

Brief profile

Contact details

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Overview

The Equality Ombudsman is an independent Government agency established on 1 January 2009. The Ombudsman's tasks include the supervision of compliance with the Discrimination Act and the promotion of equal rights and opportunities regardless of sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age.

Type of equality body

The *Equality Ombudsman* is a predominantly promotion-type and legal support body¹.

Grounds and fields of discrimination covered

Grounds	Fields	
	Employment	Beyond employment (education, goods & services, housing, etc.)
Gender	◆	◆
Race and ethnic origin	◆	◆
Age	◆	◆
Disability	◆	◆
Sexual orientation	◆	◆
Religion and belief	◆	◆
Transgender identity and expression	◆	◆

¹ According to a [European Commission study on Equality Bodies](#), predominantly promotion-type equality bodies “spend the bulk of their time and resources on a broader mix of activities that include supporting good practice in organisations, raising awareness of rights, developing a knowledge base on equality and non-discrimination, and providing legal advice and assistance to individual victims of discrimination” (page 44).

Detailed profile

Brief history

The Equality Ombudsman – an independent government agency - was formed on 1 January 2009 when four previously existing anti-discrimination ombudsmen were merged into a new body. The Ombudsman was established by an Act of Parliament (Discrimination Act 2008:567).

As set out in the Act (2008:568) concerning the Equality Ombudsman, the Ombudsman shall

- Supervise compliance with the Discrimination Act. To this end, the Ombudsman may, inter alia, receive and consider complaints from individuals asserting that they have been the victims of discrimination. Following such an investigation the Equality Ombudsman may bring a legal action for damages on behalf of the individual concerned;
- Work to ensure that discrimination associated with sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age does not occur in any areas of the life of Swedish Society;
- Work in other respects to promote equal rights and opportunities regardless of sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age.

More specifically, the statutory responsibilities of the Equality Ombudsman include the provision of advice and other support so as to help enable anyone who has been subjected to discrimination to claim their rights. Within its sphere of competence, the Equality Ombudsman shall further:

- Inform, educate, discuss and have other contacts with government agencies, enterprises, individuals and organizations;
- Follow international developments and have contacts with international organizations;
- Follow research and development work;
- Propose legislative amendments and other anti-discrimination measures to the Government;
- Initiate other appropriate measures.

Mandate

- **Powers:** the Equality Ombudsman is a predominantly promotion-type and legal support body;
- **Litigation powers:**
 - Representing in front of courts;
 - Bringing proceedings in its own name;
 - Formally deciding on complaints (decision or recommendation) – *not legally binding*.

Grounds and fields of discrimination covered

Grounds	Fields					
	Employment	Education	Housing	Social protection	Goods and Services	Other **
Gender	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Race and ethnic origin	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Age	♦	♦				
Disability	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Sexual orientation	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Religion and belief	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Other *	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦

* Transgender identity and expression;

** National military service and civilian service.

Activities

- Promotional activities aimed at duty bearers (by way of trainings, guidance material, etc.);
- Promotional activities aimed at potential victims (trainings, awareness raising, etc.);
- Communication activities;
- Publications and research projects;
- Number of complaints received per year: **2353** (in 2011).

Structure

1. Management structure

- Type: single headed equality body (led by a Director-General);
- Details:
 - The Equality Ombudsman is headed by a Director-General (the “Equality Ombudsman”). The Director-General acts on behalf of the agency and is solely responsible for its activities.
 - Pursuant to the Ordinance with instructions for the Equality Ombudsman, an Advisory Committee has been created. The task of the Advisory Committee is to provide the agency with advice and support, inter alia through the provision of expertise in discrimination issues and other matters of relevance to the Equality Ombudsman’s sphere of activities. The members of the Advisory Committee are appointed by the Equality Ombudsman.

2. Institutional structure

- Type: stand alone dedicated national equality body.

3. Nomination of senior staff and board:

The Equality Ombudsman is appointed by the Government. All other staff members are appointed by the Equality Ombudsman.

4. Number of staff:

Approximately 90 staff members (2011).

Operating budget (for the parts of the organization dealing with equality issues)

Approximately 95.000.000 SEK in 2011 (app. 11 million €)

Accountability (reporting to)

The Equality Ombudsman reports to the Government by producing an annual report.

Contact details (address, key contact person, website)

Address:

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