

Partnerships for equal opportunities in working life

Equal is an EU programme that aims to influence excluding and discriminatory structures in working life. Such structures can relate to legislation, agreements and established practices, or to attitudes on the part of employees and managers. Influence is a central concept in the Equal Programme. The objective is a working life without discrimination and exclusion, marked by a diversity that utilises peoples' competence and development potential irrespective of gender, age, ethnic background, disability or sexual orientation.

In October 2004, the Swedish ESF Council approved 30 new Development Partnerships within the Equal Programme. The projects each receive approximately SEK 500 000 in order to work with detailed planning over a period of six months. The Swedish ESF Council has reserved an average of SEK 9 million of EU funds for each project. Funding of an equal amount is arranged by the organisations behind the projects themselves. The projects are carried out in the implementation phase, which may last up to three years. Methods are tested and gradually developed, knowledge is expanded and experience is exchanged.

The Development Partnerships cooperate with similar partnerships in other EU countries. The idea is that players from, for example, industry, public authorities and NGOs should come together and develop ideas, approaches and methods within the framework of a specific theme. The projects should combat discrimination and exclusion on the grounds of age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and ethnic background.

At this stage, the applications of the approved partnerships cover 200 organisations. Most of these are NGOs (45%), followed by State and municipal organisations. Geographically, the projects comprise operations in all but four of the Swedish counties. Before the projects are approved for implementation, the number of organisations involved will probably double.

This brochure presents the activities of the 30 new Development Partnerships. My hope is that the projects will lead to new ideas, solutions and results that will have a real positive impact on society.

Åsa Lindh
Deputy Director
General,
Swedish ESF
Council



"Leksaksfångarna", 2004. From the left: Gunilla Ericsson, Niklas Lendemar, Martin Jonasson, Anette Jönsson and Klas Malmberg.

Actors reject grants

People with an intellectual disability are in principle excluded from working as professionals. The Mooms Theatre Company (Moomsteatern) in Malmö wants to change this. The project challenges a number of established structures.

Moomsteatern runs professional theatrical activities. The company

has high artistic ambitions, and several of its productions have been a great success with the public.

Everyone who works for the company is paid a regular salary—apart from the actors themselves. The actors, who form the very basis of the activities, instead receive a disability pension and a so-called habilitation grant of SEK 26 per day. The company's Artistic

Director, Kjell Stjernholm, feels that this is outrageous.

"Everyone gets a salary apart from those who generate the income. The habilitation grants they get for coming to work every day don't even cover the costs of their food vouchers," he says.

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Sweden's Minister for Democracy, Metropolitan Affairs, Integration and Gender Equality:

"The regulations are not the problem!"

Sweden's recently-appointed Minister for Democracy, Metropolitan Affairs, Integration and Gender Equality believes that changed attitudes on the part of employers, trade unions and the general public can solve the problem of exclusion. Equal Partners interviews Jens Orback.

As a journalist and broadcaster, Jens Orback has become well-known for his commitment to the less fortunate members of society. Equal Partners asked Jens Orback about his personal view of the Swedish labour market and the problems associated with diversity.



Page 2 Jens Orback

Make Your Future

Careers advice and mentorship are strengthening immigrant women in Gothenburg. **Page 3**

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Trafficking is an extreme expression of poverty and gender inequality. **Page 5**

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A smart company form is creating diversity in business and industry. **Page 6**

Equal challenges attitudes

Development partnerships with a will to change are challenging discriminatory structures and the inflexible application of regulations.

The 30 partnerships that have been awarded funds by the Swedish ESF Council fall within five themes: Employability, Entrepreneurship, Asylum, Gender Equality and Adaptability. The projects deal with everything from young people who have fallen through the holes in society's safety net to discriminating ill-health.

Exclusion often leads to people being sick-listed for a longer period of time. Many older people leave working life prematurely with a sense of inadequacy. Prejudices about the capacity of older workers make it difficult for those who want to work to find jobs. The partnerships believe that more knowledge and more flexible organisations can make it possible for people to go on working until retirement age, to the benefit of all parties.

Self-employment is seen as an opportunity for individuals to earn all or part of their living on the basis of their own skills and abilities. New methods will facilitate administration and remove language barriers.

Two partnerships address the situation of asylum seekers. Both highlight the importance of meaningful activities for asylum seekers while they are awaiting a decision on their permit applications. The stress of this wait, together with cramped accommodation and their traumatic experiences, places a great strain on refugee families.

Gender Equality and multiculturalism are a common denominator in many of the projects. Getting to grips with structural discrimination requires creativity, enthusiasm and a will of iron. The partnerships strive to create methods that will get us to apply legislation that can work, but also question structures that discriminate.

Equal Partners presents the projects under each of the themes. Each project is run by a number of players from business and industry, municipalities and NGOs. Given the limited space available, we are not able to do full justice to the scope of the projects and the range of ideas behind them. If you would like to know more, please contact the person listed at the end of each article.

Getting to grips with structural discrimination requires creativity, enthusiasm and a will of iron.



The same rights and obligations, but not the same prospects.

“The regulations are not the problem!”

Continued from page 1

What does diversity mean to you?

“That everybody, irrespective of their ethnic background, should have the same rights and obligations and the same opportunities to play an active role in society. I also believe that this social solidarity gives society the strength to develop and change.”

Why is greater diversity important on the labour market?

“Diversity forms the foundations of the society we are building in Sweden. If the inherent and dynamic effects of diversity were exploited to the full this would, apart from the fact that it is vital to individuals to find work and develop, represent an enormous potential for the economic development of the country and give Sweden a competitive edge. Employing people who don't fit the “norm” is not an end in itself. The point is that we should make the most of the competence that exists in all sectors, and at all levels, of our society.”

requires a major and concerted effort on the part of all the players on the labour market.”

Can an outdated view of the labour market and its regulations be a contributing factor to the increase in exclusion?

“No, it's not our regulations that are the problem. It is important to have security on the labour market. But Sweden's labour market is marked by a one-sided composition of the labour force. This has led to a failure to utilise all the knowledge and experience available.

Current trends and experience in both Sweden and abroad confirm that Swedish employers have a lot to gain by broadening their recruitment base. There is a tendency to see differences as a problem rather than as an asset. But we don't want a labour market that sorts people into categories on the grounds of ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, disability and so on. We have to reverse this trend.”

As the Minister for Democracy, how do you view the issue of diversity from the democratic perspective?

“Integration and diversity are ultimately about human rights, democracy, social justice and equality—all classic features of a democratic society. The key principle here is the principle of non-discrimination. Everyone must have the same rights, obligations and opportunities.

The principle of treating people equally is fundamental to the attempt to provide sustainable development and prosperity and to prevent further divisions in society. But a more open labour market cannot be created by measures on the part of the government alone. We also need to see changes in attitudes and a concerted effort from everyone involved.”

Despite all the efforts that have been made, exclusion seems to have become an almost permanent fact of life for certain groups. Do you think this is a reflection of a society with a tougher attitude, without scope for individuals who cannot always perform to 100 per cent?

“There are many indications that the explanation for differences in employment levels must be sought in the values of employers, trade unions and the public at large. One of my main tasks as Minister for Integration is to combat and prevent segregation and ethnic discrimination. The competence and creativity of all individuals should be put to good use throughout society. It is not possible to abolish discrimination simply by adopting legislation; it

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Theme I Employability

MAKE YOUR FUTURE

Empowerment strengthens women on Hisingen

Management training, gender equality measures and a good working environment are increasing the self-confidence of immigrant women.

The "Make Your Future" partnership focuses on gender equality, integration and the increasing level of ill-health in working life, particularly among workers in the healthcare and care sectors.

"Immigrant women often get a job for the first time in the care sector," says Rosie Rothstein, the Project Co-ordinator.

The partnership on the island of Hisingen in Gothenburg wants to develop methods to prevent discriminating ill-health in working life. A first step is to create healthy workplaces.

"We must ask ourselves what the employers are doing wrong," says Rosie Rothstein.

In families from cultures where the man is traditionally the provider, gender roles are affected when the woman becomes the provider instead.

"It's fairly easy for immigrant women to get a job in the care sector, while many men remain unemployed. We want to examine the impact of this on the families," says Rosie Rothstein.

Education and training may be one way of getting to grips with discriminating ill-health.

"We will run long-term careers advice and mentorship programmes together with established networks for women."

These networks help to increase contacts between immigrant women and Swedish women.

"It's important not to fall into the trap of thinking that we can "fix" things if we just employ the right measures. The multicultural groups must become strong enough to help themselves," says Rosie Rothstein.

The project partners include the Biskopsgården Urban District Council, Capio Lundby Hospital, Föreningen Integrationsnätverket, Delta and the Municipal Workers' Union in Gothenburg.

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Facts/Make Your Future

The Biskopsgården district in Gothenburg has a population of 25 772. The largest employer in the area is the Urban District Council, which has 1 677 employees. The majority of these are women who work in the healthcare and care sectors or as cleaners. 70% of the employees of the home-help service have a foreign background. Source: the Development Partnership's application.

DROPIN

Upper-secondary schools funded by business and industry?

The drop-out rate from upper-secondary schools and long-term unemployment among young people are growing problems in the County of Västmanland.

"We want to prepare young people for further study and for working life, and to give them the tools they need to manage their lives," says Inger Paris, Project Co-ordinator of the DROPIN Development Partnership.

The target group consists of pupils pursuing individual programmes at the three upper-secondary schools in the County of Västmanland.

"By focusing on health and learning, we aim to help the pupils find their strengths and interests," says Inger Paris.

The expectations and demands of young people with regard to working life do not match the needs of the private sector.

This is why co-operation with business and industry is vital.

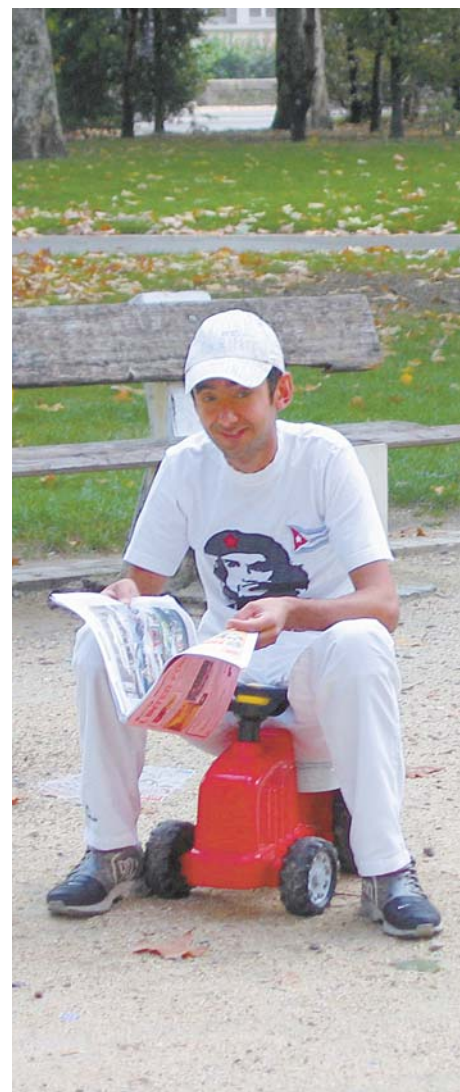
"We will take a closer look at what types of labour will be needed in the future and at whether the companies are willing to invest in tailor-made courses," says Inger Paris.

DROPIN is run by the Association of Municipalities in Västmanland, the City of Västerås, the Municipality of Sala, the Municipality of Köping, the Employment Offices in Köping, Sala and Västerås, the County Labour Board and the Diocese of Västerås.

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HOLISTIC WORK RUN BY IDEOLOGICAL ORGANISATIONS

Exchanging experience across religious borders

In Malmö, the Islamic Centre and Malmö City Mission are co-operating in an effort to find jobs for the homeless, refugees and immigrants.

The players involved in the "Holistic Work Run by Ideological Organisations" project aim to find methods to reduce social exclusion. The target group consists of refugees, immigrants and the homeless.

"We want to help the people living in this situation to find ways out of their misery," says Johannes Jörgensen from Malmö City Mission, one of the project's two co-ordinators.

The fact that Muslim and Christian organisations are co-operating in a project of this size is unique.

"In Sweden, we are used to the public sector, or possibly private entrepreneurs, running social work. Organisations that constitute a third party with a specific identity are often forgotten."

The project will clarify the division of roles between authorities and organisations.

"That is, establish who does what best," says Johannes Jörgensen.

The help available usually specialises in one or two fields. The project players want to look at the whole picture. Women are particularly vulnerable.

"The problems relating to the homeless and refugees are complex: ill-health, unemployment, the lack of education and so on mean that we must take a holistic view if we are to be able to help in the long term."

The main aim is to help refugees and the homeless to find jobs.

"At the Islamic Centre and the City Mission there are contacts with working life that are not being fully exploited. They can act as a complement to the support provided by the public sector," says Johannes Jörgensen.

The Islamic Centre in Malmö has a congregation of 50 000 in a city with a total population of 250 000.

"Why this gigantic network is not being made better use of by society is a mystery. There are people here who know about the culture of many immigrants and refugees, and who are trying to help."

Empowerment is central.

"The most important thing is that people, individually and collectively, are given hope and energy enough to take control of their own lives."

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SAMEDIFFERENT

Same opportunities, different people

"Giving different people the same opportunities requires different solutions," says Margareta Wandel, the Project Co-ordinator for "SameDifferent".

The project focuses on young people who do not complete their education. Non-ethnic Swedes and the disabled are overrepresented in this group.

"Our focus is on young people of upper-secondary school age, but some problems must be solved long before this," says Margareta Wandel, the Project Co-ordinator.

The project seeks to improve co-operation between schools, working

life and activities aimed at unemployed young people.

"Apprenticeships are one proposal for how to find alternative routes for those who find theoretical studies difficult," says Margareta Wandel.

The work of the project is limited to the industrial and healthcare sectors. The project will also work with gender-related career choices.

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Theme I Employability

ROUTES TO THE LABOUR MARKET VIA
EDUCATION AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Substance abusers get a second chance

"Our first academic recently graduated as a qualified social worker," says Alec Carlberg proudly. Basta is now continuing to develop its successful education and training model for former drug addicts together with Fryshuset, Lund University and the Municipalities of Södertälje and Nykvarn.

Basta, a unique work co-operative run by and for people with long-term substance abuse problems, is situated in the idyllic surroundings of Nykvarn.

"We started work ten years ago," says Alec Carlberg, one of the initia-

tors of the project. "The idea is to help people leave heavy substance abuse behind them through various forms of social enterprise. Today we have a total of 100 residents in two homes, one here in Nykvarn and one in Borås."

The people who come to Basta are in their 40s and have been serious substance abusers for many years.

"They have to stay at the co-operative for at least a year, but they can live here as long as they want providing that they don't drink or take drugs and that they help out."

The cooperative originally provided simple jobs like removing graffiti and cleaning, or carpentry, but after a while, the need for more qualified labour arose.

"Almost everyone at Basta is a former substance abuser, and many of them left school early. It was necessary to educate and train the personnel so that we could run things effectively," says Alec Carlberg.

It was felt that there was no point in sending people back to school after 15 years of heroin abuse.

"We realised that we had to find new teaching and training models and the idea of developing our vocational and entrepreneurial course, what we call the "Yes course", came up," says Alec Carlberg.



Basta's educational model combines traditional studies with practical work.

This upper-secondary school course is directly linked to the co-operative's work. Basta was involved in a project supported by the Equal Programme, "Empowerment for the Future", when the course was started in 2002, and now the model will be developed further.

"As Basta has been so effective, the municipality sent some teenagers to us that they hadn't been able to straighten out, and things have gone really well! The residents at Basta and the school kids help each other with their studies. The educational model has been successful.

"Our first academic has just graduated as a qualified social worker," says Alec proudly.

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Facts/ Routes to the labour market via education and social enterprise

The new Development Partnership will run a European collaboration programme (TP) that integrates the partners' experience of helping vulnerable individuals to enter the labour market. An ethical consulting company, ECCO, will be further developed to support and raise the profile of the social economy and social enterprise in Europe. The exchange of experience on educational, training and validation issues will also be developed within the partnership.



Riding lessons at the work co-operative.

OUTSIDER

Better odds for young outsiders

Co-operation between institutions, voluntary organisations and business and industry will give young outsiders a new chance.

Young people who have lived in institutions are now finding it harder to make their way back into society than they did ten years ago.

"Society's demands have steadily increased," says Rutger Zachau of the National Board of Institutional Care.

Many young people in institutional care have multiple problems, a combination of difficulties at school, substance abuse and criminal behaviour. "Many of them are complete outsiders and can't do themselves justice in today's schools," says Rutger Zachau.

The enquiry "Young Outsiders" (SOU 2003:92) estimated that 25-30 000 16-24 year olds per year find it difficult to gain a foothold on the labour market. The Outsider project covers many of these young people.

The project partners will work with

three main areas: "schools", "outsiders" and "institutions". There are structures in all these areas that provide protection for young outsiders, but there are also components that present obstacles.

"We want to open things up between institutions, voluntary organisations and companies so that we can identify and overcome such obstacles."

The energy and creativity of young people will also be channelled by offering work placement, study visits and mentorship programmes.

"We also want to start experimental workshops."

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DP NEW CITY

Simplicity in the house of dreams

The number of young people who are neither studying, working or looking for a job, nor employing their time usefully in some other way, is increasing. This is a group that easily falls between two stools.

The project aims to develop a new youth centre in Malmö to which young people can turn to get support.

"We will stop making things so complicated. Young people will not be sent endlessly from one office to another," says Lone Lindström, the financial manager of Drömmarnas Hus (The House of Dreams).

At the youth centre, all the available resources will be gathered together under one roof.

"If the youngsters want to study they will be able to get help from study advisers. If they want to look for work they will be able to talk to employment officers. Companies that can offer work placement will also be linked to the project."

"Initially, we will have ten coaches who can point the youngsters in the right direction. Young people who want to start their own companies are often received critically. They are asked to present business plans and budgets. We will provide positive support with this," says Lone Lindström.

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Lone Lindström

Theme I Employability



ROMANIES IN SWEDEN FROM SOUTH TO NORTH

Romanies on equal terms

“Now we are involved in the planning right from the start,” says Stefano Kuzhikov of the Roma National Congress. Projects on equal terms have not always been the norm when society has attempted to change the situation of Romanies in Sweden.

“In this project, all the parties participate on equal terms,” says Stefano Kuzhikov when describing “Romanies in Sweden from South to North”.

“Attempts at integration are often met with scepticism on the part of Romanies. Society has often created projects for us, not with us. Society wants us to blend in—on society’s terms. The decisions have been made over our heads. Now we are involved in the planning right from the start,” says Stefano Kuzhikov.

The Roma National Congress, which is one of the project partners, represents Romanies in Sweden and monitors and safeguards their interests.

“We combat discrimination and work to achieve a change in attitudes among Romanies.”

In his everyday life, Stefano Kuzhikov works with school issues in Helsingborg. He sees education as the only way out

of passivity and a widespread dependence on benefits. He believes that it will be a long time before all Romanies are in gainful employment.

“Unfortunately, our children experience a lot of difficulties at school,” says Stefano.

The initiative for the project came from municipalities with a large Romany population.

“We want to improve the situation of the Romanies,” says Per Östberg, who is responsible for integration issues in the Municipality of Sundsvall.

The work will be conducted at the individual level, with a focus on girls.

“We have been trying to bring the girls into working life for a long time, now we have a chance to find new methods,” says Stefano Kuzhikov.

“Romany families are dominated by the men. This can make it more difficult for the women to get a job outside



Romanies are fighting against discrimination and for a change in attitudes.

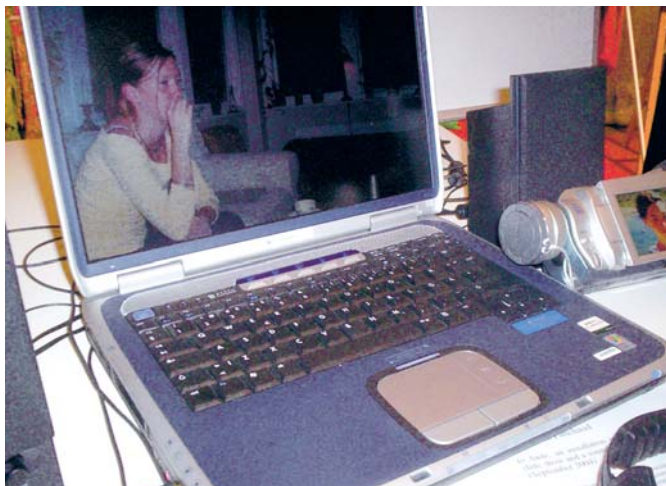
the home,” says Per Östberg.

The project is conducted in small groups with goal-oriented coaching. It is hoped that it will be possible to use Romanies that have successful careers as examples.

“The girls should be able to enter working life while retaining a sense of respect and without needing to

sacrifice their Romany identity. Self-employment may be one way of motivating them,” says Per Östberg.

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The authorities are uncertain how to deal with the complex problems posed by human trafficking.

CO-OPERATION TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING

Network to combat trafficking

The “Co-operation to Combat Trafficking” project aims to develop a transnational network. Among other things, the project will offer support to victims when they return home.

Human trafficking, mainly in women and children, is a growing problem in Europe. The police estimate that 400-600 women are exploited each year following trafficking. Half of these can be found in the Stockholm region. Many of them come from the Baltic region or the former Soviet Union.

There is still no proper action programme on how to handle new cases or on how to return women and girls to their home countries. The authorities are often unsure what to do.

“Society’s support to the victims of trafficking is poor. This applies particularly to employment, both during the

legal process in Sweden and once the victims have returned home,” says Carolina Wennerholm of Kvinnoforum.

The project aims to develop long-term support mechanisms for women who return home. Many of these women need help with work and accommodation, but also with rehabilitation.

“Some of them have suffered severe physical, mental or emotional damage and require a great deal of rehabilitation,” says Carolina Wennerholm.

Authorities in several countries, as well as NGOs and churches, are involved in the project. Kvinnoforum already has an extensive network of international contacts. The churches also have enormous networks and many of them have long been active in the fight against trafficking.

“We believe that “Co-operation to Combat Trafficking” will be a good

complement to the work of the authorities. Civil organisations are often better when it comes to working with social aspects,” says Carolina Wennerholm.

Research and information activities will be carried out within the framework of the project and efforts will be made to change men’s attitudes.

“Trafficking is an extreme expression of a lack of gender equality in combination with poverty. Attitudes regarding gender roles must be changed.”

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Facts/Co-operation to Combat Trafficking:

The Development Partnership rests on three main pillars:

- Kvinnoforum co-ordinates the work of 9 authorities in order to develop better routines for cases linked to trafficking.
- The work of a large number of churches and NGOs is co-ordinated by the organisation Hela Människan.
- The Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg works with information, research and debate.

SALT

Informal learning a formality

SALT takes issue with the term “Young Outsiders”. Being outsiders is often the only thing that the young people concerned have in common.

SALT is a collaboration between Urkraft in Skellefteå, ABF norra Västerbotten, CV Xist/Kvinnoforum and others. The project has three main elements; guidance, the recognition of learning and alternative learning environments.

The aim is to offer everyone the same opportunities on the labour market, irrespective of where they have received their education and training.

“Learning takes place in different ways. We want to find forms for the recognition of alternative learning environments,” says Jörgen Bergwall of Urkraft.

“Before we can help young people make a start in working life, they must be able to see themselves in such a context.”

Being outsiders is often the only thing that the young people concerned have in common.

“The group is far from homogenous. They have different sexual orientations and cultural backgrounds, some of them are disabled and so on,” says Jörgen Bergwall.

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Theme II Entrepreneurship



ENTREPRENEURSHIP WITH EFFECT—ENTREE

Advisory services often limit women's enterprise

The project "Entrepreneurship with Effect—ENTREE" focuses on women's enterprise.

"Only a third of new companies and a quarter of existing companies are run by women," says Helena Balthammar, Project Manager.

The figures are the same throughout Sweden and have remained stable over time. Helena Balthammar believes that discriminating structures are one reason why nothing has changed despite all previous efforts.

"Women find it difficult to gain a hearing for their ideas when they want to start their own companies," says Helena.

Not surprisingly, women often choose to start companies in sectors in which women already predominate.

"We believe that we can address part of the problem by creating awareness on the part of those who deal with women who want to start new companies," says Helena Balthammar.

The ENTREE project aims to change the advisory and funding system.

"We will work with courses on gender issues in an effort to open peoples' eyes and with the exchange of experience and mentorship programmes, but we will also try to find new working methods to combat structural discrimination."

ENTREE has two target groups; advisers and entrepreneurs.

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THE EMPOWERMENT OF MINORITIES

Financial viability strengthens organisations

The fact that ethnic minorities are over-represented among the unemployed is nothing new. However, political programmes designed to address this problem seldom include players from the minorities themselves. "The Empowerment of Minorities" project aims to change this.

The project focuses on minority organisations.

"One of Equal's aims is to affect structures. Working with organisations

provides a greater effect, the organisations in their turn work with individuals," says Mikael Hellström of Stiftelsen Kunskapsforum.

Part of the project aims to make immigrant organisations that work with social issues financially self-supporting, that is to help them to move from a dependency on grants to long-term financial viability.

"A solution in which they can plan one or two years ahead is not too much to ask," says Mikael Hellström.

SELFEMPLOYMENT

Young company form provides diversity

Does starting your own company without knowing anything about administration or being able to speak Swedish sound like an impossible dream? A platform company may be the solution.

A platform company is a "halfway house" between running your own company and being employed.

"This form of company exists in Sweden as well as the rest of Europe," says Maria Woglinde, Co-ordinator of the "Selfemployment" project.

The project aims to create networks across national borders in order to develop the concept.

Employees of platform companies can run their own operations without requiring a notice of tax assessment for self-employed persons.

"The platform company acts as the employer, handles administration and deals with any legal issues. The employees have their own customers and are responsible for their own salaries," explains Maria Woglinde.

The platform company charges an administration fee based on each employee's invoiced income, but does not usually aim to maximise profits. Any profits are instead invested in operational development.

Administration and financial risks are regarded as the main reasons why people are reluctant to start their own companies.

"Platform companies may be a part of the solution, but there are a number of regulations that prevent the platform company from developing its full potential as a company form," says Maria Woglinde.

Employees of platform companies are not, for example, entitled to unemployment benefit as the structure of such companies is too close to that of privately-owned small businesses.

"In the "Selfemployment" project we are trying to remove structural obstacles so that platform companies can be opened up to a wider group of people," says Maria Woglinde.

The company form has several advantages from the point of view of equality.

It offers groups that are currently outside the traditional labour market the chance to earn their own living.

"People who have been sick-listed for a long time find it hard to find jobs. In a platform company, people work in line with their own situation and abilities. People may not have the energy or feel able to start their own companies, but they may be able to carry out specific assignments," says Maria.

"Many immigrants come from cultures with an entrepreneurial tradition, but can't speak Swedish well enough to assimilate all the legislation and regulations."

"Selfemployment" will develop cooperation and the exchange of experience between platform companies in Sweden and internationally.

"The idea is simple, ingenious and offers great flexibility to all groups," concludes Maria.

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AGDOR

Labour legislation leads to exclusion

Social enterprise is opening doors for groups excluded from the labour market in Örebro.

The AGDOR project (in Swedish AGDOR stands for Jobs for All via Participation and Framework Agreements) believes that social enterprise creates greater self-confidence on the part of groups on the periphery of the labour market.

"The social economy could be a growth asset," says Lars Berge-Kleber, Vice President of L&SEK.

The aim is to bring people into working life using a model in which the demand for services is matched to the skills and abilities of individuals.

"A number of labour market regulations exclude people from the labour market," says Lars Berge-Kleber.

He does not believe, however, that the legislation itself must be changed.

"The way the legislation is applied in practice should be changed so that the system allows productive people to begin working in a productive context."



Lars Berge Kleber

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Theme III Adaptability

1+1=3

Helping people who work alone

People with an occupational disability who receive supplementary pay allowances are a source of cheap labour for sports clubs and associations throughout the country.

“People with an occupational disability who work in the sports movement are a vulnerable group that needs protection. They often work alone,” says Marie Denitton, Project Co-ordinator.

Most of those who work for sports clubs work on a voluntary basis as everything from coaches to office workers and groundsmen. Many sports clubs cannot afford to employ personnel, but when they have to, the cheapest solution is to employ people on supplementary pay allowances. The employer is then a board in which the members work voluntarily and are replaced regularly.

“Such boards seldom have the competence required to act as employers. It’s not that they are unwilling, but more that they don’t have the knowledge or the time needed,” says Marie Denitton.

“1+1=3” aims to strengthen the position of people who work alone on this basis and to train the employers. The project will conduct a survey of the working conditions for such workers and examine how conditions vary for women and men with regard to pay and the duties they are expected to perform.

“The duties are highly gender related. Women are given administrative tasks. They answer the telephone and do bookkeeping or general office work. The men have more practical duties,



Marking-out football pitches, a job for men?

they mark out pitches, cut the grass and repair and maintain buildings,” says Marie Denton.

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FIRE—FOCUS ON THE INDIVIDUAL'S RESOURCES/EMPOWERMENT

A quicker way back

The “FIRE” project aims to gather all the available resources under one roof in order to help those who are long-term unemployed or sick-listed and other vulnerable groups.

“Vulnerable groups such as the long-term unemployed and people with an occupational disability are excluded from the labour market by the system,” says Göran Holmström of the FIRE (Focus on the Individual's Resources/ Empowerment) Development Partnership in Östersund.

FIRE plans to gather representatives from authorities, NGOs and companies, as well as mentors, in one and the same location in order to make things easier for individuals.

“Empowerment is fundamental if these people are to have a chance. Putting all the players under one roof will be more effective and make it easier to help,” says Göran Holmström.

The Partnership will develop a model for “tryout” jobs.

“The individuals themselves will set the conditions depending on their own skills and capabilities,” says Göran Holmström.

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DIVERSITY IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM

Unfair representation

“Confidence in the rule of law can only be achieved if the legal system reflects society in general,” says Peter Naessén, one of the initiators of the project.

The Government Offices, the National Courts Administration, the schools of law in Uppsala and Umeå, the legal news service PointLex and the United Nations Association of Sweden make up the “Diversity in the Legal System” Development Partnership.

The aim is to achieve a personnel mix in the judiciary and the Government Offices that better reflects the composition of the population as a whole.

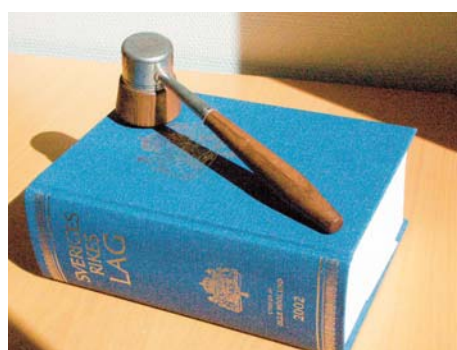
“There has been a lot of interest. The authorities have been very enthusiastic,” says Peter Naessén of PointLex.

If the citizens are to have confidence in the rule of law, the legal system must reflect society as it really is. This means that there must be a balance between the genders and a fair

representation of people with a foreign background.

The composition of the Partnership means that we can take a holistic approach. We will particularly focus on the consequences that diversity in the legal system has in practice,” says Peter Naessén.

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BELOW THE SURFACE

Schools not setting a good example

Swedish schools should set a good example with regard to discrimination. But, organisations do not always practice what they preach.

“Many homosexual and bisexual teachers find it difficult to be open with their colleagues about their sexual orientation,” says Christine Gilljam, of the Office of the Ombudsman Against Discrimination on the Grounds of Sexual Discrimination (HomO).

“Below the Surface” will work with sexual orientation in schools. The project aims to highlight the issue of heteronormativity and offensive behaviour among teachers on the grounds of sexual orientation, and investigate why homosexual and bisexual teachers have such a low profile.

“The project is aimed at the adults in the schools, but also at school politicians and local officials. We want to look at the way colleagues interact

with each other.”

Many homosexual and bisexual teachers feel that their working environment is repressive. Research also shows that teachers are quick to correct their pupils when they discriminate against others on the grounds of gender or sexuality, but in the case of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation they often say nothing.

“Many people seem to find it difficult to deal with this question.”

Christine Gilljam feels that the schools are a highly important area in which to work with these issues.

“If teachers cannot act as good examples, we will never make any progress. Pupils soon notice any discrepancy between what they say and what they do.”

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Theme III Adaptability

ACADEMY FOR FLEXIBLE LEARNING IN WORKING LIFE

Without competence development, niche occupations will die out

At many workplaces, competence development is reserved for those in higher posts. This situation is leading to a shortage of skills and competence.

The Development Partnership wants to make learning at the workplace more flexible. The project has established five workshops in different parts of the country where models for competence development at the workplace will be developed.

"Employees will receive further training at their places of work during working hours," says Conny Johansson, Co-ordinator of the "Academy for Flexible Learning in Working Life" project.

The occupational areas involved

vary from the healthcare sector to the explosives industry.

Hans Wallin of KCEM is involved at the project's workshop in Lindesberg. He is one of the few skilled professionals in the explosives industry.

"Many niche occupations are important to Sweden's competitiveness, such as rock blasting and occupations in the defence materiel industry. Today, there is no organised training in the field of explosives," says Hans Wallin.

"The situation is untenable. We must begin to train a new generation that can take over after those who retire."

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Winter in Skärhamn, Tjörn.

LIFE COMPETENCE A PLUS FOR 50 +

Life competence a plus

A project in Tjörn is looking for new routes to an enriching working life for the over 50s.

In Tjörn in western Sweden, older workers were hit hard when local companies implemented rationalisation programmes. The network project "Life Competence a Plus for 50 +" aims to create routes back to working life.

"It is such a waste not to make use of the competence of older people," says Eva Bertilsson-Styvén, one of the people behind the project at the Municipality of Tjörn.

Prejudice on the part of employers is often a major obstacle.

"Minor ailments or disabilities and the fact that people slow down as they get older are seen as obstacles to

a long working life, but with a little consideration this doesn't have to be the case."

The project will support older people who want to start their own companies.

"The network will act as a support system for people who have problems with Swedish or who find the administrative jungle impenetrable."

The project is aimed at older unemployed people as a whole, but prioritises women, the disabled and people with a different ethnic background.

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FAIR—FUTURE-ADAPTED INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT

FAIR promotes fair recruitment

Competence can be found within all groups in society. The Equal project "FAIR" aims to improve the recruitment process, primarily in the public sector.

"We will work with organisational structures and processes so that the organisations concerned can see, evaluate, recognise and utilise the competence available in a better way," says Eva Löfgren, Project Co-ordinator

She feels that too much attention is paid to unimportant details in the recruitment process. Unconsciously, recruiters give merit to irrelevant factors, such as the form and layout of the personal letter.

"Recruiters often select someone very like themselves due to a sense of insecurity. They are uncertain and not sufficiently prepared and don't really know what the job involved will entail in the future or what competence is needed."

The objective of the project is to increase diversity in the recruitment

process. To achieve this, we have to start by analysing our own workplaces.

"We should, for example, ask ourselves questions like: What norms apply here? How do we welcome and integrate new employees? We often find it difficult to see competence that varies in any way from our own norms," says Eva Löfgren.

A lot of work should be put into preparation ahead of the recruitment procedure itself.

"A clear process is needed. This should entail a structured administrative procedure and a structured interview situation. "FAIR" should result in a number of concrete tools and methods. My dream is to produce a stamp of quality or a certificate for recruitment in the public sector, something like the Fair Trade label," says Eva Löfgren.

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Theme III
Adaptability

ACCESSIBILITY AND PROFESSIONALLY
INTEGRATED DRAMATIC ART

Actors reject grants

As things stand today, people with an intellectual disability are in principle excluded from working as professionals. Moomsteatern (The Mooms Theatre Company) in Malmö wants to change this. The aim is to help the company's actors, who are all intellectually disabled, to move from living on a disability pension to earning a regular salary. The project challenges a number of established structures.

Moomsteatern in Malmö has been running full-time, professional theatrical activities since 1993. The company has high artistic ambitions, and several

of its productions have been a great success with the public.

Everyone who works for the company has long been paid a regular salary—apart from the actors themselves. The people who form the very basis of the activities instead receive a disability pension and a so-called habilitation grant of SEK 26 per day. The company's Artistic Director, Kjell Stjernholm, feels that this is outrageous.

"Everyone gets a salary apart from those who generate the income. The habilitation grants they get for coming to work every day don't even cover the

costs of their food vouchers," he says.

The company wants to see a change and to use the Equal Programme to help the intellectually disabled actors to become ordinary wage earners. Bringing about this transition, however, is no easy matter.

"It has a lot to do with the way people see the intellectually disabled. Many people find it difficult to even conceive of a situation in which the intellectually disabled could work under the same terms and conditions as people in general."

According to Kjell Stjernholm, the company's actors have demonstrated

time after time that they can perform as well as "normal" professional actors. "They play roles that are fully comparable to those of professional actors and deliver a professional result."

Kjell Stjernholm believes that there is a widespread misconception that people with an intellectual disability are slower than others. His own experience is rather the opposite.

"They have an ability to keep things simple and to get straight to the heart of the matter which, contrary to general belief, makes the working process quicker not slower."

The "Accessibility and Professionally Integrated Dramatic Art" project challenges a number of established structures on the labour market. The Swedish labour market is not designed to be accessible to the intellectually disabled, according to Kjell Stjernholm. Among other things, the effects on various payment and remuneration systems must be studied.

"Everyone knows that the social sector is full of money while in the cultural sector money is hard to come by. From a cultural perspective it would be best for everyone if "the disabled" went on being "the disabled". But the price we pay for this is that we discriminate against the disabled."

The project also clashes with current labour market policy, where the aim is rather to turn or draw people away from the cultural sector.

"You get more money when use a wheelchair as a collection box than when you raise the flag of culture. But this is not competition on equal terms. We are about to find out if there is any substance behind all the policies that say that it's better to get people off grants and into work," says Kjell Stjernholm.

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Participants in the play "Leksaksfångarna" 2004: Dino/Ronny Larsson, Manny and Esmeralda/Nina Streiffert.

Theme III Adaptability

SENIORS IN A CHANGING WORLD

International co-operation to extend working life



The exchange of knowledge across national borders will be an important factor when the Gothenburg sections of the Swedish Trade Union Confederation, the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise and Gothenburg University, initiate research projects.

“The research will lead to an action plan designed to get seniors to go on working,” says Anders Nilsson, of the TUC, when describing the project.

The project will be run in western Sweden with a focus on the industrial sector, and in southern Sweden with a focus on the service sector.

The project will encourage organisations and companies to take up the issue, but also attempt to increase the motivation of individuals. Anders Nilsson believes that part of the solution lies in adapting organisations in a better way to older workers.

“The greatest obstacle is often that older people can’t work at the same high pace as their younger colleagues. With flexible companies this would not necessarily be a problem.”

In Sweden, seniors tend to keep working longer, especially women, compared to the rest of Europe. Nevertheless, many of them have to stop working against their will.

“They feel that it’s hard to keep up or that they should make way for someone younger,” says Anders Nilsson.

The age structure of the population varies greatly throughout Europe.

“We hope to have a fruitful exchange of knowledge with the London Metropolitan University, which is also conducting research on these issues.”

In a few decades, the average age of the population will be much higher.

“We have to get people to stay at work longer for the sake of the national economy,” says Anders Nilsson.

Women in the healthcare and care sectors are particularly at risk.

“We have to find out what is about

their working situation that makes them so vulnerable. Above all, we have to do something about the problem.”

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ESMEC

Assignment empowerment

Women in the public sector are over-represented among people who are sick-listed due to mental ill-health.

ESMEC (Empowering Self Management—A European Challenge) is run by the Swedish Trade Union Confederation and the County Council of Blekinge, among others.

“One objective is to develop a certification for the sick-listing process, a governing document, in which all the parties concerned can find relevant information,” says Ann-Christin Andersson, Project Co-ordinator.

The aim is to quickly identify individuals who run the risk of being sick-listed in the long term.

“The situation is especially difficult for people who are not ethnic Swedes,” says Ann-Christin Andersson.

“Empowerment is a central issue for ESMEC. By taking control over their own lives and playing an active part in the process, the people concerned will have the opportunity to influence their situation. As things are at the moment, decisions are made over peoples’ heads,” says Ann-Christin Andersson.

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Theme IV Gender Equality

DRIVING SCHOOL FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Driving licence in gender equality

We know so much, so why is so little happening? This is the question that Stiftelsen Minerva (The Minerva Foundation) and the County Council of Dalarna asked themselves. Their response was to start a driving school for gender equality.

The “Driving School for Gender Equality” project aims to draw up a framework of regulations, a “highway code”, for gender equality.

“There are certain things that people simply would not do if they had a driving licence in gender equality,” says Marianne Lundberg, Project Manager.

“It should become completely natural to comply with the all the valid legislation and regulations, just as it should be when we’re out driving. If you give men and women different levels of pay, then you should lose your licence. When you recruit new employees, you should do so on the basis of competence, not tradition,” says Marianne Lundberg.

Stiftelsen Minerva has long worked with gender equality and leadership. The County Council of Dalarna wanted

to work with the issue because women make up a large part of its workforce.

“The County Council is a segregated workplace. Many of the employees are women, but men hold most of the senior posts,” says Marianne Lundberg.

The labour market is marked by horizontal gender segregation.

“Women and men choose different professions. We aim to find out why and bring about a change.”

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AGAMUS.NU

Is the countryside a black hole?

The Agamus.nu project aims to change negative attitudes to young people who choose to go on living in sparsely-populated rural areas.

“Many adults believe that young people who remain in Vilhelmina have no interest in getting either a job or an education,” says Tage Magnusson, who heads the municipal department with responsibility for education and cultural activities. He thinks that this is unfair. Unemployment among young people is a major problem here.

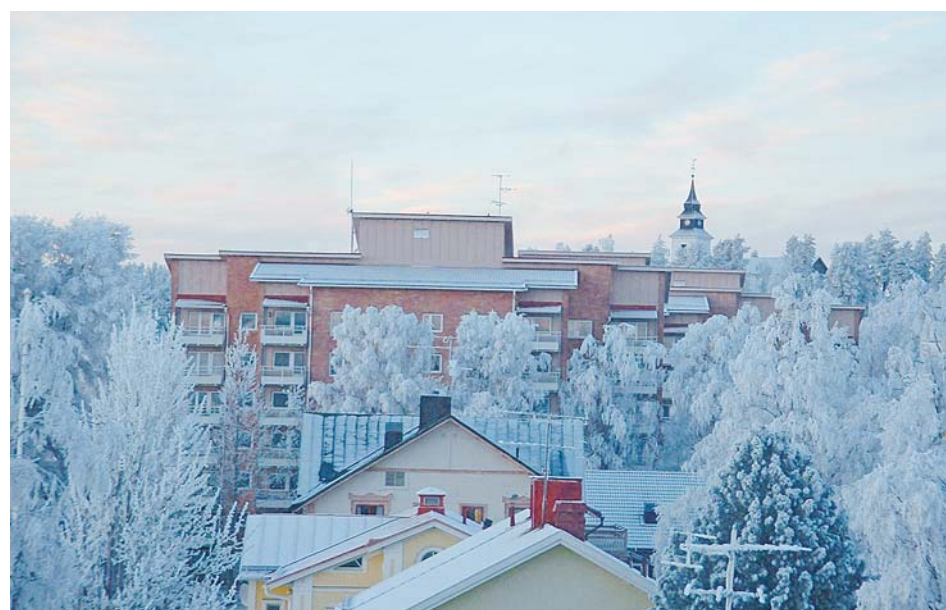
“Some of the girls at the upper-secondary school described their free time in Vilhelmina as “a black hole”. There is a lot of talk about hunting,

fishing and snow-scooters, but little is said about the future for the girls in the area. Starting a company is often mentioned as a possible option, but at present people have nowhere to go to get support for their ideas.”

The “Agamus.nu” project aims to increase knowledge about conditions for young people who choose to stay in sparsely-populated rural areas.

“The needs of young people are marginalised, which further increases their lack of self-confidence,” he says.

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Theme IV Gender Equality

THE VÄRMLAND ACADEMY
FOR WORKING LIFE

Balance is everything

Combining working life and family life is a difficult balancing act. Traditional notions about the division of work on the part of the authorities do not make it easier. "The Värmland Academy for Working Life" wants to change this by disseminating knowledge.



The idea for this project arose from a shared interest in how to balance working life and family life. The partners include the University of Karlstad, the Social Insurance Office and Föreningen för föräldrautbildare (The Association for Parental Training).

The overall objectives of the Partnership are to increase the influence of individuals over their own situation in life by providing healthier workplaces. The Partnership also wants to increase awareness in society in general that working life and family life, as an integral whole, represent a precondition for growth.

"Initially, the Partnership will cooperate with one workplace in order to identify relevant preconditions for, and obstacles to, an effective balance between working life and family life," says, Berit Sundgren Grinups of the University of Karlstad.

The knowledge gained will then be applied in a wider context.

"This is so that we will be better equipped to deal with "new" family structures with single parents, parents of the same gender and families with different cultural backgrounds."

Routines sometimes lead institutions to help create and reinforce traditional notions and attitudes.

"The County Labour Board and the Social Insurance Office realised that their clients are treated differently depending on factors such as gender and age," says Berit Sundgren Grinups.

By getting at the facts and producing statistics, and then packaging them and disseminating the knowledge gained in an easily understood way, "The Värmland Academy for Working Life" will help to change this situation.

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GENDERFORCE

Gender equality in crisis management

Training in gender equality and human trafficking will help Swedish personnel serving abroad.

The "Genderforce" Development Partnership has been formed by organisations that are active in the field of international crisis management. One of the objectives is to increase the influence of women in parallel with an effort to increase knowledge about gender equality.

Integrating the concept of gender equality and a more balanced division between the genders are key concepts for the "Genderforce" project.

"Put another way, you could say that our gender equality work is run both qualitatively and quantitatively. It's not enough to simply increase

the number of employees of a certain gender," says Charlotte Isaksson of the Swedish Armed Forces, one of the project's partners.

An important part of the work of "Genderforce" consists of further education, particularly for personnel who may observe or come into contact with human trafficking in the course of their work.

"We believe that more knowledge in this field would make things easier for Swedish personnel serving abroad. There is a fantastic knowledge base within the Partnership that we can all benefit from," says Charlotte Isaksson.

All personnel who are employed to work with international crisis management will complete a course on human trafficking.

"The course will take up questions such as what is, and what causes, human trafficking? Above all, however, the personnel attending the course will learn to recognise signs that human trafficking is taking place. We will also take up the measures that should be taken when human trafficking is suspected," says Charlotte Isaksson.

The Swedish Armed Forces, the Swedish Rescue Services Agency, the National Police Board and Kvinna till Kvinna (Woman to Woman) are members of the Partnership, and it is hoped that more partners can be linked to the project.

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Theme V Asylum



ASYLUM APPLICANTS LIVING IN THEIR OWN ACCOMMODATION IN THE COUNTIES OF UPPSALA AND VÄSTMANLAND

Survey will cover gaps in knowledge

Activity and greater knowledge about the way children react to having to flee will improve the situation of asylum seekers.

“Whether they stay in Sweden or not, the time they spend here should be meaningful,” says Sis Foster, the Project Co-ordinator.

The starting point for the Development Partnership “Asylum Applicants Living in their Own Accommodation in the Counties of Uppsala and Västmanland” is greater knowledge. Together with Uppsala University, among others, the Partnership will conduct a survey.

“Knowledge about the situation of asylum seekers living in their own accommodation is, to say the least, scanty. We don’t even know how many live in each flat or what the generation mix is like,” says Sis Foster.

The effort to find appropriate employment for asylum applicants should start as soon as possible after their arrival.

“New arrivals are called in for a health check-up. Even at this early stage, we would like to use this as an opportunity to get an idea of what activities might suit each particular family,” says Sis Foster.

The families should feel that the players are making a concerted effort on their behalf.

“We attach a lot of importance to improving co-ordination between organisations, institutions and companies. An organisational structure like this provides a sense of security,” says Sis Foster.

The activities may be designed to promote integration, but the fact that the asylum seekers may return to their home countries is also taken into

account.

“They should, for example, be able to get help to start an operation at the micro level that they can continue to run in their own country if they have to return. Education and training are important to those who will stay here. The children need to be prepared before starting school in Sweden,” says Sis Foster.

In many families that seek asylum, the stress of a long wait for a decision to be made can lead to mental ill-health. As the children often suffer most, parenting is one of the issues that the project focuses on.

“We will work to improve the knowledge of the parents about how children react to migration and having to flee.”

In total, there are approximately 800 refugees in the county. The Development Partnership hopes to be able to reach them all.

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NOVE

Employment for Asylum Applicants

The Swedish Migration Board has been criticised for its reception of asylum seekers in general and for the employment problem in particular. In Skellefteå, they are now tackling this problem.

The NOVE Development Partnership is working to improve the organised activities that the Swedish Migration Board currently runs for asylum seekers.

“The period in which applicants have to wait for a decision from the Board must be filled with meaningful activity. This would improve the general state of health of the asylum seekers. Around 90 per cent of the applications for asylum are rejected, so

the asylum seekers must also be given more help and support for the return home,” says Pekka Annala, the Project Manager of NOVE.

The Red Cross, municipalities, associations and companies are among the project partners. The aim is to be able to offer the asylum applicants a meaningful and instructive range of activities.

The project has links to the previous Equal project “Access”, which was initiated by a company called Urkraft in Skellefteå. “Access” developed a method for helping Swedes who found it difficult to gain a foothold on the labour market. This model will now be adapted to asylum seekers.

“I heard about “Access” at a seminar and was inspired,” says Pekka Annala.

The idea has been put forward that all the financial added value created during the project should be donated to the Red Cross. Through its international network of contacts, the Red Cross strives to ensure that asylum seekers whose applications are rejected are given support and a humane reception when they are forced to return home.

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Pekka Annala

A big word

The “Collins English Dictionary” defines diversity as “the state or quality of being different or varied”.

We asked a number of brave souls who were defying the winter weather in Sollentuna shopping centre what diversity means to them.

What does the word “diversity” mean to you?



Norma Hervia, Nursing Assistant
“It means all, many, mixed. It’s about everyone being entitled to the same terms and conditions.”



Aso Ahmad, Unemployed
“That people from different cultures and backgrounds can live together. For me it is a positive word.”



Linn Wågberg, Consultant
“Global influences. That people have different backgrounds, different languages, come from different countries. It simply means that we are different.”



Lisa Blomberg, Student
“Oh, that’s difficult! Diversity is a big word. But I think it means that everyone should be allowed to take part.”



Mashallah Atashkar, Caretaker
“Diversity means a multicultural society in which everyone feels secure and comfortable and is treated equally.”