



NEWS REPORT

Date: 22 October 2009
Expert: Per Norberg
Title: Survey of discrimination in the housing market
Country: Sweden

Context

Issue at stake: Survey of housing market
Ground of discrimination: racial/ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability and possibly more grounds.¹
Source: Political
Field: Housing

Content

The Swedish government decided on the 15 October 2009 to request a survey from the Equality Ombudsman regarding discrimination in the housing market and to offer to the Ombudsman remuneration of 1, 1 million crowns (approximately 110.000 Euro) to this end. The survey shall cover all the most important forms of housing, ownership², tenant-owner,³ and tenancy.⁴ It shall make detailed analysis with regard, inter alia, to differences between regions, between forms of housing, between private landlords and municipal landlords.

The Ombudsman will consider⁵ situation testing⁶ as a method to investigate the extent of discrimination. The testing the government envisages is, for instance, to send out applications to landlords or to make offers to sellers from fictitious applicants or buyers with texts or other kinds of information relating the applicants or buyers to different grounds of discrimination.

¹ As far as possible, all grounds covered by the discrimination act shall be investigated. Attachment to Government decision IJ 2009/1834/DISK.

² Approximately 38 % of the Swedish homes are owned directly. This mainly applies to single family homes.

³ Approximately 18 % of Swedish are of the tenant-owner form. This is a form of co-operative, but the tenant has a very large degree of ownership including the freedom to sell the apartment to the highest bidder and to change it, for instance adding or removing walls within the apartment.

⁴ Approximately 44 % of the Swedish homes are tenancies; in tenancies all forms of advance payment, other than the monthly rent is prohibited.

⁵ After having considered situation testing, the Ombudsman is free to choose another method than situation testing.

⁶ Praktikprovning.