

## PRESENTING HANDISAM

Handisam – the Swedish Agency for Disability Policy Co-ordination – helps to remove the obstacles which people with disabilities are still encountering in the community.

As a part of Swedish disability policy, Handisam has two paramount tasks: co-ordination and acceleration.

The co-ordinating role includes, for example, supporting the sectoral authorities tasked with implementing the national plan for disability policy. Work on the action plan is followed up and evaluated. Handisam is the Government's staff and expert authority.

The accelerating role means, among other things, developing knowledge concerning accessibility in the community and in particular ensuring that the public sector sets a good example. Handisam has issued Guidelines for an Accessible Government Service in which national authorities can study ways of making information, facilities and activities accessible to all. Local and regional authorities, business enterprise and organisations must also be encouraged to adopt a working approach incorporating the modern disability perspective.

Handisam recommends everyone working with the national action plan to devise general rather than individual solutions: a good solution for some is a good solution for everyone.

## HANDISAM'S ROLE IN SWEDISH DISABILITY POLICY

The fundamental principle of disability policy is for society to be shaped in such a way that all citizens will have the same possibilities. It is therefore of importance to the whole of society for everyone to have equal living conditions and to be able to assist and participate in social development. Handisam is helping to make that vision come true.

The most important policy document is A national action plan for disability policy – From patient to citizen. This action plan covers all sectors of society and shows disability policy to be of an intersectoral nature.

The national objectives of disability policy are:

- a social community based on diversity
- a society designed to allow people with disabilities of all ages full participation in the life of the community
- equal opportunities in life for girls and boys, women and men with disabilities

Work on disability policy must focus on the following tasks in particular:

- identifying and removing obstacles to full participation in society for people with disabilities
- preventing and fighting discrimination against people with disabilities
- making it possible for children, young people and adults with disabilities to lead independent lives and to make their own decisions in life



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## HANDISAM'S ASSIGNMENTS

In addition to its basic remit of ensuring that the State sets an example in matters of disability policy and supporting sectoral authorities, Handisam has been entrusted with a number of specific assignments.

### • **Design for all**

Handisam is working to disseminate knowledge of the Design for All concept in the community. Design for All is a guiding principle whereby universal accessibility and serviceability are factored into all planning and design of products, buildings, environments and IT services.

### • **The local government assignment**

Handisam has been tasked by the Government with developing methods for monitoring the efforts made by the municipalities to promote accessibility.

### • **Active measures**

Handisam is developing active measures to combat discrimination in schools and higher education. This assignment is proceeding in association with the Swedish Disability Ombudsman.

### • **Consultative assignments**

For a number of limited assignments, Handisam is interacting in a consultative capacity with various national authorities and NGOs.

## HANDISAM'S OPERATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Handisam speeds progress towards a society in which everyone can participate on equal terms, regardless of functional capacity.

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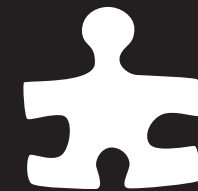
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