

# RIGHT TO HOUSING

## SWEDEN



### LEGAL ASPECT

The right to housing is both incorporated into the Swedish Constitution and established by regulation.

In Chapter 1, Article 2 (paragraph 2) of the Constitution, it is mentioned that it shall be incumbent upon the public administration to secure, inter alia, the right to housing. The state defines the broad principles and main priorities of housing policy, while municipalities are charged with providing flexibility depending on their own specificities.

Chapter 4, Article 1 (paragraph 1) of the Social Services Act (2001:453), any individual who is unable to provide for his needs or to obtain provision from them in any other way, he is entitled to assistance from the social welfare committee (which is part of the municipal administration) towards his livelihood and for his living in general. Moreover, according to Chapter 4, Article 1 of the same Act, individuals who have objections to a decision made by the social services concerning the Article, they can appeal the decision to the administrative courts (i.e. in case of a rejection to an application for rent support). This procedure is considered to be rather effective.

Source : [FEANTSA](#), 2012



Sweden ratified the Revised European Social Charter Bold Texton 29/05/1998, accepting 83 of the Revised Charter's 98 paragraphs, including the Article 31 on the right to housing. It ratified the Additional Protocol providing for a system of collective complaints on 29/05/1998. It has not yet made a declaration enabling national NGOs to submit complaints.

Source : [FEANTSA](#), 2012

### PUBLIC HOUSING

In Sweden the concept "social housing" is not used. The corresponding sector is called "allmännyttig", which literally means "public utility" or "for the benefit of everybody". In an international context the concept "public housing" is adequate. This sector consists of rental dwellings, owned by municipal housing companies that are organized as joint-stock companies (limited companies). In most cases the local authorities holds all the shares. These housing companies have a general interest objective – to promote the provision of housing in their municipality – but operate on business-like principles.

Since the early nineties, there has been a clear trend towards reducing or even eliminating assistance and subsidies. Companies borrow their capital from financial markets at market prices and henceforth take responsibility for their own economic risks, which has weakened them. This is the spirit of the new "law on public housing companies" (2011), which must now operate on "commercial principles."

Source: CECODHAS Report 2012



### CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS :

HYRESGÄSTFÖRENINGEN – HYRESGÄSTERNAS SPARKASSE BYGGNADSFÖRENING OCH – HSB – RIKSBYGGEN – HOUSING DEVELOPMENT & MANAGMENT – SWEDEN'S NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CITY MISSIONS – KRIS – KOLLEKTIVHUS NU – PENSIONÄRERNAS RIKSORGANISATION – INDEPENDENT LIVING INSTITUTE – FAKTUM – BYGGNADS

### PROBLEMS

- Sweden has successfully deregulated a number of sectors, but major distortions continue to persist on the housing market, obstructing the relationship between supply and demand and denying many Swedes their preferred form of residency.
- Since 1996, housing costs rose around 8% annually through 2008!
- Housing construction has sharply increased, but as a share of GDP, it remains significantly lower than levels in other OECD countries. This is partly a result of the fact that previous investments were massively subsidized by the state.
- Major public sector deficits: The public sector budget deficit in Sweden is very significant. In 1994, it reached 10%, making it the largest deficit in the OECD with the exception of Greece. This figure is much greater than the maximum 3% threshold allowed according to the Maastricht Treaty's economic convergence criteria. One consequence is the reduction of state housing assistance.
- Vacant housing: Sweden went very suddenly from a housing shortage to a housing glut. This shift began in 1991. By early 1994, nearly 70% of towns declared they had a housing surplus. This had significant consequences for the housing market and the construction sector.
- Housing shortages in major cities for foreigners: Housing shortages in major cities makes it difficult for foreigners to move there. The paradox is that it is precisely these cities that have work to offer them. There is a discrepancy between the housing supply and the job supply for foreigners.
- Significant growth in the number of homeless, including a lot of children.

# HABITAT WORLDMAP

BETTER UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT : [WWW.WM-URBAN-HABITAT.ORG](http://WWW.WM-URBAN-HABITAT.ORG)

## UNDER CONSTRUCTION

