



**Cities for Active Inclusion**

## **The active inclusion of young people: Stockholm**

**EUROCITIES NETWORK  
OF LOCAL AUTHORITY  
OBSERVATORIES ON  
ACTIVE INCLUSION**

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### **CITIES FOR ACTIVE INCLUSION**

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The EUROCITIES Network of Local Authority Observatories on Active Inclusion (EUROCITIES-NLAO) is a dynamic network of nine European cities - Birmingham, Bologna, Brno, Copenhagen, Krakow, Lille Métropole - Roubaix, Rotterdam, Sofia and Stockholm - each with a local authority observatory (LAO) within its administration.

Their aim is to share information, promote mutual learning and carry out research on the implementation of active inclusion strategies at the local level. The nine observatories are coordinated by EUROCITIES, the network of major cities in Europe, and supported through a partnership with the European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion).

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Organisation & integration of different policies for the active inclusion of young people

#### National level

Sweden has a population of some 9.4 million people: 13% are young people aged 15-24.

At the national level, Sweden's Public Employment Service (PES) is responsible for young people who want to enter the labour market. As unemployment benefit in Sweden is a work related benefit, a person needs to have worked for at least six months in order to join the system. In 2009, only 19% of unemployed young people who were registered with the Public Employment Service (PES) were entitled to unemployment benefit. This contrasts with the overall figure of 53% across all age groups<sup>1</sup>.

Focusing specifically on young people, Sweden's National Board for Youth Affairs follows up on national youth policy. The Board monitors the effects of various youth-focused interventions, disperses funding to NGOs and supports the empowerment of young people to participate in the democratic process, for example by increasing the dialogue between young people and public institutions.

#### Local level

Sweden's capital, Stockholm, is home to some 22% of Sweden's population, and has a population of over two million people in the metropolitan area.

Normally young people stay in school until the age of 19, and the city municipal authority is responsible for compulsory education up to age 16 and high school education from age 16 up to age 19. Under Sweden's school law<sup>2</sup>, each municipality is also responsible for the follow-up of young people aged 16-19 years old who are not in high school, to establish whether they are working, training or unemployed: the municipalities must then report this information to the National Agency for Education<sup>3</sup>.

In Stockholm, the city districts are very much independent bodies. Each district has overall responsibility for the population living within the district and is therefore expected to take action on any social problems, and to provide the services needed, including services for young people. The priorities can be quite different from one district to another, as the perceived needs of the population in each district differ. However, in general, Stockholm's city districts provide leisure activities for children and young people, undertake outreach measures for young people, and support young people in solving various problems by providing services to individuals and families.

In addition to the city districts, Stockholm has three central departments that are particularly involved in the active inclusion of young people: The Education Administration, the Labour Market Administration, and the Social Affairs Administration. These departments oversee, for example, the follow-up and collection of statistics on young people, the design of guidelines, the design and initial implementation of youth-focused projects, and the coordination of youth-focused work in each district.

<sup>1</sup> SCB, *Tema Ungdomsarbetslöshet*, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Skollagen, 1 juli 2005 (1kap, 18 §).

<sup>3</sup> [www.skolverket.se](http://www.skolverket.se).



In addition, the Sports Administration provides locations for sport and leisure that can be used by young people. It also distributes grants to local sports and leisure associations. Similarly, the Cultural Administration is responsible for libraries and cultural events and provides financial support to local cultural organisations.

There is some degree of cooperation between these different administrations. However, more could be done to offer more integrated and inclusive services, focusing on the target group of young people, and without being hindered by administrative boundaries.

## 1.2 Funding the active inclusion of young people

For some projects, national funding that aims to promote the active social inclusion of young people is allocated by the government, in order to launch special initiatives when these are considered necessary. Otherwise, EU funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) has been used to finance projects aimed at this target group of young people. For the programme period 2007-2013, the ESF has generally prioritised young people, and the Stockholm region has launched special calls for funding that prioritise young people as the target group.

In Sweden, projects funded by the ESF workforce skills development initiative included only a very small number of projects with young people as the target group: only around 7%. This is unfortunate, as new workforce skills development methods are very much needed. In contrast around 40% of the projects in ESF's Action 2, which focuses on extending employment opportunities, have young people as the target group in Sweden<sup>4</sup>.

## 1.3 Data and the current situation

Young people are generally greatly affected by economic downturns, although, on the positive side, their unemployment rate tends to fall faster when the economy improves again<sup>5</sup>.

Technically, Sweden has the highest rates of youth unemployment in the EU. For Sweden as a whole, the unemployment rate reached 25% for 15-24-year-olds during 2010<sup>6</sup>. The corresponding figure for Stockholm county was 21.5 %.

However, these rates include young people who are in education or training; and according to Statistics Sweden (Statistiska Centralbyrån) around half of unemployed 15-24 year olds are full time students<sup>7</sup>.

When the statistics for young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs) are taken into account, the figures show that Sweden is actually below the EU average<sup>8</sup>. In 2010, 10% of young people in Sweden were neither working nor studying<sup>9</sup>.

Despite special efforts to reduce youth unemployment, the rate has increased over the past two years: in 2008, it was around 20% for Sweden as a whole, and just below 20% in Stockholm county. Part of the reason for the increase is the financial crisis. In addition, there was an increase in the birth rate at the beginning of the 1990s, and this generation is now part of the labour market pool.

<sup>4</sup> Ungdomsstyrelsen: *Europeiska Socialfonden och unga*, 2010:1.

<sup>5</sup> IFAU: *Hur hjälps ungdomar av arbetsmarknadspolitiska program för unga* 2006:5, Forslund Anders, Nordström Skans Oskar.

<sup>6</sup> EUROSTAT ([www.ekonomifakta.se](http://www.ekonomifakta.se)).

<sup>7</sup> SCB, *Tema Ungdomsarbetslöshet*, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Ungdomsstyrelsen *Unga som varken arbetar eller studerar - hur många är de och vad gör de?* 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Ungdomsstyrelsen *Unga som varken arbetar eller studerar - hur många är de och vad gör de?* 2011.



Many young adults in the 20-24 years old age range are outside the labour market and at risk of poverty. Among students, poverty is widespread but temporary, as most students find employment and become established in the labour market after finishing their studies. However, the transition phase between youth and adulthood is vulnerable, and there is a risk of getting caught in social exclusion<sup>10</sup>.

## 1.4 Emerging trends

In Sweden, there are several groups of young people who are generally considered to have fewer opportunities than others: young people with a foreign background, those with a disability and young people who are parents.

It is difficult to obtain reliable statistics regarding the number of young people in Stockholm who have disabilities since the figures are based on which benefit a person receives, which is not a real indicator. However, it is estimated that around 18% of the total population of Sweden has a physical or mental disability, and that for around half of them, this affects their ability to work. In addition to facing negative attitudes from employers, a further problem for young people with disabilities is that their level of education tends to be lower than average.

In terms of gender comparisons for social exclusion, girls and boys tend to be vulnerable in different ways.

On average, girls and young women are worse off in terms of mental health, work-related diseases, low income/financial aid, and a reduced capacity to work.

Boys and young men, on the other hand, tend to do less well at school; fewer have received a high school or tertiary education; and they are more likely to be involved in crime, either as victims or participants.<sup>11</sup>

The strongest trend for Stockholm is that young people who have failed to complete their high school education are increasingly at risk of social exclusion. Historically in Sweden, it was not difficult for a young person to find a job, even without completing compulsory education or high school education. But now it is almost impossible for them to find a job. One reason is that there are now few low-skilled work opportunities in Sweden.

Another contributing factor is that many employers perceive an unfinished high school education to be a sign that the person has difficulty in being on time, in completing tasks and in taking responsibility. At Stockholm's Jobbtorg municipal employment service, the job coaches confirm that many young people who have dropped out from school have a variety of social problems.

<sup>10</sup> Social report 2010, Socialstyrelsen.

<sup>11</sup> Ungdomsstyrelsen: Youth and Youth Policy, 2010.



## 2. Policy and practices for the active inclusion of young people

### 2.1 Main priorities and practices for active social inclusion at the national level

Swedish youth policy is broader than that of many other EU countries: it includes many different policy areas and is cross-sectoral. For example, welfare issues have a natural place in Swedish youth policy. Traditionally, Sweden's youth policy has been universal: it has included all young people. However, in recent years there has been a shift in perspective, with the government and Parliament now emphasising that initiatives should focus especially on disadvantaged young people.

The overarching goals of Sweden's national youth policy are:

- Young people should have genuine influence on the priorities of society and on their own everyday lives.
- Young people should have genuine access to welfare, to ensure social inclusion and a good standard of living<sup>12</sup>.

One of Sweden's national youth policies, which is aimed at promoting inclusion in high school, is the Individual programme (Individuella programmet). This was intended to be a minor measure focused just on those pupils who failed to attain pass grades in the core subjects of Swedish, English and Mathematics. In reality, a third of pupils ended up on the Individual programme, with the aim of completing their missing grades and thereafter moving on to a national high school programme. But less than 30% of young people on the Individual programme succeeded in attaining pass grades. This makes it difficult to consider this programme a genuine active inclusion measure<sup>13</sup>.

However, according to a report from the Nordic Centre for Welfare and Social Issues there is a need for alternative and more individual teaching, as the school failure rate is comparatively high<sup>14</sup>. Since 2000, several educational reforms have been put in place. For example, earlier national tests combined with individual study plans help to identify and address deficiencies in basic knowledge at an earlier stage. In addition, in 2009, the government temporarily increased the number of places in post-secondary vocational training in the form of apprenticeship programmes<sup>15</sup>, and also increased the provision of secondary education for adults<sup>16</sup>.

Programmes specifically designed for young labour market entrants have become more common in Sweden during the last two decades. Some programme evaluations have shown a rather low level of effectiveness for youth targeted programmes. But more recent programme evaluations tend to indicate that intensive services such as coaching do help to reduce unemployment and raise the probability that young people will find employment.

The main practices used to support young people in finding a job and entering the labour market are:

- guidance & counselling;

<sup>12</sup> Ungdomsstyrelsen: *Youth and Youth Policy - A Swedish Perspective*, 2010.

<sup>13</sup> Myndigheten för skolutveckling: *Kvalitet inom IV - hela skolans ansvar*, 2007.

<sup>14</sup> Nordens välfärdscenter, *Ungdom utenfor*, 2010.

<sup>15</sup> Yrkeshögskolan.

<sup>16</sup> Komvux.



- job search;
- training;
- education.

Young people aged 16-25 years old who are registered with the Public Employment Service, and who have been unemployed for 90 days within a four month period, are offered measures within the government's Youth Guarantee Scheme (Ungdomsgarantin). Initially, the following measures are offered: in-depth skills mapping; guidance and counselling; job search with coaching.

Thereafter, activities are focused on: training at a work place; education to complete their studies; business support; and work rehabilitation.

During this time, the client receives what is known as Activity benefit (aktivitetsstöd) and can take part in the Youth Guarantee scheme for a maximum of 15 months. In addition to this Youth Guarantee, young people aged 20-25 who have been unemployed for more than six months are eligible for a New Start Job (Nystartsjobb). An employer offering a New Start Job receives a financial compensation for the social contribution they are making, which equates to a saving of around 40% of the wage cost<sup>17</sup>.

## 2.2 Main priorities and practices for active social inclusion at city level

### Schools

In Stockholm, one of the most important active inclusion strategies is to keep young people in the education system and prevent them from dropping out of school, because an unfinished education currently leads to major difficulties in entering the labour market. Figures show that just over 40% of young people aged 18-24 years who are registered with Stockholm's Jobbtorg employment service have not finished high school.

It is important to take a preventative approach, and to work hard at including all young people in compulsory education to age 16. However, the approach differs from one school to another in terms of the level of effort made by head teachers and subject teachers to actively include all pupils. Unfortunately these variations make it harder for the city to achieve its ambition of ensuring equal opportunities for all children and young people.

Stockholm's High School Channel (Gymnasieslussen) is a unit within the city's Education Administration that helps those who are not registered at a high school, either because they have dropped out or because they still need to complete their final grades.

The High School Channel offers young people a second chance: they can choose between five different programmes<sup>18</sup> in five different high schools<sup>19</sup>. The studying conditions are individualised and take into account the pupil's whole life situation as well as their potential<sup>20</sup>.

Until 2010, the High School Channel was also responsible for the municipal follow-up set out in Sweden's school law<sup>21</sup>. This requires each municipality to contact all young people aged 16-19 years old who are NEETs (not in education, employment or training) and inform them about their options for studying. Since 2007,

<sup>17</sup> European Employment Observatory: EEO Review of Youth Employment Measures, 2010 Sweden.

<sup>18</sup> Debut, Kärn, Utsikten, Flex, SALUT.

<sup>19</sup> Farsta-, Enskedegårds-, ESS- Ross Tensta gymnasium, Fryshuset.

<sup>20</sup> Andra chansen till gymnasiet! 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Skollagen, 1 juli 2005 (1kap, 18 §).



there have been around 4,000 registered young people to follow up each year in Stockholm. Every year, the High School Channel has been sending out some 9,000 letters, including reminders, asking each young person about their occupation, given that they are no longer in school. Around half of the target group (2,000) is reached by letter or phone calls. Those young people who are NEETs, and do not have any occupation at all, are offered a counselling meeting to discuss their possibilities for the future.

Although the High School Channel does not have the mandate to provide more outreach measures, around one quarter of the young people they contact attend a counselling meeting, and 70-80 % of these return to school.

The principal of the High School Channel, Ingrid Florin, said in an interview<sup>22</sup> that raising the obligatory school-leaving age to 18 would prevent a lot of social exclusion problems. This is because it is very easy to drop out of school, but it is quite difficult to return; and young people tend to act spontaneously without always thinking about the consequences. Florin believes that Stockholm's high schools currently work quite hard to prevent drop outs, because if students leave early, there are negative financial consequences for the school.

Five years ago the number of young people of high school age was comparatively large. But now that the number of young people in the 16 -19 age group is decreasing, high schools are more aware of the importance of preventing drop-outs.

In the city budget 2011-2013, responsibility for following up young people who have left school before the age of 19 moved from the Educational Administration to the Labour Market Administration. This department is now required to cooperate with other relevant actors, but there is so far no indication as to how this will be accomplished<sup>23</sup>.

One practice aimed at strengthening school results is to offer assistance with homework. In Stockholm there is a foundation sponsored by private companies called Homework Help (Läxhjälp). This foundation employs university students to help school pupils with their homework: these students also function as role models<sup>24</sup>. Another example of an initiative to assist with homework is the Tensta Community Centre (TCC): this offers an extended school day with homework help, and is especially suitable for pupils who cannot get help from their parents at home.

In addition, there are high schools working to introduce entrepreneurship in school. An organisation called Young Enterprise (Ung företagsamhet) runs a programme for high school pupils 16-20 years old. The young person receives help and support from teachers and from advisors sourced from local businesses. During the school year, pupils experience a business life cycle by starting up, managing and closing down a business. The Young Enterprise organisation is an NGO that builds bridges between schools and local businesses<sup>25</sup>.

According to Elisabeth Sörhuus<sup>26</sup>, project manager at the city's Education Administration, this business-focused approach can also be a good way to engage pupils up to 16 years old, who are still in the compulsory education age-group. When she was head teacher at the Hjulsta School, she implemented close cooperation with local businesses. Young people who had been identified as truants were given the chance to work on a business project. This made them interested in school again because they realised that they needed mathematics and other subjects in order for their project to be successful. According to Sörhuus, schools need to open up and cooperate more with the business sector.

<sup>22</sup> Interview for this report, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

<sup>23</sup> Budget 2011-2013, *Ett Stockholm där alla kan växa*.

<sup>24</sup> [www.laxhjalpen.se](http://www.laxhjalpen.se).

<sup>25</sup> [www.ungforetagsamhet.se](http://www.ungforetagsamhet.se).

<sup>26</sup> Interview for this report, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011.



## Labour market: Jobbtorg<sup>27</sup>

The aim of Stockholm's Jobbtorg employment service is to gather together all the city's labour market activities within one structure: to create a one stop shop. Jobbtorg started in 2008 as a permanent service with seven offices in different locations across the city. One of the Jobbtorg offices, in the Kista district, specialises specifically in helping younger clients. The other Jobbtorg offices also have specialist teams, with coaches who only work with young people. The goal is to support young unemployed people in preparing for and entering the labour market. One important part of the Jobbtorg service involves two study counsellors who help to guide and motivate young people back into education.

In addition to the usual measures within Jobbtorg such as coaching and guidance, there are some projects that specifically target young people (see Chapter 4: Good Lessons). Jobbtorg Kista has recently started to extend its opening hours: for one evening a week, the office is open to all young people, including those who are not receiving social assistance. This involves close cooperation with outreach workers who meet young people who may need help with education or employment, and who bring them to the Jobbtorg office if there is an interest.

As well as the main Jobbtorg employment services, Stockholm also offers 200 work-based training placements in the city's municipal departments, for young unemployed people who are on social assistance. The placements last for a period of six months: this measure was created in response to the financial crisis. Thereafter, the training placement can be followed by a contract for six months of salaried employment, again within one of the city's organisations. After six months of work, if the young person becomes unemployed again, they are then eligible for unemployment benefit.

The target groups for this initiative are long-term unemployed young people and disabled young people. When it comes to training placements for disabled young people, the city normally works with small or medium sized businesses rather than large organisations, because, according to Lars Ahlenius<sup>28</sup> at Stockholm's Labour Market Administration, smaller organisations have more flexibility to meet the needs of this target group. Another measure aims to combine high school studies with an apprenticeship for 18-24 year olds: this is the Järva apprenticeship scheme (Järva lärling), which is for young people in the Järva area who do not have a high school diploma<sup>29</sup>.

## City districts

Stockholm's city districts are responsible for helping young people who are socially excluded due to more profound social problems. For example, these young people might need addiction treatment, therapy for mental problems, or other types of help, before they can enter the labour market. In terms of the numbers of young socially excluded people in Stockholm, and the types of problems they have, the situation is different from one city district to another.

In Stockholm's Spånga-Tensta district the starting point for the social inclusion of vulnerable young people is to involve the young person's parents or carers. As Eva-Britt Leander of the Spånga-Tensta city district emphasises: "It is very important to help parents understand that their social network is also the social network of their child"<sup>30</sup>. If the parents are given this perspective, they will often alter their behaviour. For

<sup>27</sup> [www.eurocities.eu/Minisites/NLAO/dmdocuments/Local%20Practices\\_06\\_2010/SE\\_Local\\_Practices\\_Project\\_Jobborg%20Young%20.pdf](http://www.eurocities.eu/Minisites/NLAO/dmdocuments/Local%20Practices_06_2010/SE_Local_Practices_Project_Jobborg%20Young%20.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> Interview for this report, 23rd March 2011.

<sup>29</sup> [www.eurocities.eu/Minisites/NLAO\\_subsites/stockholm/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=76%3Ajaervalerling-ger-nya-jobbchanser&catid=37%3Aanyheter-lao&Itemid=65&lang=en](http://www.eurocities.eu/Minisites/NLAO_subsites/stockholm/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=76%3Ajaervalerling-ger-nya-jobbchanser&catid=37%3Aanyheter-lao&Itemid=65&lang=en).

<sup>30</sup> Quote: Eva-Britt Leander, interview for this report: 4th March 2011.



example, a family with an immigrant background may register their child in a football team in another area to broaden their child's social network, so they can get to know more people with a Swedish background. Often, children are at risk of social exclusion because their parents feel that the family has no chance of success in mainstream society, and constantly communicate this to the children. Therefore this strategy aims to change this negative circle, by working with the parents' attitudes.

In the Spånga-Tensta district, a range of other measures have also been put in place to include young people in society. Representatives from the district claim that the most powerful social inclusion initiative, implemented in 2009, is to offer summer jobs to all applicants below the age of 18. The city district organises three summer job periods, with three weeks per period. During these nine weeks the city district is impressively well cleaned, the parks are tidy, and the area is very calm. These summer jobs are multi-effective: they help prevent crime, they introduce young people to employment, they empower young people, and they actively include young people in society.

Another interesting initiative involves three city districts working in cooperation with each other as part of a pilot project: the Social Intervention project (Sociala insatsgrupper). This project has been introduced at the national level, and the aim is to prevent criminal behaviour among young people at risk of a future criminal career, through close cooperation between social services, schools and the police. The main responsible authority is social services. The pilot phase will be introduced in June 2011 in six to twelve municipalities across the whole country. Results will be reported at the end of 2012. After the pilot phase the idea is to implement the project on a large scale.

### Other stakeholders

In each city district there are various local associations that play an important role in supporting the local community of young people. For example, local sporting and cultural associations promote social inclusion: many young people take part in the activities offered by these associations, and are thereby to some extent protected from the risks confronting young people.

Two NGO's operating across the whole city are Cold Store (Fryshuset) and the City Mission.

The Cold Store organisation offers a very broad range of services for young people, including social work, education, skateboarding, basketball, music and other leisure time activities. The organisation runs several schools and programmes for vocational training, seminars and conferences, and courses in theatre and music, as well as hosting events and concerts.

Technically, Cold Store is a foundation. Public funding covers a small part of the cost of activities, while the rest is financed by a mixture of grants and fees for services such as social and educational programmes. Fees are not paid by users but by co-operational partners and public agencies. In total, the organisation employs around 500 people and provides services to around 40,000 visitors every month.

Cold Store is famous for its Peaceful Streets integration initiative (Lugna gatan), designed to create stability and safety in the evenings in streets where a lot of young people gather. Local hosts working for the Peaceful Streets initiative are present in the streets to meet young people. The aim is to create a safe environment, promote social inclusion and to break down gang structures<sup>31</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> [www.fryshuset.se](http://www.fryshuset.se).



The City Mission organisation offers a range of different services for young people with special needs. These services include leisure activities, high school education and residential college education. The City Mission is also involved in employment measures<sup>32</sup>.

In addition, Sweden's National Board for Youth Affairs also runs projects that aim to actively include and empower young people, in particular to provide them with opportunities for participation in the democratic process.

### 3. The main challenges for the active inclusion of young people

As mentioned in the introduction, the number of young unemployed people in Stockholm has been rising over the past two years, partly because of the economic crisis and partly due to a higher birth rate in the early 1990s. As a result, young people are currently facing tough competition to access the education and labour markets.

A key challenge is to actively include this group of young people now when the economy picks up again. This means that various measures need to be organised, in particular to develop the most effective tools for ensuring sustainable long-term employment for these young people. One way to develop effective tools is to use ESF funding. However, many prospective project owners feel that ESF funding requirements are too difficult to balance: ESF-funded projects need to deliver innovative measures rather than normal business activities, they need to achieve their targets, and, at the same time, they must adhere to Stockholm city council's own objectives, given that the projects are co-financed by the city authorities.

On a general level, one of the results of the expansion of the welfare state is increased specialisation within the Swedish public sector. Young people are more often the object of various different public initiatives. This means, for example, that measures related to the living conditions of young people can be found in many different departments. Therefore another important challenge is to create an integrated youth policy, to diminish the gap between different sectors.<sup>33</sup>

A further challenge is to reintegrate young drop-outs back into high school, which is the issue that Stockholm's High School Channel unit (Gymnasieslussen) is working on. An external audit report from Ernst & Young<sup>34</sup> and the unit's own quality report<sup>35</sup> both highlight the importance of improving cooperation with the city districts. A few districts try to reach the young NEETs with an outreach approach, but many do not. The responsibilities of the city districts are unclear. Ideally, each city district should work with young people who are at risk, or who have obvious problems that are not automatically covered in the annual follow-up of those who have left school. The audit report also mentions that the city council has not set out any goals for this task. In addition, the audit report highlights the fact that some of the stakeholders who were interviewed would like to see a centralised quality framework for study counselling, as the quality of study counselling is currently very different from one school to another.

In terms of the support provided by Stockholm's Jobbtorg employment service and by Sweden's Public Employment Service (PES), there is quite a lot of support for those who are registered with these services.

<sup>32</sup> [www.stadsmissionene.se](http://www.stadsmissionene.se).

<sup>33</sup> Ungdomsstyrelsen: Youth and Youth Policy - A Swedish Perspective.

<sup>34</sup> Revisionsrapport, Stadsrevisionen nr. 11, 2009.

<sup>35</sup> Kvalitetsredovisning Gymnasieslussen, 2010.



However, to promote social inclusion, there may be a case for lowering the threshold so that others can access these opportunities.

The outreach work for young people not in education, employment or training is a challenge that also needs to be tackled in the future. There are two parts to this challenge: the first is to identify the young NEETs, and the second is to offer them appropriate activities. The city has a problem with both aspects, because this group does not actively ask for any help, and in those cases where the city does get in contact with a young person, it is hard to design activities and measures that will actually be effective.

Jobbtorg has the concept of providing a one stop shop, with a range of measures and projects, but these are generally only for those on social assistance. A preventative approach could be to open these measures up to include young people who are NEETs: who are not on social assistance or benefits.

A first step is the previously described pilot initiative to open the Jobbtorg offices in the evenings: currently one evening a month. Another method could be to work more closely with NGOs to further support their outreach work and help further improve the outcomes. The Youth In (Unga In) project is an example of this, where an NGO is working with the Jobbtorg offices to encourage young people to try out short-term jobs. (see chapter 4 below: Good Lessons).

Some Jobbtorg offices continue to work with young people who belong to the national Youth Guarantee scheme provided by the Public Employment Service (PES), as the services offered within the Youth Guarantee are quite limited compared to the activities provided by the city's Jobbtorg employment service. Therefore, young unemployed people on social welfare are asked to participate at Jobbtorg even if they are registered with the Youth Guarantee scheme. This was not the original plan as the PES is the responsible authority.

A general challenge for the Jobbtorg employment service is to motivate all its young clients to actively participate in all the opportunities provided, given that participation is mandatory for all those receiving social assistance.

## 4. Good lessons

### 4.1 School

One successful school initiative has been developed at the Kvickentorps School (Kvickentorpsskolan), which is situated in the Farsta city district. This initiative is part of the Model Areas project (2009-2011), run by Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR). SALAR is coordinating efforts to improve the psychological health of children and young people in 14 model areas in Sweden. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs finances the project. At Kvickentorps School, the director decided to try a new method of encouraging pupils with special needs and involving various diagnoses, to stay in this mainstream school, instead of placing them in a special educational environment such as the St Örjans School<sup>36</sup>.

Kvickentorps School recruited a family therapist who takes care of a group of 13 pupils. This family therapist works with the whole family and provides a bridge between family, school and social services. The therapist calls the approach the 'RR-model', as it builds on resources and relations. The aim of this one year project is to share the family therapist's approaches with the teachers and to continue to work in cooperation with the social services<sup>37</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> School for pupils with a diagnosis of special educational needs.

<sup>37</sup> [www.modellomraden.skl.se](http://www.modellomraden.skl.se).



## 4.2 Jobbtorg

Stockholm is benefitting from three ESF projects that are organised within the city's Jobbtorg employment service: Filur, Merit and Youth In (Unga In). These projects aim to test new methods of supporting young unemployed people into education, training or employment:

### Filur (Fördjupade insatser leder unga rätt)

This project is based on the idea that enhanced efforts will lead a young person down the right track. It is an ESF-funded project, running from January 2010 to December 2012. It aims to establish young people in the labour market, specifically by helping long-term unemployed young people who, despite taking part in a variety of initiatives, have not found work. The focus is empowerment, by strengthening the self confidence of these young clients. The process within Filur involves:

- detailed mapping through interviewing;
- self-strengthening program;
- intensive coaching and guidance;
- training placement in a real workplace for the last month;
- a one year mentor program.

Filur's goals are to engage at least 500 participants, 50% of whom should be working or studying after six months, with 75% of these still working or studying at the end of the project. The plan is to find at least 100 mentors. During 2010, 110 young people were registered, 88 of whom joined the programme: 61% of these were supporting themselves by the beginning of 2011. The first follow-up was conducted after six months: it covers 25 young people 70% of whom were by then supporting themselves<sup>38</sup>.

### Merit

This is an ESF-funded project for 2010-2013 focusing on unemployed young people. It offers motivational measures for studying; vocational preparation; and also undertakes outreach work. The project provides special services for unemployed young people at Jobbtorg in terms of try-out studies and preparatory training for certain occupations, including a variety of trades.

Try-out studies are short periods of study which strengthen the young person's self confidence for studying again and motivates them to study at various levels. These young clients have usually failed in school and therefore lack a strong belief in their own capacity to study. The project also includes an outreach program to NEETs living in the Järva area who are not registered with Sweden's Public Employment Service (PES) or with the city's Jobbtorg service. In the Merit project, these young people are also offered work possibilities. The goal is for Merit to have at least 725 participants, with 70% of them supporting themselves 90 days after finishing their studies or professional preparation, and 90% of them feeling that the possibility of them studying or working has strengthened as a result of the project<sup>39</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> [www.stockholm.se/Arbete/Arbetsmarknadsatgarder-och-sarskilda-satsningar/FILUR](http://www.stockholm.se/Arbete/Arbetsmarknadsatgarder-och-sarskilda-satsningar/FILUR).

<sup>39</sup> [www.stockholm.se/merit](http://www.stockholm.se/merit).



## Youth In (Unga In)

This is also an ESF-funded project, which started in the end of 2009 and finishes at the beginning of 2012. The project owner is the Public Employment Service (PES) and cooperation partners are the Cold Store (Fryshuset) NGO and the city's Jobbtorg employment service. The aim is to develop methods of reaching young people who are not in school or in the labour market (NEETs). Youth In works with young people who are further away from the labour market than Merit and Filur clients. The project goals are that by the end of the project, 50% of participants will have tried 2 to 4 short jobs, 30% will have started to study or work, and 80% will feel that they are closer to the labour market as a result of the project. By March 2011, 27 young people had tried 46 short term jobs, and after participating in the project, 14% had started to study and 30% were in work<sup>40</sup>.

## 5. Future plans for promoting the active inclusion of young people

### 5.1 Future plans at national level

A new reform in Swedish high school education is due to be launched in the autumn of 2011. According to an interview for this report, the new reform could create a much more inclusive high school as five different programmes will replace the Individual programme (Individuella programmet). There is a chance that these five different programmes can offer a more personalised education for students who are in need of good support in order to succeed.

### 5.2 Future plans at city level

As mentioned earlier, responsibility for following up 16-19 year olds who have left school in Stockholm will be moved from the Education Administration to the Labour Market Administration. It is currently not clear what this change will lead to, but bringing together measures focused on reducing drop-outs from high school and measures focused on the labour market is certainly a good platform for more integrated solutions.

The city will also need to develop its outreach work, as mentioned above in Chapter 3. The Youth In project is to apply for more ESF-funding in a national call, in order to spread its methods to three other cities in Sweden: Göteborg, Malmö and Uppsala. This could be an interesting approach to developing outreach work in cooperation with NGOs, and to promoting shared learning between the cities.

A new school strategy has just been launched for the Järva area of Stockholm and also in some southern parts of the city. This new strategy forms part of two special initiatives in these two areas: Improving Jarva (Järvalyftet,) and South Vision (Söderortsvisionen)<sup>41</sup>. It is based on the results of dialogues with citizens of the local communities, and it is hoped that this new school strategy could provide a tool that can be used more widely, to offer more equal conditions for children and young people in Stockholm's schools. The reason for implementing a new school strategy is to help reverse the decline in educational attainment.

<sup>40</sup> [www.fryshuset.se/fryshuset/fryshuset\\_unga\\_in.aspx](http://www.fryshuset.se/fryshuset/fryshuset_unga_in.aspx).

<sup>41</sup> Special initiatives to reduce major socioeconomic differences between city districts.



A new initiative in Stockholm's Skarpnäck city district, the Improving Skarpnäck project (Skarpnäckslyftet), is an example of how preventative work provided by different services can be integrated within a district without the need for extra funding. This three year project started in 2010 with different actors working together around the concept of boosting the district. The police and the municipal housing organisations are also involved. The overall aim is to improve the life situation of young people living in the district. One measure is to engage local young people to work as hosts in the streets during the evenings to increase the safety in the area. If successful, this approach could be rolled out to other areas in the future.



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## Interviews

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