



The speaker's gender equality group in the Swedish parliament – a toothless tiger?

Lenita Freidenvall & Josefina Erikson

To cite this article: Lenita Freidenvall & Josefina Erikson (2020) The speaker's gender equality group in the Swedish parliament – a toothless tiger?, *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 8:3, 627-636, DOI: [10.1080/21565503.2020.1752442](https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2020.1752442)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2020.1752442>



© 2020 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 20 Apr 2020.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 993



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Citing articles: 3 View citing articles [↗](#)

Dialogue: New Critical Actors: Gender-Focused
Parliamentary Bodies

 OPEN ACCESS  Check for updates

The speaker's gender equality group in the Swedish parliament – a toothless tiger?

Lenita Freidenvall^a and Josefina Erikson^b

^aPolitical Science Department, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden; ^bDepartment of Government, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

ABSTRACT

A recent wave of research has engaged with gender-focused bodies within parliament studying their status, organization, and function. One type of body scarcely studied is issue-based parliamentary groups such as the Speaker's Gender Equality Group in the Swedish Parliament. This article focuses on the form and function of this body, as well as its potentials and pitfalls. On the basis of secondary sources, two waves of interviews with men parliamentarians (MPs) and inside observations the Speaker's gender equality group is analyzed from the 1990s until today. We conclude that despite lacking formal legislative power, this body has a key symbolic and informal role, manifested in the political will and engaged leadership to ensure that equal working conditions for women and men MPs are promoted. We also find constraints in terms of the limited and general (rather than expert) administrative support as well as the need for consistent authorization.

KEYWORDS

Gender equality;
parliamentary bodies;
Sweden; feminist
institutionalism; speaker's
gender equality group

Introduction

Ever since the 1970s research on gender and politics has emphasized women's role as legislators in agenda-setting and policy outcomes. Less focus has been directed toward the gendered nature of parliament as an institution. An exception to this research gap is a more recent wave of research which focuses on the role of gender-focused bodies within parliament (Sawer, Freidenvall, and Palmieri 2013; Sawer 2015; Celis, Childs, and Curtin 2016; Grace and Sawer 2016). Also important is the emergence of feminist institutionalism, which helps us understand the ways in which both formal and informal institutions – the rules of the game – affect the gendered dimensions of legislatures.

Gender-focused parliamentary bodies vary in terms of formal status, organization, and function but may be categorized into three main types: (1) standing parliamentary committees, constituted under formal standing orders; (2) cross-party or intra-party women's caucuses, constituted more informally by women parliamentarians; and (3) issue-based

CONTACT Lenita Freidenvall  lenita.freidenvall@statsvet.su.se

© 2020 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

parliamentary groups. As noted in Marian Sawer's introductory article, the first type of gender-focused parliamentary bodies, standing parliamentary committees, may have a formal role in relation to legislative proposals or overseeing government implementation of gender equality policy. This type may be found in the Nordic countries, where the Gender Equality Committee in the Danish Parliament oversees the government's implementation of gender equality policy, while the Committee for Employment and Equality in the Finnish Parliament has a formal role in relation to legislative proposals (Holli and Staehr Harder 2016).

The second type of gender-focused parliamentary bodies, more informal cross-party women's caucuses, are mainly found in new democracies and are generally involved in networking, information-sharing and capacity-building (Johnson and Josefsson 2016). These two types of body have been mapped and analyzed by international organizations, particularly the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In addition to the reports of these organizations (for example, IPU 2007, 2011; OSCE 2013), a number of case studies have now also been published (Steele 2002; Holli and Staehr Harder 2016).

The third type of gender-focused parliamentary body, issue-based parliamentary groups, usually require a minimum number of members from all parties for approval by a presiding officer, and they often function as a channel for expertise from civil society organizations to come into parliament. In contrast to the standing committees, they are usually informal in character. Despite the recent growth in the number of issue-based parliamentary groups, they have not been subject to research to the same extent as the other types.

This article aims at filling this research gap, with a specific empirical focus on the Speaker's Gender Equality Group in the Swedish Parliament. The article focuses on the form and function of this body, as well as its potential and pitfalls. Based on feminist institutionalism, the article asks why this informal body continues to exist despite being unregulated in standing orders or other regulations. It also asks how a body with no formal legislative power or financial muscle may still be authoritative and influential.

The article will begin with an outline of the approach taken by this study. It will then introduce the gender quality infrastructure of the Swedish parliament. After that, it will examine the form and function of the Speaker's Gender Equality Group and assess its potential and pitfalls. The article will conclude that despite lacking formal legislative power, this body has a key symbolic and informal role, manifested in the political will and engaged leadership to ensure that equal working conditions for women and men parliamentarians (MPs) are promoted, hence improving their capacity for MPs to fulfill their representative duties.

Analyzing gender-focused parliamentary bodies in a feminist institutionalist perspective

The paper is based on the concept that institutions – the formal and informal “rules of the game” – shape political life. Following Helmke and Levitsky, formal institutions may be defined as the “rules and procedures that are created, communicated, and enforced through channels that are widely accepted as official”, and informal institutions are

“socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels” (2004, 727).

As noted by feminist institutionalists, institutions, be they formal or informal, are also gendered (Krook and Mackay 2011; Mackay and Waylen 2014; Waylen 2017). As pointed out by Fiona Mackay (2011, 183), institutions interact to shape political outcomes. They may interact in complementary or contradictory ways and the institutional configurations that exist and their effects may be superficially gender-neutral but also gender-biased. Thus, an important notion when analyzing institutional innovation and change – such as the emergence of gender-focused parliamentary bodies – is that institutions are complex and that they may work in facilitating as well as obstructive ways. Informal “rules-in-use” may complement and reinforce formal institutions, “rules-in-form”. They may substitute the regulative framework when there are no formal institutions available or provide alternative rules when formal rules are not wanted and do not resonate well with the context they are to be applied in (Mackay 2011, 184). In this article, we will tease out the institutional configuration of formal and informal institutions that characterizes the Speaker’s Gender Equality Group.

To study the potential and pitfalls of the Speaker’s Gender Equality Group, we will build on Marian Sawer’s characterization of gender-focused parliamentary bodies, drawing attention both to feminist indicators and possible constraints.

This paper is based on our previous research on the Swedish parliament, including interviews with MPs in 2012–2013 and 2016. Having been recruited to the parliament as parliamentary scholars (in 2003–2004 for Lenita Freidenvall and 2005–2006 for Josefina Erikson) and being members of the parliament’s research group run by the Speaker (Freidenvall 2014–2018 and Erikson 2014–2018), we are both insiders to the field.

Institutional set up of gender equality in the Riksdag

Sweden has a parliamentary system, in which the parliament is the highest decision-making body. The major tasks of the parliament include making laws, determining the central government budget and examining the work of the government. Parliamentary elections are held every four years, when the citizens of Sweden choose 349 members (MPs) of the parliament.

Since 2010, eight political parties are represented in parliament. The party groups have a key position in the work of the parliament and the political life of Sweden. Since the 1930s, the Social Democratic Party has been a major player in Swedish politics, running the government for 44 consecutive years, 1932–1976, and then again in 1982–1991, 1994–2006, and, currently, since 2014. The major contender in recent years is the Moderate Party (former Conservative Party), which was the leading party in the Alliance government (a coalition of four Centre-right parties) in 1991–1994 and 2006–2014.

In Parliament, the 15 standing committees play a crucial role in the decision-making process, having the important mandate and obligation to prepare the decisions to be taken in the plenary. Their composition reflects the relative party strengths in the parliament, implying that the largest party in the parliament also has the most members in each committee. Thus, each standing committee functions as a mini-parliament.

Compared with parliaments in many other countries, the Swedish Parliament has a high proportion of women members, 46.1% at the 2018 election. The breakthrough for

women in Swedish political life is largely a phenomenon of the last 30 years (Freidenvall 2006, 2013). In 1994, women obtained just over 43 per cent of the seats in Parliament, a proportion that has since continued to rise. In contrast to many other national parliaments, there is no standing committee in the Swedish parliament specializing in women's right and/or gender equality, such as a Committee on Gender Equality or a Committee on Women's Affairs or the like. Rather, all parliamentary committees are responsible for considering gender equality issues within their respective fields of work, and this in line with the principle of gender mainstreaming. A practice has developed whereby gender equality issues that do not belong within any specific committee's area of responsibility are referred to the Committee on the Labor Market, which also prepares appropriations falling within expenditure area 13, Gender equality, discrimination and segregation.

There is no explicit women's parliamentary caucus in Parliament. This does not mean that there are no other bodies, apart from the standing committees, with a special remit for gender equality concerns. In fact, several internal boards and networks in the Parliament are involved in gender equality matters, including the Speaker's Group for Gender Equality, Q-sam (A network for female MPs 2006–2014), the Men's Parliamentary Network, and VKEH (a parliamentary network on honor-related violence and oppression).

Analysis: The Speaker's Gender Equality Group

The Speaker's Gender Equality Group is a body within the Swedish parliament with a mandate to discuss and highlight gender equality issues in a broad context. The form and function of this body have changed over time, from being a loose network of women parliamentarians (MPs) dealing with matters explicitly related to women MPs themselves to a permanent and gender-balanced body, dealing with gender equality in a broader perspective. The mandate of the body has shifted over time as well, from an informally regulated body into a permanent body, albeit lacking legislative and financial power and being based on a mandate that needs to be negotiated every mandate period. Although gender has been the main focus of the group, there has been an increased awareness of diversity issues during recent years.

Form

The group was established in 1995 by the feminist and critical actor, Speaker Birgitta Dahl (Social Democratic Party, Speaker 1994–2002). In the early spring of 1995, after the general election to Parliament in September 1994, she invited seven female MPs, one from each of the parties represented in parliament, to a meeting to discuss how to make the best use of the new and positive representation of women in parliament, at that time 40% and a new world record in terms of women's descriptive representation in national parliaments (Freidenvall 2013). The meeting with women MPs resulted in the creation of the *Speaker's Women's Network*, as a forum to discuss and improve the ability of women MPs to fulfill their parliamentary duties in a masculinized environment with entrenched power hierarchies. Among the key objectives were awareness-raising and capacity-building. It arranged breakfast meetings, seminars and workshops on gender equality issues for MPs and officials of parliament. It raised topics such as work-life balance and lobbied the parliament to set up a child-care center and to regulate the

sitting times of the standing committees and plenary (Riksdagen, Promoting Gender Equality in the Riksdag 2016). The next speakers, Björn von Sydow (Social Democratic Party) 2002–2006 and Per Westerberg (Moderate Party) 2006–2014 continued this tradition during their respective terms. The network has changed its name several times over the years and gradually emphasized gender equality as encompassing both women and men of different backgrounds. In 2018, under the leadership of First Deputy Speaker Åsa Lindestam (Social Democratic Party), the Working Group took the name the *Speaker's Gender Equality Group*.

Composition

The current Speaker's Gender Equality Group comprises, as in 1995, one representative from each political party represented in parliament, in addition to the Speaker. In 1995–2010, the body comprised women only, except for the male Speakers in 2002–2006 and 2006–2010. In 2010, Speaker Per Westberg (Moderate Party) invited parties to nominate two members to the group, one delegate and one substitute. The gender composition then changed slightly: from comprising only women among the delegates to comprising eight women among the delegates and five women and three men among the substitutes. In 2014, Speaker Esabelle Dingizian (Green Party) decided that the group should be gender-balanced. Members of the Gender Equality Group are also members of standing committees; this dual membership means that MPs have a stable and recognized position in parliament and are well informed about ongoing work and processes.

During its existence, the value of gender expertise has shifted. Between 2002 and 2012, the committee was assisted by two civil servants with gender expertise – the Head of the Secretariat of the Committee on the Labor Market as well as a Committee Secretary of the same Committee. Since 2012, this task has been transferred to staff members and administrators within the Speaker's Office, hence representing a certain down-grading of gender equality expertise. In 2014, however, a reference group of scholars from various disciplines was set up. Scholars were invited to Parliament to make presentations on various topics on gender equality and to give input and feedback. The setting up of the research group indicates an upgrading once again of gender equality expertise.

Mandate

The rules of procedure regulating the Speaker's Gender Equality Group have increasingly been formalized. The body was purely informal during its first years, having no formal rules regulating its form and functions. It was not until 2006, that formal rules were stipulated in the Action Plan for Gender Equality 2006–2010.

In the Action Plan 2006–2010, the Gender Equality Group is recognized for the first time as a key parliamentary body in promoting gender equality internally. The Action Plan stipulates that the Riksdag Board appoints a Reference Group for Gender Equality Issues with representatives from all political parties within the parliament with the task of proposing measures and activities to promote equal opportunities among members of parliament. The main activities of the body include the organization of seminars on gender equality on a regular basis, the organization of a public seminar in Almedalen (an outdoor annual political summit for political parties, non-governmental organizations

and ordinary citizens, with more than 4000 participants), as well as the arrangement of additional activities, including support to MPs on issues relating to gender equality. Activities also include the publication of reports on gender equality and interview studies with MPs. These activities were first introduced during Speaker Björn von Sydow's (Social Democratic Party) leadership 2002–2006 and were now set down in writing. Administrative support and a budget would also be provided for the body by the Riksdag Administration.

While the second Action Plan 2010–2014 was almost identical to the first plan, the third plan represents a shift in a feminist direction, most likely reflecting the shifts of governments in 2014. According to this plan, Action Program for 2014–2018, the purpose is “[T]o highlight differences in the conditions for male and female MPs to perform their duties, and to carry out initiatives to even out existing differences and gaps” (Promoting Gender Equality in the Riksdag 2016, p. 12). A power perspective was also stressed: “[T]o increase knowledge and raise awareness of the significance of power and influence” (Promoting Gender Equality in the Riksdag 2016).

This more proactive position on gender equality is also reflected in interviews with the chair of the body: “[I]t does not suffice to react when somebody is being exposed to discrimination or harassment, the Parliament must work more proactively to increase knowledge and awareness of the significance of gender when it comes to power and influence” (Interview with Esabelle Dingizian, May 2016).

Function

In contrast to the standing committees, the Speaker's Gender Equality Group does not draft or review legislation or budget bills. It does not add items to the parliamentary agenda or monitor policy implementation. Hence, the body is not part of the legislative or budget process or other core parliamentary work. The main function is rather to provide an institutional space in the sense that it is a venue that provides legitimacy for MPs to discuss gender equality issues generally and promote equal working conditions for women and men MPs specifically.

The Speaker's Gender Equality Group has evolved into an established meeting point for gender equality spokespersons and a forum for discussing and raising awareness on gender equality matters inside the parliament although the agenda and function have shifted over time. Delegates across the political parties describe the group as a good platform for the promotion of gender equality in parliament, but also for their own work in their respective parliamentary party groups. That the group is headed by the Speaker sends important signals that the work on gender equality is prioritized at the highest level; it gives the body legitimacy and shows that the parliament is committed to the issue. As noted by one female MP from the right/center bloc, “[I]t is an excellent arena for us to raise gender-related problems that might occur in the parliament internally, but also an excellent platform for raising awareness of gender-related problems in society that need to be discussed in parliament” (Interview 1, 2013).

The group usually meets about once a month for internal meetings and in addition to that, it arranges open seminars or workshops related to gender equality. The topics of these meetings are decided by consensus after deliberation. They have varied over time, ranging from discussion of the 2008 economic recession from a gender perspective to the Swedish

law on the criminalizing of the purchase of sexual service. Seminars are also arranged in collaboration with other parliamentary bodies. Sometimes civil society organizations, such as the Women's Lobby and the Women's Shelter Movement, are invited to be part of workshops and panel discussions. Although the body mainly deals with gender equality internally, there are signs of responsiveness and inclusiveness, in the sense that members of the body are responsive to women in society and open to the inclusiveness of the claims made for women from diverse backgrounds. As an example, joint activities have been organized in cooperation with women's organizations based on ethnic minority backgrounds and with youth organizations.

It also meets with foreign delegations with an interest in gender equality policies in Sweden and the ways in which the parliament works to promote a gender-sensitive parliament. In November 2015, for example, the Speaker was invited to Westminster to give a presentation and the group has also organized seminars for Nordic colleagues on approaches to gender-sensitize the parliament.

As part of its activities to raise awareness on gender equality, International Women's Day is often used as a platform. For example, in 2012, the Group decided to redecorate the Parliament's Women's Room.¹ The redecorated room, launched at IWD, depicts women pioneers in Swedish political history and consists of photographs of the first female MP, the first female minister, the first female party leader and the first female Speaker.

In addition to these activities, the Speaker has also initiated, after discussions in the Gender Equality Group, a series of studies on gender equality as well as interviews with MPs on their view and experiences of women's and men's work conditions in parliament. For instance, in 2004 a study was made of ways and means to achieve a more gender-equal parliament (2004/05:URF1). The study proposed several measures to improve the gender sensitivity of the parliament, for instance, that "For every electoral period, a gender equality plan should be adopted with the aim of promoting gender equality in parliament."

In 2005, the first interview study on parliamentarians' views and experiences of gender equality in the Swedish Parliament was made (2005/06:URF2) after the publication of a critical article in one of the major Swedish newspapers (Freidenvall 2006).

In 2010 and 2016, follow-up studies were commissioned. The 2010 study showed that although some female MPs encountered challenges and were subjected to stereotyping due to their gender, the parliament was largely considered by the interviewees to be a model work place in terms of gender equality (2011/12:URF1). The 2016 study showed that while both women and men MPs find that they can influence politics and that they have similar conditions and opportunities in parliament, women MPs, particularly young women, believe that they face stronger pressure and demands than men (Erikson and Josefsson 2018). This view is confirmed by the chair of the Speaker's Gender Equality Group 2014–2018, who maintains that more work is needed for the parliament to become a "truly gender-sensitive parliament" (Interview with Esabelle Dingizian, May 2016). One challenge, according to the Speaker, is the fact that gender equality is perceived as "a Swedish characteristic" – it is "not politically correct to be against gender equality reforms" (Interview with Esabelle Dingizian, May 2016). Although resistance to the advancement of gender equality in parliament exists, it is difficult to identify the sources of this kind of resistance since it is not legitimate to be "against gender equality" (Interview with Esabelle Dingizian, May 2016). According to the Speaker, one source of resistance is the Parliamentary Administration,

particularly its managers, which tends to hinder more proactive gender equality work, for instance by arguing that there is lack of resources and personnel.

Conclusion

The analysis of the Speaker's Gender Equality Group shows that it is a key parliamentary body for highlighting gender equality issues in a broad perspective. Although it does not have any formal legislative power, it plays a crucial symbolic role, as a key forum for discussion and a platform for gender equality spokespersons.

Over the last 20 years, this body has evolved from a non-formal, loose network for women MPs to an institutionalized formal body, guided by principles stipulated in an Action Plan for Gender Equality and with an obvious link to the Riksdag Board. Although there were no rules or regulations when it was first established, each Speaker has continued along the same path as the previous one. Gradually, the form and function of the Speaker's Gender Equality Group have been institutionalized – or locked in – in a path-dependent way. Despite an absence of rules-in-form, at least initially, rules-in-use have functioned as a compensating mechanism. The gradual introduction of formal rules has, together with the informal rules in place, operated in mutually reinforcing ways.

A key characteristic of the Speaker's Gender Equality Group is that it creates space and legitimacy for gender-focused deliberations. Although deliberations may be curtailed by party interests, as Sawyer points out in this volume, the intention of this group is to improve work conditions in parliament, not to influence the policy process. Hence, party interests do not matter in the same way as they do in standing committees.

Another characteristic of the Speaker's Gender Equality Group is its non-hierarchical and consensus-based organizational style. This style could be criticized for avoiding difficult topics (Sawyer in this volume). However, this style could also contribute to creating momentum, by building on topics where there is broad agreement, and enabling active collaboration and a united front in a few but critical matters.

An additional characteristic is that both women and men legislators are involved, including top representatives such as the Speaker. The adoption of an Action Plan on Gender Equality as well as the undertaking of several interview-based studies indicate that the parliament prioritizes gender equality work and finds it necessary to continuously monitor and follow-up its activities on a regular basis. Hence, there seems to be an awareness that the realization of a gender-sensitive parliament based on the ultimate goal of gender equality in all its structures, methods and work will not take place by itself – it needs continuous work, evaluation and follow-up. In this work engagement with diversity issues is of great importance to realize equality for all MPs regardless of gender and background. It also needs political commitment and engaged leadership, such as the support and involvement of the Speaker.

Having outlined the potential, there are also obvious constraints. One constraint is the limited and general (rather than expert) administrative support. Another constraint is that the Group, first introduced by a feminist critical actor, needs consistent authorization; it is reliant and dependent on the good-will of the Speaker. However, the symbolic role of the Group as a vanguard of gender equality, and the attention it receives nationally and

internationally for its work on gender sensitivity, shows that it will be increasingly difficult for Speakers to diverge from the path. The specific institutional infrastructure of the Swedish parliament combines the mainstreaming of gender through the standing committees, with dedicated gender equality bodies with different forms and functions. These elements appear to complement each other and work in facilitating ways. As a gendered ecosystem, they seem to provide a solid base for the advancement of gender equality concerns, particularly in times of government shifts.

Note

1. The women's room is a room consisting of paintings on women by female artists. It was first established in 1989, as a response to a motion that was submitted to the Parliament, stating that almost all portraits, sculptures and busts in the building were of men.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

References

- Celis, Karen, Sarah Childs, and Jennifer Curtin. 2016. "Specialised Parliamentary Bodies and the Quality of Women's Substantive Representation: A Comparative Analysis of Belgium, United Kingdom and New Zealand." *Parliamentary Affairs* 69: 812–829. doi:10.1093/pa/gsn006.
- Erikson, Josefina, and Cecilia Josefsson. 2018. "The Legislature as a Gendered Workplace: Exploring Members of Parliament's Experiences of Working in the Swedish Parliament." *International Political Science Review*, 1–17. doi:10.1177/0192512117735952.
- Freidenvall, Lenita. 2006. *Vägen till Varannan Damernas: om kvinnorepresentation, kandidaturval och könskvotering i svensk politik 1970–2002* [Every Other One for the Ladies: Women's Political Representation, Candidate Selection and Gender Quotas in Swedish Politics 1970–2002]. Stockholm: Stockholm University.
- Freidenvall, Lenita. 2013. "Sweden: Step by Step – Women's Inroads Into Parliamentary Politics." In *Breaking Male Dominance in Old Democracies*, edited by Drude Dahlerup, and Monique Leyenaar, 97–123. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Grace, Joan, and Marian Sawyer. 2016. "Representing Gender Equality: Specialised Parliamentary Bodies." *Parliamentary Affairs* 69 (4): 745–747. doi:10.1093/pa/gsw004.
- Helmke, Gretchen, and Steven Levitsky. 2004. "Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda." *Perspectives on Politics* 2 (4): 725–740.
- Holli, Anne Maria, and Mette Marie Staehr Harder. 2016. "Towards a Dual Approach: Compartmenting Parliamentary Committees on Gender Equality in Denmark and Finland." *Parliamentary Affairs* 69: 794–811. doi:10.1093/pa/gsw004.
- IPU. 2007. *The Role of Parliamentary Committees in Mainstreaming Gender and Promoting the Status of Women*. Geneva: IPU.
- IPU. 2011. *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Review of Good Practice*. Geneva: IPU.
- Johnson, Niki, and Cecilia Josefsson. 2016. "A New Way of Doing Politics? Cross-Party Women's Caucuses as Critical Actos in Uganda and Uruguay." *Parliamentary Affairs* 69 (4): 845–859. doi:10.1093/pa/gsw011.
- Krook, Mona Lena, and Fiona Mackay. 2011. *Gender, Politics and Institutions Towards a Feminist Institutionalism*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mackay, Fiona. 2011. "Conclusion: Towards a Feminist Institutionalism." In *Gender, Politics and Institutions Towards a Feminist Institutionalism*, edited by Mona Lena Krook and Fiona Mackay, 181–196. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Mackay, Fiona, and Georgina Waylen. 2014. "Introduction: Gendering "New" Institutions." *Politics and Gender* 10 (04): 489–494.
- OSCE. 2013. *A Comparative Study of Structure for Women MPs in the OSCE Region*. Warsaw: OSCE.
- Sawer, Marian. 2015. "Numbers: The Role of Specialised Parliamentary Bodies in Promoting Gender Equality." *Australasian Parliamentary Review* 30 (1): 105–122.
- Sawer, Marian, Lenita Freidenvall, and Sonia Palmieri. 2013. "Playing their part? Parliamentary institutions and gender mainstreaming." Paper for the 3rd ECPG Conference, Barcelona March 2013.
- Steele, Jackie. 2002. "The Liberal Women's Caucus." *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, Summer 13–19.
- Waylen, Georgina. 2017. *Gender and Informal Institutions*. London: Rowman and Littlefield International.
- Parliamentary material
- Swedish Parliament. 2004. 2004/05:URF1. 15 förslag för en jämställd riksdag.
- Swedish Parliament. 2005. 2005/06:URF2. Jämställt? Röster från riksdagen 2005.
- Swedish Parliament. 2006. Action Plan for Gender Equality 2006–2010.
- Swedish Parliament. 2010. Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010–2014.
- Swedish Parliament. 2011. 2011/12: URF1. Jämställt? Röster från riksdagen 2010.
- Swedish Parliament. 2014. Action Plan for Gender Equality 2014–2018.
- Swedish Parliament. 2016. Promoting Gender Equality in the Riksdag.
- Interviews
- Ann-Christin Ahlberg, December 2012.
- Penilla Gunther, December 2012.
- Amine Kakabaveh, December 2012.
- Jenny Peterson, November 2012.
- Gerdrud Åström, February 2013.
- Esabelle Dingizian, May 2016.