



Swedish Civil
Contingencies
Agency

Policy for increased gender equality and diversity in emergency services 2030

including action plan

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emergency services 2030 including action plan**

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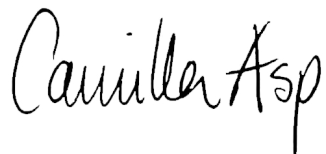
Introduction

This policy is the result of a broad process in close cooperation between MSB, municipal emergency services and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKR).

The objectives describe the desired situation in 2030: that both the working environment in the emergency services and the environment of MSB's training courses are inclusive, and welcome and make use of differences; that more people from underrepresented target groups join and remain in the emergency services; and that the entire population receives well-functioning and equal service.

Meeting these objectives requires awareness and active measures, from each emergency-services organisation and from MSB. The broad outlines of these measures, and an approximate timetable, are set out in the action plan included with the policy.

The fact that the policy and the included action plan are broadly anchored creates the conditions for a future emergency service that develops in step with society, where gender equality and diversity are a natural part.



Camilla Asp
Acting Director-General
The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency

Everyone is needed in equal emergency services

The municipal emergency-services organisation is actively working to identify risks in order to prevent and manage accidents. In order to make everyday life as safe and secure as possible, the emergency services need to develop in line with society.



Equality and diversity involve seeing and respecting each individual, but also creating a more inclusive culture and working environment. A working environment where employees feel well ultimately contributes to better conditions for preventive work and rescue operations. Attracting and reaching a broad recruitment base is a prerequisite for staffing future emergency services, which are characterised by a working environment that welcomes differences and embraces multiple perspectives, increasing the possibilities for nuanced and informed decisions.

Responsibility for promoting equality and diversity lies with everyone, but managers and politicians have a particular responsibility to formulate objectives and monitor how well they are being met. MSB is responsible for coordinating and developing organisations involved in emergency services and accident/injury prevention. The Government's instructions state in particular that MSB is to support municipalities in their work with gender equality and diversity in emergency services.

Background

In spring of 2021, MSB, in close cooperation with municipal rescue services and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKR), developed three joint objectives for gender equality and diversity in emergency services. The objectives are set for 2030, and an action plan with measures is described for the next three years (2022-2024).

Research shows that increased gender equality and diversity lead to more effective and innovative organisations. Nevertheless, the work is slow. In MSB training and in the emergency services, the gender balance is uneven and masculine norms predominate. Sweden's growing population with non-European heritage is not reflected.

Definitions

Gender equality is when women and men have equal power to shape society and their own lives.

Equality means fair relations between all individuals and groups in society, and that all people have equal value, regardless of gender, colour or sexual orientation.

In the labour market, diversity is defined by linking the concept to the seven grounds of discrimination. These are: gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation or age.

Three objectives

Three objectives have been developed to describe the desired situation in 2030. The three objectives have been broken down into active measures that emergency services and MSB must take to achieve the desired situation.

Fulfilment of the three objectives depends on the individual and coordinated implementation of the measures by the municipal emergency services and MSB.

Objective 1

The working and learning environment is inclusive, and there is zero tolerance of discrimination and abuse.

Problem description

Various forms and degrees of exclusionary behaviour towards those who in some way violate the norm exist, as studies and surveys have shown. Questioning, belittling and insults take place both in the workplace and in the context of training, both in schools and during traineeships. Almost half of women working in operations feel that they have poorer-quality changing facilities than their male colleagues, and it can still be difficult to obtain protective equipment in correct sizes. This contributes to women leaving the emergency services prematurely to a greater extent than men, and is seen as contributing to under-represented groups not applying for the emergency services professions.

Objective 2

The emergency services' recruitment base reflects society, and diversity is a natural part of operating the organisation.

Problem description

In MSB's training courses and in the municipal emergency services, the gender balance is uneven. Only 6% of full-time firefighters and 7.7% of emergency services personnel on standby are women. The share of women as top managers is about the same. A growing proportion of the Swedish population is of non-European heritage, but the proportion of emergency services personnel and managers of non-European heritage is still perceived to be low.

Objective 3

Emergency services provide well-functioning and equal service to the whole population.

Problem description

A lack of knowledge and experience regarding the realities of different population groups affects the ability to carry out effective prevention and intervention. Preconceptions and prejudices about people based on origin, sexual orientation, religion or age risk leading to poorer services and ineffective implementation of interventions

How do the objectives relate?

The overall objectives interact. If the working environment (objective 1) is not inclusive, it will be difficult to recruit (objective 2), or those who deviate from the norms will probably leave their workplace or emergency services as a whole. A well-functioning and inclusive working environment facilitates broad recruitment, which in turn contributes to the achievement of a well-functioning and equal service (objective 3).

The results of the measures will contribute to change and development that attract women and men from all backgrounds to work in the emergency services, and give them equal opportunities. Ultimately, this is about delivering well-functioning and equal service to the whole population.

The objectives and associated measures must not prevent more ambitious initiatives. Further initiatives, measures and mainstreaming are welcomed to accelerate progress.

Objective 1: The working and learning environment is inclusive, and there is zero tolerance of discrimination and harassment

Creating a workplace that both attracts and retains staff, and thus a sustainable workforce, requires an approach that considers equality, as well as clear leadership. MSB and the emergency services' work on anti-discrimination and anti-harassment training environments shall enable employees and students to work in a positive environment that welcomes and embraces diversity. Discrimination and harassment directly oppose an inclusive work environment, and disadvantaging people on the basis of, e.g. gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation, is prohibited by the Discrimination Act.

Measures to achieve objective 1

The following measures require emergency services and MSB to work together to achieve objective 1.

Knowledge material

- Initiate and produce research, studies and statistics related to the emergency services' work to promote gender equality and diversity.

Networks for exchange of experience and knowledge development

- Support networks that draw on experience and can help create a positive, stimulating and sustainable working environment that attracts everyone and provides opportunities for everyone to develop.

Develop governance and management

- Regular reporting to responsible politicians regarding the development of gender equality and diversity work.

Ensuring an inclusive educational and working environment

- Implement professional-development training regarding norms and attitudes for MSB teachers.
- Implement professional-development equality measures for emergency services personnel.

"Gender Coach" training or equivalent

- Provide training similar to the Armed Forces Gender Coach to emergency services managers at different levels to give concrete tools to deal with everyday equal-treatment issues. Training shall include aspects of diversity beyond gender.

Develop existing guidelines and standards for traineeships

- Ensure that traineeships are free from discrimination and abuse, and that students are well treated and managed, through a formalised and quality-assured structure and methodology.
- Review the procedures for feeding back the experience gained from the traineeships to the emergency services.

All MSB training is developed from the perspectives of equality, diversity, norms, values, variations and treatment

- In addition to specifically targeted modules, perspectives must be an integral part of management training, which increases the chances of a positive working environment and inclusive working practices.

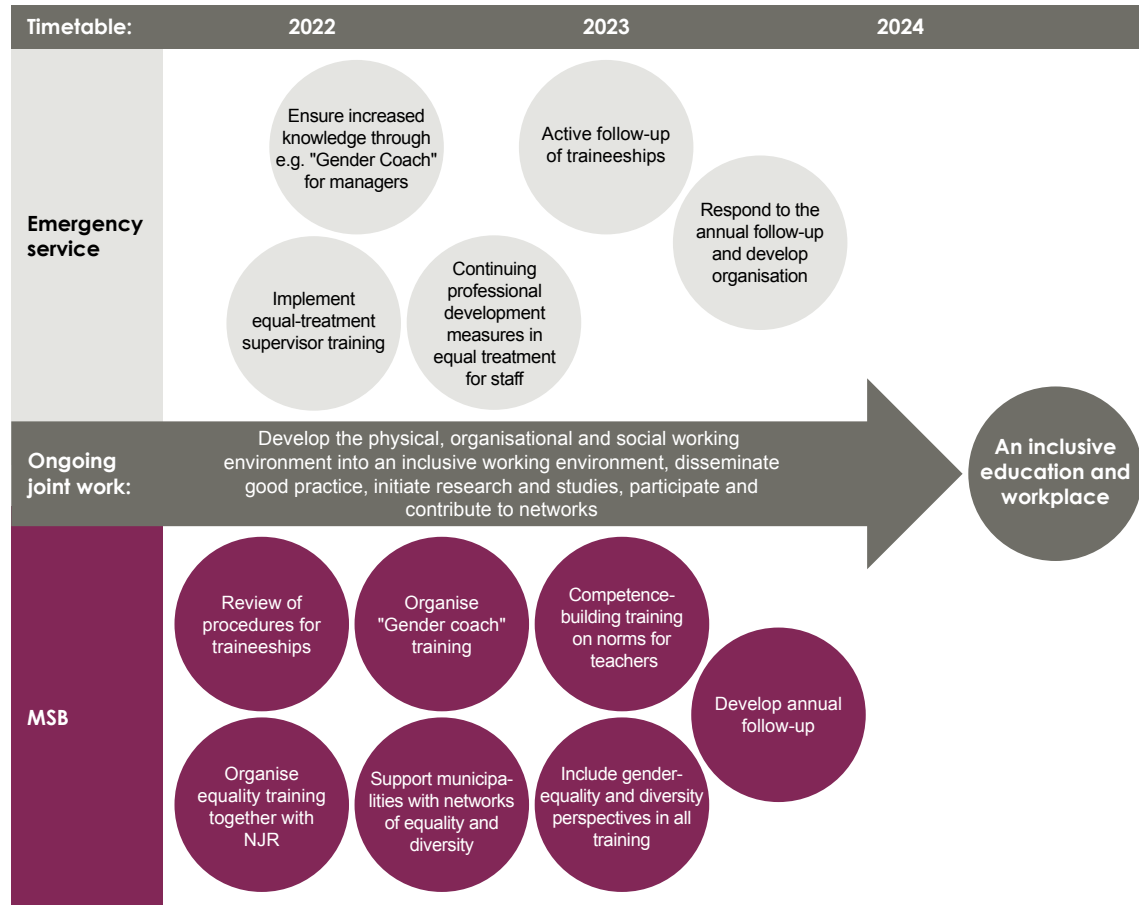
Develop MSB's annual follow-up

- MSB's annual follow-up is being developed with questions regarding the proportion of women and men in different positions within the emergency services organisations, as well as other aspects of diversity beyond quantitative gender equality. The results are made visible to all emergency services in an appropriate way. This is part of describing and accelerating the development of a better and more equal working environment.

Timetable for measures

The emergency services and MSB are responsible for different areas. The image shows the distribution of responsibility, and a timetable of planned measures.

Objective 1



Objective 2: Emergency services' recruitment base reflects society, diversity is a natural part of work

Emergency services need to recruit from across society.

A prerequisite for recruiting and retaining the skills that the municipal emergency services need now, and in 2030, is to create an equal approach to recruitment and training.

The aim is to reach more target groups. Awareness and know-how about open, gender-neutral and inclusive communication contributes to greater awareness of emergency services' vital mission. This, in turn, helps more people feel included and join emergency services.

The following measures require emergency services and MSB to work together to achieve objective 2.

Measures to achieve objective 2

Continue to promote emergency services professions

- Many emergency services seek to present emergency services as an attractive and interesting workplace in various contexts. This outreach work must not be delayed in expectation of joint communications measures.

Identify and analyse future joint communications

- Produce target-group analyses to learn about, e.g.
 - How underrepresented target groups can be attracted to join emergency services, and
 - Employers attitudes towards employees having part-time emergency-services assignments
- Based on the analyses, propose measures to support municipal recruitment efforts.
- Plan coordinated communications by emergency services and MSB.
- Develop support for emergency services to expand initiatives to mentor young people in emergency-services professions.

Working environment study for emergency services personnel on standby

- Investigate how current and past employees perceive the working environment, with a particular focus on gender equality.
- Analyse and summarise the results of the investigation.

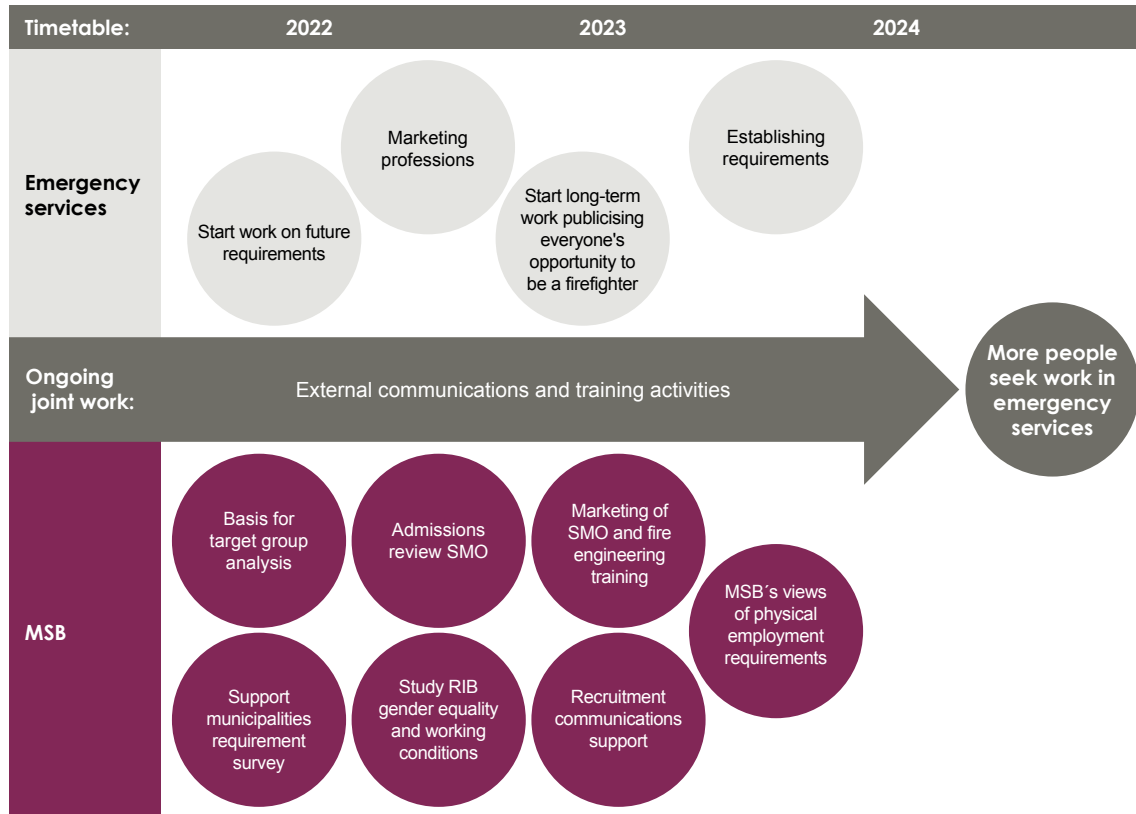
Mapping and compiling the employment requirements of the rescue services

- Survey and compile the recruitment requirements of different emergency-services organisations. Compare requirements using evidence-based knowledge, leading to a dialogue regarding future requirements, resulting in MSB expressing a view and providing organisations with a basis for reviewing their requirements profiles.
- Review of admissions to accident prevention (SMO) training, with a view to creating a more heterogenous student body.

Timetable for measures

The emergency services and MSB are responsible for different areas. The image shows the distribution of responsibility, and a timetable of planned measures.

Objective 2



Objective 3: Emergency services deliver well-functioning and equal service to the whole population

Together with other actors in society, the municipal emergency services must contribute to the municipalities' mission to protect human life and health, property and the environment. MSB has the task of supporting the municipalities in this work. Knowledge and understanding of the population's living conditions provides a basis for emergency services to meet the needs of each individual, and deliver effective and equitable service, both in prevention and in operations. This also increases confidence in the emergency services, creating conditions for a safer and better working environment.

Measures to achieve objective 3

The following measures require emergency services and MSB to work together to achieve objective 3:

Study of treatment linked to the mission of the emergency services

- Initiate a study regarding how individuals are treated from an equality perspective. The study shall include operational and preventive work, and be implemented with an intersectional perspective including many aspects of diversity.
- Based on the study, develop educational material to support professional-development measures for all categories of staff.

Developing equal treatment

- Conduct training in equal treatment for all categories of staff.

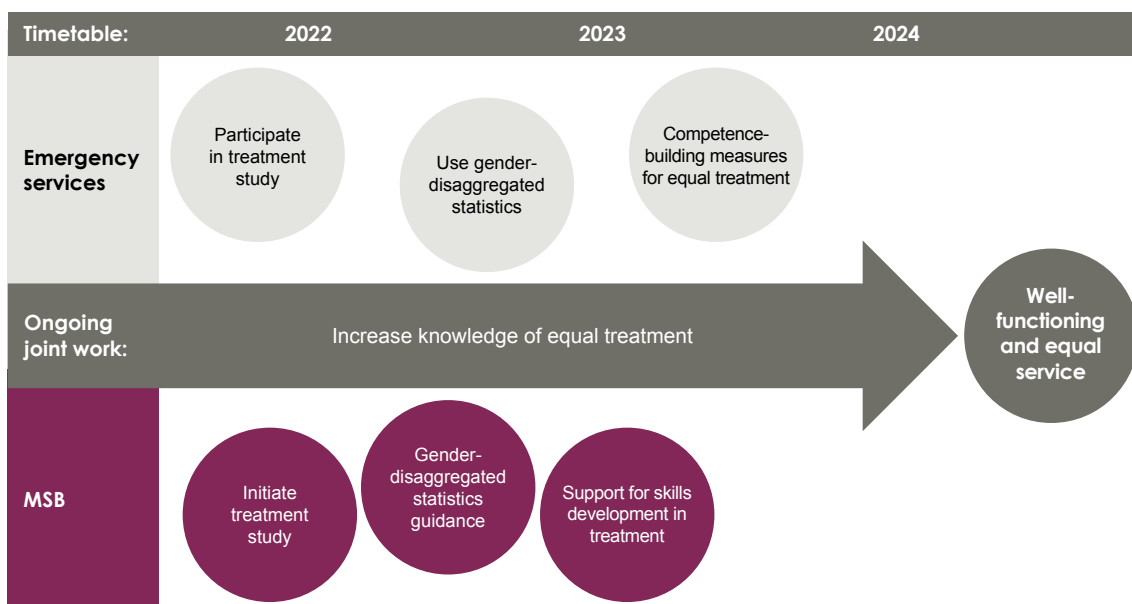
Analysing and using gender-disaggregated statistics

- Analyse gender-disaggregated statistics and translate them into practical preventative and operational measures.
- The analysis and compilation of accident statistics should provide new insights into how risk behaviour, particularly among men, can be addressed and prevented.

Timetable for measures

The emergency services and MSB are responsible for different areas. The image shows the distribution of responsibility, and a timetable of planned measures.

Objective 3



Additional knowledge and inspiration

When referring to this document, use this link: <https://www.msb.se/sv/amnesomraden/skydd-mot-olyckor-och-farliga-amnen/raddningstjanst-och-raddningsinsatser/jamstalldhet-in-om-raddningstjanst/inspiration-och-kunskapspaket-for-okad-jamstalldhet-och-mangfald/>

The link also leads to materials that can provide additional knowledge and inspire development of diversity and gender equality work.



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