



# NACKA



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## VOUCHERS FOR JOBS

**A COORDINATED RESPONSE TO UNEMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION WHERE CITIZENS USE ‘MUNICIPAL VOUCHERS’ TO CHOOSE THEIR SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDER.**

Sweden, as in most western countries, faces increasing problems of exclusion and unemployment, which has a huge impact both on the individuals and the community.

In Sweden the division of responsibilities between the national level and the local level is not always clear when it comes to tackling these challenges. Yet, according to national legislation, municipalities have the final responsibility to provide and finance social welfare for citizens.

Nacka takes a proactive approach and offers a wide range of activities including municipal social welfare programmes targeting all citizens at risk of exclusion, with particular attention paid to those who are unemployed.

## KEY FEATURES OF THE PROGRAMME

In the last decade the municipality of Nacka has developed a substantial welfare programme with the aim to ensure that all citizens are economically independent. As a consequence in 2015, less than 4 % of the labour force was unemployed, which is about half the national unemployment rate. This is remarkable given that the municipality had to reduce financial support for social programmes and has had an annual increase in the population of 25 people per year.

Within this welfare programme, Nacka organised a scheme of activities which are offered according to the individual needs of each citizen at risk of exclusion.

Key features of the programme:

- Staff members meet each citizen at risk of exclusion and offer guidance services including designing an individual programme tailored on their needs.
- The citizens receive a ‘municipal voucher’ to undertake the agreed activity; the voucher is financed by the municipality.

- The citizen can then choose the company that will deliver the service.

The municipality of Nacka offers the following activities:

1. language courses in Swedish for migrants
2. municipal adult education (primary school, upper secondary school, vocational courses)
3. an introduction to the Nacka community for immigrants
4. training for inclusion - labor market introduction
5. workplace training or internships



6,000 CITIZENS A YEAR RECEIVE ONE OR SEVERAL **VOUCHERS FOR SERVICES AIMED AT EMPLOYMENT**



**70 DIFFERENT COMPANIES** ARE INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAMME

## SUCCESS FACTORS AND RESULTS

- The Nacka voucher system provides substantial benefits to citizens, giving them the possibility to choose the best company and to share feedback on its performance. This way the company must focus on the quality of the services as well as on addressing the needs of the citizens. Overall there are 70 different companies involved in the programme.
- Nacka has a monitoring system to measure and follow up the result of each individual voucher. All results are fully transparent and published on the municipality's website for all citizens and companies. As a result, companies with bad results are not chosen by citizens in the future.
- Approximately 6,000 citizens a year receive one or several vouchers for services aimed at employment.
- Around 95% of the vouchers are offered in municipal adult education.

## INNOVATION

- The municipality coordinates the welfare programme and finances. It then follows up on the quality and results.
- The innovative approach lies in the formal split between the public authority role played by the local government and the service delivery role played by other public or private actors. In the municipality, the Labour Market and the Educational Department, is responsible for coordinating, financing and evaluating the activities. On the other hand, the companies producing and delivering the welfare services can be public or private and they all compete under the same conditions in a regulated system.

## CHALLENGES

The approach taken by Nacka allows the city council to focus on the strategic perspective of the programme. It can evaluate and improve the performance of the companies, build up and manage quality systems and set up long term plans for programmes while leaving the actual implementation to the service providers.

The municipality constantly reflects on how to improve municipal services in a cost effective way.

It is important to measure and follow up in order to make sure that each citizen in need is offered proper welfare activities and also to control the economic efficiency of public spending.

