The Gender Pay Gap in Sweden

This report shows how gender wage differences developed during the 1990s. An increased inequality was seen in the private sector and the largest wage gaps were found in occupations with highest monthly wages. In almost all occupational groups men had higher wages, but they also experienced larger wage inequalities, than women.

One objective of the report has been to compare results from studies that have standardized for differences in age, education, skills and experience, to mention some of the factors. Results indicate that the gender wage gap seems to increase and one policy conclusion is to gender mainstream wages policy.

The report was produced to the European Expert Group on Gender and Employment in 2002.

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The Gender Pay Gap in Sweden
A national report

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Preface

This report was produced during 2002 as a national report from Sweden to the European Expert Group on Gender and Employment, financed by the European Commission. It is now being published as a research report in Karlstad University Series with a special acknowledgement to the European Commission and its department for Equal Opportunities.

Karlstad 14th of December 2004
Lena Gonäs
Professor of Working Life Science
Executive Summary

The main objective of this report is to study the trends in the gender wage gap in Sweden during the last decade. We found that wage inequality between women and men in Sweden increased during the 1990s. This increase in wage inequality can mainly be seen in the private sector as a result of wage increases for high income earners. The only group who experienced a narrowed wage gap during the period 1992-2001 was women in municipal sector. According to Statistics Sweden the most important factor in explaining variations in wage is occupation, which explains about 40 percent. Occupations with highest monthly wage have the largest gender wage gaps. At the other end, the group with the lowest wages, where 65 percent of the employees are women, have small gender wage gaps. In almost all occupational groups men have higher wages, but also experience larger wage inequalities than women. The private sector stands for a larger gap than the public. Lower wage dispersion, higher share of skilled and professional women and higher concern with equal opportunities in the public sector may be part of the explanation.

Another objective has been to compare results from studies that have standardised for differences in for example age, education, skills and experience. In this report we are referring to three major reports that have been published in Sweden during 2000-2002. The first study shows the effect of different factors on wage differences. Age, education, sector and working time are held constant and the analysis is made for different occupations. The same study concludes by suggesting indicators for measuring wage differences between women and men. The second study analyzes the pay gap between 1968 and 2000. One result was that the adjusted gender pay gap increased between 1981 and 2000. The third study by Statistics Sweden looks at both unadjusted gender wage gap and the standardised gap in 2002. Here the standardised gap is almost constant from the mid 1990s to 2000, while the unadjusted gender wage gap varies more over the years and between sectors.

One policy conclusion is to mainstream gender wage equality within policy making. Women benefited from the solidaristic wage policy, when it was active up to the end of the 1980s. National policies to prevent gender segregation are important. Women are over represented in low wage jobs and underrepresented in high wage jobs. As the wage structure seems to be de-compressing, the gender gap may well keep on increasing.
1. Introduction

This report is made in accordance with the guidelines given by the co-ordinator of the EU network on Gender and Employment. The task has been to make a national report on studies made on the gender pay gap. One objective has been to show the development of the unadjusted pay gap and the measures and approaches used in different studies for doing this. Another objective has been to compare results from studies that have standardised for differences in for example age, education, skills and experience. This is to see if and how the result changes if we use methods of standardizing for differences between women and men. When standardizing we reduce the impact of the fact that women and men have different positions in working life. We then study gender wage gaps as if women and men had the same positions and thereby important divisions of gender and work disappear when we use the standardised measures. At the same time we have to find ways of doing just comparisons.

We start this report with a discussion of data sources and sample restrictions, and continue with an overview of the unadjusted gender pay gap. This is followed by a comparison of studies of the adjusted and unadjusted gender pay gap. We also discuss different types of institutional factors and how they relate to the pay differences between women and men. In the final section we present the contemporary Swedish debate on new policies and add some of our own conclusions.

1.1. Data sources and sample restrictions

The yearly publications of statistics from Statistics Sweden and the Mediation Office are supposed to be objective and informative. This report is therefore, to a large extent, based on statistics from these sources. But the examination of women and men’s wages need information on all factors that affect wages such as the situation in both working and private life. This is a very costly and difficult task, why this report cannot claim to give a full picture of the reality of the Swedish wage setting system. Nevertheless, further research is needed and improvements of statistics can be done and should be encouraged.

Comparability over time and sectors are sometimes problematic, often due to changes in sample restrictions, definition of wages or time period. For example, employment under 5 percent of full-time employment is, since 1995, not included in the sample population. Furthermore, sample selections are used for the private sector while total surveys for public sector employees. Statistics Sweden is co-operating with both trade unions and employers’ organizations to gather information. Due to their different aims and goals with the statistics, differences and discrepancies in definitions, time periods, and sample restrictions may well occur.

It is easy to lose information when dividing data into groups i.e. sectors. This can contribute to disillusionments in regards to comparability. There is also a lack of
important explanatory factors for example responsibility, working experience and other individual characteristics in the material.

A trend on the Swedish labour market is towards increased compensation in the form of the number of vacation days, shorter working time, company shares etc. These benefits do not appear in the statistics and at the same time difficult to measure, as they are part of, or work as a substitute to increases in wages.

Most wages are presented as monthly full-time wages. Part-time wages are therefore often transformed in order to be comparable with full-time wages. Part-time wages are generally lower, calculated as full-time, than full-time wages, both for women and men. However, differences between the genders are usually smaller among part-time workers than full-timers. But the use of full-time wages and the transformation of part-time wages into full-time wages facilitate comparisons. An advantage is that differences in working hours are practically eliminated. A disadvantage is that full-time working men are more representative for men as a category than full-time working women are for their category.\textsuperscript{1} Information can also get lost when eliminating differences in working hours. Full-time working men usually work more hours than full-time working women, which therefore also contribute to wage differences.\textsuperscript{2} However, studies show that working time is not a major component of the wage gap in Sweden, or at least less important than gender per se.\textsuperscript{3} Furthermore, female part-time work is often a prerequisite for male full-time work. In a way, this can be seen as male dependence on women’s unpaid and reproductive work.

Problem arises when studying the private sector, which is divided into blue-collar and white-collar workers. Wages for these two groups are presented in different ways, hourly wages for blue-collar workers and monthly wages for white-collar workers. This has resulted in the need for calculations of the hourly wages into monthly. Up until 1999, 165 hours per month was used as an average for a full-time employment. In 2000, this number was found to be an underestimation and the average working time in the private sector was 171 hours per month. Some of the increases for workers in the private sector between 1999 and 2000 can therefore be explained by the change in the transformation of hourly to monthly wages.

Due to lack of wage statistics over time and sector in the form of percentiles, wage inequality will primarily be presented in the form of quartiles and not deciles. That is, lowest quartile wages as percent of highest quartile wages. This is due to the guidelines for this report. Nevertheless, wage inequality is often

\textsuperscript{1} Nyberg, A. (2001), Inkomstutveckling för kvinnor och män, p.59.
\textsuperscript{2} Referring to paid full-time work.
\textsuperscript{3} Barry, U., Bettio, F., Figueiredo, H., Grimshaw, D., Maier, F. & Plasman, R. (2002), Indicators on Gender Gaps in Pay and Income, p. 83. According to the study the gender ratio for full-timers was 83.84 % and part-timers 88.54% in 1995.
presented as the ratio of the 90th percentile over the 10th percentile in Sweden. Thus, this measure will be used as much as possible in this report.

The guideline for showing shares of male and female workers earning less than two thirds of the median for all male full-time workers will not be followed in this report. This is because all sectors in Sweden have levels of average pay for women and men above the two-thirds level.
2. National measures of the unadjusted gender pay gap

2.1. Wage inequality over time

Wage inequality in Sweden has slowly increased since 1995.\(^4\) It is often regarded as a result of an increase in individual differential wage setting during the 1980- and 90ies. According to Statistics Sweden, the increase during 1992-2000 was 10\%, measured as a change in the ratio of highest 90\% to lowest 10\% percentile. This increase in wage inequality can first and foremost be seen in the private sector. In 2000, the ratio was 1.7 in the public sector and 2.1 in the private.\(^5\)

The increase in wage inequality that occurred during the 1990ies depends primarily on increases in wages of high-income earners.\(^6\)

Sometimes it is easier to view wage disparities as the ratio of low-income wages and high-income wages, i.e. lowest quartile as percent of highest quartile. As can be seen from the chart below, the only group who experienced a narrowed wage gap during the period 1992-2001, was women in the municipal sector. All other sectors, despite gender, show increased wage disparities. The group with the highest wage disparities is men in the county council sector, followed by private white-collar men.

According to Statistics Sweden, the most important factor in explaining variations in wage is occupation, which explains about 40%.\(^7\) The occupations with the highest average monthly wage are either male dominated or have an equal gender distribution, such as corporate executives or doctors. At the same time, these occupations also suffer the largest gender wage gaps. In 2000, only 21% of the group earning SEK 30 000 (about EUR 3230) are women, of a group that corresponds to 8% of all employees.\(^8\) In the group with the lowest

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\(^7\) Statistical yearbook of salaries and wages 2000, Statistics Sweden, p. 12.

\(^8\) Statistical yearbook of salaries and wages 2000, Statistics Sweden, p. 34.
wages, 65% of the employees are women. Occupations with low average monthly wages are male or female dominated, such as janitors and library assistants. Accordingly, these occupations demonstrate rather small gender wage gaps.9

Within most occupational categories, average monthly wage is higher in the private sector than public. Both the highest wage earners and the lowest wage earners are working in the private sector. This sector employs twice as many employees as the public sector. In times with cutsbacks in public sector spending and privatisation, employment in the private sector is increasing. In 2000, the private sector incorporated 67% of the total number of employed people in Sweden, which corresponds to a 12% increase since 1992.

Within occupational groups with a majority employed within the public sector, wage differences between private and public employees are small. In the public sector, the municipal sector (primär kommunal) stands for 21%, the governmental sector (statlig) 6% and county council (landsting) 6% of the total number of employees. At the same time, wages in municipal sector are the lowest. In the municipal and county council sectors, 50% of the employed were working part-time in 2000. Since average part-time wages are lower than average full-time, the number of part-time workers in these sectors should be kept in mind when making comparisons. The difference between part-time wages and full-time wages is largest in the private sector, where part-time workers are also found in different occupations than full-timers.10

Table 3. Part-time and full-time wages (SEK) according to gender and sector in Sweden 2001.11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Part-time Men</th>
<th>Full-time Men</th>
<th>PTM/FTM</th>
<th>Part-time Women</th>
<th>Full-time Women</th>
<th>PTW/FTM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Council</td>
<td>26300</td>
<td>29700</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>19500</td>
<td>20900</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal</td>
<td>18000</td>
<td>20600</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>17100</td>
<td>18900</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collar</td>
<td>24800</td>
<td>28700</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>20000</td>
<td>22400</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Sweden.

The wage levels in different sectors have changed quite dramatically. In 1968, it was an advantage for women to be employed in the public sector. Given education level and working experience, the standardised female average wage in the public sector was 12 percent higher than in the private.12 The trend turned in the 1980ies, and in 2000 the pattern was the opposite with 10 percent higher wages in the private sector. For men, private sector wages has been higher than public sector since 1974.

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11 All sectors are not included in this table due to lack of information on part-time wages.
Marital status is also regarded as affecting wages. According to Statistics Sweden, married people are a vast majority among high wage groups. This can of course also be seen as being a question of age.

In Sweden, ethnicity seems to be a factor related to wage. About 95% in the high wage groups and 85% in low wage groups, have Nordic background. Women with non-Nordic background are more likely to be found in low wage groups.

Geography is also an important factor in explaining wage inequalities. The largest differences between public and private sectors are to be found in the Stockholm region. Highest average wages for both sectors and sexes are also to be found in this region but also the biggest gender wage gap. In Stockholm, women’s wages corresponded to 80% of men’s in 2000, while in the Middle North (Mellersta Norrländ) of Sweden women’s average wages are 85% of men’s. According to Statistics Sweden, a public employee in the region of Småland has a salary that corresponds to 90% of the salary in the public sector worker in Stockholm. In the private sector the same figure is 83%. Women’s average monthly wage in Småland corresponds to 86% of women’s average monthly wage in Stockholm. The same figure for men is 82%. One should keep in mind that occupational compositions probably vary and affect the wage structures and that about one fourth of all employees are situated in Stockholm. Of importance is the fact that 38% of the employees in the Stockholm region has a post-secondary education, compared to 26% in the Småland region. Wages are increasing with age in all regions but the largest differences between the age groups are again to be found in Stockholm. Furthermore, regional wage differences increase with age. That is, regional wage differences are bigger among older cohorts than younger.

2.2. Gender wage inequality

Women’s monthly wages were in 2000 on average 82 percent of men’s. But if differences between the sexes in regards to age, occupation, work-time, sector and education are taken into consideration, women’s wages increase to an average of 92 percent of men’s. However, this figure is an average and differs among sectors and age groups. In the municipal sector women’s wages are 98 percent of men’s, in county council 93, in state sector 92, and in the private sector 90 percent. Differences are also lower in all sectors among younger groups and increases with age.

16 Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, www.jamombud.se
Age is a very important factor in explaining gender wage gaps. In 2001, all sectors in Sweden show an increasing gap with age. The largest differences are to be found in the county council sector, where women in the age group of 18-25 earn 102% of men’s wages while women aged 50-64 earn 62% of men’s wages. This might be as a result of the number of male doctors within this age group. The smallest difference between age groups is found among blue-collar workers in the private sector, where women start at 91% and end at 88% of men’s wages in the same age group.
Chart 5 a-e. Average Monthly Wages and Women's Wages as Percent of Men's in Sweden 2001, according to Gender and Age.

- Chart 5a. Municipal Sector
- Chart 5b. White-Collar Workers in Private Sector
- Chart 5c. County Council
- Chart 5d. Blue Collar Workers in Private Sector.

Hourly wages multiplied by 171.
Both women and men benefit from education in regards to wage but education is more profitable for men than for women. Statistics show an increase in the gender pay gap according to education in Sweden during the period 1994-2000, with the exception of the group with upper secondary school. Men show signs of larger wage inequalities within all educational groups but the largest wage inequality is found among men with tertiary education.\(^{17}\)

### Chart 6. Women's Average Monthly Wage as Percent of Men's in Sweden 1994 and 2000, according to Education.

In the year 2000, women’s wages were on average 82 percent of men’s but as can be seen from table 4, large variations can be found according to education level and age. Thus, age in combination with education affect wages. Wage inequalities increase with both age and education level.

\(^{17}\) Statistical yearbook of salaries and wages 2000, Statistics Sweden, p. 22.
Table 4. Women's wages as percent of men's according to age and education level in 1994 and 2000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Compulsory School</th>
<th>Upper Secondary School, 3 years</th>
<th>Post-secondary Education, 3 years or longer</th>
<th>Postgraduate Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-39</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All ages</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The gender wage gaps increase with age at almost every education level, and with the exception of postgraduate education, wage gaps increase with education in every age group. This means that wages increase with age in occupations where you need a university degree.

Wage inequalities among women in Sweden have decreased since the 1970s. More women are now part of the work force and the number of full-time working women is increasing. The pattern is the opposite in regards to men. A larger part of the male work force is out of work and the wage dispersion is now larger.18


Chart 7b. Women and Men working 20-34 hours per week in Sweden 1976-2001. As percent of all employed women and men respectively.

There are several reasons for women’s increased full-time employment. One reason may be the downturn in household’s disposable income during the 1990ies, making it more economically difficult for women to work part-time.19 Younger women’s higher education and desire to work full-time in combination with labour market exit of older part-time working women may also be part of the explanation for the increase in full-time working women.

Despite increases in female full-time work, women’s education level and working experience, factors usually regarded as important in explaining wage levels, the gender pay gap increased during the 1980s and 90s for some sectors while others show a decrease. If education and working experience are taken into consideration, gender wage differences increased by 3 percent between 1981 and 2000. Changes in these explanatory factors may thus have been counteracted by increases in general income inequalities, often argued to be a result of the introduction of individual wage setting.

Source: Statistics Sweden (no information on government sector)

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Statistics Sweden has published a report on working conditions and wages for women and men in health and social work. The report covers 98 percent of the employees in this area of work, about 35 percent of all employed women and 5 percent of all employed men. In the major group “health professionals” 55 percent are men and the average female monthly wage is 16 percent lower than the average salary for males. Large wage differentials as for health professionals decrease when the group is divided into smaller units. In a low wage group, “personal care and related workers,” 10 percent are men and the female average monthly wage is 2 percent lower than the male average monthly wage. It also seems as if some female-male wage differentials become smaller if an occupation can be divided into smaller groups.

In sum, in almost all occupational groups, men have higher wages but also experience larger wage inequalities than women. Wage inequalities are also usually to be found within occupations that require university education, resulting in a positive relationship between education and wage inequalities, between both women and men and among men as a group. The gender wage gap is also linked to sector, where the private sector stands for a larger gap than the public. Lower wage dispersion, higher share of skilled and professional women than men, and higher concerns with equal opportunities in the public sector may be part of the explanations for this.

3. Review of national studies that estimate an adjusted gender pay gap and comparison with estimates of unadjusted pay gaps.

To be able to draw conclusions regarding gender pay gaps based on data, one needs information on the different factors affecting wages. Both the conditions on the labour market and in private life such as marital status and number of children should be taken into consideration. It is therefore of greatest importance to identify as many variables as possible that are easy to measure and understand.

Women and men perform different kind of work. Statistics must therefore be as detailed as possible. In this way differences in work assignments can be visible and wage differences could be further reduced. For example, responsibility is an important factor affecting wages and must therefore be made visible in the statistics.

A study by the Ministry of Industry and Communications shows that with the help of regression analysis, the effect of different factors on wage differences can be estimated. Age, education, sector and working time are held constant by the method. For example in the group of “business, marketing and human resources”, women earn 77 percent of men’s wages. When comparing women and men in the same age group, education level, sector, and working time, the ratio is 84 percent. However, even though added factors may reduce the gender pay differences a gap will probably remain.

The same study concludes by suggesting some useful indicators for measuring wage differences between women and men. First, “women’s wage as percent of men’s on a national level”. This would provide an indicator of wage differences on the labour market as a whole. Although limited in regards to wage differences between women and men, it could be useful as an indicator for trends over time.

Second, “women’s wage as percent of men’s according to age”. Since wage differences to a large extent can be explained due to age, this indicator can show how wage differences vary according to lifecycles.

Third, “women’s wage as percent of men’s according to age and education”. Education is very important in explaining wages. Therefore, dividing the cohort according to age and education will provide more homogenous and comparable groups.

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Finally, the study suggests an indicator that shows wage dispersion for all women and men in different ages and education levels according to occupation. A useful measure would be “relative wage dispersion.” All these indicators should be calculated and analysed for every occupation as detailed as possible, according to age and education. Some occupations in areas of education and health care are not included in international statistics, which results in losses of information in regards to a large proportion of the female labour market. The study argues for two types of indicators, one which shows women’s wages as percent of men’s and one which shows wage dispersion for women and men in different groups.

The quality of data is of great importance in order to analyze wage differences. In order to improve data, the Swedish Ministry of Industry and Communication suggest that all sectors and occupations should be included and taken into consideration so that all wages on a segregated labour market can be analysed. In addition, information on individual’s occupations should be collected in accordance to a classification that can, on an as detailed level as possible, capture both men’s and women’s type of occupation.

Different time variables should be used such as: “working time according to agreement,” “working time according to agreement corresponding to full-time work,” “actual worked time” and “number of vacation days.” Overtime compensation is also of importance. Women work less over time and have lower compensation due to lower wages. However, overtime compensation is very difficult to measure.

![Chart 11. Employees in Sweden with children under 7 years of age, working overtime, 1987-2000.](image)

Source: Statistics Sweden (AKU).

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25 *Highlighting pay differentials between women and men*, (2000), Ministry of Industry and Communications, Regeringskansliet, p.41
Furthermore, fringe benefits are more frequent in men’s wage agreements than in women’s. These benefits can also be regarded as wages and affects the wage gap in a negative way, which is rarely shown in the statistics.

According to a recent survey by Statistics Sweden, the trend in Sweden is that both women and men are increasingly spending less time on both paid and unpaid work, and more on personal needs, leisure, and studies. Women and men have become more equal in how they spend their time but large differences still remain. Furthermore, one should keep in mind that part-time wages usually are lower than full-time wages, which makes it difficult to compare wages in different occupations, especially when some occupations are characterised to a large extent of part-time workers and others are not.

A government official report on changes in the Swedish wage structure shows how the gender pay gap narrowed between 1968 and 1981, only to increase again during the 1980ies and 90ies. To analyse the factors behind these changes, the study uses a method to decompose changes in average gender pay differences over time in different components. The method was launched by Juhn, Murphy and Pierce in 1991 and makes it possible to divide changes in gender pay differences over time into 4 different components; differences in observed qualifications, differences in observed wages (lönepremier), differences in non-observable qualifications or discrimination, and changes in non-observable wages (lönepremier). When studying the standardised wage gap, education level, working experience, and working experience squared are held constant.

The trend during the period 1968-1981, is the same when comparing wage levels directly as when comparing wages according to level of education and working experience. According to the study, women’s wages were 83.2 percent of men’s in 1981 and 82.4 percent in 1991, while the standardised wage gap increased 2.5 percent during the same period. The unadjusted wage gap decreased further about 2 percent during the 90ies, as the standardised gaps increased. In sum, the adjusted gender pay gap shows an increase of 3 percent between 1981 and 2000 but with variations during different periods.

Before 1981 a large part of the gender pay gap could be explained by education level and working experience but since differences in these factors no longer prevail, explanations of gender pay gaps due to differences in individual qualifications are now less applicable. If only education and working experience were to explain wages, the gender pay gap in Sweden should instead have decreased by 6.5 percent between 1981 and 2000. That is, given the trend in

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26 Highlighting pay differentials between women and men (2000), Ministry of Industry and Communications, Regeringskansliet.
27 www.scb.se
Stockholm: Graphium/Norstedts AB.
women’s education level and working experience the gender pay gap should have decreased much more than it has. Consequently, questions can be raised regarding the importance of these factors in explaining gender wage differences, and thus therefore also regarding policies towards gender pay equality focusing mainly on educational levels.

This trend makes labour market segregation look more as a possible explanation for the gender pay gap. Although, the importance of sector is also under questioning. Differences between sectors are now less apparent and in the year 2000, the standardized wage gap was only 1.4 percent bigger in the private sector than in the public.\(^3^0\) During the 1990ies, the standardised gender pay gap decreased in the private sector by 1.6 percent, and increased in the public sector by 1.4 percent.

The study suggests an explanation for the increase in the gender pay gap, given education level and working experience, namely that the observed increases in wages for managers and executives have a discriminatory effect on women since women are underrepresented in these positions in Sweden. Women are to a large extent subordinated men in working life. Large problems remain with high levels of segregation and rare number of women in decision-making positions in Swedish business life. The wages are generally higher in male dominated sectors in comparison to female dominated sectors.\(^3^1\) Increases in the adjusted gender pay gap may therefore to a large extent be explained by general increases in income inequality. That is, since recent increases in income inequality might be explained by higher incomes for executives and managers. The lack of women within these occupations affects the overall gender pay gap negatively. Further research into women’s educational choices and the over-qualification among women is suggested. The study calls for more thorough analysis of why women are being marginalized by the late changes in wage structures.

Statistics Sweden reports in its publication *Women and Men in Sweden. Facts and Figures 2002*, both the unadjusted gender wage gap and the standardised gap. In the later, factors such as age, education, working time, sector, and occupation are taken into consideration. The method used is based on the assumption that women and men are equally distributed among age, education, sector, working time in each occupation.

\(^3^0\) SOU 2001:53, p. 150.
\(^3^1\) *Highlighting pay differentials between women and men* (2000), Ministry of Industry and Communications, Regeringskansliet.
Table 5. The unadjusted gender wage gap and standardised gap in Sweden 1992-2000 according to sector.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Municipal Sector Gender Wage Gap</th>
<th>County Council Gender Wage Gap</th>
<th>Government Sector Gender Wage Gap</th>
<th>Private Sector Gender Wage Gap</th>
<th>All Sectors Gender Wage Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender Standaized Gap</td>
<td>Gender Standaized Gap</td>
<td>Gender Standaized Gap</td>
<td>Gender Standaized Gap</td>
<td>Gender Standaized Gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>75</td>
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<td>83</td>
<td>84</td>
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<tr>
<td>1995</td>
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<td>90</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This study differs from the government official report regarding the standardised gap during the 90ies. Here it is more or less constant, while the other report showed an increase in the standardised gap.
4. National Institutional factors and the gender pay gap

According to the Swedish Act of Equal Opportunities (1991:433), employers and employees shall cooperate in order to achieve equality in working life.32 They shall especially work towards elimination and prevention of differences in wages and other differences in working conditions for men and women who conduct work that is regarded as equal.

To come to terms with this problem, organisational changes to prevent segregation have to focus on plant or organisational level. Due to the fact that processes on this level are hard to affect with political tools, active participation by social partners is important.

4.1 Gender equality initiatives taken by the Swedish Government

The Swedish government has stated that its overall objective in regards to gender equality is a society in which women and men have the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities in all areas of life.33 Gender equality perspectives should permeate politics on all levels in society. Nevertheless, prioritised areas are power and influence, power and financial independence, men and gender equality, freedom from gender-related violence, and development of methods for mainstreaming. The overall goals for the Swedish gender equality policy are to make it easier to reconcile work and parenthood and to decrease the financial differences between families with and without children.

The development of an equal opportunity index produced by Statistics Sweden is one of the latest advancement within the mainstreaming approach. The index is produced for every local municipality (280) and regional council (24) and consists of 15 variables including postsecondary education, paid employment, unemployment, incomes, days with parental benefit, and incidence of ill health, gender segregation on the labour market, entrepreneurs, and the composition of the municipal executive committee. The index is closely related to the standard of living. It is not enough to have similar levels among women and men, the unemployment rate for example must also be low to be rated as an egalitarian county.

The index gives regional growth agreements and local activities a background for discussion and action. Centrally produced data disaggregated by sex, in different areas, is a prerequisite in order to conduct gender assessments, implementation and follow-ups of policies and programmes. Traditional “male” areas like industrial policies have no reason for not using data disaggregated by sex when they analyse labour market developments.

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32 As stated January 1, 2001
33 www.naring.regeringen.se/fragor/jamstalldhet/
4.1.1. The segregated labour market

Labour market segregation is sometimes regarded as more of a problem than wage discrimination. It is sometimes argued that Sweden has two labour markets: one for women, and one for men. It may seem that the Swedish government has been too focused on the quantitative side of women’s work, to increase the female labour force participation rate, than the qualitative, such as career opportunities. In 1996, 8-10 percent of men and women worked in gender equal occupations. One explanation for the segregated labour market is that the public sector, where female labour dominates, offers women relatively high wages and lower “care penalty”. Therefore occupational choice is not only a question of tradition but also of rationality. Since labour market segregation can be seen as an explanatory variable for gender pay gaps, women and men’s choice of occupation is also an important variable. The segregated labour market contributes to a large extent, more than direct wage discrimination, to the gender wage gap. Furthermore, a recent Swedish study shows how gender-differentiated access to organizational power structures effect wage-discrimination. That is, how the presence of female executives contributes positively on women’s wages and that the negative effect of male executives on female wages is particularly strong where decentralized wage-setting procedures are found.

Women are over represented in the public sector in Sweden. At the same time, the employers are in a monopsoni situation and can set low wages and offer higher wages for men since there is a shortage of men in this sector. One can argue that both men and women suffer from the excess supply of female workers in the public sector since this can lead to lower wages in general for specific occupations.

Due to this segregation of the labour market, statistics need to be divided by sector and occupation. Without this information the statistics may loose some of its explanatory value. Sometimes female dominated sectors or occupations get lost in the statistics, resulting in figures only representing men’s labour market.

The Council’s recommendation regarding monitoring and assessing the current level of gender segregation in the labour market has resulted in a demand, presented in the National Action Plan 2001, of a report from the National Labour Market Board (AMS). The report presents an action program in their policy area with gender mainstreaming as an essential approach. The National

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Audit Board scrutinises how gender equality is manifested in the government’s appropriation directions and the central agencies’ reports on gender equality efforts. They found that the goals in the appropriation directives were unclear. The results are to be the basis for further mainstreaming.

One of the basic tasks for the National Labour Market Board (AMS) is to prevent and diminish the gender divisions on the labour market. This work is ongoing and AMS has been instructed to present measures taken and strategies for future work in this area.

The National Mediation Office has been instructed to produce gender specific pay statistics and to analyse development of gender pay differentials.38 This has resulted in a co-operation with Statistics Sweden. The Mediation Office provides and Statistics Sweden produces the official statistics. So far, gender specific pay differences are only included in the yearly reports, monthly reports are still gender neutral due to efficiency reasons.

The Ombudsman for Equal Opportunities (JämO) has been given increased resources to make the issue of wage discrimination publicly known through opinion formation.39 The Ombudsman’s office has also actively supported and encouraged the development of a gender neutral work valuation system and individual judgement of qualifications, and produced handbooks on the subjects.

4.1.2. Employability

The Council’s recommendation of reducing the tax burden on labour, particularly for those with low take-home pay for work, is well under way. The changes are now being implemented. There has been a second part of the tax reform for low and medium income earners, resulting in a reduction of those paying government tax and a green shift in taxes. The consequences of these actions have not been analysed properly with a gender perspective. Instead, tax cuts are regarded as good for part-time working women since there is a larger share of women than men working part-time (40.5 percent of women and 9.3 percent of men). The goals are to decrease marginal effects and increase incentives for moving from part-time to full-time work. The supply of labour is therefore expected to rise due to the reform. Studies show that both separate taxation (särbeskattning) and high tax levels are positively correlated to women’s supply of labour.40 Tax policies can therefore not be regarded as gender neutral. Furthermore, since men often have higher wages than women, the effect of progressive taxes is that men pay more taxes and disposable income differences decrease.

38 www.naring.regeringen.se/fragor/jamstalldhet/
Actions are also taken in order to reduce part-time unemployment since women are over-represented in this group. One initiative to get people to expand their working-hours is the “activity guarantee”. The main purpose is to prevent people from depending on unemployment benefits through different labour market policies (NAP 2001).

The Council’s recommendation to design benefits and assistance schemes in order to increase the incentives to take up jobs has resulted in the appointment of a special committee for reviewing financial support to families. A new target of halving the number of people who are dependant on benefits, have been set. As a consequence, benefits and allowance schemes are being assessed and redesigned (NAP 2001).

Women along with immigrants and disabled have been prioritised in the “SwIT” training, an education program aimed at meeting the increased demand in the IT area. According to an evaluation of the program, 60 percent of the participants were employed within 6 months after participation in the program.

4.1.3. Entrepreneurship
The Swedish government states that it wants more women to start and run businesses. The NAP 2001 stresses the importance of gender aspects in the regional growth agreements. The agreements aim to enhance regional and local actions for employment. It states that equal opportunities should be brought to the fore in the regional agenda and that the government is stimulating equal opportunities in the business sector by highlighting it as a strategy for profitability and as a competitive asset. Nevertheless, uncertainties remain regarding the implementation of the strategies in regards to equal opportunities.

It is difficult to follow the representation of women in newly started businesses, which makes it difficult to provide supportive measures for female entrepreneurship. The possibility of breaking down business statistics by gender and ethnic background is therefore to be evaluated by the Institute for Growth Policy Studies. This could facilitate follow-ups of women’s participation in newly started businesses and inspire measures to enhance women’s entrepreneurship (NAP 2001).

4.2 The Swedish national system of wage setting
One of the characteristic features of Swedish industrial relations has been the exclusion of state from wage setting. Instead, collective agreements have been the dominant procedure through which changes at work place level has been implemented. As a result, different actors are involved in the drafting process of the national action plan.
Wage-setting processes are changing form and supervision of wages and inflation has become very tight. Due to EU membership and the EMU convergence criteria on inflation, the relationships between social partners on one hand and social partners and state on the other has changed. This has called for a special mediation office, which is now in place.

Wages in Sweden are to a large extent determined through negotiations between employers and their organisations, trade unions and single employees. In Sweden, collective agreements are used within work places or occupations as a way to control and maintain the principle of equal pay. Nevertheless, nationally co-ordinated wage negotiations have become less important on the Swedish labour market, while branch agreements have taken a more dominant role.41

Work force supply and demand both affect and are affected by negotiations between employers and unions, evidently resulting in different wages for different occupational groups. Furthermore, individual wage setting and market-adjusted wages are becoming more and more common on the Swedish labour market, parallel with some increases in wage inequalities. Hence, the possibilities for trade unions to conduct central wage setting are now diminishing both within the private and public sector.42

Since the gender wage gap is highly correlated with wage inequalities, mainstreaming gender wage equality in policy making is imperative. Women benefited from the wage setting policy characterised by solidarity and equality that were to be found in Sweden up until the 1980ies. General policies aimed at low income earners benefited women since they were in majority in this group.

Factors often regarded as affecting low wages are collective agreements, high degree of unionisation and unemployment benefits.43 Formal systems, such as collective agreements, are more transparent and raise demands for objective evaluations of equal wages for equal work. Nevertheless, these agreements involve a set of contradictory aspects. One problem with this type of agreement is that they can reinforce unjust wage differences between men and women. Even though female employees dominate the Swedish public sector, negotiators of the collective agreements are often men. That is, men are often the ones deciding the contents of the agreements, and are therefore in control both of women’s wages and the factors affecting these wages. Thus, collective agreements can both reinforce wage differences as well as contribute to changes.

43 Löfström, Å. (2001), En rapport om jämställdhet och ekonomisk tillväxt, p. 9.
Linear regression analysis shows that the overall wage gap is an important explanation to women’s relative wages, but the causality goes both ways. Sectors with high levels of income or wage inequality is often characterised by high levels of gender wage inequality.

In order to accomplish a positive change in the gender pay gap, differences need to be highlighted, on both work place and sector level. Without reports and analyses, discriminatory wage differences cannot be found, and therefore not being adjusted for. Knowledge of the wage setting system and structures are imperative but not sufficient. Individual wage differences between women and men must also be taken into consideration.

Nevertheless, the NAP 2001 states that the knowledge and competence of the work force must be made use of regardless of gender, age, ethnic background, sexual preference or any disability. According to the social partners, skills development contributes positively to equal opportunities at the workplace. Wage setting and conditions of employment must therefore stimulate continual skills development among the employees. A recent study by the Swedish confederation of professional employees, TCO, shows that the possibility for skills development is greater among men than women. Among the members, only 55 percent of the women claim that they weakly learn something new and develop at work, while 67 percent of the men claim they do. Skills development seems to depend on gender, age, education and sector. Furthermore, part-time work is found negatively related to skills development.

In sum, both market forces and the collective bargaining have been of greatest importance for the Swedish wage structure. But the relative importance of the two factors depends largely on what aspects of wage differences are to be examined.

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44 Löfström, Å. (1997), Lönepolitikens betydelse för kvinnorna i Lönepolitik och kvinnors löner, Forskningsrådsnämnden 97-4, p 22.
45 Vem får lära? –Om utbildning och utveckling på jobbet. TCO-granskar, nr 11/02.
4.3. The Swedish Equal Opportunities Act

The Swedish Equal Opportunities Act requires employers to take active measures to promote gender equality. There have been some amendments to the Act (SFS 2000:773) in regards to desegregation/positive action and pay in order to find new ways of achieving gender equality in working life. Annual revisions of wages and other working conditions have become compulsory. This means that all employers must inspect and analyse wages and other terms of employment for comparable groups of women and men. Employees must analyse whether or not wage differences may be related to gender. They are obliged to establish an action plan for equal wages, which should include the results from the analysis of differences as well as suggested measures.46 Not only wages are to be analysed. Rules and other practices should also be included, such as collective agreements, bonus systems, education and different privileges. If unjust wage differences are found, the employer has to make plans for eliminating these wage gaps between women and men. The plan has to be fulfilled in a three-year time.

Since the review of equal opportunities and the creation of action plans are supposed to be the results of cooperation among employers and trade unions, the unions are entitled to all necessary information regarding wages etc. However, this applies only to unions with collective agreements.

One problem with the Act of Equal Opportunities is how to determine “equal work”. The central organisations for both employers and employees have therefore put together information and guidelines to facilitate the process. Due to the increase in individual wage setting, comparisons can no longer only be made on work requirements. They must also include how individual performances are assessed and the information on job descriptions should be as complete as possible.

The principle of equal pay is based on comparisons between women and men. This means that a woman’s wage must be compared to a man’s in order to be classified as just or unjust. Problem arises when there are no or very few men to compare with. Then it can be very difficult to determine if there is a question of discrimination or underrating due to gender. Women working in these sectors have difficulties to make use of the Act of Equal Opportunities and legally claim a more just wage.

Factors that affect wages, such as views and beliefs, must therefore be made visible and put into question. The standard or norm within wage setting systems can usually be traced to “men’s labour market”, resulting in lower values for

46 Only businesses with less than 10 employees are exempted from this rule.
useful knowledge and skills in female dominated occupations.\textsuperscript{47} When comparing factors that determine “equal work” and wages, a gender perspective must be included. The reason for this is to make sure that the weights of different factors don’t favour one gender in particular.

Another problem with this process is that it can be rather delicate. Employers may feel that they “put a rope around its one neck”, that they are forced to confess that they have violated the Swedish act against wage discrimination.\textsuperscript{48}

It is probably too soon to say whether the system with action plans have affected wage discrimination. One can say that wage differences have not declined. Instead, figures presented by Statistics Sweden show the opposite. The reasons for this are of course difficult to determine.

Reversed burden of proof has also been introduced into the Act of Equal Opportunities. It is now the employer, who has to prove that no discrimination by gender has occurred. The Act states also a prohibition against gender discrimination throughout the whole process of employment.

\section*{4.4 Reconciling work and family}

Changes have been done to the parental benefit scheme in order to reconcile work and family life. There has been a parliamentarian decision to extend parental leave by 30 days with 80 percent of the wage, starting January 2002, as well as extending “fathers month” to two months. The parental benefit then totals 480 days. The flexible arrangements in parental leave were increased and the guarantee level rose from SEK 60 to 120 per day in January. In January 2003 the guarantee level will be raised to SEK 150 and SEK 180 in 2004. The guarantee level is given to parents with no or low income, or are not eligible for parental insurance. This increase will benefit students and younger parents in particular. Child allowances increased with SEK 100 in January 2001, the allowance for large families and the study allowance for young people have been increased correspondingly.

A new benefit level has also been introduced to the parental benefit scheme in order to increase flexibility. It is now possible to take part of the benefit by one eight or 12.5 percent. This makes it possible for parents to reduce time spent at work by one hour a day and get reimbursed through the parental benefit scheme.

\textsuperscript{47} Highlighting pay differentials between women and men (2000), Ministry of Industry and Communications, p.39.

\textsuperscript{48} SOU 1999:91, p. 93.
The number of days in 1000-nds and share (%) of used days by women and men.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Parental Benefit</th>
<th>Temporary parental benefit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Used days of (%)</td>
<td>Used days of (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>19017</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>27020</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>48292</td>
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<tr>
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<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>35661</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>36499</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Sweden

The charts and tables above show parents’ use of parental benefit, in relation to child’s birth and up until the age of 8, and temporary parental benefit, paid to a parent who, instead of working, must care for a sick child. The temporary parental benefit includes the ten benefit days known as “father days”, linked to birth or when adopting a child, when both parents can be compensated at the same time. There has been a slow and small increase in the number of men who make use of the parental benefit scheme, and in 2001, only 14 percent were men. In regards to temporary benefits, the differences between the sexes are not very big and a sharp increase in the male participation can be found in 2001 reaching 43 percent from 34 percent in 2000.

The price, not only access, of care provision is found to be important for the female labour supply, especially for households with low or medium incomes.49

Chart 12a. Used days for temporary parental benefit 1974-2001 in Sweden as share of (%) by women and men.

Chart 12b. Used days for parental benefit 1974-2001 in Sweden as share of (%) by women and men.

Source: Statistics Sweden

Direct subventions are also found to be more effective than income tax deductions for care provisions.

In regards to care provision, Swedish government policy is focusing on reforms to facilitate for parents to reconcile professional work and family life. The Parliament has decided to expand pre-school activities. All four-year olds are to be offered to take part 15 hours per week. It is free of charge and it should be on a voluntary basis for the children to participate but compulsory for the municipalities to arrange by 2003. Children with unemployed parents should also have the right to pre-school activity in order to facilitate labour market entry. This right to childcare/preschool was extended by January 2002 to include children with parents on parental leave with siblings. The reform is expected to contribute to increases in equal opportunities, since high marginal effects affect women and low-income earners in particular.

Finally, the municipalities who decide to introduce a ceiling on day care fees (Maxtaxa) are to be compensated through benefits from the state. Over SEK 4,000 million is to be invested in this measure.

4.5 Economic prospects for Swedish Labour Market

Both the Statistics Sweden’s and the National Labour Market Board’s (AMS) forecasts of the Swedish labour market suggest continued growth in the total number of people in gainful employment.50 Both private and public services are expected to grow during the next couple of years. The number of people entering higher education is expected to remain at its present level, but with marginal increases for nurses and doctors, and a constant level of graduation rates in both upper secondary school and higher education.

There are still large shortages of health and social care staff in Sweden and this shortage is likely to grow in the near future.51 The education system has made some efforts to facilitate people’s entry into care related education programmes but will have a very limited impact on the shortage, in particular in regards to medical doctors.

There is also a major shortage of teachers in Sweden, which is expected to grow.52 The shortage is found both in the teaching field and staff educated for childcare. Cutbacks in education capacity, declining interest in this occupation and “maxtaxan”, with more children in childcare may explain some parts of this shortage.

50 Education and the Demand for Labour. Prospects for the years up to 2008, Statistics Sweden and AMS labour market outlook for 2002 and 2003. Increase in employment will accelerate next year, AMS, Pressrelease 2002-06-06. Estimates are in the nature of consequence calculations, i.e. what will happen if everything carries on as so far, and gives suggestions for adjustments of the labour market and education system.
52 Education and the demand for labour, Prospects for the years up to 2008, Statistics Sweden.
Another area suffering a shortage of labour is among technicians. The number of graduated engineers with upper secondary level education is not compatible with the number of engineers leaving the labour market. Employers are now having difficulties finding people with the appropriate competence and living in the “right” part of the country.

Due to increases in the construction of houses after a long period of very low activity, employment within the construction industry is expected to increase in the future. The need for recruitment seems to be high both due to increases in demand for labour and a large number of expected retirements. However, it is difficult to predict the size of the eventual shortage of labour because of lack of long term information on the number of educated construction workers. Despite increased interest in construction programmes at secondary school level, future needs will probably not to be met.

Despite the crisis that hit many Swedish IT-consultancy companies in the last couple of years, there is a major shortage of qualified IT staff. This shortage has been prevailing since the mid-1990s and is not decreasing.

Statistics Sweden also reports on surpluses on the Swedish labour market, such as in humanities and social sciences. Another area on the labour market where a surplus of labour is to be found is in the area of hotel, restaurant and catering programmes. There are twice as many graduates from the upper secondary school programmes as required. However, employers experience difficulties finding qualified staff in this branch of the economy, which means that a large proportion of those with this educational background work outside their target occupations.

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5. Policy Review and Conclusions

Since the gender wage gap is highly correlated with wage inequalities, mainstreaming gender equality within general policies targeting wage inequalities is important. Women benefited from the wage setting policy characterised by solidarity and equality that were to be found in Sweden up until the 1980ies. General policies aimed at low income earners benefited women since they were in majority in this group. The possibilities for achieving this on a national level through collective bargaining are now diminishing as individual wage setting is dominating both within the private and public sector.

The Swedish government’s measures towards increasing women’s economic power and reducing economic differences between the sexes have primarily been focusing on: lowering unwarranted wage differences, breaking up gender based educational choices, increase female full-time work, increase female entrepreneurship, increase fathers use of parental benefits, and the sharing of unpaid house work.

The Swedish government has pursued a gender mainstreaming strategy since the mid-1990s. Gender perspectives should be in the fore when assessing questions affecting single individuals and efforts to achieve gender equality should be integrated into all government ministries and spheres. The development of an equal opportunity index is one of the latest advancements within the mainstreaming approach and provides background for discussion and action for work on equal opportunities.

Discussions about the gender pay gap in the Swedish public debate involves primarily the unadjusted wage gap, asserting women’s wages at around 82 percent of men’s. Nevertheless, the Office of Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, among others, focuses on the adjusted gap, which leaves an unwarranted pay differential for equal work of between 1-8 percent.

Despite the fact that women today have higher education than men, the same working experience and fewer women are working part-time, they still have as a group lower wages than men. The observed wage gap might have decreased in several sectors since the 1980ies but not the adjusted one, on the contrary in some sectors and occupations.

These findings might suggest that education, work experience, and working time is not where the money should be put. The gender wage gap runs deeper and the issue of women’s work as having lower value becomes imperative.

National policies aimed at breaking down the segregated labour market are very important in order to reduce the gender wage gap in Sweden. Women are over-represented in low wage jobs and under-represented in high wage jobs. Sweden’s relatively compressed wage structure may dampen the effects of the
segregated labour market but since the wage structure seems to be de- 
compressing, the gender gap may well keep on increasing.

It is probably too soon to see any effects of the recent changes in childcare and 
parental leave infrastructure on women’s behaviour on the labour market. 
Women’s full-time work increased during the last decade but it is difficult to 
determine any direct explanations for this trend, which is probably multi-folded. 
Furthermore, it is not enough to focus on the quantitative aspects of women’s 
labour force participation. The vertical labour market segregation is still very 
apparent in Sweden, which is positively related to gender wage inequality. That 
is, larger gender wage gaps are found in sectors with few female executives or 
supervisors. Men earn higher wages but also experience larger wage inequalities 
than women. A solution to the gender pay gap on the Swedish labour market 
seems therefore paradoxical and is closely related to the problem of labour 
market segregation. For women to come more into similar positions like men, 
 wage inequality among women has to increase with more women among high 
income earners, or an overall transformation of the income distribution is 
needed.

Perhaps there will be a change in the pattern when the large cohort born in the 
1940ies leave the labour market. At present, the largest wage inequalities are to 
be found within this group, both between genders and within the same gender. 
Younger women work less part-time and have higher education but the effects 
on the overall gender wage gap might get lost due to older cohorts. 
Nevertheless, statistics show that the gender wage gap in Sweden increases with 
education level and age.

Gender wage inequality is a complicated problem, and it seems difficult to find 
both explanations and solutions to it. The Swedish act of equal opportunities 
makes wage discrimination unlawful but it cannot directly abolish the gender 
 wage gap. Structural pay differentials due to differences in individual 
characteristics, and different forms of value and wage discrimination lure 
behind the gender pay gap. Politicians, trade unions, employers’ organizations, 
and employees are all responsible for making the problem of gender wage gaps 
visible and to counteract the phenomenon of gender discrimination. Follow-
ups of different measures are therefore imperative for the analysis of gender 
 wage inequality, preferably with the help of an inequality index or different 
indicators.

One thing for sure is that further research is important. Since workloads and 
duties are important factors in determining wages, as detailed statistics as 
possible is needed. It is otherwise very difficult to make comparisons of “equal 
work” and “equal pay”. The increased importance of fringe benefits should also 
be taken into consideration when making differences between genders visible. 
These benefits are difficult to measure and do rarely appear in the statistics.
They may not help in explaining wage gaps but are an all more important part of incomes.
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The Equal Opportunities Ombudsman: [www.jamombud.se](http://www.jamombud.se)

The European Expert Group on Gender and Employment: [http://www2.umist.ac.uk/management/ewerc/](http://www2.umist.ac.uk/management/ewerc/).

Statistics Sweden: [www.scb.se](http://www.scb.se)
The Gender Pay Gap in Sweden

This report shows how gender wage differences developed during the 1990s. An increased inequality was seen in the private sector and the largest wage gaps were found in occupations with highest monthly wages. In almost all occupational groups men had higher wages, but they also experienced larger wage inequalities, than women.

One objective of the report has been to compare results from studies that have standardised for differences in age, education, skills and experience, to mention some of the factors. Results indicate that the gender wage gap seems to increase and one policy conclusion is to gender mainstream wages policy.

The report was produced to the European Expert Group on Gender and Employment in 2002.

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Lena Gonäs & Sara Spånt

The Gender Pay Gap in Sweden

A national report