

“Framework” for active measures and women’s career progress?

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Swedish Discrimination Act (2008:567)

Chapter 2

**Prohibition of
discrimination
and reprisals**

Chapter 3

**The framework -
active measures
to counteract
discrimination
and bring about
equal rights and
opportunities**



Overall framework for active measures with the aim to promote equal rights and opportunities.

- Overview of the legal framework underlying active measures.
- Underlying purpose behind the framework,
- Questions concerning the challenges and conditions for implementation of the framework?
- Can the active measures be more effective - to support women's career progress?

Changes in the Act, Chapter 3, 1 January 2017 (Prop. 2015/16:135)

- A Framework – a work process with systematics,
- The employer has to **document** the ongoing work, the equality plan is not required,
- Includes **all** discrimination grounds,
- **Documentation** includes every employer with 10 or more employees,
- **Cooperation** (employer and employees)

Purpose behind the "framework" approach

- The focus will be in the working process, rather than single measures as such,
- The details are left for employers to decide depending on the problems found locally,
- Better grasp hopefully on the issues of organizing of work, **everyday social practices, structures, norms and cultures, NOT individuals!**

A framework - active measures



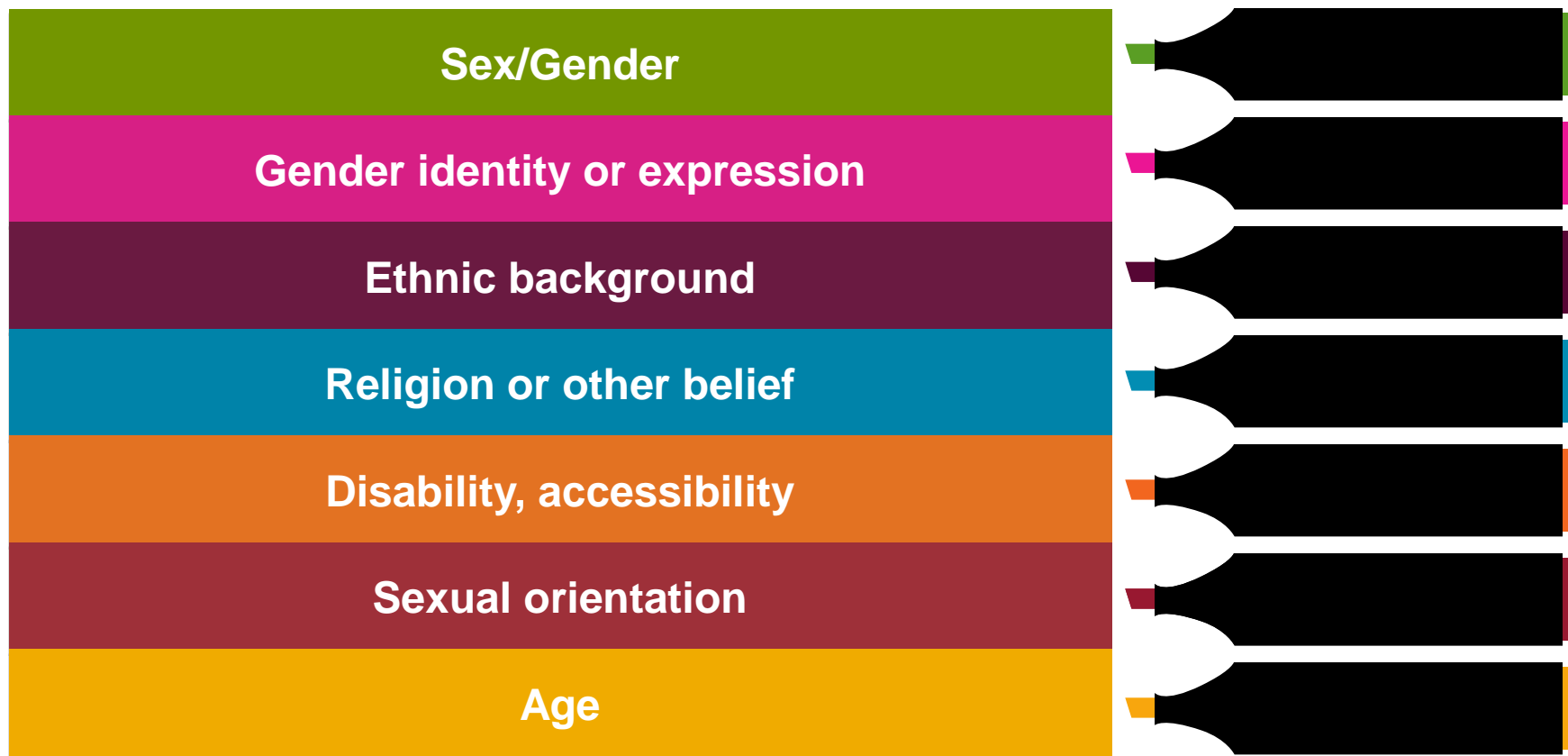
The active measures included within the framework/working process:

diskriminering
om hudsminner



- 1. Working conditions** (organizational, social, work environment)
- 2. Pay equity** – provisions and practices regarding pay and other terms of employment that are used at the employer's establishment,
 - pay differences between women and men performing work that is to be regarded as equal or of equal value,
- 3. Recruitment and promotion** at work,
- 4. Skills development and education,**
- 5. Possibilities to combine work and parenthood,**
- 6. Promote equal distribution of women and men.**

All discrimination grounds



Some general questions concerning the implementation?

From Plan to Practice – conditions and challenges?



General problems - the study shows...

- Difficult to set up "right" goals, if the reasons to the problems are not known.
- Easy to set up quantitative goals (representation and numbers),
- Qualitative goals: how to measure?
- Challenges to change the organization culture and work environment.

General problems...

- Lack of knowledge on **change management**, the practical work,
- The equality plans are not used, they are sometimes regarded as the equality actions themselves,
- The lack of systematics and structures,
- Steering and follow-up of the work is inadequate,
- Difficult to measure the effects and what the activities lead to.



What is needed for better implementation?

- To increase the knowledge of discrimination problems that are often embedded in everyday work place actions, often unreflected, taken for granted (cultures, norms) and result in unintentional consequences for some groups of people,
- Capacity to understand (methods and problems) and strong will (the law needs to be interpreted in order to be adjusted to the local conditions).
- Structures, active management, resources (time, money and personnel resources), systematics, routines for steering and follow-up,
- A pressure from outside (institutional pressure): legal framework, monitoring, supervision and market pressure) and inside (labour unions)

Would the new framework be a support in combating discrimination?

Some indications from a study on employer's work on pay equity

- The active measures have been seen as details, isolated from the rest of the organization daily life,
- In order to be able to neutralize the gender pay gap, it is particularly important to **review the working conditions and distribution of women and men in specific roles and within different categories of employees.**
- **In other words; we have to regard the equality work as an important part of the organizations' overall development.**



A holistic (learning) approach – active measures are important for (gender) equality as well as for organization development!

- The employers' explanations (from our study on pay equity) show that there is a great value in coordinating the efforts made by employers to combat the gender pay gap, **with the other required efforts following the legal requirements for active measures.**

Equality Ombudsman is now working on 3 main areas concerning employers duty with active measures in working life:

1. The lack of knowledge of the Act and legal frames,
2. The lack of knowledge of what is discrimination, how does it happen?
3. The lack of knowledge of how to combat discrimination with active measures, the implementation.

Implementation process - an ongoing work

– a process to be integrated in the organization – pay attention to risks for discrimination!

Relevant knowledge on discrimination, legal framework and change management

Build up the work structure!
Appoint the "working group"

Explore the problems, risks

Analyze (problems found) work-place culture and structures (formal and informal)

What can be done?
Relevant goals, measures, time table

What works well?
Follow up! Evaluate!

Do what you find is needed as soon as possible!

YEARLY WORK CYCLE

Thank you for your attention!

A research project from Sweden, showing the problems with women's careers in some organizations.

“Gender inequality is largely to do with the expectations we have of each other. And we tend to want to be what is expected of us.”

Andersson, S., Amundsdotter, E., Svensson, M., and Däldehog, A-S. (eds) (2009) **Middle managers as change agents.**

(A participatory research study conducted over three years, a practical gender equality work and gender research.)

Go to: http://fiberopticvalley.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Middle-managers-as-change-agents_version1-okt.1.pdf