enclose a list accounting for the gender distribution of Chairs, Main investigators or Members of Boards within that Ministry.
- If a gender equal distribution, in spite of efforts, is not possible → explanatory memorandum. The memorandum is subject to approval of the Division for Gender Equality.

Commission of Inquiry: Covid-19

- Newly appointed Commission of Inquiry to evaluate the measures taken by the Government and municipalities during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Commission has a gender equal composition of members.
- The measures that have been taken by the government and municipalities are to be evaluated also from a gender equality perspective

Challenges and lessons learned

- Routines that hold fast in times of crisis. In the case of Sweden no changes of established routines.

Soft measures =

- No quotas
- No legislation