



homelessness

multiple faces, multiple responsibilities

– a strategy to combat homelessness
and exclusion from the housing market



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Government Offices
of Sweden

The Government has presented a strategy to combat homelessness and exclusion from the housing market *Homelessness – multiple faces, multiple responsibilities*. The strategy covers 2007–2009. Its purpose is to establish a structure that clarifies that multiple actors at national, regional and also local level have a responsibility and a role to play in work to address homelessness and exclusion from the housing market. By specifying a clear direction for action, a broad approach and clear joint work, the strategy represents a higher level of ambition.

Introduction

Homelessness is a challenge for the Swedish welfare state. Up to now responsibility for combating homelessness has largely rested with the municipal social services. Naturally, the social services still have their responsibility, but if work to address homelessness is to be successful in the long term, more actors must be involved.

The Government's strategy is a framework for further work to combat homelessness and exclusion from the housing market. The objectives specify its direction and make it possible to monitor and gradually develop the actions taken.

Since 2002 the National Board of Health and Welfare has had a commission from the Government to develop knowledge about the scale of homelessness and about methods to combat homelessness by carrying out surveys and providing support for local development work.

In September 2006 the Board reported on an evaluation of the local development work that had received funding in 2002–2005. One conclusion is that people who are homeless do not make up a homogeneous group and that homelessness problems cannot be solved by the social services alone; instead they affect several policy areas such as the labour market, the housing market, healthcare, integration and education. The Board calls for a unified perspective and a concerted policy at both national and local level. International experience also points to the importance of a unified perspective that leads to homelessness being given attention in all the relevant policy areas. The strategy is also an input into Sweden's strategy report for social protection and social inclusion in 2006–2008.

What is meant by being homeless?

Homelessness does not describe a person but the situation a person finds himself or herself in for a shorter or longer period of time. The concept is commonly used to describe a person who is sleeping rough or has to use emergency accommodation or a hostel.

The National Board of Health and Welfare uses a wider definition that includes people who currently have somewhere to stay but whose housing situation is uncertain in various respects. One example is when a person is in prison or has been admitted to a treatment unit or supported accommodation in the social services, a county council or some other care provider and does not have any accommodation arranged before being discharged. The Board also counts people who are living involuntarily with relatives, friends or acquaintances or have temporary subletting contracts (less than three months at the time of measurement) and who have sought assistance or been in contact with the social services or some other organisation on account of this. This group can, for instance, include asylum seekers who have been granted residence permits but do not have accommodation arranged. In this strategy the Government builds on the homelessness situations described by Board to show clearly that homelessness problems are complex and that each situation demands appropriate action by various actors.

The concept of homelessness is often associated with strong social exclusion characterised by unemployment, lack of education, segregation and poverty. The survey

conducted by the National Board of Health and Welfare also shows that in many instances homeless people have misuse and/or psychiatric problems. There are also people who have an uncertain housing situation, but who are not commonly defined as or define themselves as homeless. One example is young people who have not yet become established on the housing market. Even though these people do have an uncertain housing situation, they are not associated with the strong characteristics of social exclusion. Instead, their lack of housing is a consequence of a phase in life characterised by studies, higher mobility or project-based employment. The objectives set up by the Government in this strategy are mainly intended to combat homelessness – which also helps to combat exclusion. For the sake of a unified approach, the strategy also describes how the Government intends to facilitate entry into the housing market for young people and other groups that do not have social or economic problems but still need support from the government in this specific context.

It is important to have a correct picture of homelessness so as to be able to take appropriate action. However, the political discussion must not be reduced to a discussion about figures and statistics in a way that drains force from concrete action. Every person living in homelessness is one person too many and must be sufficient justification both for the support provided by the public authorities and civil society, and also for the attention both give to the matter.

New knowledge sets the course

In January 2006 the National Board of Health and Welfare presented its most recent survey of the scale of homeless-

ness. A total of around 17 800 people were homeless according to this count. This means that homelessness has increased by 2 000–3 000 people since 1999. The proportion of women has also increased.

The count shows that there are 3 600 people who are sleeping rough or hostel residents or are living in women's refuges, emergency accommodation, hotels, campsites or youth hostels. Of these, over 900 are women and 2 700 men. Two thirds of the people in this group have misuse problems, a third have psychiatric problems – often they are the same people. More than half have been homeless for more than one year. Most do not have any employment at all and are receiving financial assistance from the social services or sickness compensation or activity compensation from the social insurance system.

A comparison between 1999 and 2005 shows a very big increase in this group. The number of people in hostels or other emergency accommodation has trebled since 1999. In absolute numbers this is an increase from around 550 people to 1 650 people. This increase applies to both women and men. During the same period the number of women in women's refuges has more than doubled. In absolute numbers this is an increase from 41 people to 93 people. The number of people sleeping rough has not increased to the same extent during the period, but still shows an increase in absolute numbers from around 350 people in 1999 to around 400 people in 2005. As in previous surveys, more men than women are sleeping rough or living in hostels.

The National Board of Health and Welfare points to deficiencies in health care and social care of misusers and people with psychiatric problems as possible reasons for the increase that has taken place since 1999. Heavy misuse has increased without a corresponding increase in public action to combat it (*Heavy misusers. Incentives for better care and treatment./Personer med tungt missbruk. Stimulans till bättre vård och behandling./Swedish Government Official*

Reports, SOU 2005:82). The proportion of homeless people receiving help at institutions or in supported accommodation has decreased. In a series of reports the Government's psychiatric services coordinator has demonstrated major deficiencies in both the quantity and quality of health care and social care for people with psychiatric problems.

A further 13 100 people are included in the National Board of Health and Welfare's wider definition of homelessness. Of them 26 per cent are women and 74 per cent men. To a great extent they have the same problems as the people in the first group as regards misuse, psychiatric problems, financial problems or a lack of employment. Information has been provided about a further 1 100 people (situation unknown).

A description of the situation of all the people reported as homeless shows that almost half of the women have misuse problems and/or psychiatric problems. Among the men the misuse problems are more widespread: more than two thirds of the men have misuse problems and more than a third have psychiatric problems. The respondents have specified various causes behind the homelessness. The causes specified differ between men and women. Conflict or violence in close relationships is given as a much more common cause behind homelessness among women than among men.

More than 30 per cent of the homeless people are also parents of children aged under 18 years. Of them 1 719 are women (41 per cent of the women) and 3 256 are men (28 per cent of the men). It is mainly women who are reported as living with children. Around 60 per cent of all women who are known to be parents live wholly or partly with their children compared with around 30 per cent among the men. It is important to obtain more knowledge about the situation of homeless children and their parents. Homeless parents are reported as having financial problems, family problems and a lack of work or employment

more frequently than other homeless people. The inquiry into evictions and homelessness among families with children (SOU 2005:88) calculates that at least 1 000 children are subject to evictions each year.

Surveys and methods development have contributed more knowledge about the causes behind homelessness and exclusion from the housing market. It is important to draw on this knowledge to enhance this work.

The objectives and actions of the strategy

The Government's strategy contains four objectives for future work.

- 1) Everyone has to be guaranteed a roof over their head and be offered further coordinated action based on their individual needs.
- 2) The number of women and men who have been admitted to or registered at a prison or treatment unit or have supported accommodation or are staying in care homes and do not have any accommodation arranged before being discharged has to decrease.
- 3) Entry into the ordinary housing market has to be facilitated for women and men who are in housing ladders, training flats or other forms of accommodation provided by the social services or other actors.
- 4) The number of evictions has to decrease and no children are to be evicted.

Current situation

During a measurement week in 2005, 3 600 people (25 per cent women and 75 per cent men) has to use emergency accommodation, women's refuges or hostels and 23 per cent of these 3600 people had been sleeping rough.

Set of problems

Naturally a bed for the night or temporary emergency accommodation does not solve the underlying causes of homelessness. For most homeless

people this is a temporary solution in an acute situation and they will eventually move on to other housing and to employment and social participation. However, there are women and men with misuse problems, often in combination with physical and mental ill health, who are in great need of action by the psychiatric services, physical health care and the social services. In addition, some homeless people distrust public authorities and are therefore unwilling to get in touch with health care and the social services by themselves.

Direction of work

The municipalities are responsible for ensuring that the people who are in such a vulnerable situation that they do not know where they are going to spend the night are offered emergency night accommodation. To reach these people, who often have complex problems, the Government wants to encourage municipalities and county councils to jointly develop coordinated outreach fieldwork in order to be able to meet these people at hostels and emergency accommodation in their own environment on the basis of a broad set of skills and channel them on to the regular social services and further action.



Objective 1

Everyone has to be guaranteed a roof over their head and be offered further coordinated action based on their individual needs.

In many places NGOs make an extremely important contribution. It is important for the municipalities to cooperate with and support non-profit actors in this area so as to achieve the best conceivable results.

A government grant has been available since 1 July 2000 for case manager services (about SEK 90 million per year from 2002 until further notice). The municipality is

the authority responsible for the managers but provision of the service is voluntary. The role of the managers includes making sure that people with extensive psychiatric disabilities receive the care and support they need and are entitled to and to ensuring that the measures are coordinated and are delivered. The Government has provided an additional SEK 20 million for each of the two years 2007 and 2008. The funding is to be used to increase the number of case managers. In addition, the National Board of Health and Welfare has been commissioned to review the target group. It is, for example, to be assumed that, to a great extent, women and men who are homeless have extensive psychiatric disabilities and are living in particularly vulnerable social circumstances. They may have a substantial need of support and coordinated action. This Board reported on the commission on 1 July 2007.

Case managers can be a link between outreach fieldwork and contacts with the authorities. At a suitable point in time the managers can step in and support homeless people in their contacts with the social services and other authorities.



Objective 2

The number of women and men who have been admitted to or registered at a prison or treatment unit or have supported accommodation or are staying in care homes and do not have any accommodation arranged before being discharged has to decrease.

having any accommodation arranged before being discharged or moving out. Women accounted for 26 per cent of them and men for 74 per cent. Out of these 8 400 people, 2 000 had a planned discharge within three months; 22 per cent of them were women and 78 per cent men.

Set of problems

The women and men in this situation often have complex problems. In its survey the National Board of Health and Welfare has shown that many homeless people have misuse problems and/or psychiatric problems. Housing and support in daily life are necessary to make treatment, rehabilitation and recovery possible. An effective transition from care and treatment in institutions to services in more open settings is an important link in the care chain. The value of treatment in institutional care is determined by the action taken when the person is discharged, so it is of the utmost importance to already give priority to the individual's housing situation during treatment and to plan at that time for their future housing.

For homeless people who are the parents of children under the age of 18, housing is of great importance for their possibility of living together with their children or for their access with their children. For prison inmates who do not have housing it is important that the enforce-

Current situation

Around 8 400 people had been admitted to or registered at prisons, treatment units or supported housing in the social services, a county council, a private care provider, a care home or a treatment unit run by the National Board of Institutional Care without

ment and release planning carried out for each inmate also includes actual and effective cooperation between the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, the social services, care facilities and other networks around the client.

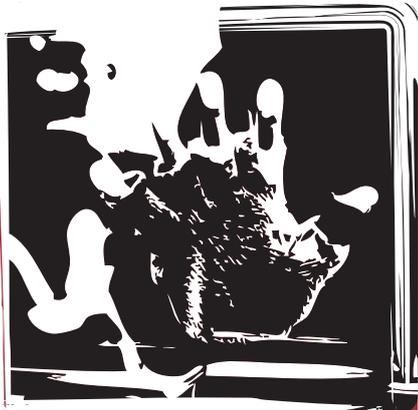
Direction of work

The Government considers that long-term sustainable structures for cooperation need to be built up both within the municipality's various services and between municipalities, county councils and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, as well as with NGOs.

In the municipalities government-supported development work is under way on reinforced care of misusers, whose focus includes a reinforced care chain and unified perspective with housing as one component.

Case managers are another initiative intended to give people with psychiatric disabilities support and to coordinate action and speak for the individual (see more details under objective 1). Case managers should also be available for people in care homes as well as for people with psychiatric disabilities and misuse ("comorbidity").

In order to improve and establish a more structured transition from life in prison to life in freedom a new transition alternative, a stay in a half-way house, has been available since 1 January 2007. Such a stay means that the inmate is placed in transitional accommodation. The half-way house is a home controlled by the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and adapted to give its inmates special support and supervision. During a stay in a half-way house inmates have to devote themselves to work or some other form of activity while building up their existence and getting used to life outside prison. The aim is to facilitate cooperation with the other authorities involved ahead of release.



Objective 3

Entry into the ordinary housing market has to be facilitated for women and men who are in housing ladders, training flats or other forms of accommodation provided by the social services or other actors.

Set of problems

This objective includes accommodation provided by the social services or other actors that has restrictions on occupation. However, it does not include housing with special service for people with disabilities under the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments or special housing for elderly people or people with disabilities under the Social Services Act.

In many Swedish municipalities various variants of the ladder model (the “housing ladder”) have been developed. This means that municipalities have negotiated with the housing companies on access to a number of dwellings that the social services sub-let to the client, but without the client having a right of possession of the dwelling. These dwellings are used as part of action to achieve certain objectives formulated in a treatment plan. The characteristic feature of a housing ladder is that

housing and accommodation are provided outside of the regular housing market. The underlying idea is that the individual or household has to “learn” to live in housing so as to be able to be moved up to the next rung with the aim of obtaining their own home with their own rent contract.

The evaluation of local projects to address homelessness funded by the National Board of Health and Welfare in 2002–2005 shows that housing ladders are a common strategy for combating homelessness. The experience of this kind of solution is mixed. On the one hand, the requirements for a move up to the next “rung on the ladder” gradually get tougher, so the path to a rent contract of their own can be longer than originally implied to clients. On the other hand, there are examples where it has been possible to strengthen the client’s rights as a tenant within the framework of this model and where, in many cases, clients have attained a better housing situation than before. However, the evaluations also show that even when the housing situation of clients has improved, few leave the housing ladder for their own rent contract in the regular housing market.

Another method that has won increasing support abroad is the “housing first” model. This means that homeless people are offered housing on normal terms in the first place, and alongside this they are offered the support they may need to deal with any problems they may have.

More knowledge needs to be developed about to what extent housing ladders, the “housing first” model and other approaches are effective methods of channelling women and men into the regular housing market.

One trend pointed out by the National Board of Health and Welfare in its evaluation is that there are landlords who do not accept social assistance as an income source to obtain a rent contract. This is something that should be given attention and combated.

Direction of work

Under a commission from the Government, the National Board of Health and Welfare and the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning are to prepare a plan for a survey of the secondary housing market, i.e. housing let through the social services, such as sub-lets or various forms of trial housing. As part of this commission a clear definition will be drafted of what is included in the concept of the secondary housing market. The report on the commission is to be submitted to the Government no later than 1 September 2007.

The Government wants to encourage the municipalities to develop, along with housing companies other relevant actors, their work for the objective of more homeless women and men receiving their own rent contracts in the regular housing market. It is important that this development work makes use of the good experience available from successful housing solutions and effective “housing first” methods. One important question that should be given attention in local work and that can play a significant part in enabling this group to obtain their own rent contracts is the acceptance of social assistance payments as an income source.

The Government considers that the experience generated in the local development projects needs to be supplemented by deeper knowledge of various methods for channelling homeless women and men into the regular housing market. The National Board of Health and Welfare will therefore be commissioned to produce a knowledge overview of different housing solutions to deal with homelessness in consultation with the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning. The National Board of Health and Welfare is to present its report on the commission no later than 31 December 2008.



Objective 4

The number of evictions has to decrease and no children are to be evicted.

Current situation

The number of eviction orders enforced has fallen by about half over the past ten years. About 35 per cent of applications for possession lead to evictions. In places where cooperation between the Swedish Enforcement Authority, the municipality and property-owners is well-developed evictions have fallen even more. However, the statistics in the area are deficient. At the same time the Inquiry on Evictions and Homelessness among Families with Children estimates in its report *Eviction and homelessness – also affect children (Vräkning och hemlöshet – drabbar också barn, SOU 2005:88)* that at least 1 000 children are affected by evictions each year and that children without a home feel that this is very difficult, for instance in relation to their friends. An eviction is always associated with shame and guilt and is nothing a child can talk about with its friends. It can result in being uprooted from friends and a in longer way to school, things that are very tangible to children.

The Government takes the view that the overall aim must be that no child will need to experience an eviction. Parents have a crucial responsibility for the achievement of this objective. It is the parents that are responsible for

paying the rent and taking responsibility for the undertakings involved in housing in other ways. At the same time, the Government is aware that sometimes things don't work out here, and that there may be various reasons for this. On many occasions such a situation can be avoided through systematic preventive work involving financial counselling or other measures.

Set of problems

Most people who are evicted – this also applies to families with children – are evicted because of rent arrears. There are often complicated financial problems in the background. The households can therefore need financial counselling rather than any other social measures.

Older women and men with a complex set of problems relating both psychiatric illness and dementia are a group that is not reached by social home care services and that should be given attention. At local level this group has been given increasing attention as a risk group due to a limited ability to pay their rent, resulting in a risk of eviction. In the case of people with psychiatric disabilities case managers are an important resource for the provision of help and support.

Direction of work

One conclusion from the methods development work done by the National Board of Health and Welfare is that action to prevent evictions is assessed as successful and such strategies should be drawn up and implemented in the social services. The Government wants to encourage municipalities to develop systematic work to prevent evictions along with the relevant actors. It is important for such work to build on the knowledge available about the causes behind evictions and to make use of the practical experience generated in the development projects supported by the National Board of Health and Welfare.

The Board is being commissioned to produce guidance

for the municipalities in their work to prevent evictions. This guidance will include information on the legislation that applies to the area, such as the possibility for the social services to make rent payments and assume responsibility for paying the rent.

The Government intends to see whether the current legislation is sufficient in situations where parents do not fulfil their responsibilities for the undertakings involved in housing and whether there is reason for the social insurance office to pay the housing allowance direct to the social welfare committee at the request of the committee. Similarly, the Government intends to review the possibility of paying financial assistance from the social services direct to a landlord.

Making it easier for people to establish themselves in the housing market

The objectives and actions described up to now have a clear focus on the women and men who are homeless and who frequently have complex problems. For the sake of a unified perspective the Government also wants to highlight the action being taken in other policy areas to make it easier for people to establish themselves in the housing market.

The Government's overall objective is to create conditions for more jobs in more and growing businesses and to break the pattern of social exclusion by doing so.

This will make people more able to find their own housing. Renting is also a central part of the housing market in the context of creating the conditions for a flexible and effective labour market.

There can be many causes behind difficulties in finding housing. For young people and others it can, for instance, involve difficulties in finding housing at the right price or difficulties in being able to rent or buy because of fixed-term employment even though the person concerned has their own ability to pay.

The direction of housing policy is to seek to establish long-term stable conditions for housing ownership and construction. This is of great importance for the move towards more effective housing and construction markets, where the housing that is built corresponds to demand in terms of design and price, including cheaper and simpler rented housing. It is important to remember that when new housing is produced, chains of moves are established that can result in new people being able to establish themselves in the housing market in existing housing.

The supply of housing is also about the effective use of the existing stock. Private individuals who are temporarily unable to use their home could help to complement conventional forms of housing by renting all or part of it. The Government has given supplementary terms of reference to the Inquiry on the Financial and Legal Conditions for the Letting by Private Individuals of their Own Home (Environment 2006:07, Terms of Reference 2006:141). The intention of the supplementary terms of reference is to increase the possibilities for the Inquiry to propose financial incentives that can make occupants more interested in letting their own home. The inquiry is to present its report no later than 1 June 2007. Making better use of the existing housing stock would benefit the whole of the housing market, especially young people and other people who have diffi-

culty in establishing themselves in the housing market.

It is important that everyone, including economically vulnerable households, has housing of their own, and there are households that may need public support to arrange their own housing. The Government therefore considers that support intended to favour groups entering the housing market will be more effective and better suited to its purpose if it is directed at consumers instead of producers. In view of this the Government has set aside SEK 100 million in the policy area of housing policy in the 2007 Budget Bill to make it easier for people to establish themselves in the housing market. The question of how to design such support is currently being processed in the Government Offices and the Government intends to come back to the Riksdag with a more precise proposal.

There can also be financial reasons, such as records of non-payment, behind difficulties in finding housing. At present some 2 500 minors are registered with the Swedish Enforcement Authority for non-payment of debt. This can involve minor offences like an unpaid mobile phone bill, with consequences in areas like the possibility of eventually getting your own rent contract. Municipal budget and debt counselling services therefore have an important role both as regards help to people who are already in debt and in preventive work. The Swedish Consumer Agency is responsible for support and guidance for municipal budget and debt counsellors in forms like training, handbooks and information material. The Agency also has to monitor, support and contribute to the further development of the services in the municipalities.



Implementation of the strategy

Action to implement the strategy covers both incentives for local development work and commissions to government agencies to develop knowledge and working practices.

Role and responsibilities of the Government

Since the strategy builds on greater cooperation and broader assumption of responsibility, work in the Government offices is affected. Officials from the relevant ministries will therefore be invited to take part in an interministry working group. The task of the group will be to follow and press forward work in government agencies and other bodies in their areas of responsibility. Each ministry is responsible for its parts of the strategy and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is responsible for coordinating work in the Government Offices.

Government agencies and other actors

Government agencies at national level have an important role in spreading knowledge and providing support for actors in their area of responsibility. In order to stimulate both national and local work the National Board of

Health and Welfare will be commissioned to lead and coordinate the implementation of the Government's strategy in consultation with the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, the Swedish Enforcement Authority and other relevant agencies, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and the relevant organisations. At national level non-profit organisations should be able to take part in the development work in order to find new forms for participating in work to combat homelessness.

Local development work

First and foremost it is in the local context that the strategy will be put into practice. The role of the Government and the national agencies is to support and stimulate local actors in their work in the best possible way. In this strategy the Government has chosen to stimulate local development work through greater knowledge and financial support for the development of work practices and the work organisation. It is important that the different conditions and possibilities of women and men form a starting point for this work. At local level NGOs fulfil an important role. They should be encouraged to also take part in this work.

Spreading knowledge and inspiration

Important parts of action to develop local work are spreading knowledge about the Government's strategy and about the relevant regulations and good examples for achieving the objectives set up. This can be done in the form of ideas seminars, support for regional networks, the possibility of making comparisons between municipalities concerning relevant statistics, etc.

The Government has identified some areas where it is particularly important to develop and spread knowledge and good examples.

Guidance in work to prevent evictions

In order to develop and secure the procedures in the work of the municipalities to combat evictions, especially for families with children, the National Board of Health and Welfare has been commissioned to produce material providing guidance.

The Inquiry on Evictions and Homelessness among Families with Children (SOU 2005:88) notes the importance of preventive work and early action to combat evictions among families with children, both in terms of social costs and benefits and in an individual perspective. The Inquiry Chair considers that the Rent Act and the rules of the Enforcement Code are sufficient to enable the social services to handle their duties on condition that the social services organise their work well and have sufficient staff. The Inquiry Chair takes the view that at present the social services do not seem to have sufficient knowledge about the relevant rules and possibilities available to help families with children, such as the possibility for the social welfare committee to take over responsibility for paying rent.

The Government wants to take a unified approach to homelessness problems and considers that material providing guidance on work to prevent evictions ought to cover a broad area and relate to several parts of the Government's homelessness strategy. However, the focus should be on support for families with children. It can deal with guidelines for better cooperation, both between different parts of the social services and with other relevant actors. Another question that is important to highlight in this context is how to handle problems concerning secrecy. An important part of the commission is to spread knowledge, both about the relevant legislation and about the experience and good examples that are available. This information should be updated continuously. In this work the National Board of Health and Welfare should cooperate with all the relevant actors

such as the Swedish Enforcement Authority, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, property-owners and tenant associations.

Knowledge of different housing solutions

Another important area is to what extent various methods of providing support in housing such as housing ladders, low threshold housing, "housing first", etc. are effective methods of channelling women and men into the regular housing market.

Incentive funding

The National Board of Health and Welfare has been commissioned, in consultation with the relevant agencies, to distribute funding for local development work and evaluate the results in relation to the objectives set up. The Government has allocated SEK 55 530 000 for this purpose in 2007 and 2008. The funds are mainly to be used to develop working practices and a work organisation to enable the development of long-term sustainable structures. The funds are to be distributed on the basis of the knowledge and experience that has been generated by the development work carried out by the National Board of Health and Welfare concerning effective methods.

Continuous monitoring

Developments concerning the scale of homelessness and exclusion from the housing market should be monitored continuously. In the agencies' appropriation directions for 2007 the Government has therefore commissioned the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning and the National Board of Health and Welfare to produce a plan for a survey of the secondary housing market in Sweden. The term secondary housing market refers to the housing let under various types of agreements or in some other way by the social services or through other actors. In its appropriation directions for 2007 the

Swedish Enforcement Authority has been instructed to develop statistics on eviction orders and their enforcement. The statistics are intended to show the number of applications made and the number of eviction orders and evictions actually enforced per municipality. The surveys of the scale of homelessness conducted by the National Board of Health and Welfare, with the possibility of following developments over time, are another important source of knowledge. In order to take a concerted approach the National Board of Health and Welfare has been commissioned to propose, along with the relevant agencies, how to follow the continuous monitoring of homelessness and exclusion from the housing market.

Timetable

The strategy covers 2007–2009. The commission to the National Board of Health and Welfare includes producing a plan along with the relevant agencies in which they

define their roles and how they can help to achieve the objectives set up. The commission also includes specifying how the work will be monitored. It is of great importance that user organisations and other organisations, such as the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, are invited to participate in this work. Together with the other agencies the National Board of Health and Welfare is to inform the Government about the plan no later than 15 June 2007.

Evaluation and reporting

The National Board of Health and Welfare is to deliver a joint report from the government agencies no later than 1 July 2010 that includes the question of how local development work has helped to achieve to objectives set up. This report will form a basis for the future priorities set by the Government.

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