RENTAL HOUSING POLICY NORMS IN STOCKHOLM
THROUGH A QUEER THEORETICAL LENSE

AYSEGUL ALAYAT

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KUNGLIGA TEKNISKA HÖGSKOLAN
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
Department of Urban Planning and Environment
Division of Urban and Regional Studies
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Normer på Stockholms Hyresrättsmarknaden Sedda Ur Ett Queerteoretiskt Perspektiv

Author:
Aysegul Alayat, Royal Institute of Technology

Supervisor:
Moa Tunström, Senior Research Fellow, Nordregio

Examinator/Examiner:
Hans Westlund, Professor, Royal Institute of Technology

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Abstract

Swedish Instrument of Governance and Housing Sustention Responsibility state that everyone living in Stockholm County has the right to housing. This thesis deals with norms created by the first-, second-hand rental market and priority housing rules and regulations in the Stockholm County. Using a queer theoretical framework this thesis analyses the situation of young adults and students, elderly, homeless, LGBTQ and abused persons in housing market in relation to “housing for all” policy and suggests possible policy changes in order to make the rental housing market more inclusive.

Queer theory asserts that subjects are precisely constituted by the existing power structures through socio-political arrangements that are based on assumptions. Urban planning by its nature also uses assumptions therefore it also reproduces accepted truths and risks generalizing heterogeneous social groups’ needs, these generalizations might also create cases that are insensitive to personal needs. According to queer theory identities change over time and individuals can belong to more than one category simultaneously and therefore rental housing market requires having awareness of fluidity.

This study by using the queer theoretical framework, analyzes the situation of young adults and students, elderly, homeless, LGBTQ and abused persons in Stockholm’s rental housing market by using stories, interviews, policy documents, reports and statistical data to clarify how accepted truths/norms effects the constitution of housing categories, and how these housing categories, for that matter norms that are created by rules and regulations, exclude/include different social groups from the rental housing market.

In order to fulfil the laws for “housing for all”, there is a need for more affordable rental housing units as well as regulation luxury renovations, supporting research that is related to housing prices and so on. The laws can also be fulfilled by changing in the norm for rental housing tenants; this can be done decreasing the demands for being eligible tenants including requirement on income for regular queue and requirement of study phase of 50 percent for students. For the second-hand rental housing there is a need of a system that minimizes possible discrimination, a database of accessible housing units could help those that need accessibility issue solved and a wider variety with a bigger housing stock for homeless could benefit homeless that want to change their realities. Concerning usage of housing stock in Stockholm, policy changes like “kompis kontrakt” make it possible to use the existing rental housing stock more efficiently.

The conclusions of this study shows that the requirements set by the rules and regulations on first-hand rental housing excludes individuals that have record of non-payment related to housing, an income that is lower than the total of the monthly rent and 4 675 SEK, and that are not credit worthy. For many including homeless sensitiveness to personal needs are critical. The results show that there is number of shelters in Stockholm County is insufficient and the aid given by the social services to shelters reproduces gender binaries through laws.
Sammanfattning

Sveriges grundlag samt Bostadsförsörjningslag fastslår att alla boende i Stockholms län har rätt till bostad. Denna uppsats berör de normer som skapats av första- och andrahandsuthyrning på bostadsmarknaden samt regler om förtur i Stockholms län. Med ett queerteoretsiskt ramverk analyserar denna uppsats situationen för unga unga vuxna och studenter, äldre, hemlösa, LBGTQ samt misshandlade personer i behov av skydd på bostadsmarknaden i relation till principen om "bostad för alla" och föreslår möjliga policyförändringar med syfte att göra hyresmarknaden mer inkluderande.


För att nå målet ”bostad åt alla”, behövs prisvärda hyresrätter, åtstramning/minskning av renovering av lyxlägenheter samt forskning kring hyressättning, och så vidare. Lagarna kring ”bostad åt alla” kan även följas genom att ändra på normen för hyresvärden, bland annat genom att minska på kraven för vem som anses vara en lämplig hyresgäst (och stå i bostadskö) på basis av sin inkomst samt minimum 50 procent studiefart för studenter. När det gäller andrahandsuthyrning finns ett behov av att minska risken för diskriminering. En möjlig lösning är en databas med lediga lägenheter som finns tillgängliga för de som är i behov av tillgänglighetslägenheter och således nå grupper som, tex hemlösa, som vill ändra sina levnadsförhållanden. Ytterligare en lösning är möjligheten till ”kompiskontrakt” som skulle göra utnyttjandet av hyresbeståndet mer effektivt.

Denna studie visar att reglera kring förstahandskontrakt utesluter vissa individer/grupper som har ett förflyttat av att inte kunna betala hyran, lägre inkomst än den totala månadshyran eller som inte är kreditvärdiga. Särskild hänsyn bör därfor tas till många gruppers, även hemlöses personliga situation. Resultaten från denna studie visar även att antalet härbärgen i Stockholms län är för få och att Socialstyrelsens bidrag till dessa reproducerar könsbinärer.
Förord

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PART I

1. Introduction

Introduction

“Happy, nice, from Norrland, responsible, easy, well-behaved, steady economy, smoke-free, pet-free, no record of non-payment, really good economy, good references, works a lot, newly moved, positive, takes responsibility...” (Trapp, 2011)

These are the words that are used by individuals that are searching for apartments. Finding housing is an ongoing problem in Stockholm region, where many have difficulties finding a place to live and end up accepting high rents or inadequate conditions. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to a standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate housing (1948). This right is further protected by the Instrument of Government (Swedish Parliament, 1974, p.80) and Housing Sustention Responsibility (Swedish Parliament, 2013). The Swedish rental housing system aims to give housing possibility to everyone independent of their age, place of birth, income, sex etc.

Today’s rental housing system in Stockholm is in crisis. Current housing stock does not fulfil the needs of the population. In 2013, 431 144 people were in the rental housing queue and 62000 of them were actively searching for accommodation according to Stockholm Housing Service (Stockholm Housing Service, 2015). The same year, the average wait time for a housing unit in Stockholm City was 8,4 years (Tottmar, 2014). For those who are actively searching for accommodation there is an immense competition. For instance Stockholm Housing Service states that there are several social groups that compete for the same type of housing. A market in crisis affects foremost those who have a disadvantage and difficulties fulfilling requirements set by the market and rental system. Homeless people are an example of those affected.

In Stockholm, apart from renting first hand or second-hand; legally or illegally, there is the possibility to buy on the housing market. However, given the current situation – with lack of housing in general and very high prices in the housing market – the idea of housing for everyone is rarely realized. In order for the UN’s statement to be operative, all social groups in the society should have access to housing. In order to investigate what “housing for all” actually means, and what the effects of this policy are, this thesis uses a queer theory framework. With the help of queer theory the existing norms, and deviations from it or contradictions in it, are exposed.

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1 Linda Lövgren, Market Analysist at Stockholm Housing Service, interview, 2015-04-23
• **Aim and Research Problem**

The aim of this research project is to critically analyze the existing rental housing policy in the Stockholm region in a queer theory framework in order to investigate what “housing for all” means in contemporary Stockholm.

In order to fulfil the aim, this project describes the current rental housing policy norms in Stockholm region on both production and process bases by using current statistical data on housing production and demography, interviews with stakeholders and analysis on existing housing rules and regulations in order to understand the inclusiveness of housing production and propose alternative policies for a more inclusive housing policy.

The research questions are formulated to cover three subjects: 1) How does rental housing tenant norm look today? 2) Which group(s)’ needs are not met? 3) What might inclusive policies look like?

• **Structure of thesis**

The study includes three central parts. The first part (PART I) focuses on design of the research and queer theory by introducing methodology, limitations and queer theory. Further, the framework used to analyse the rental housing market for different social groups is represented in this section. The second part (PART 2) is the investigation on Stockholm’s regional demographics, rental housing market structure, and rental housing market situation for different social groups. The third part (PART 3) brings queer theory framework and Stockholm region’s rental housing situation for different social groups together. It also suggests possible policy changes as discussed in the Aim and Research problem section (PART 1).

![Research design](image)

**Figure 1: Research design**
• Previous research on rental housing policy in Stockholm region

Several studies on rental housing policies and their effects have focused on specific social groups. These studies have been relevant to understand the effects of housing related issues effects on different social groups. For instance Abramsson et.al.(2014) in their study focused on needs and wants of the elderly. Their research shows that only 5 percent of the elderly population over the age of 65 is living in elderly housing in Sweden, further they show that costs and health conditions are two important influences on elderly’s housing preferences.

There is also research that focuses on discrimination in the housing market via web based applications for second-hand apartment contracts (Ahmed and Hammarstedt 2008, 2009 and Ahmed, Andersson and Hammarstedt, 2008). One of their studies (2009) showed that homosexual male couples get less call-backs, invitations for further contact and invitations to showings than heterosexual couples, while in another study (Ahmed, Andersson and Hammarstedt, 2008) they show that there is no differentiation between homosexual female couples and heterosexual couples. In their study named “Discrimination in the housing market – a field experiment on the internet” the results showed that landlords prefer female tenants to male ones in the second-hand rental apartment market (2008).

There are several international researchers that intersect queer theory with urban planning issues as well as housing issues. Sandercock (2000, p.7) for instance focuses on transnational migration and the difference that has to go into the agenda of planning for citizens to have a full life, by acknowledging different population groups independent of their ability, sex, gender, class, sexual preferences, ethnicity and class.

In a Swedish research context there has been a focus on queer theories interactions with architecture by researchers like Bonnevier(2007) however there has been no focus on housing research from a queer theory perspective. This research contributes to understanding and embracing the differences within the society and for that matter housing needs, through queer theory lenses. Further it also contributes to queer urban planning practice in Stockholm context.

2. Methodology

This research is based on qualitative data. The first part of the research is based on a literature review on the subject including policy documents, articles and previous research on the subject. Furthermore, interviews with professionals within the urban planning field are conducted.

Simultaneously quantitative data has been collected on what is being built by size, form, location, form of tenure, prices and etc., as well as data on current demographics. The author is aware that the statistics that are collected for this project can be created for other purposes. Furthermore the rules regarding category houses, contract regulations, forms of tenure and priority housing are also examined.
The research is characterized by its’ transdisciplinarity. In the field of urban planning there has been a limited amount of interaction between queer theory and planning practice. This research explores the possible new understandings of these disparities.

**Documents**

Documents used during the project were chosen after conducting a literature review. The annual report *Läget i Länet 2015 - Bostadsmarknaden* written by Henrik Weston et.al. is used as a guideline by Stockholm County Administrative Board (Länstyrelsen Stockholm) to assist municipalities’ work to fulfil their achievements on accommodating their population. This document was chosen as a starting point on the research as it describes different social groups’ housing situations in relation to rental housing market. Furthermore other student and researcher papers, debate articles as well as reports from housing related institutions/organizations focusing on different social groups’ wants and needs from the housing market were used as research material.

**Interviews**

In the empirical part of this study interviews were conducted with key persons working in the housing sector about the housing situation for different social groups, on the inclusiveness of non-norm population and existing housing norms. There were two aims of choosing interview methodology. The first one is to gain insight on how the practice of building, mediating housing units works. Interviews provide more detailed data on practice as well as clarification of rules and policies. Second aim was to understand how the rules and policies do not meet the needs of different social groups according to practitioners.

The interview form that is used is semi structured interview. The semi structured interview is characterized by openness to modification of arrangement and form of the questions (Kvale, 1996, p.124). This type of interview is chosen to give room to interviewees to tell their stories while taking more detailed data on the subjects chosen by the researcher. This type of interview also gives space for discussions and follow-up questions. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to be able to cite correctly.

Interviews were done in Swedish and interview subjects are the following;

- Henrik Weston – Development leader - Stockholm County Administrative Board
- Linda Lövgren – Market Analyst - Stockholm Housing Service
- Berit Göransson – Analyst - Strategy and Development Department – Stockholm Municipality
- Ulrika Sax – Senior Adviser - Swedish Association of Public Housing Companies

An important part of the research was the selection of different interviewees. The choice of interviewees was done to enlighten the question and cover different perspectives on the rental housing market and to compliment the document study, to get interviewee interpretations on the rental housing situation from entities that work directly with the issue.
The number of interviewees are limited and would not give an image of the rental housing market if interviews were the only method that is used for this study. However interviews were also supported with other methodologies in order to get a clear image of the housing market.

- **Storytelling**

  This thesis uses storytelling to put the problem in context, and as a communicative tool to give personal views of individuals from different social groups on the subject. Storytelling gives “life” to statistics by relating to life and practice as well as it contributes to better understanding of this research and its possible effects. Stories are collected from numerous persons and were edited by the author to provide anonymity to the original storyteller. Seven persons were interviewed during the research during the research process. Interviews were recorded only if the interviewee gave consent. Interviewees were promised anonymity in order to create a secure environment for them to tell their very personal stories.

  “Stories are central to planning practice and planners use them in process, as a catalyst, in policy and in pedagogy“ (Sandercocck, 2003, p.12).

  There is a direct connection between the existing power structures and whose stories are being told in news media, visions, policies etc. Certain conditions are not represented, certain stories are not told. Stories can push readers beyond their horizons of imagination and understanding. Storytelling for this reason might be a tool to open planners’ and other participants’ frame of mind to a more receptive one (Sandercocck, 2003, p. 26). In this study storytelling is not used as an analytical tool. However the choice of storytelling was done in order to pedagogically communicate situations and stories of social groups that are not the norm. It further defines the multiplicity of realities in Stockholm region.

- **Delimitations**

  In order to study inclusion and exclusion of different social groups through lenses of queer theory certain social groups are selected as examples. Due to time constraints of some social groups and availability of empirical data for the social groups that are studied were sieved. Young adults, students and the elderly are the three biggest social groups that are named by the interviewees. Homeless, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer (LGBTQ) and abused persons were chosen for this study as they consist of multiple identities, some directly affected by taken-for-granted meanings or assumptions. Also, their situation can clearly illuminate whether there is “housing for all”. In this study persons with disabilities, newcomers and undocumented immigrants social groups are not studied, but because identities are multi levelled, those social groups are partially included in the analysis of studied social groups. These groups that are not included in the case study could be further analyzed by queer theory framework in future research.
3. Theoretical Positions

- Queer Theory

Since the late 1980s queer theory has been used in academic and activist circles to problematize and resist naturalized Western assumptions about sexuality. These assumptions divide subjects into rigid binary divisions such as gay and straight. Queer theory aims to interrogate these categories, posing that they are culturally and historically constituted (Doan, 2011, p 71).

“Post-structuralism encourages consideration of the self within the wider context of a given society, recognizing that individual subjectivities are actually product of multiple and relational forms of power operating at various levels – from institutional practices to social relations in our everyday lives” (Doan, 2011, p 71). With an understanding of poststructural thought, queer theory analyzes “the institutional practices and discourses producing sexual knowledges and the way they organize social life” (Seidman, 1996, p.13 in Doan, 2011, p.71).

The term “queer” has been taken back and used to challenge normative understanding of sexuality and resist the strategy of assimilation and subjugation used by more ”mainstream” gays and lesbians in the quest for tolerance and acceptance from a heterosexual-dominated society. However queer theory is not only utilized to question traditional gender identities.

“The utility of queer theory is its challenge to a broad range of assumptions about the nature of the social life, not only those that relate in a direct way to sexuality” (Green 2007, Stein and Plummer, 1994 in Doan, 2011, p.71).

Namaste(in Doan, 2011, p 71) states that subjects are precisely constituted in and through specific socio-political arrangements, they are not the autonomous creators of themselves or their worlds. According to Browne and Nash, (2010, p.6) queer theorising, in refusing a representational theory of what ‘truth’ is, adopts a diversified form of discourse as well as textual analyses to acknowledge how existing power relations are established and preserved in production of social and political meanings. For that matter queer theory is relevant to scrutinize ‘truths’ of both urban planning and also housing policy and it is this form of queer theory that will lay the basis of this study.

The following part of the queer theory section will first focus on urban planning profession and its possible interactions with queer theory. By the end of the section a framework that will be used to analyse housing policy in Stockholm will be presented.

“Planners should be more self-critical with regard to the social values about adult relationships underlying planning regulations and policies (Forsyth, 2001, p.349).”
It should be kept in mind that planning practice is a complex mechanism that is in constant relation with political decision. However it is also apparent that when planning, planners base their decisions on several different assumptions. Urban planning needs to use categories, boundaries and borders –municipal, social, spatial etc. Some of those assumptions risk generalising and homogenising very heterogeneous social groups and their needs. However, neither population nor different social groups are homogenous. These assumptions create borders; borders that make those that do not fit those assumptions non-norm, disadvantaged, in need of special care, etc.

Hendler and Backs state that queer theory can help planners unpack normative assumptions both as a profession and as a process (2011, p.71). When Hendler and Backs intersect queer theory with planning theory, they focus mostly on LGBTQ and sexuality issues. They further state that recent scholars in the queer theory field focus on the power of the practice of queering, which can be regarded as a form of subversion, whereby existing forms of truth and understanding produced through hegemonic power relations are problematized and troubled (2011, p 77). In this thesis queer theory will be focused on a wider definition of non-norm which includes LGBTQ and sexuality issues.

According to Hendler and Backs, exploring planning through queer theory does not only scrutinise in terms of inclusion of identities but also scrutinizes planning and its subject of thoughts on the point of an identity itself. They further (2011, p.84) refer to Knopp and Elder’s (1999) research which articulates that queer theory in geography underlines six points; “deconstruction of categories, the power of space (and ideas of space), the permeability of boundaries, the use of theories of sexuality in realms other than medicine/psychology, the intersection of social boundaries and identities, and challenging truths in the discipline”. Hendler and Backs (2011, p.84-86) analyse planning and gave six ways of looking at planning using queer theory.

1. **Fluidity and permeability of plans/visions/ ideas of the ‘good’ city:** Queer theory challenges planners and planning to consider fluidity and permeability in plans, policies, programs, visions, and the idea of what is considered to be a good city. For example a housing market that gives possibility of accommodation for locally born, middle-income, heterosexual, “nuclear” family constellations could be questioned for the exclusion of other identities even if these identities are “nebulous and ever-changing” as Hendler and Backs describes in their article. Queer theory discusses people as having different identities that are ever-changing and ambiguous.

2. **Inclusiveness of the existence of binaries:** Binaries exist and are constant within planning practice as in other postmodernist projects. Our language and thinking is based on comparison or least differentiation, which affects our understanding of planning. Usage of binaries can cause the exclusion of those that do not fit into those groups and/or providing privileges to any of the parts.

3. **The planning “profession”:** Queer theory stresses post-structuralism and therefore questions all boundaries and identities including planning profession and planners. It poses questions about the planning identity and its definition, its construction and description as a profession. It further questions the planner itself and asks what defines an
expert and reasoning behind one finding the right to call oneself as planner. To summarise queer theory in relation to planning does not only analyse what planning does but also questions the planning itself. This reasoning is familiar to post-modernist writers; queer theory within planning forces us to look beyond gender and sexuality and challenges us by questioning embodied power of planners.

4. **Accepted truths**: Queer theory is focused on problematising and questioning accepted truths. Within urban planning it can be to question the development standards that are being used or the terms such as “best practice” and instead ask “Who is it best for, which situation is it best for?” and so on. “This queering endeavour entails the deconstruction and interrogation of commonplace planning norms with a focus on the underlying power relations and other factors that have led to their use and widespread acceptance, in planning thought and practice”. (Doan, P.85)

5. **Interdisciplinarity**: According to Sandercock and Kliger planning is worried about its borders as a part of searching for credibility and a defensible identity (1998, p.224). Queer theory can lead us to explore interdisciplinarity for more pervious boundaries. Even though planning is considered to be interdisciplinary in its nature, queer theory can further deepen this aspect.

6. **Focus on process**: Queer theory states the importance of process, and this can be applied to planning by focusing on the process instead of the result itself. According to Doan, queer planning would focus on how the process looks and how hegemonic principles, which are implied within the process, can be overturned for a more consensus-based, inclusive planning process. However, using queer theory’s scrutinizing nature can reveal not only hegemonic power structures but also others such as power structures created by neoliberalism.

Hendler and Backs (2011) are interested in queer theory and its connections to urban planning profession. This thesis will focus on queer theories relating to housing. The housing market today is full of competition and certain groups have difficulties meeting the demands of landlords.

“…population groups, differentiated by criteria of ability, age, gender, class, ethnicity, sexual preference, and religion, have different claims on the city for a full life and, in particular, on the built environment” (Sandercock, 2012).

1. **Fixed categories**: Foucault states that discourse creates policies by which identities are formed, reinforced and reproduced (Foucault, 1997, p.168). These categories are to be deconstructed and transcended. For instance, definition of families within plans and policies are typically an instrument that serves many functions, such as limiting student household sizes and limiting noise and traffic, but these definitions “have the additional effect on limiting a number of household types” (Doan, 2011, p.80 and Forsyth, 2001, p.348).
2. **Binaries:** As also stated by Doan, binaries in planning is ubiquitous. As in other socially constructed categories, the housing system also has binaries. Some of these binaries depend on each other to exist such as rental and tenant-owned tenure. Other examples are co-habiting/separate living, rental apartment/tenant-owned apartment, first hand contract/second-hand contract, etc. Independent of how rooted these binaries are and, how difficult (sometimes even unrealistic) they are to get rid of planners should have an awareness of their existence and effects in order to plan in a more inclusive manner.

3. **Accepted truths/norms:** Tunström states that unless there is hegemony that shapes the understanding of certain phenomena, there might be struggles over what is accepted as truth (2009, p.179). Which also means that accepted truths can change over time. In housing policy what is defined as a “better” or a “fairest” housing queue, or a “good” tenant are examples of accepted truths. Further examples are rules that are related to housing allowance or rules regarding minimum income level to secure a first-hand rental contract are accepted truths and norms. These truths and norms determine who gets (does not get) to live in which apartment.

4. **Identities that change over time:** According to queer theory sexual and gender identities change over time. This thesis uses queer theory to analyse different social groups, and therefore claims that an individual can belong to one or more -as the identities are multi levelled- groups and this can change over time. Every individual is in the situation of becoming as an individual might identity in many ways over their lifetime and therefore the housing system should have an awareness of fluidity.

5. **Insensitiveness to personal needs:** Ideally, housing policies would be able to meet each individuals’ needs by hearing their stories about their needs and preferences and making accommodations based on those. Nevertheless this is neither economically nor logistically possible. On the other hand a housing policy that is queerified could be more inclusive and be more accommodating to multiplicity of individuals.

6. **Silence and disinterest:** Huckin states that often what is not said can be as important as what is said (2002, p.348). Lack of research and lack of creation of statistical data or relevant databases are indicators of silence and disinterest. Huckin further states that discreet silence can be used to reinforce community norms (2002, p.351).

   “Where ‘we’ are today globally is a situation in which every ‘we’ discovers that it is in part a ‘they’: that the lines between ‘us’ and ‘them’ are continuously redefined through the global realities of immigration, travel, communication, the world economy, and ecological disasters“ (Benhabib 1995, p.9).

This statement puts the idea of “the public” in question and emphasises the importance of multiple publics. It also exposes a paradox within the planning profession, namely that the multiplicity of social groups and the usage of assumptions in planning poses a risk of generalising. Further, can this also be implemented in the Stockholm context? ‘We’ and
‘them’ is also redefined during distribution of goods and means. As reasoned in the previous sections, housing is one of them. Is housing distributed in a way where there are ‘we’ and ‘them’?
PART II

1. Setting the ‘Norm’

According to UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 25 “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control” (1948). The right to housing is also protected by Article 2 of the Swedish Instrument of Government which states that governmental institutions shall secure the right of housing (Swedish Parliament, 1974, p.80). Furthermore Law (2000:183), Housing Sustentation Responsibility, Article 1 states that municipalities shall produce guidelines to create conditions for all to live in good housing and to promote suitable arrangements for housing sustentation to be prepared and realized (Swedish Parliament, 2013). Everyone living in Stockholm region should have access to affordable and adequate housing. This right can only be fulfilled by a sufficient housing stock which has solved the physical accessibility issues that serves wide range of variety on size, price and tenant forms.

• Structure of the housing market

This part of the thesis will start with a short explanation of how the housing market in Sweden is regulated. Further it will continue with clarification of different types of tenure that exist in Stockholm in order to explain how the rental housing market works and lastly, it will further focus on the regular rental housing line.

Sweden has a social-democratic welfare system which is being changed by the center-right government by decreasing the tax rates and sickness benefits, as well as creating privatized options of education and healthcare (the Economist, 2010). According to Ruonavaara (n.d., p.3) the central aspects of the Nordic welfare model are benefits provided to everyone, independent of their wealth and income, high amounts of compensation, comprehensive coverage of different services as well as redistribution of income. Sweden has a very specific housing regime that contains a housing system that includes both state and market oriented housing systems.

Since the 1930s housing has been seen as a right and municipal housing companies started building housing units for families with many children and from the 1940s until today their aim has changed and municipal housing companies must provide with housing for all, more specifically for people with different needs.2 Also in 1940s Sweden decided to not have social housing and municipalities started their own housing companies offering rental apartments to everyone whatever income and working in a not-for-profit purpose. At this time the Swedish state subsidized all construction of new houses and the municipal companies received the highest support. The state subsidies for building new houses decreased during the years and were totally terminated some years ago. Private landlords have claimed that the municipalities support their own housing companies in a way that hurts competition. This criticism resulted in a new act on

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2 Ulrika Sax, Senior Adviser at Swedish Association of Public Housing Companies, interview, 2015-05-28
municipal housing companies valid from 2011 saying that the companies should work for the purpose of promoting public benefit and follow business-like principles. This way the companies are able to continue offering rental apartments to everyone whatever income and the political decision from the 1940s to not have social housing but public housing for everyone could still be maintained.\(^3\)

- **Form of tenure**

![Swedish Rental Housing Market Diagram](image)

**Figure 2: Swedish Rental Housing Market**

Sweden has a housing policy that is based on both home ownership and renting. There are three types of tenure;

- Rental apartment (Hyresrätter): For regular first-hand rental contracts the period of renting time is not limited however for short time first-hand contracts and second-hand contracts the period of renting time is defined on the contract together with period of notice.

- Owner-occupied (Bostadsrätter): Owner occupied units can be any kind of housing from flats to single-family houses. The one owning owns the right to live in the unit and if it is a flat they also own a share of the association that owns the building.

- Residence with ownership rights (Äganderätter): The one owning owns the sole housing unit. This is mostly single family houses or terrace houses.

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\(^3\) Jörgen Mark-Nielsen, Head of Investigations and Public Inquiries at Swedish Association of Public Housing Companies, telephone call, 2015-10-13
With the right wing majority in Stockholm Municipality, the increase in percentage of other tenant forms other than rental apartments continued until 2014. After the election in September 2014, the Social Democrats, the Left Party the Green Party and the Feminist Party built the majority and there has been a political decision to have 50 percent of the all housing stock as rental apartments in Stockholm municipality.\(^4\)

According to the National Board of Housing, (2015, p.9) Sweden has the third highest production costs in Europe today. However, building costs are 75 percent higher than the average of the European region. Independent of who is building the housing units, new construction is often expensive to rent\(^5\). This pushes tenants to find other solutions such as sharing or renting apartments with others, living in overcrowded spaces, waiting to move out from your apartment until you have better economy that fulfils the requirements of the rental housing market. The prices on the new production apartments make them less accessible to those who do not earn as much as needed.\(^6\) This contradicts with the aim of housing for all.

In the last few years, housing production has been targeting the economic group with middle and upper income.\(^7\) Also, as long as one has capital it is possible to have access to housing, but with the existing housing trends, newcomers and homeless people will be

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\(^4\) Berit Göransson, Analyst at Strategy and Development Department, Stockholm Municipality, interview, 2015-04-22  
\(^5\) Berit Göransson, Analyst at Strategy and Development Department, Stockholm Municipality, interview, 2015-04-22  
\(^6\) Ulrika Sax, Senior Adviser at Swedish Association of Public Housing Companies, interview, 2015-05-28  
\(^7\) Henrik Weston, Development leader of Entity of community planning at Stockholm County Administrative Board, interview, 2015-04-16
The groups that will have the most difficulty in the Stockholm region. Stockholm Housing Service on the other hand mentioned young people, immigrants and people with unstable economy⁸.

To diminish the housing shortage and balance the housing market there is a need for more rental housing. Rental apartments for property owners are safe investments with a lower pay back rate in comparison to co-operative apartments. The Swedish Property Federation, Fastighetsägarna, states that the profitability of rental apartments is too low, a non-market steered rental system is problematic and building costs are too high (Fastighetsägarna, n.d., p. 5). However, changing these conditions would not result in increasing more rental apartments or building in other neighborhoods that are not in demand by the norm.

The Stockholm Housing Service (Bostadsförmedlingen) is a marketplace to help tenants meet property owners. Their aim is to be the mediator in order to create a safer housing market for all actors and most importantly tenants.⁹ In order to get an apartment one has to fulfil the requirements that are mentioned in the apartment advertisement and to have the longest queuing time of all applicants. Further, in the interview they stated their system considers queuing time as the only capital in order to fight any possible discrimination.¹⁰

![Figure 4: Average queuing time according to apartment type in Stockholm Region in 2014 (Stockholm Housing Service, n.d.)](image)

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⁸ Linda Lövgren, Market Analyst at Stockholm Housing Service, interview, 2015-04-23
⁹ Linda Lövgren, Market Analyst at Stockholm Housing Service, interview, 2015-04-23
¹⁰ Linda Lövgren, Market Analyst at Stockholm Housing Service, interview, 2015-04-23
By the end of 2014, the housing queue in the Stockholm region increased to a record high of 472 000 people in which only 13 percent of the people were actively searching for apartments (Stockholm Housing Service, n.d.). According to Stockholm Housing Service one needs to submit at least five housing applications in order to be counted as an active member.

The same report also asserts that queuing time required for rental apartments vary substantially. In 2014 most of the rental apartments required a queuing time between 5.6 years to 8.9 years and the average queuing time was 7.7 years. The following chart shows that average queuing time required varies according to the housing type. For instance, average years that are required in the queue was 5.2 years for students in 2014, while for regular housing it was 7.7 years.

Both the chart and the statistics clearly show that there is a norm of being in the housing queue for more than 5 years and it creates limitations for those that did not have the opportunity to be in the queue for that long.

Many of the Stockholm municipalities report a shortage in rental apartments in 2015 (Stockholm County Administrative Board, 2015, p.10). Lower conditions in rental apartments, longer queuing times and more demands on tenants both by private landlords and housing firms together with increasing housing prices create a housing market that is difficult to enter for those that do not fulfil the high demands and fit the norm. This situation also pushes tenants to live in insecure second-hand rental apartments instead (Stockholm County Administrative Board, 2013, p.20).

According to the Stockholm County Administrative Board (Länstyrelsen) more than one fifth of the population and one fourth of the population between ages 18-30 in the Stockholm Region lives in an overcrowded household. A household is counted as overcrowded when there is less than 4 rooms including living room and kitchen for 2 adults and 2 children (Statistics Sweden, 2015).

According to the National Board of Housing (2014, p.3), Boverket, many individuals are in the risk group of not getting a first-hand contract. This is caused by high demands that landlords and rental housing companies put on tenants. Demands vary from certain amount of income, good references and a permanent job to no records of non-payment. For example financial support does not count as income.

- **First-hand rental**

As mentioned in the previous part, municipal rental apartments have changed their aim of only accommodating the economically disadvantaged but to accommodate all inhabitants. In this section the existing rules will be analyzed to question to see if these rules create unequal competition for different social groups.

Stockholm Housing Service is the mediator between the private/public property owners and the tenants in Stockholm region (including Uppsala municipality). Linda Lövgren explains that many of the property owners of the Stockholm municipality use the Stockholm Housing Service as their mediator; those are Stockholmshem, Svenska
Bostäder, Familjebostäder. According to the Swedish Union of Tenants (Hyrsegästföreningen) there is a voluntary contract that any landlord can sign with Stockholm Housing Service. The contract states that landlord will mediate 50 percent of their housing units through Stockholm Housing Service however as the contract is voluntary not many landlords choose to do that.

Applications to accommodation units are done through an online system. In order to get an apartment one needs to fulfil all the requirements set by the property owner and shown on the announcement. Stockholm Housing Service also creates a minimum requirement for their own apartments and they suggest this to other landlords that will lease their apartments via Stockholm Housing Service. Still, some private landlords firms have very high demands, such as 300 000 SEK income per year, having permanent residence permit, not having pets etc. For the apartments that are mediated for Stockholms hem, Familjebostäder, Stadsholmen and Micasa Property Owners are the following rules (Stockholm Housing Service, 2015).

Economy

- In order to be accepted as a tenant after the payment of the rent there should be 4675 SEK left for one person household.
- At the time of applying income counts as one’s own work, income from capital, student grant, economic aid, housing benefit, child benefit, maintenance allowance, unemployment benefit or correspondent.

References

- Those that previously had a first-hand contract have to have good references which are rent paid on time during the last 6 months. Also applicant should not be disturbing during the last 12 months. If the tenant has lost their apartment due to rental debt at least one year has to pass from termination of the last contract in order to get a first-hand contract. If the eviction happens due to disturbance the trial can happen at least after three years from when the contract was over.
- If the applicant or fellow-applicant has an existing housing contract, property owners require the housing contract to be cancelled or provide proof of selling of the housing unit before the new contract is signed because in order to get a first-hand rental housing contract one cannot live anywhere else.

Credit-worthy

- If the applicant has any record of non-payment or debts there will be an individual trial on approval of applicant as a tenant. During the trial, quantity and frequency of record of non-payment will be regarded. Applicant may not have records of non-payment or debts from previous tenancy.

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11 Linda Lövgren, Market Analyst at Stockholm Housing Service, interview, 2015-04-23
12 Pär Svanberg, Housing Policy Expert at Swedish Union of Tenants, telephone call, 2015-10-04
Fellow applicant

- Fellow applicant should live with the applicant. Rental agreement is signed by the main applicant however the common income is considered for approval. Handover of rental contract is regulated by rental, cohabiting and marriage laws.

Student housing

- In order to get student housing, one needs to prove they are studying or are accepted to an educational institution however, distant studies are not accepted for student housing. Studies should be in minimum 50 percent pace.

Other

- With consideration to the other tenants or the neighborhood there can also be specific demands of the tenants.

There are examples of cities where rules for getting first-hand contracts have changed in order to accommodate more people. Halmstad Property Owners (Halmstads Fastighets AB) applied a new policy that has fewer demands from their tenants which are the following (HFAB, n.d., p.4).

- Monthly income should be more than the rent. Same types of income as Stockholm Housing Service are considered eligible.
- Applicant should not have any debts to Halmstad Property Owners. Applicant cannot have a record of non-payment in the last 12 months.

Comments on First Hand Rental Rules
Each criteria that is put in the housing announcements excludes certain groups of persons. At the same time, for a market that works and is safe for all actors, landlords should know that their tenants have the capital power to pay their rents.

However, these kind of rules shown above set norms on who can have access to rental housing market. Stockholm Housing Service mediates 10000-12000 housing units every year and even if they were mediating 100 000 housing units, there would still be many persons that would have difficulties going into the rental housing market as they would not fulfil the requirements. This clearly shows there is a norm of having a certain level of income, having good references, being credit-worthy, and having co-applicants that have income are norms and many do not fulfil the requirements of these norms.

Analysis of the minimum requirements that exist in the first hand rental market are the following.

- A requirement based on time collection in the queue favors certain groups and excludes some i.e. those that move in from other cities and those that came to Sweden newly.

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13 Linda Lövgren, Market Analysist at Stockholm Housing Service, interview, 2015-04-23
- A requirement on income of rent and existence minimum excludes those that have the priority of paying their rents and instead have other financial constellations that support their economy i.e. those that have unofficial partners while fulfilling other requirements. Further according to Statistics Sweden in 2014 there were around 901 000 of a total of 1 674 000 persons that are over 20 years old that earn less than 300.000 SEK per in Stockholm County.
- A requirement on good reference creates an idea of a “good” tenant that implies a tenant that pays the rent on time and does not disturb the neighbours. It also excludes those that want to start a new life and does not have a good reference i.e. homeless. This might exclude lifestyles that are not defined as “good” by the norm.
- A requirement of studying at half-time in order to be eligible for student housing creates limitations for those that have other life constellations that need to be prioritized over other things than school i.e. international students who do not have the right to student loans and allowances that has to work more than 50 percent to maintain their life.

- **Second-hand rental**

  *In a bit of a panic I turn on my PC. My landlord told me they would like the apartment back in a month. Finding an apartment in Stockholm takes time. As I login to my account I already know, it’s impossible to find a first-hand contract with five year queuing time. The last landlord owned the apartment and was charging me the whole loan payment for a room. I was living on a 20 m2 room in far from where I would like to live paying 8000 Swedish SEK of someone else’s loan.*

This quote illustrates the difficult situation of many who are obliged to have a second-hand rental contract. Second-hand rental apartments are apartments that are rented from someone who has a first-hand rental apartment contract or are private landlord. For tenant owned housing units the landlord should get the permit from the housing cooperative and for the tenants that have first-hand contract, a permit from the landlord is required. If there is no permit from the relevant parties, the second-hand rental becomes illegal. For a person with a second-hand rental contract it is legal to rent the apartment to a lodger as long as the tenant that owns the contract lives there at the same time. Third hand rental and short-term rental of housing units without a permit is illegal.

Rent, contract period and contract parts are decided by the contract parties. If the contract between two parties does not include certain information the rental law (Hyreslagen) takes precendence. According to the law (the Regional Rent and Tenancies Tribunal, 2013) about renting of private housing the rent price that is considered reasonable is 4 percent of the market price of the housing unit per year with an addition of the monthly fee to the building association. An example for this is a housing unit that
costs 3 000 000 SEK in the market with an fee of 2 000 SEK would have a rent of 12 000 SEK. The calculation would be the following.

\[(3 000 000 \times 0,04) + 2000 = 12 000 \text{ SEK rent per month}\]

According to the same law if the rent price is more then what is considered to be reasonable by the law, the tenant has the right to demand to the Regional Rent and Tenancies Tribunal, in Swedish Hyresnämden, tenants who had higher rents have the right to decrease the rents however they do not have the right to refunding (the Regional Rent and Tenancies Tribunal, 2013).

When renting out a first-hand rental housing unit, the first hand contract owner has the right to add 10-15 percent on the actual rent however if the rent addition is higher than 15 person the tenant has the right to claim a refund of the rent (maximum one year old) through Regional Rent and Tenancies Tribunal (The Regional Rent and Tenancies Tribunal, 2015).

Second-hand rental apartment tenant selection criteria are often not as clear as Stockholm Housing Service’s system criteria. This kind of system, in which the applicant makes direct application to the property owner or landlord, allows landlords to make their own decisions. Moreover, it creates risk of discriminating applicants.

The Equality Ombudsman (Diskrimineringsombudsmannen) states that housing companies express that they would like to have the right of choosing tenants to live in apartments owned by them and that they also have the ability of manoeuvring without violating the discrimination legislation (2008, p.41). Stockholm Housing Service is currently working on a new system where safer second-hand rental contracts will be mediated.

According to a research done by Ramboll Management Consultancy allowing the market to determine rent prices, would cause an increase to around 63 percent in Stockholm municipality and 40 percent nationally. Furthermore, today 8 percent of single people, 9 percent of single parents with children and 7 percent of those cohabiting with three or more children are in need of income support. According to the research, the sharp increase of rent prices would also create another 19 percent single persons, 20 percent single parents with children and 10 percent cohabiting with three or more children (the Swedish Union of Tenants, 2015). However, many live illegally on second-hand rental apartments it is also difficult to create and find reliable statistical data.

**Comments on Second-Hand Rental Rules**

The rule regarding acceptable rent price for privately owned apartments suggests rents to be based on the market price of the housing unit which means that housing units that are located in the neighborhoods where the demand is higher would have higher rents. As certain areas with higher market value create higher rents, those that do not have capital would not be able to rent housing units in these areas. In other words the rule regarding acceptable rent prices for privately owned apartments supports segregation by excluding social groups that do not have capital.
Unlike the first-hand rental apartments there are no official and clear requirements regarding tenants. This creates an unsecure position for applicants and gives possibility for discrimination.

- **Priority Housing**

  When I started using my wheelchair I was asked by Stockholm Housing Service to move from my rental apartment in the outer city to another one in the inner city. Together with a good friend of mine I went there to check the apartment. I never saw the apartment though. The apartment I was suggested had a few steps by the entrance and after I was carried up we realised that the elevator was extremely small for the wheelchair. Later I heard similar stories from other friends, I wish they had better control over the apartments they have.

Priority housing is a concept to help those that have strong medical needs, social needs, or serious threat level.

In 2014 723 of 10862 housing units were assigned as priority housing units (Stockholm Housing Service, 2015) and every year there are around 18000 applications for priority housing and around a sixth of them get priority housing.

Conditions to get priority housing are;

- One needs to be settled and registered in Stockholm city for at least two years.
- One needs to have a personal identification number.
- One who has strong medical needs or a serious threat, Stockholm Housing Service help can be crucial.
- One needs to be able to live by oneself without disturbing neighbours.
- One cannot have debts that affect one’s ability to pay the rent.
- Record of non-payment is not accepted by the landlords.
- One should not have the possibility to find housing, not even to get a second-hand contract or to be a lodger.
- There should not be any possibility to adjust one's recent housing unit (Stockholm Housing Service, 2015).

There is no database that shows accessibility condition of different housing units and tenants that apply to priority housing has the right to reject the suggested housing unit maximum two times.\(^\text{14}\)

**Comments on Priority Housing Rules**

For the tenants that require accessibility issue to be solved, it is important to have a database where accessibility to housing units is shown in order for them to have the opportunity to choose.

\(^{14}\) Linda Lövgren, Market Analyst at Stockholm Housing Service, interview, 2015-04-23
A positive aspect of priority housing is that one does not need to have the longest queuing time of all other applicants and the priority housing system is based on answering applicants specific needs such as, accessibility, security etc.

Requirements based on having no debts and no record of non-payment limits individuals that want to change their life and have been in struggle paying their rents as they had different priorities.

2. Questioning the Norm
In this section different social groups are analysed from a queer theoretical perspective. Each section below starts with a narrative of a person that identifies themselves, and is categorized by the housing system, as a part of that group. This is followed by a description of the category, the conditions of the individuals in the group, their wants and needs (only when available) and different project examples initiated by public and private actors.

- Young Adults and students

  It was my neighbour’s dog who had the birthday. We were on top of the park eating chocolate cake to celebrate my neighbour and their dog. I started talking to my neighbour’s father who also lives very close to where we live. He seemed and sounded very confident. He said: “I think the youth is making a mistake, they should not rent their apartments and pay other’s debts. They should buy their own.”, I humbly asked: “How? Not everyone has the job or the money that is needed to buy an apartment”. He answered with passion: “That is when we, parents, are needed. Parents should take care of their children. They should help with payment and also be the reference person for the loan”. I answered him: “Well... You know not everyone’s parents can help them.” He asked me: “Where are your parents?”. So it was my parent’s fault that they weren’t with me or couldn’t financially support me. After all that’s the way it should be. Half an hour later, I left them with a bit of broken heart and a bit of anger, not to my parents of course.

Young adults and students is one of the biggest social groups that will be analysed in this thesis. This section will first explain the situation and preferences of the young adults in the housing market and it will end with clarifying the same for students.

Getting into the housing market is a problem for young adults all over Sweden. In Stockholm County 41 percent of the youth population lives in their own apartments and with these values Stockholm County has the lowest values on young adults accommodation owning percentage (the Swedish Union of Tenants, p.3).
Around 66 000, which is about 28 percent of the young adult population in Stockholm County, live with their parents. In Stockholm Municipality the percentage is 20. The percentage that lives with their parents is higher in the neighboring municipalities to Stockholm as more live in houses and young adults have more space, as well as the amount of students moving into Stockholm to study (the Swedish Union of Tenants, 2015, p. 10). The group of young adults who live with their parents is not homogenous either. Around 39 500 of 66 000 young adults are living with their parents even though they would prefer living under other conditions (the Swedish Union of Tenants, 2015, p.12).

Youth apartment requirements are the same as the regular housing queue, but the applicants have to be 18-25 years old.

Young adults, is a group that does not have financial stability and power. To accommodate more young adults there are two possible solutions; building smaller, cheaper apartments and creating other constellations where the rent per person is low.

In a project done by the bank Swedbank, the construction company NCC, and the real estate owners’ organization Fastighetsägarna (2014, p.1), 1000 young adults were asked about their housing preferences, the results showed that young adults have more interest in bike parking than car parking. Parking norm today is a huge cost for the building sector and also for tenants. The municipality of Malmö (Malmö Municipality, 2010, p.8) shows that one parking lot built on street level, costs 700 SEK per month for each household independent of car ownership, and a subterranean parking lot on -1 level costs 2500 to 3000 SEK per month. Depending on the depth of the parking garage the prices can go up to 4500 SEK per month/household. As a result, the rent of the apartments can even double in cost. In 2015 a full time student can get 2828 Swedish krona allowance and loan 7120 Swedish krona per month from CSN, the Swedish government authority in charge of financial aid for studies and home equipment loans.

In the same research that was done by Swedbank et.al. young adults were asked how they would like to live and the lobby organization jagvillhabostad.nu (2015) did a similar research by workshop series during the design process of Snabba Hus (“Fast houses”) project held in Stockholm. Both projects show that young adults want to live close to public transportation and to commercial centres. Thus they do not want to travel longer distances work or school.

Furthermore, the project Snabba hus (2015), is in collaboration with the public housing company Svenska Bostäder. During the project, several workshops were done in order to understand the wants and needs of young adults. As result the project now aims to build housing units that are small, cheap, and close to public transportation (Snabbahus, 2015). Housing units being built are temporary and mobile. These units will be located in the plots that are prepared to be built. Housing units will be moved to the next location when the building process starts. Young adults who are renting these units will not lose their queuing time in the regular housing queue. The first group of 300 housing units is currently being built in Norra Ångby in Stockholm. There are also other module housing solutions in Stockholm, later new units are planned to be built in Västberga and Råcksta areas (Snabba Hus, 2015).
At the same time there are many positive initiatives for young adults. Municipalities are working to facilitate young adults entering the housing market. Some municipalities have their own youth queues, some have special housing types for youth. For instance the public housing company Stockholmshem helps young adults to get one room apartments by distributing apartments to certain age groups, for each age group the person with longest queuing time receives the apartment. These apartments are mediated by Stockholm Housing Service, have four year contract and the tenants do not lose their queuing time during their stay (jagvillhabostad.nu, 2008).

One of the most recent changes in the rental housing market in the Stockholm region is an initiative taken by the public housing company Familjebostäder. In May 2015 the company decided to create a new type of contract that they will mediate, “a friend contract” (“kompiskontrakt”). The friend contract gives possibility to unify the queuing time of two friends that want to live together and then rent a youth apartment. This type of contract will only be available for apartments that are bigger than three rooms and the renting period will be a maximum 4 years, tenants also keep their queuing time during their stay (Hultman, 2015). The friend contract is a change in favour of the non-norm population. Further, both tenants get the legal right to be on then contract and will hopefully get positive references after their stay.

There are several barriers in order to build cheap apartments. Construction of small housing units is also affected by noise rules. When building small housing units that are close to traffic axes with windows on only one side, it becomes impossible to create a silent side of the apartment. Therefore, the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning (Boverket) and Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (Naturvårdsverket) launched a new rule for noise levels around the houses. Previous rules demanded a noise level of maximum 45 dBA to 70 dBA on the facade of the building depending on the time of the day. New rules demand a noise level of 50 dBA to 70 dBA (Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, 2015). Also, if the housing units are smaller than 35 meter square, the average noise level should not be higher than 60 dBA on the facade of the building (Riksdagen, 2015). This change in rules will enable the construction of more houses especially smaller houses that are located close to public transportation.

On the other side, in the region there are around 80 000 students, 17 universities and colleges, but the amount of student apartments are around 13 000 (Stockholm County Administrative Board, 2015, p.21). This results in a shortage of student apartments as well as long queuing times. Of course not all students live in study housing and therefore there is a shortage of at least 8000 student apartments (Studentbostadsföretagen, 2014, p.19).

Stockholm has the longest queuing time for student housing in the whole country and in order to get a student apartment one needs to have a queuing time of 100 weeks in 2014 (Studentbostadsföretagen, 2014, p.19).
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Figure 5: Comparison of number of student housing in relation to student population

The Stockholm region has the highest rent for student apartments in Sweden. On average a student apartment costs around 2000 Swedish SEK per meter square/year (Hem & Hyra, 2014). It is an equivalent of 4000 SEK for a 20 square meter apartment per month. This leaves around 5000 SEK to live on if you are supported by student loans and subsidies.

The student housing category mostly provides small housing units. But, students are not a homogenous group, not all students are young and some students even have children, it is hard to fulfil all the needs in this category.\(^\text{15}\)

In order to get a student accommodation the minimum requirement that are set by Stockholm Housing Service are the following:

- Students should have the longest queueing time of all other student applicants to get the housing unit.

- Student should study between 15 to 30 credits (equivalent to a minimum of half time studies).

- Student that fulfils the requirement above and has the longest queueing time will get the housing unit.

The shortage in student housing drives students to get second-hand contracts. As a result, they are at risk of being charged unreasonable prices or living in poor conditions. There is an initiative called Academic quarter (Akademisk Kvart) a collaboration between Stockholm Student Union Central Organisation (SSCO), Stockholm City, Stockholm Housing Service and five big universities from Stockholm. The project aims to create a platform for students to search for rooms with acceptable prices and also offers information on the renting process and prices. According to Stockholm County Administrative Board, with the new law regarding renting of private apartments, which allows the landlords to decide on the rent, the amount of apartments that have acceptable prices for students have diminished (Stockholm County Administrative Board, 2015, p. 22).

\(^\text{15}\) Henrik Weston, Development leader of Entity of community planning at Stockholm County Administrative Board, interview, 2015-04-16
Additionally, there is a student housing production to decrease the shortage. A regional project called Sthlm6000+ is an urban development project that involves different municipalities, architectural firms, building companies. The aim is to build 6000 new student apartments, which would be an increase of 50 percent of the existing student apartment stock, by 2017 (Sthlm6000+). Seven of the county’s municipalities are working together with Stockholm County16.

**Analysis on Young Adults and students**

The research done by Swedbank et.al. shows sensitiveness to personal needs. Of course not all youth prefer bikes over cars, but building units built with less parking lots would not only encourage bike usage but it would also acknowledge other realities and needs than the norm of car usage.

As the youth housing stock is very limited and the competition is unfair, Stockholmshem’s categorization of youth in age groups gives an opportunity to young adults to compete with others that are in their own age group. This creates an advantage for the ones that are younger that did not collect queuing time and it also raises a question on how the rental system works. In the previous sections the fairness of the rental housing market was discussed, following the same discussion in this specific case Stockholmshem’s new implementation questions what is considered to be fair, in other words it questions accepted truths on rental housing market. From another perspective it produces new accepted truths. Why is it fair that different age groups will compete between themselves? This is a paradox that each requirement and rule that is set for first-hand rental faces. In this specific case it creates an advantage for the young adult social group to be able to get into the housing market easier.

The example of Fast House project, in Swedish Snabba Hus, focuses both on the result and also on the process where different workshops were done through the year where youth got the chance to request a wide range of features from interior design of the buildings, to location, courtyard plan, rent they would like to pay and so on. This data was used by jagvillhabostad.nu and other collaborators to shape the project both financially and physically.

Further, Henrik Weston’s statement on difficulties in defining and generalizing a category called students due to multiplicity of identities within student group shows that there is sensitiveness to different personal needs.

Average queueing time for student housing is around 100 weeks, almost two years. This requirement, due to lack of student housing, is difficult to fulfil for many students that became members or moved to Stockholm recently.

The requirements set for student housing clearly show that there is a norm for being a student. A student that would like to study but does not have savings, a family to get support from or the financial aid from the government, might want to work as they study.

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16 Henrik Weston, Development leader of Entity of community planning at Stockholm County Administrative Board, interview, 2015-04-16
In addition, a person that has a family constellation that doesn’t allow for studying more than 50 percent of the time do not fit into the definition of the student category.

- **Elderly**

  *Kids grew and moved out, it became more silence here. I think I will want to move in with others soon, also because I don’t know for how long I can walk up the stairs, it feels so useless to have so much space and not use it. Maybe I could make more friends with others in a collective, share costs with others and kids can continue visiting me as they want to.*

Elderly as a social group is defined by individuals that are over 65 years old. In 2014 there were around 345000 individuals that were in this group in the Stockholm region (Sweden Statistics, 2014). According to Stockholm County Council (Stockholm Läns Landsting) the number of people over the age of 65 in Stockholm county will continue to increase until year 2045 (2015, p.2).

The Stockholm County Administrative Board (2015, p.24) and the Swedish National Pensioners’ Organization (n.d., p.8) state that many of the elderly want to stay in their own home for as long as possible. There are different push factors (reasons to move elsewhere) for moving to houses for the elderly, those are: change in lifestyle, maintenance, social isolation, and health and mobility. (Stimson & McCrea, 2004, 1446) divide retired individuals to two groups. The first one is the proactive retirees that would like to decide how and where they will live while they are younger to have social contact. The other group is the reactive retirees that move later in their life as they need more support with their health and daily life, they cannot take care of the house or the garden or after they lose their partner or a family member moves out.

There is also a wide variety of different realities in this group and as a result it is challenging to make any generalizations. The figure below (Figure 6) shows the tenure forms for different age groups. It is clear that older age groups have a higher percentage of individuals that live in rental apartments than those aged 65-74. According to Swedish Association of Public Housing Companies many elderly prefer moving to a rental housing unit as they get older.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence with ownership rights</th>
<th>65 - 74 years</th>
<th>75 - 84 years</th>
<th>85+ years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental housing</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6: Elderly Tenure form according to age (Statistics Sweden in PRO, 2015, p.7)

17 Ulrika Sax, Senior Adviser at Swedish Association of Public Housing Companies, interview, 2015-05-28
For those that are renting their home there are different housing options (Figure 7). The services provided are flexible according to the needs of the tenant, but there is a lack of personal space in the housing units which decreases the time spent in each housing unit, therefore the quality of services decrease.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence with ownership rights</th>
<th>Living at home</th>
<th>Senior living</th>
<th>Secure living</th>
<th>Nursing home</th>
<th>Specialized care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied</td>
<td>Home Service</td>
<td>Sometimes HS</td>
<td>Home Service</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental housing</td>
<td>Home Service</td>
<td>Sometimes HS</td>
<td>Home Service</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied</td>
<td>Home Service</td>
<td>Sometimes HS</td>
<td>Home Service</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental housing</td>
<td>Home Service</td>
<td>Sometimes HS</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Rental housing</td>
<td>Home Service</td>
<td>Sometimes HS</td>
<td>Home Service</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7: Services provided according to the housing type (in Edström and Gustavsson, 2011, p.18).

For the elderly one of the most important issues with housing is the accessibility. Today many building companies build their new apartments accessible to both disabled and the elderly. The word accessible here is used as physically accessible; which includes a higher oven, an elevator with a seat, wheelchair storage by entrances, lower post boxes, enough space to manoeuvre a wheelchair in every room, neighboring bathroom and bedroom, higher toilet seats, rails to hold on to by toilets, staircases and elevators.

Further, Abramsson et al indicate a tendency among elderly of a willingness to move to housing units that are more appropriate (2011, p.6). As many new housing units are being built to be physically accessible, many of them are unfortunately economically inaccessible. In 2014 according to the Swedish Pension Agency (Pensionsmyndigheten) the average monthly pension for a woman was 13 192 SEK, while for a man it is 19 875 SEK before tax (n.d.). Statistics show that a newly built rental apartment in Stockholm County in average costs 9744 SEK per month (Statistics Sweden, n.d.). For those who have been living in tenant owned housing units for a long time, costs were around 2000-4000 SEK in 2011 (Abramsson et al, 2011, p.6). Unquestionably, the elderly is not a homogenous group, however, the numbers also indicate that there are elderly people who cannot afford to live in a newly built rental apartment in Stockholm County and those that have tenant owned housing units have of an advantage in this specific case.

One of the hindrances for individuals that want to move into housing for elderly units is the risk of not being able to move with their partners. Some municipalities, like Stockholm, guarantees that elderly couples have the opportunity to live in the same housing unit even if the services they need are different from each other. Furthermore, the “kompisboende” form of living that was mentioned for young adults above could be possible to apply to the elderly who want to live together with their friends and partners.

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18 Ulrika Sax, Senior Adviser at Swedish Association of Public Housing Companies, interview, 2015-05-28
Botkyrka municipality already implemented this idea in the spring of 2015. (Samuelsson, 2015).

**Analysis on Elderly**

Housing for the elderly is a category that represents different realities depending on the specific life situation. Within this category of housing there is Senior Living, Nursing Home, etc. The variety of different housing options show sensitiveness to personal needs.

The study shows that with the current values of average pension, many elderly might have difficulties moving to rental housing units and that there is a need of rental housing units that costs less.

Lastly, guaranteeing living options with partners, as well as applying “kompisboende” to elderly housing units not only is sensitive to personal needs but it also creates more flexibility within the category.

- **Homeless**

  I had an apartment and a family here in Gotlandsgatan in 2008 but as part of my divorce I was put on the street by the Social Services Department for children and adolescence. I rented a second-hand contract that was for a certain amount of time. After I lost it I began living on the streets or at friend’s places. According to the “system” I’m healthy and glib so I must get an apartment and a job by myself. It’s impossible for me to get a job or do anything else if I don’t have a place of my own, a start point and a door of my own to close. The only place the “system” offers me is emergency housing, where many use drugs in the toilets. I can’t be there if I’m going to be drug-free. I can’t do this anymore, I’m 62 now and my social situation is catastrophic.

Homelessness as stereotype is seen as a personality type not as a situation that one is in and that it might change through time\(^9\). Also, homelessness is not only a matter of lack of housing. It is a political situation that causes individuals to be homeless. According to the Swedish parliament, homeless individuals have difficulties to use their rights, such as voting, since they are not registered to an address, thus they are at risk of not getting any information (2002). A homeless person’s frame of acting is therefore smaller than others. There are myths and stereotypes about homeless persons as well as difficult demands put on them by authorities. To get a regular job one needs to have housing. This puts homeless persons into a situation that is hard to get out of; a vicious cycle.

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\(^9\) Henrik Weston, Development leader of Entity of community planning at Stockholm County Administrative Board, interview, 2015-04-16
Stockholm is the city with highest amount of homeless persons in Sweden, even though the number of homeless persons per 1000 persons is not the highest in the country. In 2011, the municipality of Stockholm officially had 4100 homeless persons (Social Services, 2011, p.53), and the Stockholm region in the same year had 8350 homeless (Social Services, 2011, p.111). These numbers are official and homeless individuals who are not recognised by authorities or volunteer organizations are not counted in these statistics, such as undocumented immigrants or EU-migrants without residence permit.

Homeless housing units are distributed by Social Service (Socialförvaltningen) and Foundation Hotelhouse (Stiftelsen Hotellhem) builds housing units for the homeless. The municipality of Stockholm has different types of housing options for the homeless. In all cases, housing needs to be offered by the neighbourhood administration or by the Unit for the Homeless. Housing types vary from urgent and temporary places, such as accommodation for the night to long term and permanent housing forms.

The state has trial and training apartments, in Swedish försöks- och träningsboende, with tenant support and housing specifically for homeless elderly persons. Needless to say there is also drug free housing, as well as low threshold transitional houses which accommodate persons that have active drug habits. However, alcohol and drugs are not welcome inside the housing unit (Stockholm Municipality, 2015).

According to Stockholm City Mission (Stockholm Stadsmission) they report that the number of homeless in EU/EES citizens with no residency right, third country citizen and undocumented persons that are homeless are increasing. For this Stockholm municipality works mostly with “ceiling overhead”, in Swedish “tak över huvudet”, which means

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20 Berit Göransson, Analyst at Strategy and Development Department, Stockholm Municipality, interview, 2015-04-22  
21 Berit Göransson, Analyst at Strategy and Development Department, Stockholm Municipality, interview, 2015-04-22
sleeping accommodations for all independent of whether they are registered in the municipality of not\textsuperscript{22}.

Stockholm city arranges around 1000 living places with different ranges of support for the homeless each year. Apart from this, the Hotel home foundation in Stockholm (SHIS) offers around 1100 temporary apartments. Their web page is only in Swedish and is not accessible for non-Swedish speakers, which constitutes an information barrier.

There are several initiatives towards solving housing problems for homeless persons. One of them is called Housing First, \textit{Bostad först}, which the municipality of Stockholm has been working with since 2010. The Housing first project is inspired by an American model which offers permanent housing to homeless individuals. The project states that it is hard for an individual to work out their problems without having their own place first. However, at the moment, the program only exists in Sollentuna and Värmdö municipalities (Stockholm County Administrative Board, 2013, p.22).

The county and the municipalities focus on Swedish citizens and immigrants, and EU-migrants are not counted in the statistical data and do not get any support other than substitution of their journey tickets to where they are registered\textsuperscript{23}. Further, they state that those who are not registered in Sweden only have the legal right of staying in Sweden for three months consecutively, then they need to travel outside the country.

Another project arranged by Stockholm City Mission is called Crossroads. The project aims to support EU-citizens and persons from lower-income countries that have permanent residence permits with an action plan, different courses, information on Swedish society and how it works, as well as food and resting places. As the aim for the project is to help and assist individuals from different backgrounds, their webpage is accessible in nineteen languages. The organisation also has volunteers that can speak in twelve different European languages (Stockholm City Mission, n.d.)

\textbf{Analysis on Homeless}

The narrative used for this social group shows that the homeless group is not flexible enough for identities that change over time and it is also not sensitive to personal needs. The individual, who might also represent a certain part of the social group, would like to become drug free and change their reality but because they are categorized as drug addict, they are forced to live with others that use drugs as a result they have difficulties becoming free from drugs. On the other hand the variety of different housing options shows sensitiveness to multiplicity of realities and needs.

The Housing First initiative gives a great opportunity for those that are in the vicious cycle of homelessness. It creates possibilities for individuals within this fixed category to change their situation and help them in their transition.

\textsuperscript{22} Berit Göransson, Analyst at Strategy and Development Department, Stockholm Municipality, interview, 2015-04-22
\textsuperscript{23} Henrik Weston, Development leader of Entity of community planning at Stockholm County Administrative Board, interview, 2015-04-16
• LGBTQ

My partner and I, have for a longer period of time wanted to move in to an apartment that is closer to the city. We want to live more anonymously and to be in a crowd and not noticed.

There is no research on lesbians, gays, bisexual, trans and queer persons housing conditions due to lack of statistical data. However, it is possible to make connections between other kinds of research on gay, lesbian and heterosexual income levels and housing conditions. Klawitter and Flatt (1998) in their article about earnings of gays and lesbians in comparison to straight persons in United States show that same-sex female couples earn 18-19 percent less then same-sex male couples and different-sex couples (Klawitter and Flatt 1998, p.670. Similarly, according to the research done by Ahmed et.al. (2011,) lesbian households earn 15 percent less than heterosexual households in Sweden (Ahmed et al 2011, p.265). Thus lesbian couples are less affluent than other couples which makes them less likely to buy their own housing units and if they can afford to buy, they would be more likely to buy in the outskirts.

In the Stockholm housing queue there is no special category housing for LGBTQ persons yet an LGBTQ individual might apply for priority housing based on serious threats. When asked, the Stockholm Housing Service said that they were not informed about priority housing applications done by LGBTQ persons as being LGBTQ is not a disease or psychological disorder, therefore there is no need for LGBTQ housing.24 However, due to this thesis investigation they investigated this and found out that there actually had been applications to priority housing by LGBTQ persons.

To find a second-hand contract is different than first-hand and priority housing applications, a research done by Ahmed and Hammarstedt (2009) showed that homosexual male couples get less call-backs, invitations for further contact and invitations to showings than heterosexual couples while in another study (Ahmed, Andersson and Hammarstedt, 2008) the results show that there is no differentiation between homosexual female couples and heterosexual couples for callbacks. In the latter research they ask why homosexual males are discriminated but not homosexual females. In their study “Discrimination in the housing market – a field experiment on the internet” the results showed that landlords prefer female tenants to male ones in the second-hand rental apartment market (2008). This research shows that there is discrimination against homosexual males.

Even though there is insufficient research and data on the subject. There are a few initiatives from different actors. The Swedish Federation for Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights (RFSL) works with certification of refugee camps. Conditions in asylum camps are hard for most. In a video of newcomers done by RFSL it is stated that when one is in a camp it is hard to be an LGBTQ person as it is also hard to know others’ views on LGBTQ. This creates socially unstable situations for individuals (RFSL, 2015). There are only three LGBTQ certificated asylum camps in Sweden, all located in

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24 Linda Lövgren, Market Analyst at Stockholm Housing Service, interview, 2015-04-23
Skåne region (Migration Agency, 2015). Still many LGBTQ persons do not have the chance to move into those settlements.

In 2013 the first LGBTQ elderly cooperative rental association was built in the Municipality of Stockholm. The property owner and the landlord is Micasa Fastigheter and the target group is elderly persons that are identified as homosexual, bisexual, transgender or queer from EU countries (RFSL, n.d.). The architecture of the buildings were based on the survey done by Stockholm Åldreboende AB and Qruiser (online LGBTQ community with around 110 000 members). The results from the survey showed that there is a high demand for activities and common rooms and the architecture of the building was created with accessible activity places, as well as a common kitchen.

**Analysis on LGBTQ**

In the analysis it becomes clear that certain social groups and their housing conditions are not in considered, one of them is LGBTQ persons. There is a lack of research on the LGBTQ population in relation to planning/housing and a lack of statistics on the LGBTQ population.

Further, Micasa’s elderly housing project adapts to identities that change over time and it also has more inclusive rules by expanding the norm of tenants from being registered in Sweden to living in EU countries.

- **Abused persons**

  I want to exist in a way that I am myself, I am me and I give my own decisions without relating to anyone else. I have been beaten, I have been horrified to make them angry, I adjusted to their feelings and disappeared. I feel that I don’t exist anymore; I miss old me the one who was independent, happy, full of live and joy. I want a new start where I don’t have to behave but just be.

Many people get abused by the ones they are in close relation to and many of those persons need temporary shelter as they create a new life for themselves and sometimes also for their children. Today in Stockholm’s county as well as in Sweden shelters for abused persons are named as “Kvinnojouren” which in translation to English is Women’s shelter. They also only accept “women” to their shelter. This creates a paradox in itself? Why only women? What about abused trans persons, abused men?

In the last few years a new term, “violence in close relations” has been used by the Social Services(Socialstyrelsen). One of the arguments of using the term “violence in close relations” is because it makes it visible that there are also other social groups that are being violated such as people with other sexual orientations and have other gender identities. Holmberg says that “heterosexual eyeglasses stay stable on the nose and it does not help to rewrite the norm” (2010).
There are two federations in Sweden that work with shelters; the National Organisation for Women’s Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden (Roks) and Unizon. Unizon has an inclusive stand (Unizon, 2014) while Roks has a women-separatist stand (Roks, 2015) and members Roks choose to accept or reject trans-women. As a result many trans-women do not have access to shelter homes. This paradigm is also supported by the rules regarding financial aid from Social Services. In order to get financial aid as shelter, local organizations have to work with women and their children (Social Services, n.d.). This means the goal of the new term’s rhetoric and practice of sheltering individuals in need have a gap. Those shelter homes only include biological female, which is an outdated form of understanding the complexity of sexual orientations, gender identities and gender-power order as well as it excludes many in need, there are still a crises related to housing in shelters.

In 2014 there is around 300 shelter places in the Stockholm region (Stockholm County Administrative Board, 2015, p.27). These shelter places are mostly organized by voluntary women’s shelter that take yearly financial aid from the state for their work. Unizon in their research show that due to the existing housing shortage in the county, time that individuals stay in the shelters was 50 days longer in average in 2014, this number was 40 days in average in 2012 (2014). As a result number of women in need utilizing shelters decrease, in 2014 only one out of three reportedly abused women took a place in shelter (Unizon, 2014). The Stockholm County Administrative Board in their report Läget i länet 2015 state that these housing units lack stable long term financial aid in order to ensure quality of their operation (p.27).

**Analysis on Abused Persons**

There is a wide range of literature on risks and benefits of creating exclusive women shelters. This thesis only analyses women shelters from a queer theory perspective. According to the first point of the framework deconstruction of categories is part of queer theory. Separatist women exclude those that are not cis women whose sex assigned at birth and gender identity match. In the case of deconstructions of the name and the exclusiveness of “women shelters” the aim would be to have more inclusive places for others that are not defined as biological female. However, this is in paradox with creating safe spaces for groups that might benefit separatism.

Further the second point of the framework suggests analyzing the inclusiveness of the binaries. Binaries that are embedded in the definition of “women's shelters” are to be scrutinized. The question of “who is being abused?” could be asked. Is it only the women or the men that are abused or are there also others that do not fit into the binaries that have a need for shelter? Are there others outside the binary that are being excluded such as transgender persons or gay men that might be violated by their families for their sexual orientation and gender expression or by their partners? Shelters as a concept is for those that are need in safe place while building a new life for them whatever background, gender expression and sexual orientation they might have.
PART III

1. Possible Policy Changes
In this part possible policy changes that come as a results of the analysis will be explained. The focus in the proposed policy changes is a more inclusive housing policy/an updated “housing for all”-perspective using a queer theoretical perspective. The first and the most important policy change would be to decrease the requirements for first hand rental apartment contracts. This would give access to the market to many that do not have the possibility to apply for housing.

Firstly, the requirement for not having any record of non-payment should change to not having any record of non-payment in the last year. This change would help individuals who had difficulties with their payments in past for many reasons.

Secondly, the requirement for income levels should be changed to a minimum salary after taxation that is more than the rent of the housing unit. Another alternative would be to decrease the minimum income to 71739 SEK per year which was the equivalent of the average annual rent in Stockholm region in 2014 for both private and communal rental housing (Statistics Sweden, 2014). This policy change would result in 550 000 people in Stockholm County in 2014 would have fulfilled the requirements.

Another perspective of working with income requirement is to lower the rent prices. Many face difficulties in the rental housing market due to the high rent prices. There are several possible solutions that relate to rent prices such as building with less parking norm, minimizing the luxury renovations, have a goal of having the same tenants after renovations, supporting research on how to build cheaper with high quality, supporting temporary/movable units that cost less, building in noisier environments etc.

In order to use both the first-hand and second-hand rental housing efficiently as possible, the solution is to create a platform that can mediate second hand rental housing units to tenants. This kind of platform would also decrease the occurrences of discrimination.

Further, there is a need for government decisions to decrease the competition between the non-norm groups. This could be done by building more affordable and adequate housing and building more rental apartments. Municipal housing companies can buy housing units to increase the rental housing stock in collaboration with private landlords.

There is a lack of rental housing units for the homeless so it is also a possible policy change to have drug-free and drug-friendly units that are attained for individuals that are categorised as drug and alcohol addicts in order to help those that would like to change their habits.

Creating a database for the accessibility levels of rental housing units could decrease the amount of time spent by the staff and tenants in the long run, it would also increase the occurrences of matching needs to housing features.
Another policy change could be to open up the financial aid application for shelters to allow for trans persons and males to be included for those that are abused and not biological female that require transitional housing.

Friend contracts (Kompis kontrakt) apartments can also be improved so three persons can also apply for rental housing together. This would open up the rental housing market to new housing combinations.

2. Discussion & Conclusion

This research aimed to answer the following research questions. 1) What does rental housing tenant norm look like today? 2) Which group(s)’ needs are not met? 3) How might new inclusive policies look?

Using the queer framework to analyse the rental housing norms in Stockholm it becomes clear that there is an existing paradox for creating different rental housing categories. Rental housing categories creates a more sensitive system that gives possibilities to individuals that do not fit the norm and by generalising they set new norms that individuals within that category are obliged to fulfil. The existence of different rental housing categories can be considered essential, but the rules of each group must be more flexible to different realities.

The research on the existing rental housing rules showed that there is a norm of;

- having the longest queuing time of all other applicants,
- having an income of total amount of rent with an addition of 4675 SEK per month,
- being credit-worthy,
- not having any debt or records of non-payment,
- for student housing; studying at a minimum of 50 percent pace,
- for youth and elderly housing; being a certain age,
- for priority housing; having medical condition or threat to wellbeing.

The study also showed that social groups young adults and students, the elderly, the homeless, and abused persons have difficulties fulfilling the requirements to fit the norm due to specific requirements.

Young adults, students and the elderly are three groups that include large populations which also has a wide variety of realities. For the elderly there is a range of different housing types that allows them to choose from according to their needs.

As being homeless can be a temporary situation, it is critical to create housing that shows sensitivity to personal needs. Stockholm County offers several types of housing for those that are in need, but due to the lack of homeless housing units it lacks flexibility to identities that change over time.
Lastly, the category abused persons shows that in the financial aid from Social Services are given to shelters that are defined as women shelters and this statement supports and reinforces binaries of woman and man, excluding those identities that are not captured in that binary.

Furthermore, there is a gap between the idea of a ‘fair’ rental housing system which includes different social groups that fulfills the “housing for all” mandate and the actual rental housing market.

There are several initiatives and projects that show sensitivity to personal needs, multiplicity of realities and needs within different categories such as Housing First and Fast House project. In order to have more flexible categories that can accommodate identities that change over time and is sensitive to personal needs the first and most essential policy changes are to decrease the requirements for the norm of possible tenants and to build more housing that is affordable and adequate.

The queer theory framework was useful in the analysis of social groups’ situations in rental the housing market in Stockholm County as it scrutinized the accepted truths about the rental housing tenant requirements and showed that the requirements were based on assumptions and generalizations of different identities. In another research the framework can be further developed into a practical tool that can be used for change by suggesting practical changes.

Lastly, previous research shows that there is discrimination against gay male tenants in the second hand rental market, but the lack of research on LGBTQ persons’ housing needs is a matter of disinterest. As a result, there is a need for research on housing situations of LGBTQ persons. Also, a greater depth may be obtained by doing further research on any of the named social groups to break the silence on academic research on social groups that are underrepresented in research and to suggest further possible policy changes. Another positive improvement on housing research could be rules and regulations regarding a second-hand rental housing platform; defining how could a fair – non discriminative – inclusive – sensitive to personal needs system could look like.
REFERENCES


LANGUAGE GUIDE

English | Swedish
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Academic Quarter | Akademisk Kvarth
Equality Ombudsman | Diskrimineringsombudsmannen
Feminist Party | Feministisk Initiativ
Foundation Hotelhouse | Stiftelse Hotelhem
Green Party | Miljö Partiet
Halmstad Property Owners | Halmstads Fastigheter AB
Housing Sustentation L | Lag om kommunernas bostadsförsörjningsansvar
Instrument of Government | Regeringsformen
Left Party | Vänster Partiet
Migration Agency | Migrationsverket
National Board of Housing | Boverket
Regional Rent and Tenancies Tribunal | Hyresnämnden
Rental Law | Hyreslagen
Social Democrats | Socialdemokraterna
Social Services | Social Förvaltningen
Stockholm City Mission | Stockholm Stadsmission
Stockholm County Administrative Board | Länsstyrelsen Stockholm
Stockholm County Council | Stockholm Läns Länsting
Stockholm County | Stockholms län
Stockholm Housing Service | Bostadsförmedlingen
Stockholm Municipality | Stockholm kommun
Stockholm Property Federation | Fastighetsägarna
Student Union Central Organisation, | Stockholms studentkårers centralorganisation
Swedish Association of Public Housing | Sveriges Almännyttiga Bostadsföretag
Swedish Environmental Protection Agency | Naturvårdsverket
Swedish Parliament | Sveriges Riksdag
Swedish Pension Agency | Pensionsmyndigheten