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REVISED EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER

10th National Report on the implementation of
the Revised European Social Charter

submitted by

THE GOVERNMENT OF SWEDEN

(Articles 8, 17, 27 and 31
for the period 01/01/2003 – 31/12/2009;
(Articles 7, 16 and 19
for the period 01/01/2005 – 31/12/2009)

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CYCLE 2011

Submitted by the Government of Sweden in accordance with Article 21 of the Revised European Social Charter on the measures taken to give effect to the following provisions of **the Revised European Social Charter**

Accepted provisions of Articles 7, 8, 16, 17, 19, 27 and 31 for the period 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2009.

In accordance with Article 23 of the Charter copies of this Report have been communicated to

- (1) Svenskt Näringsliv (Confederation of Swedish Enterprise)
- (2) Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting (Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions)
- (3) Arbetsgivarverket (Swedish Agency for Government Employers)
- (4) Landsorganisationen i Sverige (Swedish Trade Union Confederation)
- (5) Tjänstemännens Centralorganisation (Swedish Confederation for Professional Employees)
- (6) SACO, Sveriges Akademikers Centralorganisation (Swedish Confederation of Professional Organisations).

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Article 7 – The right of children and young persons to protection

Article 7§1

1) The general legal framework

Reference is made to the previous report.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Article 7§2

1) The general legal framework

Reference is made to the previous report.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant

Reference is made to the previous report.

Additional information with reference to Conclusions 2006

Since 2006 the Swedish Work Environment Authority has made an annual inspection during the summer months of workplaces where many young people (under 24) work. In 2009 a total of 577 workplaces were inspected, chiefly within the commercial sector, restaurant and care services, golf and riding clubs, and in the recreation sector and park maintenance. Various requirements were made in connection with 189 inspections. In all, 457 requirements were imposed, primarily relating to systematic work environment efforts and concerning risk assessments and routines. These inspections will continue in future in workplaces where many young people work since introduction and guidance have often been neglected in these workplaces, which in itself involves a risk of accidents.

Sections 5 - 7 of the AFS 1996:1 regulations (see below) concerning minors include provisions for certain hazardous jobs. The exception under Section 5, first paragraph item 2b only applies to young people who have undergone vocational training for the assignment in question. The training must be regulated by an approved syllabus, which constitutes a guarantee of the type demanded that the young people have been instructed concerning the risks that may arise in their work.

Section 5 A minor who works as an employee, entrepreneur or in some other way or is undergoing training, may not be engaged for or carry out the assignments specified in annex 1. However, this prohibition does not apply in the following cases.

1 If the assignments are included in teacher-supervised tuition located on school premises or some other place specially arranged for tuition.

2 If the minor has completed compulsory schooling and reaches the age of at least 16 during the calendar year and either

a) the assignments are part of vocational training and take place directly under the leadership of a specially appointed instructor or

b) the minor has completed vocational training for the assignment in question.

Exceptions 1 and 2 only apply if the contents of the training are regulated in a syllabus that has been approved by the authority responsible for the training or by an employers' organisation jointly with a trade union or comparable workers' organisation.

Where specified in annex 1, the exceptions under 1 and 2 only apply if a doctor has assessed that the minor may be engaged for the work without the risk of overstrain or other harmful effect on the minor's health or development.

Section 6 The person appointed instructor under Section 5, 2a shall have good knowledge of the work and its hazards. He shall continually ensure that the pupil works in a safe way and is aware of the risks involved in the work. He shall have sufficient time set aside to fulfil his/her assignment as instructor.

Section 7 A minor may under no circumstances be engaged for or carry out the work specified in annex 2.

Article 7§3

1) The general legal framework

Reference is made to the previous report.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Additional information with reference to Conclusions 2006

Regarding the rule that half of the summer holidays shall be protected from work, irrespective of the length of the holiday, Sweden maintains what was previously stated. In Sweden the summer holidays are approx. 10-12 weeks. Under Section 9 of the Work Environment Authority's provisions on minors, AFS 1996:01 (see below), minors must have four weeks consecutive holiday from work during the year. The holiday must be planned to be taken at a time that is free from scheduled tuition. Over a long period (30 years) Sweden has been criticised on this point. This time as previously we wish to draw attention to the protective mechanisms that exist to ensure that children's work does not encroach on their opportunities to benefit from compulsory schooling (i.a. rules on working hours, the requirement that only light work may be carried out and parents' consent). In addition, it is stressed that it would be unreasonable to apply the rule in question as the Swedish summer holidays are so long.

Regarding the question concerning holiday during the year that is shorter than one week, under Section 9 AFS 1996:01 the same rules apply to these holidays as to normal school weeks.

Section 9 When a minor is engaged for work as an employee before the calendar year in which he or she reaches the age of 16 or before compulsory schooling has been completed, the following special provisions apply.

1 Work must be organised so that it is simple and without risk.

2 Work may in total comprise at most two hours per school day and twelve hours a week. On school-free days, work hours may not exceed seven hours a day. However, work carried out during continuous school-free time of at least a week may comprise up to 35 hours a week or for those who have reached the age of 15, 40 hours a week and at most 8 hours a day.

3 Work may not be carried out between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m.

4 The minor must have at least 14 hours continuous time off work every 24 hours for a night's rest.

5 The minor must have a continuous period of time off work during each seven-day period (weekly rest). As far as possible time off shall comprise two continuous days and be arranged at the end of the week. This weekly rest period may not be less than 36 hours. It shall be arranged for a time that is free from scheduled tuition.

6 The minor must be free from work for at least four continuous weeks every calendar year. Time off work shall be arranged at times that are free from scheduled tuition.

7 A guardian must have given permission for work. Furthermore, for work on a school day before school starts and after the end of the school day, the head teacher must have given permission if more than five school days a term are involved.

Article 7§4

1) The general legal framework

Reference is made to the previous report.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or other information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Article 7§7

1) The general legal framework

Reference is made to the previous report.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Article 7§8

1) The general legal framework

Reference is made to the previous report.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Article 7§9

1) The general legal framework

Reference is made to the previous report.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Additional information with reference to Conclusions 2006

Regarding the requirement of the introduction of a general rule concerning regular health checks of minors who carry out hazardous work, Sweden maintains what was previously stated. There is no such rule in Swedish law. Regarding health checks the principle is that they are only required when they can reduce or prevent risks. Under the Charter, the individual states decide which jobs are hazardous. In Sweden this list is very long and also includes jobs where the health check in itself cannot minimize the risks. Instead, in these cases Swedish law focuses on doing something about the risk, for example by imposing the requirement of hearing protection at noisy workplaces. Rules about medical examinations that apply in cases where it is considered they can eliminate or reduce risks apply to everyone, that is to say also to minors. Furthermore, the employer shall prescribe a health check in individual cases where he or she considers it motivated in order to protect a minor's health. In addition to this, all upper secondary school pupils are guaranteed a health check during school time.

Article 7§10

1) The general legal framework

Reference is made to the previous report.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report and to the following additional information.

In 2007, the Government presented the second updated version of the National Plan of Action against commercial sexual exploitation of children. The first was introduced in 1998,

and was first updated in 2001. The 2007 Plan of Action contains on the one hand a description of the work carried out in the area since 2001 and, on the other, a number of measures that the Government has chosen to initiate in order to further speed up efforts to prevent and combat sexual exploitation of children. The Government will follow up the Plan of Action in connection with Sweden's next report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which will be in 2012. The Government further decided on 10 July 2008 on a national Plan of Action against prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes (Gov. communication 2007/08:167). The overriding objective of the Plan of Action is to combat prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes and give increased protection and support to those who are exposed to it. The Plan of Action contains 36 measures to counter prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes. It is estimated over SEK 215 million will be used to implement the Plan of Action during the period 2008-2010. The measures in the Plan of Action are taking place within five special areas; increased protection and support for those exposed, strengthened preventative work, increased quality and efficiency in the judicial system, increased national and international cooperation, as well as increased knowledge.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Article 8 – Right of employed women to protection of maternity

Article 8§1

1) The general legal framework 2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Additional information with reference to Conclusions 2005

Sweden has been criticised on this point since there are no rules in Swedish legislation concerning six weeks' compulsory leave in connection with childbirth. There are, on the other hand, rules in Swedish law to the effect that an employer is obliged to let women utilise their right to leave of absence. The right to leave is very extensive. As was previously reported, in practice all women are on leave at least six weeks after childbirth, There is therefore nothing to prevent women from being on leave in connection with childbirth.

Increased allowance during maternity leave/parental leave

A woman who is pregnant can apply for parental allowance and leave from her work 60 days before the expected time of birth at the earliest. If the woman has a dangerous or heavy job and cannot be transferred to another post, she is entitled to leave of absence from work during the entire pregnancy or parts of the pregnancy. In this case maternity allowance is paid. Parental allowance (for 390 days per child) and maternity allowance amount to 80 per cent of the employee's income entitling to sickness benefit. Income entitling to sick benefit is often equivalent to the employee's previous salary, up to a specific income ceiling. Regarding parental allowance, this ceiling was increased from seven and a half to ten times the price base amount as from 1 July 2006. In 2009 the highest income entitling to sickness benefit for calculation of parental allowance was SEK 428 000. The highest payment per day was SEK 901 and the lowest SEK 180 a day. The income ceiling in pregnancy allowance is still seven and half times the price base amount. The raised ceiling for parental allowance makes it possible for more parents to receive compensation equivalent to 80 per cent of their salary and can increase incentives for men to draw parental allowance. It should also be mentioned that many parents have the possibility of receiving additional compensation in connection with parental leave through their employer. The level of the extra payment varies between different trades and collective agreements.

As from 1 July 2006 the amount for full parental allowance at the lowest level (90 days per child) was increased from SEK 60 a day to SEK 180 a day and applies to children born as from 1 July 2006. Parents who have no previous income receive a basic amount instead of an income-related parental allowance, this amount was also increased to SEK 180 a day.

Article 8§3

1) The general legal framework 2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Article 16 – The right of the family to social, legal and economic protection

Reference is made to previous reports on Article 16 and 12 as well as to the additional information given below.

A. Social protection

Housing

1) The general legal framework

Phasing out of production subsidies

As from 1 January 2007 no new production subsidies are granted for the construction of ordinary housing. The subsidies affected include the investment grant for the construction of rented housing in areas with a shortage of housing which was introduced in 2001 and the investment incentive for the construction of small rented dwellings and student housing introduced in 2003. These subsidies were time-limited to the end of 2006 and ended in accordance with the decision of the Riksdag when they were introduced. So-called interest subsidies, in existence since 1993, have been terminated following a proposal by the Government in the 2007 Fiscal Bill. The decision of the Riksdag also means that interest subsidies that have been granted will be phased out over a five-year period to subsequently cease completely.

Acquisition guarantees

Acquisition guarantees mean that the state may issue credit guarantees to credit institutes that lend money to private individuals for the purchase of housing. The acquisition guarantee applies to the interest payments of first time buyers up to SEK 100 000 for at most ten years in connection with loans for a permanent dwelling, for example an ownership right in a tenant-owners' flat or own home . The purpose of the guarantee is to facilitate establishment and create greater freedom of choice for the consumers on the housing market. It is estimated the proposal will produce effect above all for young people and tenants in areas where rented flats are being converted into tenant owners' building societies. In 2009 only one guarantee was disbursed.

Rent guarantees

A state grant is given to municipalities that have provided surety for individual households' obligation to pay rent for their dwelling (municipal rent guarantees). The purpose of a municipal rent guarantee is to support households that are financially able to manage the costs of their own housing but, in spite of this, have difficulty in becoming established on the housing market and obtaining rented accommodation with protection of tenancy right. A grant is given in the amount of SEK 5 000 per rent guarantee which, following a means test municipalities have provided to individual households that do not have their own independent housing. A precondition shall be that the households for which the guarantees are provided have obtained housing with tenancy right and protection of tenancy right and also that the rent guarantee covers at least six monthly rents. The grant is given for rent guarantees provided as from 1 July 2007. During 2009, 15 municipalities were awarded grants for 128 guarantees.

Changes have been made to the housing allowance. (see under Economic protection). The changes chiefly affect single parents with children and strengthen their financial situation.

2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Counteracting homelessness and facilitating establishment

The Government has raised its level of ambition as regards counteracting homelessness and therefore invested SEK 66 million during the period 2007-2009 primarily in local development work.

The Government's strategy against homelessness

The Government adopted a strategy to counteract homelessness and exclusion from the housing market. An essential objective was to reduce the number of evictions and to ensure that no children are evicted. The strategy covered the period 2007-2009. Statistics kept as from 2008 show that the number of children affected by eviction – when both or one of the parents is given notice to leave their dwelling – decreased between 2008 and 2009 by 14 per cent, from 716 to 618 children. Thus the goal that no children should be evicted has not been reached. There is no information concerning how many children actually have been evicted in the households subject to eviction. In 153 municipalities in Sweden no children at all have been affected by eviction. See also under heading 1) The general legal framework and Rent guarantees.

The Committee requests information concerning how Roma families' right to housing is to be met. Roma families' right to housing does not differ from other people's right to housing. Under Chapter 2, Section 12 of the Discrimination Act, discrimination is prohibited on the part of a natural or legal person who, outside the private and family sphere, supplies housing to the general public. However, investigations carried out in 2008 and 2010 by the former Ombudsman against ethnic discrimination and the new Ombudsman against ethnic discrimination showed that discrimination of the Roma does occur on the housing market. In 2006 the Government set up a committee with the task, *inter alia*, of proposing measures to improve the situation of the Roma. The committee submitted its report "The rights of the Roma – a strategy for the Roma in Sweden", in July 2010. In this report, it is proposed that further analyses of the problems for this group on the housing market be carried out in order to be able to initiate possible further measures. The report has been circulated for consultation until the end of December 2010 and will then be processed in the Government Offices. For further information on the new Discrimination Act reference is made to Article 27.

Childcare facilities

1) The general legal framework and 2) The measures taken

Under the Education Act municipalities are obliged to provide preschool activities and school-age child care for children aged 1-12 years to the extent necessary in order that parents can be gainfully employed or study or if the child has its own need of the activity. The obligation also comprises preschool activities for children whose parents are unemployed or on parental leave for a sibling. These children must be offered a place in preschool or educational care (as from 1 July 2009, the concept family day-care home has

been changed to educational care) at least three hours a day or 15 hours a week. The municipalities' obligation to organise universal preschool has been extended and now applies to all children from the autumn term in the year the child reaches the age of three as from 1 July 2010. More children will thereby have access to preschool free of charge. The preschool time free of charge comprises 525 hours a year.

A childcare capitation allowance has been introduced as part of a reform of family policy. The childcare capitation allowance is a municipal grant to private approved preschool activities and school-age child care. In that the municipalities will now be obliged to provide grants to approved forms of educational care in addition to preschools and leisure-time centres, a childcare capitation allowance system has been created. Thus, the municipal grant follows the child to the activity the parents themselves choose. The aim in introducing a childcare capitation allowance is to increase parents' freedom of choice and chances of choosing different forms of educational activities for their children. The law amendments relating to the introduction of a childcare capitation allowance entered into force on 1 July 2009. It is the municipality that decides the level of the grant to the activity in question on the same grounds as applied by the municipality in connection with the distribution of resources to its own activities.

On 1 July 2008 the Government introduced a municipal childcare allowance. The childcare allowance gives parents greater opportunities to be at home and care for their children during the period the child is between one and three years old and is an alternative to publicly financed preschool activities. The childcare allowance is voluntary for the municipalities and amounts at most to SEK 3 000 a month. Further information is available below under Economic protection.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

In 2009 preschool activities comprised 86 per cent of all 1-5-year-olds. Over 466 000 children were in preschool and educational care in 2009 where approximately 97 000 adults are employed. In 2009 the total cost of preschool was SEK 52.9 billion. The number of children per annual worker (number of employees converted to year-round work) was 5.4 children.

Family counselling services

In 2009 the Government presented a proposal for a national strategy for extended parent support. Parent support is defined as an activity that gives parents knowledge of children's health, emotional, cognitive and social development and strengthens parents' social network. The overall goal of the strategy is that all parents be offered parent support during the childhood and adolescence of their child. During 2009 and 2010 the Government is to invest SEK 70 million each year to stimulate developments in parent support and carefully monitor development work. The National Institute of Public Health (FHI) distributes the money to a selection of municipalities which, together with researchers, are to develop and evaluate the municipality's parent support. For further information please see the report concerning Article 17.

Regarding the question as to whether family organisations are always consulted in the matter of legislation concerning family policy, reference is made to previous reports.

Depending on the nature of the issue, the opinions of authorities and also non-profit organisations are obtained, however there is no formal list of all organisations that are always consulted but rather the consultation bodies are chosen with reference to the legislation matter involved.

B. Legal protection

Violence against women

1) The general legal framework

Gross violation of a woman's integrity is a crime which came into force on 1 July 1998 in chapter 4, Section 4a of the Swedish Penal Code. The crime refers to a number of criminal acts, for example assault or sexual exploitation, committed by a man against a woman to whom he is or has been married or with whom he is or has been cohabiting. If the acts were part of a repeated violation of the woman's integrity and thus seriously damage her self-confidence, the crime is called gross violation of a woman's integrity. Gross violation of a woman's integrity is a more serious offence than "ordinary" assault while gross assault or rape is even more serious. During the present term of office the government has initiated an evaluation of the application of the provisions to determine how the provisions have been applied and whether they have had the desired effect. The evaluation will be finished March 31, 2011.

On 1 July 2007, Chapter 5, Section 11 of the Social Services Act (2001:453) was amended to clarify the obligation of social welfare committees regarding the provision of help and support to crime victims. The amendment is intended to clarify the responsibility of municipalities to help and support crime victims. The revision specifies that a municipality shall – rather than should – give special consideration to the needs of women exposed to violence and of children who have witnessed violence. The Government has given several instructions to the National Board of Health and Welfare to improve knowledge-based support the municipalities in their implementation of the amendments to the Social Services Act (see more below).

2) The measures taken

Preventing and combating all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, is highly prioritized by the Government. The point of departure for this work is that any and all forms of violence against women and girls comprises a major obstacle to women's and girls' enjoyment of human rights as well as to achieving gender equality. Sweden's commitments within the framework of UN and Council of Europe efforts in this area also represent an important basis for national action.

In the autumn of 2007, the Government took a decision on an action plan to combat men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour, and violence in same-sex relationships. The action plan which includes data collection and analysis, prevention and protection measures, higher standards and greater efficiency in the judicial system, better measures targeting violent offenders, increased cooperation and coordination and enhanced knowledge and competence is still in force. The Swedish Government has allocated a total of SEK 1 billion in 56 different measures during the present

term of office. A few of the measures are presented below. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention is mandated to evaluate the plan and will present the report in January 2011.

Funding to assist women subjected to violence

The municipalities receive yearly special funding (109 million SEK) for measures to reinforce and develop their work to support and assist women subjected to violence and children who have witnessed violence in accordance with the legislation, for example to develop and strengthen sheltered housing for battered women.

Improve knowledge-based support to social services

The Government has instructed the National Board of Health and Welfare to improve knowledge-based support to the social services for their work with battered women and with children who witness violence. The Board has presented guidelines in order to support the municipalities in their implementation of the amendments to the Social Services Act (2001:453), and to meet the need for knowledge support to social service staff working in this field.

Developing risk assessments

The Government has given the National Board of Health and Welfare a mandate to initiate development concerning risk assessments relating to custody, residence and access.

Counteract violence and oppression in the name of honour

The Government has assigned the county administrative boards to provide funding for measures to prevent violence and oppression in the name of honour. The Östergötland County Administrative Board, in addition to its regional mandate, is providing funding for action at national or supraregional level against violence and oppression in the name of honour.

Increased support to women's shelters and crime victim support centres etc

The Government has increased the organisational funding distributed by the National Board of Health and Welfare to organisations involved in combating violence against women. The work undertaken by voluntary women's shelters, crime victim support centres and other voluntary organisations are a valuable complement to the support services provided by the municipalities. Also, these organisations work across a broad spectrum to raise awareness in the community about issues relating to men's violence against women, violence and oppression in the name of honour and violence in same-sex relationships.

Development of physical environments for the investigation of violence against women

The Government has given further funding to the National Police Board in a project to develop a physical environment that is specially adapted to the investigation of crimes of violence and other forms of abuse directed at women.

Increased assault protection

The National Police Board has been mandated to develop a assault protection kit in order to prevent women living under threat become victims of violence.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Statistics on men's violence against women in Sweden 2009.

The number of reported assault offences continued to increase in 2009. A total of over 86 000 assault offences were registered during the year which is an increase of two per cent compared with 2008. However, the increase varies between different forms of assault. There was a particularly strong increase in the number of reported cases of assault on children. The number of reports of assault on women also increased, above all assault on young women. This development may be seen in the light of the fact that the police have made major efforts to encourage more women to report this type of crime. Regarding assault on men, the number of reported offences has been relatively stable over the last three years. A pattern in the context of reported assault offences is that men and boys are chiefly exposed to violence by an unknown perpetrator out of doors, while women and girls are exposed to violence by an unknown perpetrator indoors. In report statistics, sexual offences have increased considerably in recent years. Approximately 15 700 sexual offences were reported in 2009. Almost 6 000 of these were rape and girls and women represented over 90 per cent of the victims. Both the number of reported cases of rape and of sexual offences in general has thereby increased by nine per cent since 2008. In this respect too there has been a particularly strong increase in reported offences against children. The number of unrecorded cases relating to violence against women in close relationships is estimated to be considerable. The National Council for Crime Prevention estimates that only 20-25 per cent of violence against women in close relationships is reported to the police. See also: http://www.bra.se/extra/pod/?action=pod_show&id=7&module_instance=2

Number of reported cases of assault on women aged 15 or over:	29 200
of which are unknown to the perpetrator:	27%
and known to the perpetrator:	73%
Number of reported cases of assault on men aged 15 or over:	45 900
of which are unknown to the perpetrator:	66%
and known to the perpetrator:	34%
Number of reported cases of gross violation of a woman's integrity:	2 657
Number of reported cases of rape women aged 15 or over:	3 855
Number of reported cases of rape men aged 15 or over:	124

Source: Official crime statistics, National Council for Crime Prevention

Table: reported crimes 2005-2009, assault and rape

Year	Assault child. 0-14 år	Assault women 15 år-	Assault men 15 år-	Rape
2005	8 286	24 097	40 262	3 787
2006	8 806	25 491	42 722	4 208
2007	9 619	26 857	45 786	4 749
2008	10 460	28 315	45 791	5 446
2009	11 100	29 282	45 899	5 937

Source: Official crime statistics, National Council for Crime Prevention

C. Economic protection

Family policy

Parental insurance

1) The general legal framework

The income ceiling in connection with calculation of income entitling to sickness benefit for parental benefit was increased from seven and a half to ten times the price base amount as from 1 July 2006. The income ceiling for temporary parental benefit and pregnancy benefit is seven and a half times the price base amount. In 2009 the highest income entitling to sickness benefit for calculating parental benefit was SEK 428 000. The highest payment per day was SEK 910 and the lowest SEK 180 a day. The raised ceiling enables more parents to obtain compensation equivalent to 80 per cent of salary and can increase incentives for men to draw parental benefit. It should also be mentioned that many parents have a possibility of receiving additional compensation in connection with parental leave through their employer. The level of the extra payment varies between trades and agreements.

The amount for full parental benefit at the lowest level (90 days per child) was increased to SEK 180 a day as from 1 July 2006 and applies to children born as from 1 July 2006. The increase also means that those who have no previous income and therefore do not have income-based parental benefit received an increased basic amount.

The temporary parental benefit was extended in the case of care of a seriously ill child under 18. For these children temporary parental benefit may be paid for an unlimited number of days when the child is undergoing treatment for its illness and without treatment the child's life would be in danger.

2) The measure taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

In 2009 parental benefit was paid to 377 673 women and to 292 846 men. Most days with parental benefit are paid to women.

Maintenance support

1) The general legal framework

As from February 2006 maintenance support was increased by SEK 100 to SEK 1273 per month and child. The base deduction of the parent who is under obligation to pay maintenance, that is to say the amount the parent obliged to pay maintenance may retain for his/her own living expenses before maintenance is calculated, was increased from SEK 72 000 to SEK 100 000.

2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

In December 2009, maintenance support was paid out to 158 408 parents for a total of 254 606 children. There were 152 207 parents who were to pay back all or part of the maintenance support to the state (parents under the obligation to pay maintenance allowance). At the end of 2009 there were approximately 498 000 children who were not living with both their parents. This means that many parents solve the maintenance issue themselves which is one of the Government's set objectives for family policy. The proportion who manage the maintenance issue themselves, either through direct payments or in that the children live alternately with each parent, has increased over a number of years.

Housing allowance

1) The general legal framework

New rules for housing allowance were introduced on 1 January 2006. The changes mean, among other things, that the part of the housing allowance granted as a special allowance to families with children was increased. Furthermore, an access allowance was introduced for parents who due to custody or access have their children living with them periodically. Changes were also implemented to the calculation of the part of the housing allowance that is based on housing costs.

Income, housing costs, size of the dwelling, how many children the applicant has as well as where the children live determine the right to and size of housing allowance. The maximum allowance that can be paid when the applicant has custody of the child, the child mainly lives with the applicant and the child is registered at the applicant's address is:

1 child	SEK 2600
2 children	SEK 3200
3 children	SEK 4000

2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

In the month of December 2009, a total of 137 255 households with children received housing allowance. The great majority of households had children living at home, however there is also the possibility of receiving payment for children under a right of access. The majority of applicants are women in single households,

Child allowance

1) The general legal framework

On 1 October 2005 child allowance was increased from SEK 950 to SEK 1050 per child and month. At the same time the large-family supplement was increased by SEK 100 and a large-

family supplement of SEK 100 was introduced for the second child. On 1 July 2010 the large-family supplement was increased again. (see table for the relevant amounts)

Table: Child allowance and large-family supplement per month, 1 July 2010.

No of children	Child allowance (SEK)	Large-family supplement (SEK)	Amount
1	1050	-	1050
2	2100	150	2250
3	3160	604	3754
4	4200	1614	5814
5	5250	2864	8114

2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

On 1 July 2006 it became possible for parents to share child allowance between them. In the case of joint custody of a child, general child allowance is paid to the parent who has been registered with the social insurance office as the recipient of the child allowance by the parents jointly. If no notification is made the allowance is paid to the mother. For parents living apart with joint custody of a child who lives alternately with each parent, a possibility is being introduced of sharing the child allowance so that half is paid to each parent. In 2009 child allowance was disbursed for approximately 670 000 children at a cost of almost SEK 23.4 billion. General child allowance constituted almost 90 per cent of the cost (just under SEK 21 billion), the large-family supplement was responsible for about 9 per cent (slightly more than SEK 2 billion) and the extended child allowance just over 1 per cent (about SEK 287 million).

Gender equality bonus

1) The general legal framework

On 1 July 2008 a gender equality bonus was introduced that gives parents better economic chances and incentives for sharing parental leave more equally and also improving the preconditions for increased gender equality on the labour market. The gender equality bonus shall be calculated on the basis of how a child's parents apportion parental leave with parental benefit. Parents who take an equal number of days with parental benefit receive a maximum bonus of SEK 13 500 together on condition that they work when the other parent draws parental benefit. Parents who have joint custody of a child are entitled to a gender equality bonus. Payment of the gender equality bonus is made by credit entry in the parent's tax account.

2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

The social insurance office was given the task of informing parents about the gender equality bonus and also, through information, of giving parents better chances of choosing how they want to divide the days with parental benefit between them. The social insurance office distributes information to parents who are estimated to be entitled to the gender equality bonus with a request to apply for the bonus. A first analysis of how parents use the gender equality bonus has been carried out by the social insurance office. In 2009 it is estimated 12 066 parents were entitled to a gender equality bonus based on their withdrawal of parental benefit during the year. Of these, 72 per cent applied and about 57 per cent of all

those entitled received a bonus (6833). So far, it has not been possible to observe any significant impact of the gender equality bonus on withdrawals of parental benefit.

Municipal childcare allowance

1) The general legal framework

The Government introduced a municipal childcare allowance on 1 July 2008. The childcare allowance offers parents increased opportunities to be at home and care for their children during the period the child is between one and three years old and is an alternative to publicly financed preschool activities. The childcare allowance can be combined with gainful employment but not with payments received in connection with unemployment, sickness etc. The childcare allowance is voluntary for the municipalities and amounts at most to SEK 3000 a month.

2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

In the autumn of 2010 approximately 100 municipalities made it possible to receive the allowance. A first survey for the period 1 July 2009 to 31 December 2009 shows that a total of 3316 applications were received, 88 per cent of which were approved. All in all, childcare allowance was paid for 3025 children during the period. This is equivalent to about two per cent of the total number of children aged 1-3 in the municipalities that have introduced a childcare allowance. A further statistical survey will be presented on 1 March 2011.

The cost of economic family policy amounted to SEK 68 billion in 2009. During 2009 the following amounts were disbursed for the major benefits: child allowance SEK 23 365 million, parental benefit SEK 25 230 million, temporary parental benefit SEK 4 639 million, maintenance support (net, that is to say after those liable to pay maintenance had paid their amount) SEK 2 258 million and housing allowance SEK 3 361 million.

For households with children, economic family policy benefits represented on average eleven per cent of disposable income in 2009. Family policy has the greatest effect on single households. Family support made up 27 per cent of disposable income for single parents with two or more children in one and the same year. Means-tested benefits such as maintenance support and housing allowance have the greatest effect for single households while for cohabittees insurances such as parental benefit have the greatest effect on disposable income.

Households' financial standard (disposable income per consumption unit) has increased every year during the 2000s. The total increase between 1999 and 2008 was 32 per cent. The increase in the financial standard during the 2000s was greater for those with employment. Students, the unemployed and other groups outside the labour market have not had as favourable a development. For those in employment the increase was 33 per cent and for those without employment 10 per cent.

During the 2000s, the proportion of the population with a low financial standard (lower than 60 per cent of the median value for all) has increased. In 1999 the proportion was 8.4 per cent. In 2008 it had increased to 13 per cent. Among single women with children and those born abroad, about every third person had a low financial standard in 2008. Families with

children were one of the groups badly affected by the 1990s recession and it took time before their financial standard had again reached the same level as in the early 1990s. During the 2000s, cohabitees with children have had a better development of their financial standard than single parents with children.¹

The information in the sample survey HEK which is the basis for the calculations underestimates the number of single households. Additional calculations have therefore been made. They will be published in the 2011 fiscal bill.

¹For further information on households' finances and distribution of income, see SCB http://www.scb.se/statistik/HE/HE0103/2008A02D/HE0103_2008A02D_SM_HE21SM1001.pdf

Article 17 – The right of children and young persons to appropriate social, legal and economic protection

Reference is made to Sweden's fourth report, to previous reports on Article 17 and to the additional information below.

Article 17§1

1) The general legal framework

Legislation on sex crime

On 1 April 2005, new legislation on sex crimes entered into force. The aim of the new legislation is, *inter alia*, to emphasise in different ways and strengthen protection of children and young people against exposure to sexual violations. The legislation contains a new penalty for child rape which is aimed at the most serious sexual crimes against children. Under the provision, requirements are no longer made that violence or threats were used in connection with the assault. A person who has sexual intercourse with a child under the age of 15 or who carries out some other seriously abusive sexual act is sentenced for child rape. The provision also comprises cases where children between 15 and 18 years are abused by certain close relatives or other persons with a special responsibility for them.

A special provision which aims to protect children from being exploited for erotic posing has been introduced into the Penal Code. A person who promotes or exploits a child to perform or take part in erotic posing is sentenced for exploitation of a child for erotic posing. The crime also comprises acts committed against a child who has reached the age of 15 but not 18 years, if the posing is intended to damage the child's health or development.

The prohibition against the purchase of sexual acts by children has also been tightened. Among other things the penalty has been extended to also comprise purchase of sexual acts by children that take place in circumstances other than pure prostitution.

Additional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child

In December 2006, Sweden ratified the Facultative Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child relating to the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and the Utilisation of Children in Pornography. In this connection, a new offence was introduced into the Penal Code – improper procurement of consent or permission to adopt a child. Attempt to commit a crime of this nature has also been made a criminal offence. The amendments entered into force on 1 July 2006.

Children in social care

During the period 2006-2008 the county administrative boards were given the task of strengthening supervision *inter alia* relating to children who had been placed in a foster home or institution. Special funds were allotted to the county administrative boards for this purpose.

In accordance with Government bill Development of social care of children and young people (2007), the Government has carried out several changes, aiming to further develop social care of children and young people. Among other things, prior to placing a child in a

foster home or institution, the social services committee, as far as possible together with the child and its parents, shall draw up a plan describing how the care is to be implemented. The social services committee has an obligation to meet the need of support and help that may arise when care has terminated.

On 1 August 2010 amendments to legislation entered into force that give social services the right to give the child a hearing without the consent of the custodian and without the custodian being present in investigations into the need to intervene to protect or support a child. Extended opportunities to interview the child among other things provide better chances of taking the wishes of the child into consideration which is in full agreement with what is expressed in the Social Services Act. It may be seen from the Social Services Act that when a measure concerns a child, the child's attitude shall be made clear as far as possible and heed paid to the wishes of the child, taking into consideration its age and maturity.

Coordinated and clear supervision of social services

In 2009 the Government presented a bill to the Riksdag entitled Coordinated and clear supervision of social services (Gov. bill 2008/09:160). The proposals in the bill mean, *inter alia*, that the county administrative boards' supervisory and licensing activities under the Social Services Act (SoL) and the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (LSS) be transferred to the National Board of Health and Welfare and coordinated with the supervision of health services.

It is furthermore proposed that a provision be introduced into the relevant legislation to the effect that in connection with supervision the National Board of Health and Welfare may give the child a hearing. The National Board of Health and Welfare is given the right to inspect activities under the authority's supervision. In connection with such inspection the National Board of Health and Welfare may request the help of the police.

It is proposed that the National Board of Health and Welfare also be given responsibility for all supervision of licensed privately run activities under SoL and LSS. The municipalities' responsibility for routine inspection should cease. Furthermore, municipalities and county councils which carry on such activities under SoL and LSS, which when run under private management require a licence, should report their activities to the National Board of Health and Welfare. In addition, supervision of SiS (National Board of Institutional Care) institutions should be the task of the National Board of Health and Welfare. All the proposed amendments entered into force on 1 January 2010.

2) The measures taken

Social services child welfare

In order to create uniformity in reporting, planning and follow-up work – focusing on children and young people – the National Board of Health and Welfare developed the method "Focusing on children's needs" (BBIC) and together with several municipalities ran the BBIC project. The project aims to strengthen the position of children in social services child welfare. BBIC is a uniform system for process and documentation in reporting, planning and follow-up. The system consists of a series of forms that follow the entire case process – from report or application through investigation to follow-up of efforts. In accordance with this method, documentation is more structured and better substantiated which facilitates

follow-up of the efforts. The child and its parents are continuously to be able to give their opinion and comment on the contents of all documentation and particular heed must be paid to the child's view of his/her situation. By using the BBIC method it will be clearer to children, young people and their parents what social services are doing and social services will be clearer about the needs of children and young people.

Coordinated and clear supervision of social services

On 1 January 2010 a reform of supervision relating to social services entered into force. Of importance for social care of children and young people is that the supervisory and licensing activities that were previously the responsibility of the county administrative boards were transferred to the National Board of Health and Welfare to strengthen supervision and make it more uniform across the country. A provision entitles the National Board of Health and Welfare to give the child a hearing in connection with inspections concerning children's conditions if it may be assumed the child will not take harm from the interview. The child may be given a hearing without the consent of the custodian and without the custodian being present. Furthermore, the National Board of Health and Welfare must integrate a perspective embracing the rights of the child in the inspection and develop methods regarding how an inspection relating to children and young people should be implemented. The Board shall also produce informational material addressed to both children and young people and their custodians. The information should contain details of the rights of children and young people and of the task of the supervisory authority. The National Board of Health and Welfare shall also carry out tests with representatives of children and young people placed in family foster homes at inspections.

The reform also meant that inspection of the special homes for young people run by the National Board of Institutional Care (SiS) was made independent in that responsibility for inspection was transferred from SiS to the National Board of Health and Welfare. The National Board of Health and Welfare shall continuously visit care and residential homes for children and young people (HVB) at least twice a year or more often if necessary. At least one of the visits should be unannounced. On these inspection occasions the interviews should be with the children and young people. The interviews must be voluntary and be carried out with respect for the integrity of the individual.

Honour-related violence

The Government is aware of the importance of increasing knowledge and awareness in social services of, among other things, cultural aspects and the special needs that people with a foreign background may have. The National Board of Health and Welfare and a special institute for development of methods in social work are working continuously with development of knowledge in order to increase awareness in social services, *inter alia* with information concerning cultural aspects. For example, the National Board of Health and Welfare produced a memorandum with information about girls who live under threat and coercion in patriarchal families.

During the period 2003–2007 the Government appropriated SEK 160 million for measures to counter honour-related violence. The aim is to increase knowledge about honour-related violence and oppression, to change attitudes and to meet the need for places in sheltered accommodation. The target group is primarily girls and young women but boys and young

men are also given attention. Homo- and bisexual young people and young transsexuals are further included. The measures are chiefly preventive and focus on better protection of the individual.

A reinforced care chain in youth welfare

Insecurity and criminality are major problems in some exposed districts. Unemployment is high and a large proportion of the inhabitants have long been dependent on social security allowances. Early and rapid efforts on the part of society are important when young people commit crimes.

In 2006 the Government commissioned the National Board of Institutional Care (SiS) to develop new care chain models based on long-term planning and cooperation for the taking into compulsory custody of young people with very serious problems of criminality and/or drug abuse. Essential elements of the models were *inter alia* to increase interwork between all those involved, to adopt a more long-term perspective on care and to achieve greater participation for the young people and their parents. The investment, of SEK 230 million, comprised in all 500 young people placed in institutions in 2007 and 2008. The young people were taken into compulsory custody and placed in one of SiS special juvenile homes. The project produced good results regarding reduced criminality and drug abuse. Also, a large share of the young people and their parents felt they had participated in the care planning. SiS has utilised the knowledge and experience gained from the project and is cooperating with, among others, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions in the promotion of well developed care chains in juvenile care.

Children who witness violence

In order to help and support a child who has witnessed violence it is essential to see to the individual child's needs since these do not always tally with, for example, the needs of the parent exposed to violence. On 15 November 2006 an amendment to the Social Services Act entered into force which establishes that children who witness violence or other abuse of or against a closely related adult are the victims of crime. On the same date other amendments entered into force, which mean that a child who witnesses a crime that is intended to damage the child's security and trust in relationship to a person close to them shall be entitled to criminal injuries compensation from the state. On 1 July 2007 an amendment to the Social Services Act entered into force clarifying the responsibility of the social services committee for efforts for victims of crime, primarily women exposed to violence and children who have witnessed violence.

Children with parents deprived of their liberty

Work to improve the situation of children with parents who are deprived of their liberty has led, among other things, to rooms adapted for accompanying children, a visitor's room at each institution that has been arranged for children and the possibility of telephone calls free of charge. Staff at the institutions have been informed of the contents of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and new institutional regulations have been produced to elucidate the child perspective. Furthermore, social services are informed in the case of a break in intensive surveillance.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Statistics concerning the development of social care for children and young people during the period 2005-2009

Table: Number of children and young persons (0-20 years) provided with care at some time during the respective year, 2005 and 2009

	2005	2009	Change (per cent) 2005-2009
Open care	51 600	56 100	9
girls	23 400	24 900	6
boys	28 200	31 200	11
24-hour care	20 300	23 400	15
girls	9 700	10 600	9
boys	10 600	12 800	21

Source: National Board of Health and Welfare

Open care is the most common type of care for children and young people. The number of children and young persons who on some occasion during the year received means-tested open care, above all in the form of a structured open care programme and means-tested personal support, has increased in recent years. One of the aims in extending open care was to reduce the need for 24-hour care, such as placement in residential care (HVB). However, developments show that the number of children who receive 24-hour care has increased. This indicates that the municipalities have had difficulty in replacing 24-hour care with open care. One explanation for this may be that the number of children and young persons who come to Sweden alone has increased.

Table: Number of children and young persons (0-20 years) who at some time during the respective year were placed in a family home, HVB or in a home with special supervision

	2005	2009	Change (per cent) 2005-2009
Family home	15 350	17 050	11
girls	7 650	8 500	11
boys	7 700	8 550	11
HVB	5 650	7 250	28
girls	2 650	2 700	2
Boys	3 000	4 550	52
Homes with special supervision	1 200	1 300	8
girls	450	450	0
boys	750	850	13

Source: National Board of Health and Welfare

*The same individual child may be included under more than one form of care.

Family homes (foster homes) are the commonest form of 24-hour care. In 2009 over 17 000 children and young persons, about the same number of girls as boys, were placed in family homes on some occasion during the year. During the period 2005-2009, the number of children and young persons placed in family homes increased. Placements in HVB residential care represent the greatest percentage increase during the period and the increase has almost exclusively referred to boys. As mentioned earlier, one explanation may be that the number of children and young persons who come to Sweden alone has increased. There are about 400 HVB homes in Sweden for children and young persons, some 40 of which receive children and parents. Approximately 80 per cent of the HVB homes are under private management while the municipalities are principals for the others. HVB homes offer different treatment depending, *inter alia*, on problems, age and sex. The great majority of the HVB homes, about 70 per cent, are relatively small operations with 1-9 places.

In addition to the HVB residential homes under private or municipal management, through the National Board of Institutional Care, the state runs juvenile homes for the children and young persons who need special supervision if care is to be implemented. Every year care is provided for some 1 300 children and young persons at one of the Board's 26 special juvenile homes. The Board also effects closed care, which is a sanction to which young offenders between 15-17 are sentenced instead of prison. The number of admissions to closed juvenile care decreased during the period 2005-2009, from 104 to 85. The average age of inmates is just under 18 years.

Article 17§2

1) The general legal framework

New Swedish school policy

In recent years the Government has reformed Swedish school policy. A new Education Act, a new upper secondary school, new curricula with new syllabuses as well as a new grading scale with more levels are some of the reforms currently being implemented or which will be implemented in the next few years. A decision on the proposal for a new Education Act was taken by the Riksdag in 2010 and the new Act will begin to take effect during 2011.

2) The measures taken

Clearer knowledge requirements

In March 2009, the Government decided on guiding principles for new curricula for schools in accordance with the Government bill Clearer goals and knowledge requirements – new school curricula (Gvt bill 2008/09:87, Report 2008/09:UbU9, communication 2008/09:189). This means that every type of school in the compulsory education system – compulsory school, compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities, special needs school and the Sami school – shall have its own integrated curriculum. The curriculum is to include the school's fundamental values and tasks, overall goals and educational guidelines as well as syllabuses for the respective type of school. The new curricula were decided by the Government in October 2010 and will begin to take effect in the autumn of 2011.

More national tests

Continuous follow-up and evaluation is necessary in a goal- and results-oriented education system. The national tests create the preconditions for national equivalence and fair grade

assessment. Since 2009 pupils in the third school year have done national tests in Swedish, Swedish as a second language, and maths. The previously voluntary national tests in the fifth school year have become compulsory. In addition to national tests in Swedish, Swedish as a second language, English and maths, national tests in natural sciences have been carried out in the ninth school year since 2009.

More support

Earlier results and more national tests will enable teachers to discover and follow up the pupils who do not achieve acceptable school results. These pupils must be given support to be able to catch up.

Since 2008 a special stimulation grant has been available to strengthen the basic skills, reading, writing and arithmetic. Pupils who are in danger of not attaining the goals are the priority group, but the government grant may also be used for older pupils in need of special support and specific measures to improve qualifications. The Government supports the municipalities' work on summer schools to give pupils in the nine-year compulsory school and upper secondary school a chance to attain school goals during the summer. The Government invested a total of SEK 165 million in summer schools from 2006-2010.

Strategy for entrepreneurship in the education system

In 2009 the Government drew up a strategy for entrepreneurship in the education system. The National Agency for Education was commissioned to promote schools' cooperation with working life, offer professional development, facilitate exchanges of experience and distribute development funds and activity support. The Agency is also to map out, analyse and disseminate information about principals' entrepreneurship work. The Government wants to continue work on the entrepreneurship strategy and increase support to organisations that successfully work on entrepreneurship in schools.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Children and pupils

Statistics relating to children and pupils in the autumn of 2009:

- 825 816 children in preschool activities and school-age child care. 466 470 of these were in preschool activities, 446 080 in preschool and 20 390 in educational care.
- there were 359 346 children in school-age child care, 357 622 in leisure-time centres and 1 724 in educational care
- 100 283 pupils in the preschool class
- 891 727 pupils in the nine-year compulsory school
- 12 673 pupils in compulsory special needs school
- 394 771 pupils in upper secondary school
- 9 412 pupils in the special needs upper secondary school

Schools

Number of schools autumn 2009:

- 19 651 preschools, activities within educational care, open preschools, leisure-time centres and in open leisure-time activities, 4 151 of these under private management.
- 3 773 schools with preschool classes, 503 of which independently/privately managed
- 4 660 nine-year compulsory schools 709 of which are independent

- 8 special needs schools
- 722 schools for pupils with learning disabilities (compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities) 36 of which are independent
- 269 special needs upper secondary schools, 29 of which are independent
- 976 upper secondary schools, 458 of which are independent (15 October 2009)
- 99 schools with supplementary education programmes

Teachers and staff

Statistics relating to teachers and staff in the autumn of 2009:

- 127 605 employees working with children in the preschool activities and school-age child care. – staff density in preschools was 5.3 children per full-time employee, 4.9 children per member of staff in educational care and 20.9 children per full-time employee in leisure-time centres
- 85 750 teachers served in the nine-year compulsory schools, teacher density was on average 8.2 teachers per 100 pupils.
- 37 425 teachers served in upper secondary schools, teacher density was on average 7.9 teachers per 100 pupils.

Article 19 - The right of migrant workers and their families to protection and assistance

Article 19§1

1) The general legal framework.

Legislation on labour immigration

New legislation on labour immigration to Sweden entered into force on 15 December 2008. The system is demand driven, welcomes labour migrants of all skills levels and grants full access to social and labour market rights. This means full access to welfare, such as for example medical benefits. With the legislation it has become easier for non-EU/EEA citizens to migrate to Sweden for work. An employer who can show that he is unable to recruit relevant competences from Sweden or EU/EEA countries or Switzerland may recruit labour from a third country if certain fundamental conditions are met. In order to demonstrate the inability to find relevant labour locally as well as regionally, the employer must first post the vacancy on the Swedish unemployment agency website, also including EURES, for a period of ten days.

The Swedish system allows applicants to apply for a work permit electronic (online) or in person. First time applications from a labour migrant who hands in the application at the Swedish Embassy (or consulate-general) in his or her home country, the initial screening of the application is usually done by the personal posted at the embassy. If an application is made online by a labour migrant the initial screening is instead done by the Swedish Migration Board. If there is need for more information or an short interview the applicant is asked to go to the nearest Swedish mission in order to leave information or undergo an interview.

In order to be granted a work permit the applicant must have a valid passport and be able to earn his or her own living in Sweden. In addition, the employer in Sweden must have advertised the post in Sweden and the EU for at least ten days (for new recruitment). It must offer terms of employment that are equal to those of a Swedish collective agreement or what is customary within the profession or sector and give the relevant union organisations the opportunity to express an opinion on the terms of employment in the job offer.

One of the cornerstones in the new legislation is to guarantee that both labour migrants' and employers' rights are fully protected - and that both wage or social dumping is prevented. The Swedish Migration Board is an independent authority responsible for the decision making in all cases relevant to residence and work permits, citizenship etc. The Migration Board examines whether the employment conditions – including salary, insurance protection and other terms of employment – are at least in accordance with the conditions applying to employees already resident in Sweden. To make sure that the employer has advertised the post it is asked to give the reference number of the advertisement. The employer must also state the offered terms of employment on the job offer which the relevant labour organisation can leave an opinion about. Generally, the working conditions and other relevant standards have been established in collective agreements. The Swedish unions thus play an important role in the decision making process. They give consultative opinions to the Migration Board on whether the employment conditions offered a third

country national are at least in line with Swedish standards. While the Migration Board does not have a legal obligation to follow the opinions given by the trade unions on the terms of employment, the Board generally attaches great importance to them as one way of ensuring that social and wage dumping does not occur. The information on the job offer is also compared to the information that the applicant has left in his or her questionnaire. The employer always has to leave its organization number which enables the Migration Board to verify information about the employer in other official registers, if necessary.

The new legislation also contains simplified rules for visiting students who wish to stay on and work in Sweden at the completion of their studies.

The Swedish Aliens Act and the Aliens Ordinance

The new rules are mainly found in Chapter 6 of the Swedish Aliens Act (2005:716, Utlänningslagen) and in the Aliens Ordinance (2006:97, Utlänningsförordningen)²

Work permits

As a general rule, temporary work permits can be granted for the duration of the employment or for a maximum of two years. If the work contract is prolonged, the individual migrant may receive an extension of his or her permit for the duration of the renewed contract or for a maximum of an additional two years. The total period for which temporary permits can be granted cannot exceed four years. After four years, a permanent residence permit can be granted. The application for an extension of a work permit, or the application for a permanent resident permit can be filed in Sweden. Hence, the applicant is not required to return home to apply for an extension.

Access to rights

The labour migrant and accompanying family members gain access to more or less the same rights and obligations as Swedish citizens, voting rights excluded.

Job applicant visa

A job applicant can come to a job interview through a job applicant visa. This may reduce the likelihood of the employer passing false information about the job and the working conditions to a prospective employee. Employers are likely to only bear personal interview costs for high skilled professions, which makes persons working in the lower tiers of the labour market more susceptible to possible misunderstandings about the nature of the job. The new provision still reduces the information monopoly of the employer and makes it possible for job applicants to get a more realistic image of the job.

Transition period

Experiences from employer-tied labour migration regimes have shown that migrants hesitate leaving a workplace where they are not satisfied with the conditions. To reduce the dependency between employers and employees there is a three month transition period in case that the migrant loses his/hers job or is not satisfied with the employer. During a period of three months the migrant will then be able to look and apply for a new job. The

² See <http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/06/61/22/bfb61014.pdf> and <http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/07/56/18/7cbd265a.pdf>

Swedish regulations goes beyond the ILO Convention Nr. 143, Article 8, stating that a migrant worker lawfully residing in the country shall be treated like nationals in case of loss of job involuntarily due to illness, or because the employer terminates the relationship or has to due to bankruptcy.

2) The measures taken

Information to migrants

The Swedish Migration Board has information on its website for those who want to work in Sweden.³ When the new legislation on labour immigration came into force the Swedish Institute was commissioned to set up a web site where potential labour migrants can learn more about how the Swedish labour market is set up, and how one can get a work permit in Sweden.⁴

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

In 2009 21 582 applications for employment purposes (in a wider extent) from persons outside the EU were granted. In 2008, 14 513 applications were granted.⁵ The statistics must be read in the context of the changed rules for labour immigration. Regarding immigration and emigration of non-Swedish citizens, 19 242 persons emigrated and 83 318 persons immigrated in 2008⁶.

Article 19§2

1) The general legal framework

Reference is made to the previous report and to Article 19§1.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report and to Article 19§1.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to Article 19§1.

Article 19§3

³ See http://www.migrationsverket.se/info/Arbeta_en.html

⁴ See <http://www.sweden.se/work> or www.workinginsweden.se

⁵ For statistics regarding labour immigration, see the Swedish Migration Board 2005-2009:

<http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.358c12fe127a8ff14c2800017/oversiktATUT.pdf>

⁶ The Swedish Migration Board, 2008:

<http://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.56e4f4801246221d25680001070/%C3%96versikt+%C3%B6ver+in-+och+utvandringen+2008.pdf>

The Government agency Statistics Sweden (SCB):

http://www.scb.se/Pages/Product_25799.aspx?Produktkod=BE0101&displaypublications=true

1) The general legal framework.

Reference is made to the previous report.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Article 19§4

1) The general legal framework

Reference is made to previous report and to Article 19§1, Examination of terms.

Migrant workers enjoys full access to the welfare system on the same level as Swedish citizens.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Article 19§5

1) The general legal framework.

Reference is made to previous report and to Article 19§1, about the new system for labour immigration. Migrant workers enjoy full access to the welfare system on the same level as Swedish citizens.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to previous report.

Article 19§6

1) The general legal framework

According to the new legislation on labour immigration, a person who has been granted a work permit is allowed to bring his or her family members. The accompanying spouse will gain full access to the labour market (i.e. without restrictions to employers or sectors). As family members are considered husband/wife, de facto ("common law") spouse or registered domestic partner and children under the age of 21 of the employee or his or her husband, wife, de facto spouse or registered partner. If there are children in the family, the Swedish welfare system guarantee child care at a maximum cost regardless of monthly income and children from seven years of age goes to school. The right to part time work as long as the children are under eight years of age is also stated by Swedish law. All this

combined should help to provide good opportunities for the spouse, either man or women, to participate on the labour market.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

In 2009, 3 628 persons were granted residence permits specifically as family members of persons who were granted work permits (labour migrants). Before 2009, this category was reported under the title Relatives in the statistics⁷:

Year	Number of persons granted residence permits as relatives
2006	22 869
2007	21 284
2008	22 519
2009	24 809

Article 19§7

1) The general legal framework

Access to justice applies to all individuals within Swedish jurisdiction. A decision of the Swedish Migration Board to reject an application for a work permit or a decision to withdraw a work permit may be appealed to a migration court, if the question of the work permit has been dealt with in a refusal-of-entry or expulsion order (see the Swedish Aliens Act Chapter 14, Section 3, paragraph 2).

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to previous report.

Article 19§8

1) The general legal framework

Additonal information with reference to Conclusions 2006

The Swedish Aliens Act was amended as from 1 January 2010.⁸ The Swedish Aliens Act will be described as for the period 30 March 2006 – 31 December 2009 in text below.⁹

If an application for a residence permit is rejected or a residence permit is withdrawn while the alien is in Sweden, a refusal-of-entry or expulsion order shall be issued at the same time, unless there are special grounds not to do so (Aliens Act, Chapter 8, Section 16).

⁷ See footnote 4

⁸ The amendments are found here:

<http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/06/61/22/94531dbc.pdf>

⁹ See footnote 1 on the Swedish Aliens Act and the Aliens Ordinance.

Withdrawal of permits

The rules for withdrawal of permits are laid down in the Swedish Aliens Act Chapter 7. Visas, residence permits and work permits may be withdrawn from an alien who has knowingly supplied incorrect information or knowingly suppressed circumstances that have been important for obtaining the permit. If the alien has been in this country for more than four years on a residence permit when the question of withdrawal is examined by the authority that makes the first decision in the matter, the residence permit may only be withdrawn under the first paragraph if there are exceptional grounds for this (Chapter 7, Section 1). A residence permit may be withdrawn from an alien who has entered the country e.g. if the alien has been granted a work permit and the employment has ceased, unless the alien has found new employment covered by the work permit within three months or has applied for a work permit as a result of new employment within the same period of time and the application is subsequently granted. A residence permit may also be withdrawn if it can be assumed on the basis of previous activities or otherwise that the alien will engage in sabotage, espionage or unlawful intelligence activities in Sweden or in some other Nordic country. (Chapter 7, Section 3, paragraph 1 and 3). In assessing whether a residence permit should be withdrawn from an alien who has entered the country, account shall be taken of the ties that the alien has to Swedish society and of any other arguments against withdrawing the permit. Particular attention shall be paid to the alien's personal circumstances, whether the alien has children in Sweden and, if so, the children's need of contact with the alien, the nature of the contact in the past and how it would be affected by the withdrawal of the alien's residence permit, the alien's family situation in other respects and how long the alien has been in Sweden (Chapter 7, Section 4).

Refusal-of-entry or expulsion

The rules for refusal-of-entry and expulsion are laid down in the Aliens Act Chapter 8. A first instance decision on refusal of entry may not be made later than three months after the first application for a residence permit has been made following arrival in Sweden. Other cases require a decision on expulsion. The description will be limited to the prerequisites of refusal of entry and expulsion in certain cases.

The rule for refusal of entry and expulsion on grounds of national security or on account of anticipated criminal activity is laid down in the Aliens Act Chapter 8, Section 15. It refers to the Act concerning Special Controls in Respect of Aliens (1991:572)¹⁰ which contains provisions on expulsion on grounds of national security. On account of anticipated criminal activity, Section 15 refers to the Act on Criminal Responsibility for Terrorist Offences (2003:148). See below regarding decisions in security cases.

Impediments to enforcement of refusal-of-entry or expulsion order

When a question of refusal of entry or expulsion is examined, account shall be taken of whether the alien cannot be sent to a certain country on account of the provisions in the Aliens Act Chapter 12, or whether there are any other special impediments to enforcing the

¹⁰ See http://62.95.69.15/cgi-bin/thw?%24%7BHTML%7D=sfst_lst&%24%7BOOHTML%7D=sfst_dok&%24%7BSNHTML%7D=sfst_err&%24%7BBASE%7D=SFST&%24%7BTRIPSHOW%7D=format%3DTHW&BET=1991%3A572%24

order. The most important rule regarding impediments to enforcements, is Chapter 12, Section 1, in its wording from 30 March 2006 to 31 December 2009. The refusal of entry and expulsion of an alien may never be enforced to a country where there is fair reason to assume that the alien would be in danger there of suffering the death penalty or being subjected to corporal punishment, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment or the alien is not protected in the country from being sent on to a country in which the alien would be in such danger.

Decisions in security cases

The description below refers to the Aliens Act in its wording from 30 March 2006 until 31 December 2009. Security cases are cases in which the Swedish Security Service, for reasons relating to national security or otherwise bearing on public security, recommends

- that an alien be refused entry or expelled,
- that an alien's application for a residence permit be rejected or
- that an alien's residence permit be withdrawn

(Aliens Act, Chapter 1, section 7).

In a security case a decision of the Swedish Migration Board on refusal of entry, expulsion, a residence permit or a work permit may be appealed to the Government. A decision concerning a work permit may, however, only be appealed in the cases where the question of the permit has been dealt with in a refusal-of-entry or expulsion order. A decision of the Swedish Migration Board under may also be appealed by the Swedish Security Service (Aliens Act, Chapter 14, Section 11). An appeal in a security case under Section 11 shall be turned over promptly by the Swedish Migration Board to the Migration Court of Appeal, which shall hold an oral hearing in the case, if this is not clearly unnecessary. The Migration Court of Appeal shall then pass on the case along with its own opinion to the Government for examination. The opinion shall specifically state whether there is an impediment to enforcement under Chapter 12, Section 1, 2 or 3. If the Court finds that there is such an impediment, the Government may not diverge from the assessment of the Court in its examination (Aliens Act, Chapter 14, Section 12).

When an appeal is lodged against a decision in a security case both the Swedish Migration Board and the Swedish Security Service are the opposite parties of the alien when the case is handled by the Migration Court of Appeal and by the Government (Aliens Act, Chapter 16, Section 6). If, during the enforcement of a refusal-of-entry or expulsion order in a security case, information comes to light that the enforcement cannot be carried out, the Swedish Migration Board shall promptly turn the case over to the Government for examination under Section 18. In this examination the Government shall obtain an opinion from the Migration Court of Appeal. The opinion shall specifically state whether there is an impediment to enforcement under Sections 1, 2 or 3. If the Court finds that there is such an impediment to enforcement, the Government may not diverge from the assessment of the Court in its examination (Aliens Act, Chapter 12, Section 20). A similar procedure as described above also applies in cases concerning the Act on Special Control in Respect of Aliens (1991:572).

Amendments in the Swedish Aliens Act as from 1 January 2010 has been made regarding rules on appeal in security cases. Decisions by the Swedish Migration Board in security cases according to the Aliens Act may no longer be appealed to the Government. Appeals are

made to one of the migration courts. Amendments as from 1 January 2010 has also been made in the Act on Special Control in Respect of Aliens. The amendments implies that EEA-citizens and their family members have the right to apply for legal examination by the Supreme Administrative Court of a decision on expulsion according to the Act on Special Control in Respect of Aliens.

2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report and to the information above.

Article 19§9

1) The general legal framework

Reference is made to the previous report.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Article 19§10

1) Please describe the general legal framework

Reference is made to the previous report and to Article 19.8.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report.

Article 19§11

1) The general legal framework

Swedish for immigrants (SFI) initiative was an initiative by the Swedish Government in the year of 2008. The purpose of "Swedish for immigrants (SFI) initiative" is better quality and tougher requirements in sfi. The initiative includes for example skills enhancement for teachers, mandatory national tests and clearer goals for SFI education.

2) The measures taken

Reference is made to the previous report.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Swedish as a second language in the nine-year compulsory school and upper secondary school

In the 2009/10 school year, 71 382 pupils took part in classes in Swedish as a second language in the nine-year compulsory school. In the 2009/10 school year, 1 830 and 1 766

pupils respectively left upper secondary school with one of the two courses in Swedish as a second language included in their leaving certificate.

Swedish for immigrants (sfi)

The number of teachers in the 2009/10 academic year was 2 617 (1 873/72% of whom had a qualification in education), corresponding to 2 062 full-time equivalents. The total cost for the 2009 academic year was SEK 1 706 000 000 .The number of students in the 2008/09 academic year was 84 333.

Municipal	58 636	ca. 69.5%
Other	16 428	ca. 30.5%

Article 19§12

1) The general legal framework

The curriculum for pre-school states that the pre-school should help to ensure that children with a mother tongue other than Swedish, receive the opportunity to develop both their Swedish language and their mother tongue. Children and youths whose first language is not Swedish are entitled to mother tongue tuition in compulsory and upper secondary school. Participation in mother tongue tuition is not compulsory, but municipalities and schools are required to provide tuition for the pupils if at least one of the guardians of the pupil has another mother tongue than Swedish, the language in question is a daily form of communication for the pupil and the pupil has basic knowledge of the language. Municipalities and schools are not required to provide mother tongue tuition if there are fewer than five pupils eligible for tuition in the specific language or if a suitable teacher cannot be found. Specific rules apply if the pupil is adopted or if the language in question is one of the five national minority languages of Sweden: Sami, Finnish, Meänkieli, Romani Chib or Yiddish. Mother tongue tuition is a subject that is additional to other tuition at school – teaching over and above that which school normally covers. The Government decides on a national curriculum for mother tongue tuition. The curriculum states that in addition to developing a pupil's skills in her or his own language, mother tongue tuition is to help students build self esteem and promote their development as bilingual individuals with dual cultural identity and competence.

In 2010 the Parliament decided on a new Education Act. With this Act the regulations of mother tongue tuition are moved from government ordinances to law (the Education Act). However, no change in the right to mother tongue tuition is intended. In addition to mother tongue tuition, pupils can receive study guidance in their mother tongue. Schools can also arrange bilingual education in compulsory education as a way to support pupils with another mother tongue than Swedish.

2) The measures taken

Distance education

One reason for pupils not receiving mother tongue tuition is the lack of suitable teachers. One way to solve this problem is to allow for ICT-based distance education in compulsory and upper secondary education. The National Agency for Education has investigated the issue, and a proposal is being developed within the Government Offices.

Mother Tongue Theme

The National Agency for Education has the task given by the Government to run the website Mother Tongue Theme (<http://modersmal.skolverket.se>). The site is primarily intended as a resource for those working in child care and school education. It contains different "mother tongue rooms" with information and tools for communicating in different languages. These rooms are run by active mother tongue teachers at both pre-school and school level.

Teaching materials

The National Agency for Education has the task given by the Government to develop teaching materials to be used to support children in pre-school with another mother tongue than Swedish and teaching materials for national minority languages.

National development measures

Between 2006 and 2008 the National Agency for School Improvement (closed in 2008) had the task of supporting school development in 32 municipalities with low education results. Examples of measures taken were a grant to schools to support bilingual education and further education for teachers in supporting reading and writing skills for multilingual pupils.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

The following statistics concern compulsory education 2009/10: 173 147 pupils or 19,4 % of all pupils (85 061 girls and 88 086 boys) were eligible for mother tongue tuition. 92 308 pupils or 53,3 % of all eligible pupils (47 029 girls and 45 279 boys) actually received mother tongue tuition. The most common languages were Arabic, Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian, and Spanish. Of all pupils who finished upper secondary education in 2009 (97 064 pupils), 2 992 had had mother tongue tuition. The National Agency for Education conducted a study of mother tongue tuition in 2008 (With Another Mother Tongue, NAE 2008:321). The Agency concluded that participation in mother tongue tuition is greater in schools with a larger proportion of students with another mother tongue. Pupils who have taken part in mother tongue tuition are more often from homes representing a higher level of education. The reasons for students not receiving tuition in their mother tongue is usually due to too the pupil not wanting the tuition, few students having the same mother tongue and a lack of teachers.

Article 27 – The right of workers with family responsibilities to equal opportunities and equal treatment

Article 27§1

1) The general legal framework 2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report and to the following additional information.

A new Discrimination Act

On January 1, 2009 a new Discrimination Act (Swedish Code of Statutes 2008:567) entered into force in Sweden. At the same time a new agency, the Equality Ombudsman, was established to supervise compliance with the Act. The new Act replaced seven previous acts against discrimination, for example the Equal Opportunities Act. At the same time, the former four Ombudsmen against discrimination were merged into one Ombudsman. The aim of the Discrimination Act is to combat discrimination on grounds of sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnic origin, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. Two new grounds have been added: age and transgender identity or expression. The Act applies to basically all areas of society, such as working life, social insurance and labour market policy activities and employment. The new Act means that protection against discrimination on the grounds of sex has been extended to apply fully within the areas of health and medical care and social services.

Besides prohibiting employers, among others, from discriminating against a person on any of the grounds mentioned above, the Act also requires employers to take active measures to promote equal opportunities at the workplace, Chapter 3. The rules on active measures in the previous acts against discrimination were, in principle, transferred into the new Act. However, a few changes were made, see below.

According to Chapter 3 Section 1 of the Discrimination Act, employers and employees are to cooperate on active measures to bring about equal rights and opportunities in working life regardless of sex, ethnicity and religion. Employers are to conduct goal-oriented work to actively promote equal rights and opportunities in working life (Chapter 3 Section 3). According to Chapter 3 Section 5, employers are to help enable both female and male employees to combine employment and parenthood. Further, every three years, instead of every year as previously, employers are to draw up a plan for their gender equality work. This obligation does not apply to employers with less than 25 employees(Chapter 3 Section 13), a limit which previously was set to less than 10 employees.

Employers and employees are in particular to endeavour to equalise and prevent differences in pay and other terms of employment between women and men who perform work which is to be regarded as equal or of equal value. They are also to promote equal pay growth opportunities for women and men (Chapter 3 Section 2). In order to discover, remedy and prevent unfair gender differences in pay and other terms of employment, the employer must conduct pay surveys every three years (Chapter 3 Section 10). Further, employers with 25 employees or more are to draw up action plans for equal pay every three years (Chapter 3 Section 11) , instead of every year for employers with 10 employees or more as previously.

An employer who does not fulfil his or her obligations concerning active measures may be ordered to fulfil them subject to financial penalty (Chapter 4 Section 5).

The Equality Ombudsman also monitors compliance with the Parental Leave Act (Swedish Code of Statutes 1995:584) and seeks to ensure that employees on parental leave are not treated less favourably at work, see below.

Regarding questions from the Committee the following information should be noted.

Sweden's gender equality policy

The overall objective of Sweden's gender equality policy is to ensure that women and men have the same power to shape society and their own lives.

The policy focus is set out in four subgoals:

- Equal distribution of power and influence. Women and men shall have the same rights and opportunities to be active citizens and to shape the conditions for decision-making.
- Economic equality between the sexes. Women and men shall have the same opportunities and conditions with regard to education and paid work that provide them with the means to achieve lifelong economic independence.
- Equal distribution of unpaid care and household work. Women and men shall take the same responsibility for household work and have the same opportunities to give and receive care on equal terms.
- Men's violence against women must stop. Women and men, girls and boys, shall have equal rights and opportunities in terms of physical integrity.

A gender equality perspective is to permeate all government policies. It is through action in such areas as education policy, employment policy and social policy that the means are created for achieving a society in which women and men are equal.

In June 2009 the Swedish Government presented a strategy for gender equality in the labour market and the business sector. The strategy contains both an analysis and a description of specific measures aimed at promoting women's and men's equal opportunities to develop their potential in these areas. More than 60 measures have been introduced.

Despite ongoing efforts for many decades to promote gender equality, the Swedish labour market and business sector are still marked by a lack of gender equality. This can be seen, for example, in pay differentials, unequal career opportunities, gender differences in sick leave, an unequal division of parental insurance and an underrepresentation of women in executive positions.

In light of this, the Government sees the need for an overall, long-term strategy to serve as a guide for gender equality policy in the labour market and the business sector. Below are some of the initiatives mentioned that aim at increasing gender equality in the labour market.

Gender equal participation in working life

Women and men are to have the same opportunities and conditions to carry out paid work to the extent they wish to do so. This is why the Government's efforts are aimed at evening

out the distribution of paid and unpaid work, for example by means of a gender equality bonus and tax credits for household work.

Gender equality in working life conditions

The Government's coordinated efforts in this area are aimed at creating better conditions for equal terms for women and men in working life. Initiatives aimed at combating discrimination, violence and harassment in working life are therefore important in achieving a gender-equal labour market.

Inquiry on active measures

An inquiry was tasked with investigating the effects of the provisions on active measures in the anti-discrimination legislation. The inquiry submitted its report to the Government in spring 2010 and the report is currently under consideration within the Government Offices.

Measures to take care of other members of the immediate family

The Committee has asked the next report to provide information on the available family services and arrangements for other members of the immediate family who clearly need care and support. It also has asked what methods are applied in order to assess the need for the various services and asks to what extent the need is actually satisfied, in particular for low-income families. Lastly, it requests information on the geographical location across the national territory of such services.

Regarding measures to care for seriously ill members of the immediate family other than the employee's own children, the compensation and leave of absence (care of close relatives) Act (1988:1465) and the Act on leave of absence for urgent family reasons (1998:209) apply. Benefit may be paid to an employee who refrains from work in order to care for a close relative who is seriously ill. The compensation is in principle equivalent to 80 per cent of the employee's income, up to a specific ceiling. Regarding leave of absence for care of a close relative, the term close relative also includes others with whom the employee has a close relationship, for example friends. Persons applying for benefit to care for a close relative must be employed in Sweden and the person who is ill must work or reside in Sweden. The care must be provided in Sweden or in another EU country.

Over the last decade, stimulation grants have been paid to municipalities to develop forms of support for close relatives. Evaluation shows that this has contributed to the development of permanent forms of support. Municipalities' responsibility to provide support for relatives was clarified through an amendment to the Social Services Act which entered into force on 1 July 2009. A stimulation grant of SEK 300 million directed to support for close relatives will continue to be disbursed in 2010. As from 2011 the funds will be included in the general government grant to the municipalities, as a consequence of the clarification of the law.

Article 27§2

1) The general legal framework 2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report and to the following additional information.

Municipal childcare allowance

An additional right to compensation to be at home with one's child, apart from parental benefit and temporary parental benefit, was introduced on 1 July 2008. It is called municipal childcare allowance. The childcare allowance offers parents greater opportunities to be at home and care for their children during the period when the child is between one and three, and it is a complement to the publicly financed preschool activities. The childcare allowance can be combined with gainful employment but not with payments received in connection with unemployment, illness, etc. The childcare allowance is voluntary for the municipalities and amounts at most to SEK 3000 a month. During the autumn of 2010, about 100 municipalities offered the possibility of receiving an allowance. Statistical information about the number of children, recipients, cost, etc. is not yet available. A parent who is an employee is also entitled to full leave of absence or a reduction of normal working hours by half under Section 9 of the Parental Leave Act (1995:584) when he or she receives childcare allowance.

Gender equality bonus

On 1 July 2008 a gender equality bonus was introduced which gives parents better financial opportunities and incentives to share parental leave more equally and also improves the preconditions for increased gender equality on the labour market. The gender equality bonus is calculated on the basis of how a child's parents divide between them parental leave with parental benefit. Parents who take an equal number of days of parental benefit receive a maximum bonus of SEK 13 500 together on condition that they work when the other parent is on parental benefit. Parents who have joint custody of a child are entitled to a gender equality bonus. Payment of the gender equality bonus is effected by crediting the amount to the parents' tax account. A first analysis of how parents use the gender equality bonus has been made by the national insurance office. During 2009, it is estimated that 12 066 parents were entitled to a gender equality bonus based on parental benefit drawn during the year. Of these, 72 per cent applied and about 57 per cent of all those entitled received a bonus (6833). So far, it has not been possible to note any significant effect of the gender equality bonus on how parental benefit is drawn.

Increased payment during parental leave

Payment during parental leave, parental benefit, amounts to 80 per cent of income entitling to sickness benefit (for 390 days per child). Income entitling to sickness benefit is most often equivalent to the employee's previous salary, up to a specific ceiling. This ceiling was raised from seven and a half to ten times the price base among as from 1 July 2006. In 2009 the ceiling was SEK 428 000. The highest payment per day was SEK 901 and the lowest SEK 180.

The raised ceiling enables more parents to receive compensation equivalent to 80 per cent of their salary and may increase incentives for men to draw parental benefit. It should also be mentioned that many parents have a possibility of receiving additional compensation in connection with parental leave through their employer. The level of the extra payment varies between different trades and collective agreements.

As from 1 July 2006 the amount for full parental benefit at the lowest level (90 days per child) was increased from SEK 60 a day to SEK 180 a day and applies to children born as from

1 July 2006. For parents who had no previous income, a basic amount is received instead of an income-related parental benefit, this amount was also increased to SEK 180 a day.

Article 27§3

1) The general legal framework 2) The measures taken and 3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Reference is made to the previous report and to the following additional information.

Increased protection for employees on parental leave of absence

Protection of employees and job applicants against unfair treatment because of parental leave was strengthened in 2006. An employee or a job applicant may not be disfavoured for reasons connected with parental leave unless different conditions or different treatment are a necessary consequence of the leave. The exception shall be strictly interpreted. The rule means that an employee or a job applicant is protected from unfair treatment on grounds of parental leave in principle in all situations where an employer's decision or action is of importance for the job applicant or the employee, see government bill 2005/2006:185, p. 83. In disputes that concern unfair treatment connected with parental leave, a provision was also introduced in 2006 to the effect that the burden of proof lies with the employer in the same way as is applicable in other areas of discrimination. If the job applicant or employee demonstrates circumstances that give reason to assume he or she has been disfavoured for reasons connected with parental leave, the employer must prove that no such disfavour has occurred or that the disfavour is a necessary consequence of the leave. The proof requirement, that the employee shall make it probable that disfavour has occurred, is not particularly high. On the other hand, the proof requirement for the employer is high. To protect himself, the employer must verify, that is to say fully prove, his point of view.

In July 2006, employees' protection in connection with notice of termination during parental leave was also strengthened by an amendment to the Employment Protection Act (1982:80). If an employee is given notice of termination when he or she is on parental leave, the period of notice of termination shall not commence until the employee returns to work wholly or partly after completed parental leave. The amendment means that an employer cannot avoid paying salary during the period of notice of termination by giving an employee who is on parental leave notice of termination.

The Equality Ombudsman may represent an employee in a dispute with the employer relating to unfair treatment or notice of termination on grounds of parental leave.

Updated figures for the number of children in preschool

In 2009, 78.4 per cent of all children between 1 and 3 were registered in preschool and for the ages 4-5 the equivalent figure was 97.9 per cent.

Article 31 – The right to housing

Reference is made to previous reports on Article 31 as well as to the additional information below.

Article 31§1

1) The general legal framework

The Constitution prescribes that "In particular, it shall be incumbent on the public institutions to secure the right to health, employment, housing and education, and to promote social care and social security" (Instrument of Government, Chap. 1, 2 §, 2 sub-par.). One of the most important municipal instruments is the Planning and Building Act, Swedish Code of Statutes 2010:90, (PBL), which, *inter alia*, gives the municipalities a planning monopoly of what is to be built where. The municipalities are also responsible for promoting a supply of housing in the municipality (the law on municipalities' responsibility to supply housing, the Act on Housing Provision (2000:1383)).

On the Swedish housing market, housing is available as right of tenancy, cooperative right of tenancy, ownership right in a tenant-owner's apartment or right of possession (owner-occupied house and owner-occupied apartment). All forms of tenure are available to all on the same conditions. Owned housing – owner-occupied house, owner-occupied apartment and ownership right in a tenant-owner's apartment – are sold on the market at a market price, there is no price regulation.

In the rented accommodation sector, there is legislation on how rents are to be set (Tenancy Act [12 Chap. Land Code 1970:944] and the Rent Negotiations Act [1978:304]; see comment on Article 31.3).

In Section 9 of the Tenancy Act, it is specified that at the time the tenant takes possession, the flat must be in such condition that according to local general opinion it is usable for the intended purpose. Exceptions meaning a deterioration of its condition may only be made for a residential flat if this takes place in a negotiated agreement between the landlord and a tenant's organisation. Under Section 15 of the Tenancy Act, the landlord is obliged to keep the flat in the condition referred to in Section 9. Furthermore, it rests on the landlord to carry out some renovation and customary repairs at reasonable intervals. If the landlord does not fulfil his commitments in these respects, at the request of the tenant the Rent Tribunal may order the landlord to remedy the deficiencies on penalty of a fine. Furthermore, in this situation the tenant is entitled to a rent reduction and to rectify the deficiencies at the expense of the landlord. Under Section 18a of the Tenancy Act, all residential flats shall have a minimum standard specified in detail. If this is not the case, the tenant may apply to the Rent Tribunal to order that measures be taken, which may be combined with penalty of a fine.

If a property does not meet the demands the tenants are entitled to make regarding soundness, order and condition, under the Act on the Administration of Housing (1977:792) the Rent Tribunal may decide the property be placed under special administration ("compulsory administration"), if the property's deficiencies depend on the property

owner's neglect of maintenance of the property or that he/she in some other way has managed the property in a manner unacceptable to the tenants. Application for compulsory administration is made by the municipality or by a tenants' organisation.

In a decision on special administration, if the management deficiencies are not of a serious nature and it is judged sufficient in order to achieve acceptable management, the Rent Tribunal shall order the property owner to hand over management to a special administrator (management injunction). If the management deficiencies are of a serious nature or it may be assumed that a management injunction is not sufficient to achieve acceptable management, the Rent Tribunal may decide to place the property under the administration of a special administrator (compulsory administration).

Some groups who are in need of special housing are entitled to such housing through the agency of the municipality. This refers to persons with functional impairments and elderly persons who can no longer live in their own dwelling, not even with assistance from social services (Social Services Act, SoL [2001:453]; Act concerning support and service for persons with certain functional impairments, [1993:387], LSS. In addition, persons seeking asylum are entitled to housing until they have been granted a residence permit. Responsibility for this group rests with the state and the right to housing is limited to specific types of housing.

Certain parts of the housing market are reserved for students, the elderly and persons with functional impairments. Different types of production subsidies were previously available, which from having been directed at all forms of housing were gradually changed so that interest rate subsidies were only granted to rented housing and tenant owner's flats. Special, time-limited investment subsidies were granted only to certain rented housing. All production subsidies have ceased and previous commitments are being phased out so that the final disbursements will be made in early 2012.

Rented housing is primarily supplied by the respective property owner. The municipalities may establish municipal housing agencies. However, these may not find flats for people, instead the housing agencies are to be regarded as a "marketplace" where property owners with flats to rent can meet flat hunters. Each property owner stipulates himself/herself the requirements set for presumptive buyers as long as these rules are not discriminatory or infringe some other law. The largest municipal housing agency is in Stockholm, the Greater Stockholm Housing Agency.

Regarding newly produced tenant owner's flats, owner-occupied houses and owner-occupied flats, the property fee is reduced for the first ten years after the year of completion. In the first five years no fee is paid, subsequently half of the property fee is paid for five years.

2) The measures taken

In June 2010, the Riksdag decided to amend legislation on public housing companies and rent setting. The municipally owned housing companies will in future be exempt from the requirements in the Local Government Act of cost price and prohibition of profit, furthermore normal yield requirements are to be imposed and they must act in such a way that competition in the sector is not distorted (Act concerning public municipal housing

companies [2010:879]). In the matter of rent setting, the prescriptive role in rent setting of the municipal housing companies is to be replaced by a prescriptive role for rents that are determined through rent negotiations, irrespective of whether the property owner is a municipal company or a private actor. However, the utility value principle remains intact. According to the latter, equally valuable flats shall have equivalent rent, which is the same as saying that rent differences must be motivated by differences in the flats' utility value. A special protective rule is also to be introduced that will mean it will be possible to implement for a longer period rent changes as a consequence of the fact that the rents did not previously correctly mirror the utility value. A period of adaptation of this type is determined either by a negotiated agreement between a tenants' association and the property owner, or by the Rent Tribunal.

The rules concerning special administration were tightened on 1 March 2010 as follows (gov. bill 2009/10:21): The requirements were eased for a management injunction to be issued. The requirements of proof of the mismanagement that may be the basis for a decision on special administration (management injunction and compulsory administration) were reduced during a transitional period of three years after a rented property has changed ownership. In these cases, the Rent Tribunal may issue a decision on such administration if there is reason to assume the property owner does not fulfil the requirements imposed under law on the management of the property.

For a management injunction to be issued it is required that the deficiencies have been of a specific intensity and effect and that the tenants have generally felt inconvenienced. It may be a question of a management injunction, for example, if the landlord does not fulfil his/her obligation to keep tenants informed of his/her name and address in accordance with Chap.12, Section 18 i of the Land Code. Another example is that, in spite of notice, the landlord does not carry out repairs or maintenance work without for that matter conditions being so serious that there are the preconditions for compulsory administration. Another circumstance that may tell in favour of a management injunction is that there are several minor inconveniences in the property which individually do not motivate action under the law but together indicate that management of the property does not meet the requirements tenants are entitled to make.

It may be a question of compulsory administration if deficiencies are more serious than for management injunction. The deficiencies referred to are of the same type as for management injunction; the difference lies in how serious the management deficiencies are. Intervention in the form of compulsory administration can also be made if it may be assumed a management injunction is not judged adequate action to achieve acceptable management. If management of the property does not improve in spite of a management injunction, the Rent Tribunal may, following application, decide on compulsory administration. This may, for example, be the case if the property owner in violation of the trust agreement, takes measures that have a negative effect on the tenants' situation. Sometimes it may be clear in advance that the property owner will not comply with an injunction to hand over management to someone else, for example when previous management injunction attempts have failed or there is reason to fear the property owner will oppose the administrator. In such cases, the Rent Tribunal may decide on compulsory administration without a preceding management injunction.

The proof requirement is relatively low for deficient conditions that may be the basis for a decision on special administration for the first three years after a change of owner, however, application of the provision presupposes that there is something tangible that suggests conditions are as poor as those referred to in the first paragraph. It may be a matter of deficiencies that may generally affect tenants. Preconditions for applying the provision may exist if, for example, the property owner owns other properties that are or have been subject to special administration and relatively soon after the acquisition of a new property, several minor deficiencies in management occur that have a negative impact on tenants without the deficiencies being so obvious that intervention by virtue of the first paragraph is possible. A case near at hand is that the property owner already owns other properties where there have been deficiencies in management and there is a tangible risk that similar deficiencies will arise as regards the newly acquired property soon after its acquisition.

State property tax on housing has been abolished and replaced by a municipal property fee. The property fee is indexed in that it is tied to changes in the income base amount. In 2010 the property fee is SEK 1 277 per flat in a block of flats, however at most 0.4 per cent of the rateable value. For small houses and owner-occupied flats, the property fee is SEK 6 387, but at most 0.75 per cent of the rateable value. The property fee for permanent dwelling in small houses is limited through a tax reduction to 4 per cent of the fee payer's income, but at the least to a floor value that is indexed in that it is tied to changes in the price base amount. For 2010 the floor value is SEK 2 895. Those who can count in a tax reduction are persons who had reached the age of 65 at the start of the year prior to the tax year or who during the year prior to the tax year received activity compensation or sickness compensation or, alternatively, compensation under legislation on social security in another state in the European Economic Area if the compensation is paid on grounds that are comparable with those applicable to sickness and activity compensation.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

During the period 1998-2006 a total of 294 applications were made to the Rent Tribunals under the Housing Administration Act, that is to say over 30 a year. 58 applications were tried while the others were discontinued or dismissed for other reasons. Of the applications that were tried, 41 were approved. Of the 58 cases that were tried, 25 appealed to the Svea Court of Appeal which pronounced approval of the application in 18 cases.

Article 31§2

1) The general legal framework and 2) The measures taken

Reference is made to a previous report, to what is stated above under Article 31§1 and to the following additional information with reference to Conclusions 2005.

Report on eviction and homelessness among families with children, etc.

The main task of the committee was to analyse social services efforts to support and assist families with children in the process that precedes an eviction and, in cases where it was not possible to prevent eviction, social services work after an eviction. The terms of reference

also included dealing with the respective roles of the landlord and the enforcement officer in the eviction process.

(Eviction and homelessness – also affect children, Swedish Government Official Reports 2005:88)

At present proposals are being considered for amendments to the Rent Act that aim to counteract eviction of families. This concerns a requirement that in order that an extension of a rental agreement may be refused on grounds of negligence, landlords must normally have called the attention of the tenant to the deficiencies and requested correction. When a right of tenancy is forfeited, that is to say notice of immediate cessation is given, there already is such an obligation. Furthermore, a proposal is being considered that the Rent Tribunals should be instructed to inform the social services committee that an extension of a rental agreement is to be refused on grounds of negligence. The intention is that as a result the right of tenancy will not be lost or at any rate that efforts can be planned if this should be the case.

The Government's strategy to counter homelessness

In 2007, the Government presented for the first time an integrated strategy for efforts to combat homelessness under the heading "Homelessness – multiple faces, multiple responsibilities". The strategy covered the period 2007-2009. The aim of the strategy was to create a structure that clarifies that multiple actors at national, regional and also local levels have a responsibility and a role to play in work to address homelessness and exclusion from the housing market. The strategy represents a higher level of ambition by specifying a clear direction for action, a broad approach and clear joint work.

A national steering group with representatives of the National Board of Health and Welfare, the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, the enforcement service, the correctional service and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions was commissioned to lead the work and implement the strategy. The main activity was to give support to local development work. The aim was to develop working methods and organisation in order to achieve enduring structures in work to combat homelessness. The strategy comprised four objectives:

- 1) Everyone has to be guaranteed a roof over their head and be offered further coordinated action based on their individual needs.
- 2) The number of women and men admitted to or registered at a prison or treatment unit, or who have supported accommodation or are staying in care homes and do not have any accommodation arranged before being discharged has to decrease.
- 3) Entry into the ordinary housing market has to be facilitated for women and men who are in housing ladders, training flats or other accommodation provided by the social services or other actors.
- 4) The number of evictions has to decrease and no children are to be evicted.

Guidelines with reference to eviction prevention work

As part of the Government's strategy to combat homelessness, the National Board of Health and Welfare in collaboration with the enforcement service has produced guideline material for municipalities and other actors in eviction prevention work. The aim of these guidelines is to give municipalities support to develop and secure routines in their work to combat eviction, particularly for families with children. The guidelines give information about

legislation in the area and describe central preconditions for carrying on effective eviction prevention work. In addition, examples are given for how eviction prevention efforts may be carried out in the municipalities.

Improved statistics

The enforcement service has developed its eviction statistics so that it is now possible to study the number of evictions by municipality and type of household. The statistics are published on a quarterly basis on the service's website www.kronofogden.se. As from the year 2010 the enforcement service's eviction statistics will be included in Sweden's national statistics.

Knowledge overview of housing solutions

The National Board of Health and Welfare was commissioned by the Government to produce – in consultation with the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning – a knowledge overview of different housing solutions and their effects.

The basis for the knowledge overview is a systematic mapping out of evaluations of the effects of different housing programmes that have been carried out. The knowledge overview should be seen as a step in the development towards evidence-based practice in the area of homelessness, in which research, professional experience and the clients' experience and wishes are weighed in. Work on the knowledge overview has led to an international cooperation project between the National Board of Health and Welfare and researchers from several countries, Campbell Collaboration. The project is to collect, critically review and statistically synthesize the results from all relevant research in a systematic overview. (See www.campbellcollaboration.org)

Study of the secondary housing market

In 2008 the National Board of Health and Welfare and the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning were commissioned to make a survey of the secondary housing market.

The aim was to try to give an overall view of the current scale and focus of the secondary housing market. The Boards are to map out recurrently – every third year starting in 2008 – the scale and focus of the secondary housing market.

Local development efforts

One of the measures in connection with implementation of the national homelessness strategy was to stimulate local development work. The Government chose to stimulate local development work through increased knowledge and financial support to the development of work methods and organisation. Over SEK 55 million was allocated to 23 efforts.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

Survey of homelessness

The most recent survey of homelessness was carried out in measurements over a week in 2005. For a person to be counted as homeless in the 2005 investigation it was required that during the week in question he or she was judged to be in one of the four situations below: a) situation 1 included persons referred to emergency accommodation, a hostel, social services accommodation or were sleeping rough.

- b) the second situation comprised persons who were inmates of/registered at a prison, treatment unit or in supported accommodation and who were to be discharged within three months of the measurement period but did not have housing arranged prior to discharge.
- c) the third situation comprised persons equivalent to those in the second situation but who had neither a planned discharge nor any accommodation.
- d) the fourth situation comprised persons living in temporary accommodation without a contract at friends/acquaintances, family/relatives or had temporary (less than three months after the measurement period) sub-letting contracts and due to this situation had sought help (had been in contact with the authority/organisation providing information) during the measurement period.

Approximately 17 800 persons were homeless when the measurement was carried out, which was an increase compared with 1999. Three quarters of the homeless were men and one quarter women. The proportion of women has increased since 1999. The average age among the homeless was a little over 40, which is the same as in previous surveys. Although the majority of the homeless were born in Sweden there is an overrepresentation of persons born in other countries. In total, national surveys of homelessness in the country were carried out in 1993, 1999 and 2005. The next survey is planned to take place in 2011. All the surveys have used different definitions and investigation techniques which makes it difficult to interpret the results and also makes comparisons difficult. In attempts at comparison over time, following processing of the data, homelessness during the period 1999 to 2005 is estimated to have increased by 2000-3000 persons or by 30-40 per cent.

Eviction of children

During 2008, 718 children were affected by evictions and, during 2009, 618 children.

Article 31§3

Reference is made to previous reports, to what is stated above under Article 31§1 and to the following additional information with reference to Conclusions 2005.

1) The general legal framework

On the Swedish housing market, housing is provided in the form of a tenancy, cooperative tenancy, tenant ownership or title (owner-occupied home or owner-occupied flat). All forms of tenure are available to all on the same conditions. Certain parts of the rental market are reserved for students, elderly persons and persons with functional impairment. (see section 31.1).

Regarding the cost of housing, in the case of right of ownership and right of tenancy ownership, these dwellings are available on the market without any form of public regulation of prices. Nor are there any production subsidies for new housing, and the previous subsidies for new production of rented flats and tenant owner's flats are being gradually phased out up to 2012. However, there is a special subsidy for the construction of housing for elderly persons of SEK 500 million a year.

Private individuals' interest expenses for loans are tax deductible in their entirety. To the extent the deduction results in a deficit in income from capital, the deficit gives entitlement to a tax reduction of 30% of the deficit up to and including SEK 100 000 and 21% in excess of

this amount. This contributes towards reducing the actual housing costs for persons with housing loans in owner-occupied homes, owner-occupied flats and cooperative tenancies to the extent a member has taken a loan for the necessary down payment.

Provisions of importance for rent setting are to be found in the Tenancy Act and the Rent Negotiation Act. Under the latter Act, a landlord is obliged to negotiate on his/her own initiative with a tenants' organisation concerning certain changes in conditions. If the landlord does not fulfil this obligation, the contract with the tenant is invalid in this part. An obligation to negotiate of this type applies, *inter alia*, to rent increases and determination of the rent for a new tenant if the rent asked exceeds the previous tenant's rent. If the landlord and the tenants' organisation cannot agree on conditions, the tenant or landlord concerned may apply to the Rent Tribunal to change the conditions. This means that in these cases the Rent Tribunal decides what is a reasonable rent. Through the collective negotiation order, individual tenants' rights are strengthened and rent conditions on the market are subject to systematic review. There are several provisions in tenancy legislation that aim to ensure that the parties achieve a good negotiation result. It should be noted in general that the collective negotiations are an essential part of the Tenancy Act's regulation. Thus, several provisions, for example regarding the state of the flat, are linked to it.

If a tenant considers the rent to be too high, to start with he or she may choose between calling for negotiations under the Rent Negotiation Act or requesting the terms be tried by the Rent Tribunal whose decision may be appealed to the Svea Court of Appeal. The Rent Tribunal shall determine the rent in a reasonable amount. The rent is not to be considered reasonable if it is considerably higher than the rent for flats of the same utility value. A flat's utility value is determined, *inter alia*, by its size, degree of modernity, layout, location in the building, standard of repair and soundproofing. Benefits that affect the utility value may be access to a lift, refuse chute, laundry, special storage space, good service, garage and car parking space. Factors such as the building's general location, the residential environment as a whole, and proximity to communications also affect the utility value (see govt bill 1983/84:137 p. 72). When rent levels are compared, flats in buildings owned and managed by municipal housing companies are primarily taken into consideration. This means that the municipal housing companies are in practice normative for rents. As from 1 January 2011, however, the comparison will in the first instance be with rents that have been determined in negotiated agreements under the Rent Negotiation Act (see govt bill 2009/10:185 p.63 f.). Thus, in future rents agreed between the tenants' organisations and landlords will be normative. The forms for the negotiations between landlord and tenants' organisations are regulated by law. (See further information on amendments that enter into force on 1 January 2011 below under 2 The measures taken).

For some time special rules applicable over a ten-year period have been in place for newly produced blocks of flats. This means, among other things, that the landlord and tenants' organisation have an opportunity to agree on a rent that is not limited to the utility value. After ten years, the rent is again valued in accordance with the utility value principle.

There are various forms of financial support for persons who cannot pay the going rent in a specific district or who lack the funds to purchase a house or tenant-owner flat.

Housing supplement for pensioners and others is a means-tested benefit, the size of which depends on cost of housing, income and wealth. Over the period 2005-2009 the rules for housing supplement for pensioners and others have remained largely unchanged. The changes that have taken place include a raise in the levels in several stages for persons who have reached the age of 65 (see below The measures taken). For persons under 65, chiefly persons who draw activity compensation or sickness compensation, the housing supplement has not changed during the period. For them the ceiling for housing supplement is SEK 4 500 a month for unmarried persons and SEK 2 250 a month for married persons. The highest housing supplement that may be paid is 91% of the housing cost up to the ceiling. However, the housing supplement for the same group, that is to say persons with sickness and activity compensation (previously early retirement pension) was raised on 1 January 2010. This has contributed to a strengthening of annual income for persons with sickness compensation and young people with activity compensation who at the same time have a housing supplement.

New rules apply to housing allowance paid out as from 1 January 2006. The changes, among other things, mean that the part of the housing allowance paid as a special allowance to families with children was raised. In addition, an allowance was introduced for parents who, due to custody or right of access, have their children living with them periodically. Changes to the calculation of the part of the housing allowance that is based on housing cost was also carried through. Entitlement to and the amount of the housing allowance are determined by income, housing costs, size of dwelling, how many children the applicant has and where the children live.

The maximum allowance that may be paid when the applicant has custody of the child, the child lives mostly with him/her and the child is registered at the address of the applicant is:

1 child	SEK 2 600 maximum
2 children	SEK 3 200 maximum
3 children	SEK 4 000 maximum

2) The measures taken

As from 2008 the tax levied on the value of dwelling-houses was substantially reduced, which has meant lower housing costs above all for those who own their own homes. There is a freeze that limits property tax for permanent dwelling in small houses to at most 4% of income for pensioners. A special yield tax on certain tenant-owners' societies was removed, which has meant reduced costs for those living in those societies.

On the rented housing market, a decision on a new system for determining rents has been taken by the Riksdag and will be implemented in early 2011. Compared with the previous system, in future the Rent Tribunal will make rent comparisons with other similar flats in the location where the rent was negotiated between representatives of tenants and landlords, irrespective of who owns the properties. A rule will also be introduced that protects the private individual from rapid rent increases as a result of the parties reaching agreement on considerably higher rents.

Over the period 2005-2009 the levels of the housing supplement for pensioners and others were raised in several stages for persons who have reached the age of 65. In January 2005 the ceiling for the housing supplement was SEK 4 670 a month for unmarried persons over 65. The equivalent amount for married persons was SEK 2 335 a month. The highest housing supplement possible was 91% of the housing cost up to the ceiling. The ceiling was raised in January 2009 to SEK 5 000 a month for unmarried persons over 65 and the highest possible housing supplement that may be paid out had risen to 93% of the housing cost up to the ceiling.

3) Statistics or any other relevant information

In December 2009, a total of 137 255 households with children received housing allowance. The vast majority of households had children living at home, however there is also a possibility of receiving an allowance for children for whom the parent has right of access. Most of the applicants are women in single households.