

NEWS REPORT

Date: 15 April 2009
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Title: Homosexual policemen discriminated
Country: Portugal

Context

Issue at stake: Revision of the Police forces statutes
Ground of discrimination: Sexual orientation
Source: Newspapers: Jornal de Notícias
Field: Employment

Content

The Sindicato Unificado da PSP (one of the Police forces trade unions) wishes to include in the next revision of statute a clause related to discrimination based on sexual orientation. This revision is being made between the police trade unions and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and will, in principle, be concluded within two months. Their goal is to change attitudes and encourage good employment practices through managing equality issues.

The proposal of revision presented by the Ministério da Administração Interna (MAI) (Ministry of Internal Affairs) does not include in article 8 the term “sexual orientation” as one of the factors which may lead to discrimination; this is considered by the trade union as being against the principle of equality of all citizens laid down by the Portuguese Constitution. Article 8 of the statute in force states as follows: Special duties - b) to act without discrimination based on ancestry, sex, race, language, country of origin, religion, political or ideological convictions, education, economic situation or, social condition. This wording corresponds to article 13 on the principle of equal treatment of the Portuguese Constitution.

If sexual orientation will not be included in the statute of the Police force, this may allow discrimination not only against the citizens on the grounds of sexual orientation, but also against the policemen. Furthermore, none of them could complain against discrimination at the workplace on grounds of sexual orientation and be fairly treated if this clause is not expressly foreseen in the Police forces statutes.



The Ministry of Internal Affairs had already committed to include sexual orientation on the grounds of discrimination foreseen in article 8.

“It is time to change and assume that there is homosexuality in the police force” referred the Associação Sindical dos Profissionais de Polícia (the Policemen Professional trade union association).