

Area-based Policies in Urban Areas: How to Promote Good Living Conditions for Children and Youth

Relevant Policy Initiatives and Fields

Foundations and Challenges

Key Questions

What is the Groruddalen Plan a Case Study of?

Crosses policy areas (child/youth poverty, area/urban development, integration of immigrants, the role of culture)

Focus on child/youth poverty – Kindergarten, youth lighthouses,

Other emphases: public health initiative, Språkløftet/Norwegian language offensive, district initiatives on better levels of living (language skills, job centre, health)

Activation a strong focus, as is culture

Child and youth poverty as emerging fields

- 3 common approaches: income supports, services, participation
- A mixed approach between universal and selectivity
- A turn to working with parents
- Now 'social investment' is strong in the discourse as is a tailored universalism
- Re youth – employment and training and education have to be key elements

Resonances with EU Policy

- EU Agenda on the Rights of the Child and the best interests of the child
- Europe 2020 – the topic is relevant to two integrated guidelines (9 and 10) and two targets (on poverty and reducing school drop-out rates) as well as the recommendation on Child Poverty and Well-being (due 2012) – also new rules on the disbursement of the Structural Funds
- Youth policy
- Participation of children and young people
- Immigration/integration policy

Things that seem to make the Gror. initiative work/Learning

- A plan (nine years, to which many units have committed)
- Willingness to experiment
- Resources (all from the public sector)
- Strong municipal power/autonomy and resources
- History of services working together (?)

Question Marks??

- Is there a clear enough focus?
- How to get joined-up initiatives?
- Long-term sustainability?
- How to get local ownership?

Challenges for Peer Replication/Learning

- Acceptance of child poverty as a priority (especially in times of austerity)
- The challenges of a multi-dimensional approach
- Difficulties when there is no integrated service infrastructure or history of working together
- Increasing centralisation of decision making and impoverishment of local level units
- Is the emphasis on culture and on integration through culture affordable in these times?

Key Issues for Discussion

What is the appropriate balance between universal and targeted approaches?

To what extent have localism and a spatial approach in anti-poverty policy been tried and proven?

Can the same set of policies cover child poverty and youth poverty?

What are the lessons around long-term sustainability of projects/measures?

How can we best engage directly with those involved and especially the most vulnerable?