



Roks

The National Organisation
for Women's Shelters and
Young Women's Shelters
in Sweden

Women's shelters and Covid-19

Challenges and needs during the pandemic

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Experiences from other countries

- Violence increases during lockdown
- Isolation generally connected to violence

Experiences from Sweden

- The first stage: Very quiet (as during vacations)
- Young women's shelters – more contacts
- Gradually a more normal situation, for some
- "The large wave" has yet not come
- No "general picture"

Expectations from the media

- Quite intense cover of the “violence-question”
- Expectations that the violence has increased
- Focus on “especially vulnerable groups”

Expectations from the politicians

- A strong interest in our points of views
- A high level of trust
- A one eyed focus on "especially vulnerable groups"
- A large amount of money – within destructive conditions: has to be used in a very short time

Challenges for the sheltermovement

- How to handle expectations that doesn't match the reality? How to tell it like it is?
- How to not get compromised by attention and fundings?
- How to manover on the field that "violence against women" has become in Sweden?

Roks – actions and strategies

- Keep a close contact with the shelters – exchange information and ideas
- Pay close attention – don't give answers you don't have
- Focus on your core: non-profit, feminist organisation. Develop that!
- Use your knowledge, be open: we have never seen this before!

Our analysis

- The pandemic increases the risk for populist politics on our field
- The populist focus might overshadow important changes, such as
- The pandemic pushes the boundaries for violence, creating a new harsher normality
- The pandemic turns the shelters into charity due to economic hardship and lack of societal help

Possibilities

- The Swedish women's and young women's shelter movement might return to its roots, with a larger autonomy and a higher integrity