Masculinization of poverty in the Sweden

1964 to 2010

Lovisa Broström

Abstract

Sweden has been a country, where full employment and an extensive social security have been the catchwords for a long time. The social security net has diminished poverty and reliance on means tested social support among elderly, sick and disabled. Women have always been in majority among the poor, but something has changed and poverty among young men has become more common. The aim of this paper is to discuss if there has been a change from a Feminization of poverty towards a Masculinization of poverty in Sweden during the last 50 years and if so why this has occurred.
1. Introduction

Since the 1970's there has been an outspoken concentration on females in the research of poverty. Scholars have shown that women's economic status has declined and that women to a larger extent than men suffer from economic hardship, job insecurity and social exclusion. This phenomenon which has been coined Feminization of poverty is often claimed to be a global fact, and correspond to the development in industrialized, newly-industrialized and non-industrialized nations. But this theoretical framework is not applicable everywhere. Several factors indicate that there has been a reverse trend in Sweden, were a Masculinization of poverty has taken place, especially among young men. Through a decline of manual labor, male dominated immigration and a feminization of education and other factors the living conditions for men have changed. If these circumstances have lead to a Masculinization of poverty it is a shift in modern history where men as a group for the first time face the same forms of economic insecurity and precarious situations that have been female dominated thorough modern history. I have stated two questions that I aim to answer in this paper: Has there been a Masculinization of poverty in Sweden? And if so: Why has there been a Masculinization of poverty in Sweden? By studying age, origin and gender in relation to the distribution of means tested social allowance in the population over the last 40 years I will try to answer the first question. In the second question I look at means tested social allowance in relation to the labor participation rate, unemployment insurance and immigration.

2. Social allowance as a measurement of poverty

To answer the question: Has there been a Masculinization of poverty in Sweden? this paper follows the development of means tested social allowance between 1964 and 2010. Means tested social support is not a perfect measure of poverty in society. Poverty is more extensive than the distribution of social allowance will reveal and not all citizens who have the right to social allowance apply for it, which indicates that social allowance is underutilized. Hence poverty is more extensive than this study will show. It is not even certain that it is those who receive social allowance who are those with the smallest economical resources or the lowest standard of living neither. However, means tested social assistance is one of many measurements of poverty, and one of few that can be traced back to the beginning of the 20th century. Walter Korpi claims in the article Poverty, Social assistance and social policy in post-war Sweden that the percentage of the population receiving means tested social assistance can be taken as an indicator of relative poverty. Sociologist Björn Halleröd claims in his thesis that it is logical to equate social allowance with poverty since today’s social service is a descendant of yesterday’s poor relief. Sociologist Sten-Åke Stenberg claims

that the great majority of those who are granted social assistance suffer from economic hardship\textsuperscript{5}. In the Social reports it is also claimed that welfare recipients have far worse living conditions than other marginalized people\textsuperscript{6}. In modern times means tested social assistance also is one indicator of which groups that are left behind, since the majority has been included social insurances. Sweden, known for its dense social security net and its history of almost full employment, the norm of means tested social allowance plays a certain role. Sweden lacks a statutory poverty line instead the norm for means tested social allowance (socialbidragsnormen) serves as such a line. There are several different factors that distinguish the structure of social insurances from means tested social allowances. The social insurances look strictly into how long you have been working, for how long you have been a member in an unemployment fund, how much you have been earning, and the premium you have been paying. Means testing works in another way. Eligibility for social assistance requires exhaustion of all other economic means; the recipients are not allowed to have savings of any kind neither own housing or a car. While the social insurances are paid by the state or unemployment funds which have been subsidized by the state, the means tested social allowance is distributed by the municipalities, which can lead to an arbitrary outcome.

When social exclusion has been studied or when it has been alerted in the media, especially concerning the young, it is mainly the unemployment that gets the attention. But the unemployment data has for decades been biased for Sweden. Until 2007 Sweden used its own measurement of unemployment, which has not has been compatible with the calculations from ILO (International Labor Organization). The older data left out some of the students, which were included in other countries statistics. When the new international standardized measurements have been used the youth unemployment has raised quickly. The data before 2007 do not capture the reality that younger people have been facing for decades, when it comes to poverty and social exclusion. This biased unemployment statistics is a reason to follow the development of social allowance statistics instead. To use social allowance as a measurement is not without problems. The requirements for social allowance have changed structure three times during the time span for this paper. Since the municipalities distributed the allowance it can differ from one place to another. Many factors also indicate that it has gradually has become more difficult to receive means tested social allowance. Before the economic crisis in 1991 it was probably easier to get entitled to benefits than it is in 2010. Hence, there are many objections to means tested social allowance. It is not a perfect measurement over time, however the situation for groups who apply for means tested social allowance the same year is quite similar which further gives an indicator of which groups that are relatively poor at that particular year.

\textsuperscript{6} 1995. Socialbidrag. 1994, Stockholm, Socialstyrelsen. S.15
3. Feminization of poverty

Poverty has often been portrayed as a female issue worldwide and there is comprehensive number of studies that has dealt with the feminization of poverty in the world. Diana Pearce coined the concept feminization of poverty in article: The feminization of poverty: women, work, and welfare in 1978. She concluded that women formed a larger and larger percentage of the poor. She followed up with the article: The feminization of Ghetto Poverty. After Pearce, there have been countless articles and books that dealt with the feminization of poverty in different countries and from different perspectives. The term feminization of poverty focuses our attention on sex differences in poverty rates and the fact that they have grown during the last half-century. Feminization describes both the unequal state of men’s and women’s poverty rates and the processes by which women’s risk of poverty has increasingly exceeded that of men’s. In Pearce’s articles she focused on the proportion of the poor who were female. Other scholars like Sara McLanahan have focused on the ratio of women’s poverty rates to men’s rates. The increase of female poverty is often related to new family patterns, later marriages, increased divorce rates, increased numbers of single mothers. It has also been correlated to the new economy with increased rate of female participation in the labor market. Different scholars have highlighted the problem from different perspectives but it all comes down to a phenomenon in which women represent disproportionate percentages of the world’s poor and that group has increased all over the world.

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Sweden is often referred to as a stereotypical case of Esping-Andersen’s social democratic welfare regimes, with income tested social benefits that reach the majority of the population18. The social insurances take shape in form of unemployment insurances; pension insurance, sick pay, parental leave etc, to cover losses of income during different stages of life. However, beside the income based social benefits there has always been poor relief or means tested social allowances as well, as a last resort for those who for different reasons do not make ends a meet. Together the insurances and means tested allowance constitute a dual dimension of welfare. Women have been in a clear majority among the recipients on means tested allowance for as long as we can trace it back in the statistics, in particularly older women1920. After the Second World War the recipients of means tested social allowance have been constant, between 4 and 6 percent21. Korpi writes that during the major part between 1950 and 1960 the single women were to a larger extent dependent on means tested social allowance than men2223. In 1957 the Social Help Act replaced the old law from 1918. This new law did not have any direct effect on the number of recipients. The shift of trend is first visible in the late 60’s and early 70’s from here on it is a climbing figure of male recipients of means tested social allowance (See Figure 1). Single men without children were also by far the most frequent household type (see figure 2). The proportion of young citizens in the age span 16-29 year olds also started to increase, while other age groups decreased their shares. In Figure 1 the longitudinal line represents single adult men and women who been receiving social allowance during the last hundred years. The convergence between men and women is striking after 1964 in which men occasionally even have outnumbered women. The financial crisis in the beginning of the 1970’s was a hard strike to several sectors in Sweden24. The share of welfare recipients in the country increased continuously25 and among them men constituted the majority between 1970 and 1977. For women there was a slight decline during the first half of 1970’s26. In the social help survey from 1968 it is outspoken that the sharp increase in the proportion of 16-29 year olds (Which is visible in FigureXX) among aid

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19 BROSTRÖM: L Work in Progress
20 SAINSBURY, D. 1993. Dual welfare and sex segregation of access to social benefits : income maintenance policies in the UK, the US, the Netherlands and Sweden. journal of social policy (Print).
26 BERGMARK, Å. 1991. Socialbidrag och försörjning : en studie av bidragstagande bland ensamstående utan barn = [“Social assistance and household economy”]: [a study of social assistance recipience among single persons without children], Stockholm, Univ.
recipients does not depend primarily on the fact that the age group increased their proportion of the population\textsuperscript{27} this is a statement that’s been true since.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure1.png}
\caption{Single adults who been reciving menas twested social allowance in absolute numbers 1913-2009}
\end{figure}

The share of 16-29 year olds has declined in proportion to the total population. The 1980’s in Sweden were characterized by a growing economy and a falling rate of unemployment. Despite of that the number of recipients increased steadily during the first half of the 1980’s. In 1982 the new Social Service act replaced the law from 1957, this coincide with an increased number of social allowance recipients. The new law had an outspoken goal to promote people's rights to economic and social security, equal living conditions and active participation in the society. In an evaluation report from 1987\textsuperscript{28} the research group concludes that the new Social Services Act may be responsible as an independent cause of the increase in benefit claimants\textsuperscript{29}. The policy change from \textit{subsistence level} to \textit{reasonable standard of living} might have served as a way of including new people and by that increase the number of recipients. The number of recipients increased with 54 000, 1981-1989 in which male constituted almost half of the total increase. One major change was that the share of recipients under the age of 40 rose quicker than the rest. In the yearly Social reports about social allowance show that in 1983, 72 percent of the head of the household were under 40 years old and 27 percent under 25 years old. The statistical report from 1989 shows that about 38 percent of the households consisted of single men without children and about 22 percent of single women without

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
children. What has to been taking in consideration here is the groups with children, in which single mothers by far outnumber singles fathers.

This leaves more women with a heavier support responsibilities and a more difficult economical situation. And even if a sharp reduction among single women with children, which relied on social allowance, was pronounced in the late 1980’s30 were their economic situation troublesome. I will not get closer into that subject of support responsibilities since it is not the purpose of this paper; however it is necessary to keep the cost of children in mind. In all the social statistics reports during the 1980’s the increase of 16-29 year olds is emphasized. Right before the crisis in 1991 a remarkable share of young adult was reported as recipients of means tested social support. The Statistical Report from 1990 show that 80 percent of recipients were younger than 40 years old and nearly half were under 25 years old. Only 3 percent were seniors (65 years or older). Right before the economical crisis in 1991 single men without kid’s constituted by far the most common household type, and were heavily overrepresented in proportion to their percentage of the population31.

Source: Yearly social allowance reports 1957-2010

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30 Ibid.
31 BERGMARK, Å. 1991. Socialbidrag och försörjning : en studie av bidragstagande bland ensamstående utan barn = (“Social assistance and household economy”) : [a study of social assistance recipience among single persons without children], Stockholm, Univ. S.12
The economical crisis at the beginning of the 1990's had an extensive impact on the Swedish economy and reshaped the society in many ways. Extensive austerity measures were implemented and governmental spending cut. The proportion of dependent men and women increased; the increase was more pronounced among men than women. Population figures in the official statistical reports show that 13.7 percent of all single men at some point in 1991 received social assistance. In 1992 this had risen to 15.3 percent. The corresponding numbers for women were 11.4 percent in 1991 to 12.3 percent. This trend was kept intact during the 1990's. The number men receiving means tested social assistance increased faster than the number of women. It is not only the number of recipients that are of interest, the time on means tested social allowance is also of importance. Is the economic help of temporary character or is it the head income? Figure 3 illustrates how many months per year that single men without children have been receiving the allowance (comparative statistics for other groups are available in appendix). Eleven month or more is considered long-time beneficiary. 100 percent correspond to the entire group, who has been receiving social assistance during a year. The trend in figure XXX is that the share of men that only need allowance two month or less decreased from 65 percent in 1957, to 35 percent 2010, while long-time beneficiary during under the same period increased from 12 to 31 percent. The fastest increase is visible from 1990 and beyond. Long time beneficiary among households in the establishment phase, young, students and immigrants also increased substantially.\(^{32}\) Between 1990 and 1997 the cost for means tested social


allowance doubled. The number of allowance takers started to decrease first after 1997. During almost a ten year period that followed, the social allowance decreased in the whole population.

**Figure:4 16-29 year olds receiving social allowance, divided in sex and origin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Born in Sweden</th>
<th>Born abroad</th>
<th>All 16-29</th>
<th>All ages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>32 487</td>
<td>32 270</td>
<td>64 757</td>
<td>24 730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>37 177</td>
<td>39 665</td>
<td>76 842</td>
<td>27 309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>37 778</td>
<td>40 032</td>
<td>77 810</td>
<td>28 212</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Yearly social allowance reports 2008-2009. (These numbers do not correspond to the relative numbers)

In 2003 a new social help was act implemented, the new law was characterized by ?????? The number of recipients started to rise again from 2007, which coincided with the economic downturn. From 2008 the statistics is divided in gender, age and born in or outside of Sweden which makes it possible to see how the means tested social allowance is divided in the young group. In Figure 4 the quite surprising results shows that young men born in Sweden constitute the largest group, not just in this table but in the whole population divided in age, gender and origin groups. Their increase during this short time is also the fastest among Swedish born males. In the Social report from 2006 they state that this rejuvenation of poverty is an historical shift in modern Sweden.34

The factors that have lead to an increase in a feminization of poverty, like increased divorce rates; increase numbers of single mothers have of course taken place in Sweden as well. What is different in Sweden has been the rather generous housing allowance that has not been related to means testing, child benefits and government policies which allow parents of young children to reduce their work hours for several years while keeping their jobs.35 Labor rate participation among women in Sweden has also been one of the highest in the world, which entitled women to the social insurances36. Through social legislation and governmental support there are surprisingly few single mothers dependent on means tested social allowance in an international comparison.

In the first part of this paper has I have tried to answer the question *whether it has occurred a Masculinization of poverty between 1964 and 2010 in Sweden*. The statistics show that the absolute and relative number of young male receivers has increased during this period and equals the average receiver of means tested social allowance. The second part of this paper deal with the question: *Why has there been a Masculinization of poverty in Sweden between1964 and 2010?* And if

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33 Ibid. P.11
36 SAINSBURY, D. 1993. Dual welfare and sex segregation of access to social benefits : income maintenance policies in the UK, the US, the Netherlands and Sweden. journal of social policy (Print).
the well-established theoretical framework of feminization of poverty gives an incorrect and indistinct answer to the poverty development in Sweden, which theories gives a sharper analysis?

5. Labor market

To analysis: Why there has been a Masculinization of poverty in Sweden? This paper follows the statistics of means tested social allowance in relation to the labor participation, unemployment insurances and immigration. Unemployment and poverty in an economic historical perspective has been a longstanding hot topic. Those who, for different reasons, were outside the labor market have been included as an important factor in several theory constructions. Since Sweden both have had full employment and a dense social security net for a rather long time the ones who live on means tested social allowance a peculiar role. The recipients of means tested social allowance they are not embedded in the general de-commodofication of the population through social insurances instead omitted to the market. To analyze the Swedish development of Masculinization of poverty I have decided to use the theory about the industrial reserve army together with the theory of a dual welfare state and see if these two combined can explain the Swedish development than the theory about feminization of poverty in a better way.

The industrial reserve army is a concept coined by Karl Marx in the first volume of Capital 37. Marx saw the industrial reserve army as an indispensable part of capital accumulation and a part that was indistinguishable from the rest of the labor force. To fit his time Marx made a division of the industrial reserve army into three parts: the latent, the floating and the stagnant. The latent group was according to Marx found in the agricultural districts and consisted of a constant flow of labor from agriculture into the industry in the cities: "The constant movement towards the cities requires the countryside to a constant latent surplus population". The latent group is today mainly found in developing countries and we leave them hereby unchecked from this paper. The floating group of the industrial reserve army consisted of workers who were unemployed because of the normal ups and downs of capital accumulation as a result of frictional and structural unemployment: people who have recently worked, but was at the moment out of work and in the process of searching for new jobs. The last group is The stagnant group. The stagnant part of the industrial reserve army was, according to Marx, working but had extremely irregular work. This included all types of part-time work, temporary work, and casual labor. Wages for workers in this category may be said to fall below the average normal level of the working class, "It was here that the majority of the masses came who had been made redundant". Its standard of living was below the average working class. In Marx's time this group was in particular dominated by female workers in the home industries who acted as

shock absorbers against fluctuations on the labor market. Their standard of living was below the working class average and it was characterized by a maximum of working hours and minimum wages. The U.S. political writer Harry Braverman modernized several of Marx's ideas in the book *Labor and Monopoly Capital: the Degradation of work in the Twentieth Century* from 1974\(^{38}\).

Braverman's updated theories about the industrial reserve army, were that jobs will not disappear so much for those on the labor market but for of those who were new to the labor market. The nonwhite young workers will constitute a larger share of the stagnate part of the reserve army\(^{39}\). Braverman also adds the gender aspect of how men's and women's work have changed in the 20th century. Men have to a larger extent lost their jobs while women have risen to the labor market, but Braverman concludes that these two diametrically opposed movements are part of the same trend:

> These two opposing statistical movements of male and female workers are contradictory in form only. In essence, they represent two sides of the same phenomenon, the increase in the relative mass of industrial reserve army. Among male workers this takes the form of sloughing off into the rank of the so-called nonparticipation in the labor force, or in other words an increase of the stagnant portion. Among female workers it takes the form of a growing body of female labor which is drawn from the masses of women who previously did not work, and hence represent an enlargement of the "floating" and stagnant reserve army.\(^{40}\)

Braverman points out a trend towards men or newly arrived in the labor market that lose their jobs and end up in the stagnant part of the industrial reserve army. When Braverman predicts the future, he believes that the laws of capital accumulation will lead to convergence between men and women in the labor market and that both will belong to the industrial reserve army:

> The logical culmination of these trends is an equalization of the labor force participation rates between men and women and the stabilization of a uniform rate for the population as a whole in other words, the transformation of as much as one-third or more of the male population into a reserve army of labor, along with a similar part of the female population.\(^{41}\)

Braverman opposites the predecessor of feminization of poverty and pointes toward equalization of precarization of labor and living conditions for men and women and a movement of capital accumulation, which would leave no one untouched, regardless of gender. Full employment has been the buzzwords in the Swedish welfare state, and keeping the unemployment rate on a minimum of 2-3 percent. The crisis in the beginning of the 1970’s hit the male dominated sectors like engineering industries, shipyards, and mining first and hardest. Many of these branches were kept alive by state subsidizing and employment was kept intact. The most striking change can be seen after the economical crisis 1990, when the Swedish unemployment rose to numbers that had not been seen since the crisis in 1930. Recent studies on the financial crisis in 2008 show that there is an important gender dimension to the vulnerability of youth in the current crisis, as young men


\(^{39}\) Ibid. s.273

\(^{40}\) Ibid. S.270

\(^{41}\) Ibid. S.271
have been generally more affected than women, reflecting that these individuals are employed in such sectors as construction and manufacturing, which are heavily impacted by this recession\(^2\). This is a recurrent pattern for the western world and is also in line with what Braverman predicted as a strong and consistent decline of typical male labor opportunities\(^3\). In each successive recession since the 1970’s, male unemployment has risen more and quicker than female unemployment. This development reflects the number of recipients of means tested social allowance, in which the raise of male recipients is more of a direct response to the crisis. It is not only the decreases of jobs in male dominated sectors that explain this, the number of females in former male dominated jobs like teachers and doctor has also been increasing.

![Figure 5: Four different types of works in proportion to the total economy 1964-2000 (in absolut numbers)](http://www.historia.se/)

In the young group it is a clear convergence between men and women. The male labor participation has gone down and the female one has gone up. Figure 5 illustrates the convergence of men and women, (in the appendix the statistics divided in 19-24 year olds and 25-34 year old and the trend is even stronger in the older group). More men found themselves to be unemployed and outside the labor market than before. The figure 7 shows the development of the labor market for 16-29 years old every tenth year\(^*\) From 1964 in which the development of young males initially had a higher labor participation rate than females until 1984.


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42 (http://ftp.iza.org/dp4359.pdf.)
The crisis at the beginning of the 1990's can be seen as a shift towards a higher unemployment level. The most severe change is also obvious among men. Labor force participation has been decreasing among men simultaneously as it has been increasing among women. It was not only that unemployment raised, the temporary employment and casual labor became more common among men as well. Temporary employment in 1988 was 7 percent of the employed men and 14.5 percent of the employed women in temporary employment. In 2003 that number was 13 respectively 16 percent. Much of this temporary labor can be traced back to the development of staffing agencies in Sweden, they were made legal in 1992 and since then have flourished. In 2011 the staffing agencies had about 140 000 employees at some point during the year. Workers under the age of 34 made up to 71 percent of the ones who had been employed by staffing service agencies. Together with new temporary forms of employment the employment situation for men has changed dramatically, especially among young men and resembles insecurity the women earlier had faced, both in regards of labor force participation and temporary employments. According to Braverman does “…[the] subemployed labor holds on its lowest levels the pauperized layers of the population, that bottom sediment which is drawn into employment only frequently, sporadically, and at peaks of ‘prosperity’”. Marx discussed how the humans are assigned an economic value through

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45 Antal anställda och penetrationssgrad I bemanningsbranschen 2011–bemannningssjöfartens utveckling).
46 Åldersfördelning på anställda i bemanningsbranschen)
*Except from 2010.
Commodofication and by that the labor force is something that can be bought and sold on the market. Karl Polanyi coined the concept *De-commodofication* furthered developed by Esping-Andersen in which social entitlements and citizen’s degree of immunization from market dependency were cornerstones in the welfare state construction. The British economics professor Guy Standing writes in the monograph *The Precariat-the new dangerous class*, from 2011, that development towards more flexibility and temporary employment is a process of labor *Re-commodofication*, which makes the labor force more responsive to supply and demand on the labor market. Bravermans and Standings ideas are applicable as an analysis of the labor situation for young males in Sweden. There is a clear falling rate of labor participation among young males simultaneously with an increasing number of temporary employments and employments through staffing agencies which indicates that they make up a larger part of what Marx would call the *stagnant part* of the reserve army and Standing would call the *precariat*.

![Figure 7: Position on the labour market in relative terms](image)

Among the once who recived means tested social allowance the young males mainly receive it because of unemployment. Single men without children accounted for half of the increase in the number of contribution households. During the 1990’s more men than women suffered from unemployment and income losses. The proportion of women with low incomes has fallen sharply over the period 1987-1994. In 1994 there remained no significant differences between the sexes. During

the 1990’s more men than women suffer from unemployment and income losses\(^{51}\). Accordingly the labor market has on several levels gone towards convergence between men and women.

\section*{5.1 Unemployment insurance}

To understand why means tested social allowance is increasing, the labor market is the foundation, and however it gives far from the whole picture. In a state like Sweden with a dense social security net the construction of the social insurance system is an important component to understand why some people live on means tested support. Standing writes that the welfare state and the labor regulations were designed with the core of the manual workers in mind, and since 1970’s below this group has developed what he calls a precariat (a portmanteau of the words proletariat and precarious). A group of casual, temporary and insecure jobs, which in many ways are a reminiscent of what Marx, called the stagnant part of the industrial reserve army, with the addition of the relation to the modern social security system Standing writes:

\begin{quote}
By favoring flexible labor markets, it has allowed the precariat to grow without responding to its insecurities or fears. It has shifted social protection decisively towards mean-testing, which gives priority to those most in need while pushing long-standing citizens, who might be near-poor, towards the back of ye queue for benefitting.\(^{52}\)
\end{quote}

In \textit{Capital}, Marx writes that the stagnant part of the reserve army has a proportionately larger share of working-class growth than its other constituents. This statement has not been correct over time. But since 1970, one can see a rapid growth of this segment of society, Standing devotes a whole chapter to the question: \textit{Why is the Precariat growing}?\(^{53}\) Braverman also concludes that the stagnant part has been growing in the United States during the 20\(^{th}\) century. In Sweden the unemployment law from 1934 was replaced in 1974. The new law was characterized by a softening approach on different levels. The work condition (\textit{arbetsvillkoret}) changed from requiring 12 month of labor to 12 month of membership in the unemployment fund. The labor condition decreased to 75 days in a period of five months at the same time as the benefit period prolonged from 150 to 300 days. The unemployment insurance was kept intact until the austerity at the beginning of 1990’s unemployment. The unemployment insurance went through changes and degradation in different stages from 1993 to 1998. The level of compensation which had been pegged to 90 percent of the daily income got lowered to 80 percent in 1993, which was further reduced to 75 percent in 1996. In 1997 the compensation was restored to 80 percent of the daily income and from 1997 you had to had been working the last 12 month had worked 6. The rules of getting secluded got extended from 20 to 45 days. In 1998 the entry condition for the unemployment funds was sharpen and required more

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \(^{52}\) STANDING, G. 2011. \textit{The Precariat}, Bloomsbury USA Academic. S,150
\item \(^{53}\) Ibid.
\end{itemize}
work time to be qualified for the unemployment insurance membership. In 2007 it was time for new comprehensive changes of the unemployment insurances. First of all the reimbursements for unemployed were lowered in three stages. The first 200 days does the unemployed received 80 percent of the final wage. After 100 additional days it was lowered to 70 percent of the final salary and finally after 300 days of unemployment, the unemployment reimbursement was set to a level of 65 percent of the final wage. The work condition got stricter and required more labor to qualify to the unemployment insurance. The state had earlier paid 90 percent of the unemployment insurance; the new law had the more market insurance character. The costs for the unemployment fund membership rose significantly in some branches where unemployment was high. In 2007 the possibility for students in higher education to be entitled to unemployment benefits disappeared. In the Sociological report “Who has left the unemployment funds? And who refrained from joining?” by Anders Kjellberg he states that young people have limited ability to pay due to low wages, temporary jobs and part time do not qualify for the unemployment insurance and the fact that students are not entailed by the unemployment insurance. The same is to be said about immigrants as well who work, in those branches with the highest unemployment rates, which lead to higher insurance premiums. This development correspond to the theories by Guy Standing who wrote

_While unemployment insurance still holds sway in a few countries, entitlement conditions have been tightened everywhere; periods of entitlement have been shortened and benefits have been cut. In most countries, only a minority of the unemployed receives benefits and the minority is shrinking. And means-tested benefits have expanded, with all sorts of behavioral conditions attached to them._

Standing points towards a duality not just in the labor market but even in the welfare structure. Dual welfare state theory was first developed by Dale. A. Tussing in the article _The Dual welfare system_ and further adapted to Swedish conditions by Stefan Svallfors and Staffan Marklund in the report _Dual Welfare-Segmentation and Work Enforcement in the Swedish Welfare systems_. They emphasize on how the welfare system is not just a passive reflection of the dual labor market, it upholds in itself a strong duality. To be entitled to social insurances income is not the only criteria, regularity and permanency of work also need to be taken into account.

_In particular the dual welfare system discriminates against people that do not work at all or have only worked for a short period of time. This dividing line in the dual welfare structure goes between stable labor market participation and the non-working or irregular working reserve-army._

Svallfors and Marklund draw the line of duality between marginal welfare programs based on the low flat rate provision and means testing on one side and on the other and universal and essence of wealth with social insurance based on the idea of income. This analysis from 1987 is up to date with the changes in the Swedish unemployment insurance. Some workers constitute the core of the

54 Ibid. S.46
55 TUSSELL, A. D. 1975. Poverty in a dual economy, New York, St. Martin’s P.
57 Ibid. S.17
workforce through permanent jobs and collective bargaining agreements and are therefore eligible for today's modern social insurances and another group which has more temporary jobs, lack of collective agreements and referred to means tested benefits in the case of unemployment. In sum requirements for the unemployment insurance in Sweden has become stricter at the same time as the reimbursements have decreased. All of these changes have lead to a drastic fall of young people in the unemployment funds. The threshold to qualify is higher; the premium together with greatly reduced benefits in case of unemployment discourages many young people to participate in the unemployment funds. In Kjellberg's report, he states that the member collapse in absolute numbers was largest among 16-34 year olds in which 17 percent left the insurance funds between 2007 and 2008. Among that are young and new to the labor market have constituted 31 percent reduction of the inflow to the unemployment funds.

Figure 8 shows that among the ones who receive means tested social allowance unemployment is a stronger factor for men than for women. Young men mainly apply for social allowance because they are unemployed and without unemployment insurance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age/Gender</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-19 Women</td>
<td>41,8</td>
<td>40,9</td>
<td>36,1</td>
<td>33,4</td>
<td>33,7</td>
<td>35,7</td>
<td>35,7</td>
<td>38,8</td>
<td>33,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19 Men</td>
<td>41,2</td>
<td>43,2</td>
<td>37,2</td>
<td>36,9</td>
<td>36,5</td>
<td>38,4</td>
<td>36,9</td>
<td>39,3</td>
<td>34,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24 Women</td>
<td>60,7</td>
<td>53,1</td>
<td>48,5</td>
<td>46,4</td>
<td>46,7</td>
<td>47,5</td>
<td>48,4</td>
<td>47,9</td>
<td>57,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24 Men</td>
<td>72,6</td>
<td>65,0</td>
<td>62,8</td>
<td>59,9</td>
<td>61,2</td>
<td>60,9</td>
<td>60,8</td>
<td>60,6</td>
<td>68,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29 Women</td>
<td>41,8</td>
<td>37,1</td>
<td>36,1</td>
<td>33,2</td>
<td>34,2</td>
<td>34,3</td>
<td>33,1</td>
<td>36,3</td>
<td>46,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29 Men</td>
<td>54,7</td>
<td>50,1</td>
<td>49,2</td>
<td>47,6</td>
<td>48,7</td>
<td>47,9</td>
<td>45,8</td>
<td>50,4</td>
<td>58,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of the whole population</td>
<td>42,9</td>
<td>37,5</td>
<td>35,5</td>
<td>32,5</td>
<td>32,6</td>
<td>32,9</td>
<td>32,0</td>
<td>35,7</td>
<td>32,9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the report from 2009 the Inspection for unemployment insurance (IAF) they have followed jobseekers with and without unemployment reimbursement. They conclude that the rate of men without unemployment insurance was higher than the rate of women. The rate of 18-24 years old was significantly higher than the rest and had been increasing from 2007. The reason for higher rate among young people was that they were not members or they that they had left or that they had been members for too short a time. There is not a one-to-one relationship between the lack of unemployment insurance and reliance on means tested social allowance. Björn Gustavsson have for

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59 Ibid
example shown that it takes about a year for unemployed without unemployment insurance to get entitled to means tested social allowance. The main reason for that is that all other economic means need to be exhausted first, before one can be entitled to mean testing. The question is if it takes as long time for young people since its more probable that they don’t have savings, own a car or their own housing, I will not get closer into that question but it is probably a fact that young people apply faster.

Another part of the labor participation share is education particularly among the young. Women in Sweden have a higher tendency to enroll in higher education than men. About 60 percent of the students are female and that number has been increasing since 1977. Higher education gives new work opportunities; the share of unemployed among the ones with higher education is significantly lower than non-educated. Higher education sometimes also serves as a solution for young people who do not get work on the labor market. This implies that more men are out on the labor market instead of in higher education. The re-commodofication that Standing mentioned seems to affect young Swedish men harder than young Swedish women. The Swedish board of higher education claimed in a report from 2008 that "Sweden is moving towards a low educated male proletariat and a highly educated female proletariat", since males do not have grades that are good enough or for other reasons refrain from enroll in higher education.

### 5.3 Immigration

Immigrants have, since the division of immigrants and native Swedes in the statistics (1964), shown a higher tendency to live of social allowance than native Swedes. The immigration groups who have been living on means tested social welfare have changed over time, but irrespective of ethnical origin they have been heavily overrepresented. The net immigration to Sweden has always been dominated by males, preferably younger males, the average age for an immigrant in 2012, was 28 years of age.

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The immigrants distinguish themselves from the rest of the population since they are younger and have more children. The statistic shows that immigrant families with children are more common frequent in the data. Immigrants compared to all the help cases have also been heavily over represented in the family type single men without children\(^{61}\)(1974)(1974). The largest increase of immigrants took place in the 1980’s. One problem with this data over means tested social allowance is that immigrants have a tendency to move around which might lead to registration in more than one municipality. Figure 11 illustrates that the increase of young immigrants took off during the 1980’s In the Social Report from 1994, is the Increase of social costs in the second half of the 1980s can fully be attributed to the foreign households\(^{62}\).

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The net immigrant surplus is also larger among men than among women, at the same time as the averaged age for immigrants is 28 years of age. Immigrants have significantly lower labor participation than the rest of the population and that’s why they are not entitled to unemployment insurances. In 1992 introduction payment was introduced instead of means tested social allowance for immigrants. The introduction payment is on the same level and have the same requirements as means tested social allowance had I have merged them together in the statistics. Standing concludes that Migrants make up a large share of the world’s precariat, they constitute the light infantry of global capitalism. This paper only deals with officially registered migrants, which of course leave out all the paperless migrants which Standing calls the truly shadow reserve army63. Braverman writes that the nonwhite (which not necessary is the same as immigrants) have faced the same development on the labor market as native women, with an increased labor participation mainly in service jobs. Immigrants in general also have a lower education level and lack high school degrees, which often is a requirement even for low-skilled manual jobs. This has left immigrants to a larger extent outside both the labor market and the social insurance system, and since immigration is dominated by men they have a slightly higher frequency among the recipients of social allowance. In figure 4 the gap between young men and women born in Sweden is larger than that for foreign born.

63 STANDING, G. 2011. The Precariat, Bloomsbury USA Academic.
6. Conclusions

The first question for this paper was: Has there been a Masculinization of poverty in Sweden? The answer to that question must be yes. If one looks at the number of recipients of social allowance and long time beneficiary we can see a clear trend towards more men both in relative and absolute numbers among the young. The feminization of poverty which is claimed to be a global phenomenon is not visible in the Swedish statistics, instead it is a clear convergence between young men and women and in some cases men even supersede women among the recipients. Men also tend to raise quicker when economic crisis occurred. This development corresponds to Bravermans and Standings theories about an equalization of poverty and living conditions between men and women.

The second question: Why has there been a Masculinization of poverty in Sweden between 1964 and 2010? is a more complex question that requires a more elaborate answer. The Swedish welfare state is built upon the idea of full employment and universal social insurances that is closely linked to the labor participation. Full employment is both the precondition and its Achilles heel of the social democratic welfare state. With a falling rate of traditional male jobs and a general trend of precariousization of remaining jobs, this has lead to a weaker position on the labor market, in particular for people who enter the labor market for the first time, hence, young people and immigrants. The net immigration is larger among men than women, at the same time as immigrants are overrepresented among receivers of social allowance. In Sweden young women at the age 16 -29 have a higher tendency to enroll in higher education than men, which exclude females from the labor force. Women also have a higher tendency to work in the service sector which has been expanding in contrast to the male dominated industrial sector. Braverman predicted a convergence on the labor market for men and women and Standing meant that we nowadays can talk of a ‘mancession’ instead of a recession(Standing, 2011)(Standing, 2011) This does not mean that women are poor or suffer from social exclusion, only that there has been a clear trend towards convergence between young men and women when it comes to poverty during the last 50 years. However it is not only a weaker attachment to the labor market that explains the increase of means tested social allowance among young men, it is also a weaker attachment to the welfare state. Through retrenchment of the welfare system fewer people today are qualified for the unemployment insurance at the same time as insurance premiums have been rising and reimbursement have in real terms been decreasing. It is particularly young people who have left the insurances or refrained from joining, which left them without any income in a situation of unemployment. Standing meant that the new unemployment benefits acted as a breeding ground for the precariat. Marklund and Svalfors points at how the

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64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
work criteria in the unemployment scheme are harder to meet than any other social programs\textsuperscript{66}. The harder criterions create a sharper duality in the welfare state and pushes people out from the core welfare into the marginal welfare. All of these factors together have created a low skilled, unemployed male proletariat with a weak attachment not only to the labor market but also to the welfare state and only has the mean tested social support to rely on in lack of other incomes. The average receiver of means tested social allowance among the young is by that crystallized to a young single native Swedish male. Young men end up in the same precarious position that’s been dominated by females and immigrants throughout history.

7. Appendix:

Figure 3.1: Share of months on mean tested social allowance among single men with children 1964-2010

Figure 3.2: Share of months on mean tested social allowance among single women without children 1964-2010
Figure 3.3: Share of months on mean tested social allowance among single women without children 1964-2010

6.2 Labour Force participation 25-34 year old Sweden 1964-2010
6.1 Labour Force Participation 16-24 years old Sweden 1964-2010
8. Material

9. References

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