

# Swedes struggle with the meaning of sick leave

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As part of the continuing campaign to shed their hard-working stereotype, perhaps taking a cue from their more well-adjusted Norwegian neighbors, Swedes have been taking dubious sick leave in record numbers.

[A] study showed 40 percent believe it is enough to feel tired to stay home and draw benefits.

A survey of 1,002 Swedes by the board also showed 65 percent believed they could go on sick leave if they felt stressed at work and 41 percent thought a conflict with their boss or workmates was a good enough reason.

One fifth thought a strike at the child care center also made them eligible for the benefits and 71 percent said family problems entitled them always or sometimes to sick leave.

Reuters claims *Dagens Nyheter* as the source, but if you punch “Anna Hedborg” into DN:s search engine, asking for articles within the last week, it finds nothing. But if you ask Google, the article is right there: *Trötta sjukskriver sig (The tired call in sick)*. Once again, Google finds a web page that the site itself cannot.

On a somewhat related note, a different type of sick-leave abuse has been detected.

According to the Social Insurance Board, several people have been drawing sick-leave pay for several years, while simultaneously working another job and receiving unemployment benefits.

Some cases are of ordinary people who defraud the Board in small amounts but over a long period of time. In the other cases, there are links to serious economic crime where, for example, money was paid out to fictitious employees at nonexistent companies.

(Raymond’s bad translation.)

[Typo fixed 25 September.]

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