

45 Development Partnerships to fight against Discrimination and Exclusion in Working Life



Equal

The Community Initiative Equal is an European Union programme to fight discrimination and inequality in connection with the labour market. Every person's competence and possibilities must be recognized and integrated in the society with no regards to sex, age, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or disability.

The objective is a working life free from discrimination and inequalities, characterized by diversity.

In Sweden 45 Development Partnerships are working since 2002 to find new pathways and methods to change structures and attitudes that are discriminating or excluding. Around 700 non-governmental organisations, municipalities, enterprises and public authorities are active in the Development Partnerships. All Swedish Development Partnerships are co-operating with Development Partnerships within Europe.

Equal's Umbrella project presents the Swedish Development Partnerships in this brochure. The text is based on interviews.

More information can be found on the following web sites
www.paraplyprojektet.se
www.esf.se

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Diversity in Västernorrland

Diversity in Västernorrland is a Development Partnership consisting of 14 different organisations. These include three organisations that represent discriminated groups, while the others are major social organisations. Together, they aim to increase awareness of the importance of broad diversity and to create a greater degree of openness in working life.

A range of trials/subprojects are underway within the framework of the Development Partnership, but these all share a common purpose, i.e. to create diversity at the workplace. The target groups involved and the methods used do vary, however. The Partnership works with a broad definition of the diversity concept.

“Above all, however, we have to identify and highlight the opportunities that broad diversity offers to individuals, workplaces and the county as a whole,” says Solgun Lundgren, co-ordinator of the Diversity in Västernorrland Partnership. The county’s vision – Västernorrland offers opportunities and diversity – provides a good base for the work of our development partnership.”

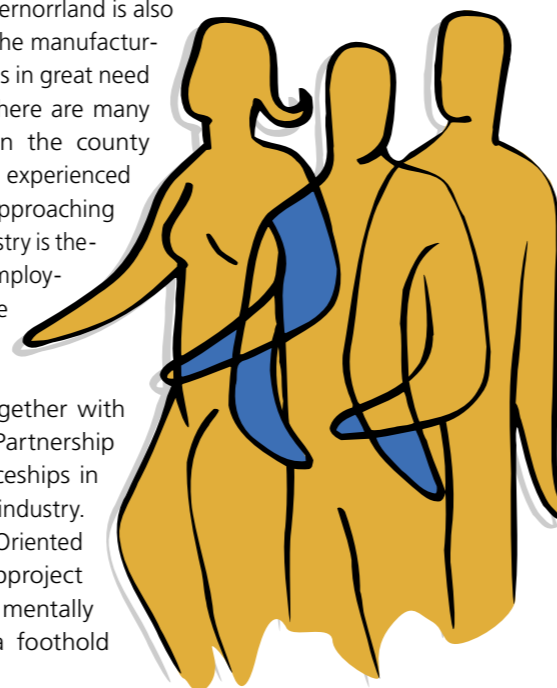
One of the subprojects is called “Up With Work!” This is an Internet-based, interactive training programme on multicultural Sweden and is aimed at workplaces. The programme is free and available on the web. It can be described as a computer game for workplaces that aims to increase awareness of prejudices and to open up workplaces to new people with new and valuable skills and expertise.

Another subproject is called Safir (Swedish in Working Life for Immigrants). Safir works at the individual level and aims to create a more flexible Swedish training course for immigrants and to facilitate integration into working life for people with a foreign background. This

course is also web-based and alternates tuition with self-instructional sessions. In addition, the participants spend four weeks studying at a workplace and receive two weeks of practical training. The first course will be run in the autumn of 2003.

The Development Partnership also runs a subproject in the healthcare sector. The aim is to help people on the long-term sicklist while also getting people who are thinking of giving up their jobs with the county council to keep on working there. This subproject is run by the county council and entails getting people who are unemployed or on the long-term sicklist to act as a support to students in the field of healthcare. As the healthcare sector is a sector in which women predominate and where the number of those on the sicklist is very high, women form the main target group.

Diversity in Västernorrland is also co-operating with the manufacturing industry, which is in great need of young labour. There are many small companies in the county that have older and experienced workers who are approaching retirement. The industry is therefore using older employees and those on the long-term sicklist as mentors. The idea is to work together with the Development Partnership to create apprenticeships in the manufacturing industry. The “Working Life-Oriented Rehabilitation” subproject works to help the mentally disabled to gain a foothold



on the labour market. The subproject is being run in Sundsvall by Samrehab, which is a collaboration between the Employment Office, the Social Insurance Office, the County Council of Västernorrland and the Municipality of Sundsvall. People who themselves have suffered from mental illness are now working as guides to support the participants. At present, four such guides have been employed. They help and support people with a mental disability to achieve their goals, for example to work in a library.

The “Active Life” subproject is a collaboration between sports associations and associations for the disabled that aims to help the physically disabled to find work. These efforts are based on the wishes of the individuals concerned, their knowledge and experience and their capabilities. The subproject has employed guides who will help disabled people to find jobs. The associations’ networks and knowledge of the local labour market are now being used to find workplaces.

Another subproject aims to help people from the Romani community to find work. According to Solgun Lundgren, this Romani project will begin in the autumn.

The County Administrative Board for Västernorrland is the overall co-ordinator of the Diversity in Västernorrland Development Partnership, but the members of the partnership the work closely together.

“We are learning a lot from each other as all of the subprojects co-operate so closely. We are all working towards the same goals - to increase diversity and to combat discrimination. Even though each subproject has a specific target group, we are all working with the broad concept of diversity in mind. If you view all of the subprojects as a whole and as part of a Development Partnership, you will see that they represent a broad diversity perspective that also comprises the equal opportunities aspect,” says Solgun Lundgren. “During the autumn, we will be working on how we can more clearly integrate equal opportunity issues into our work.”

An important result of the work so far consists of the contacts and informal networks that have been developed.

Transnationally, Diversity in Västernorrland is working with Development Partnerships in Italy, the Netherlands and Ireland. These Partnerships focus mainly on preventing the discrimination of the functionally disabled.

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EMBA – Empowerment in Baronbackarna

In the Baronbackarna housing area in the Municipality of Örebro, the Empowerment in Baronbackarna Development Partnership is working to help immigrants to take power of their own area and their own lives.

“Baronbackarna constitutes the geographical boundaries of the project and the total population of the area makes up the target group. Eighty per cent of the households in Baronbackarna are depended on some of financial support, for example social benefits, unemployment benefits or disability pensions. It is an extremely poor area and an area that is segregated in relation to the rest of the city,” says Per-Erik Andersson, Co-ordinator of the project.

The Empowerment in Baronbackarna Development Partnership aims to change all this. An underlying aim is to enable people to become “providers” rather than “receivers”, that is to become wage earners and taxpayers.

“Our focus is always on empowerment and this has yielded concrete results. People have found jobs,” says Per-Erik Andersson.

The hypothesis behind the project is that there is structural discrimination in society and on the labour market. The problem is not that there is a lack of work, but rather a lack of wage-paying employers.

The development partnership recognises the fact that current employment programmes often fail to lead to paid jobs. An increasing number of people are, for various reasons, being excluded from the labour market and becoming dependent on benefits. The partnership, therefore, aims to start co-operatives in order to provide alternative routes to employment and to find new models in Baronbackarna that can be used to change the nature and direction of current employment programmes. In other words, the project aims to give people the tools

they need to take control of their own lives.

“People must gain control of their own lives and their own purse strings. When your on benefits, it is the authorities that control the purse strings – both in terms of how much money you get and how you should spend it. We create jobs by starting co-operatives. The co-operatives are not subsidised but are based on empowerment, that is the members do everything themselves. We just provide support, and in exchange we get access to their first-hand knowledge and experience of exclusion,” says Per-Erik Andersson.

The co-operatives produce and sell goods and services. There is a restaurant business and a cleaning and property management business, Kooperativet Kullen, within the framework of the project. At present, there are 65 participants. Over the course of 12 months, 15 people who had been unemployed for 8 – 10 years have found jobs. These jobs are mainly within the co-operatives, but some of the individuals involved have also dared to try their luck on “the market”

The Development Partnership believes that the comradeship and sense of community that develops among those working in the co-operatives provides a form of rehabilitation, and it thus aims to sell rehabilitation services.

“Rehabilitation here is a question of empowerment and of handing over control to the individual. The rehabilitation lies in people being seen. Rehabilitation in this context must be de-psychologised,” says Per-Erik Andersson.

The starting point is what the participants themselves want to do, and the project management does its best to meet the training needs that arise. There are, however, a number of structural obstacles along the way.

“Our main task is to identify obstacles. The obstacles are there, inherent in the system,” says Per-Erik Andersson.

He says that the national employment programmes are a good example. Many municipalities have economic problems and find it difficult to fund employment programmes of their own. They therefore try to pass on these costs and this responsibility to the State, as the State finances the national programmes.

“The local government officers mean well, but the structures are such that the municipalities do not in the first instance strive to give people jobs,” says Per-Erik Andersson.

The Development Partnership is also conducting research in co-operation with Örebro University. This research focuses on the participants’ first-hand knowledge of exclusion, that is of being excluded from the labour market and, by extension, from society.

Empowerment in Baronbackarna is conducting participatory research, which means that the participants themselves are researchers and follow scientific methods under the guidance of a research manager from Örebro University. This is done in order to avoid inherent structural thinking and prejudice. As “professional” researchers also have preconceived notions and attitudes as to how things “really” are, it was felt that this risk could be minimised by letting the participants themselves conduct the research. The project aims to create jobs through all its operations.

“We are working under market conditions and in this way are creating the market, that is demand, itself. This is why we are also running courses on marketing,” says Per-Erik Andersson. He is also convinced that the jobs are there, it is simply a question of shaking up established and entrenched structures in order to make them accessible to people.

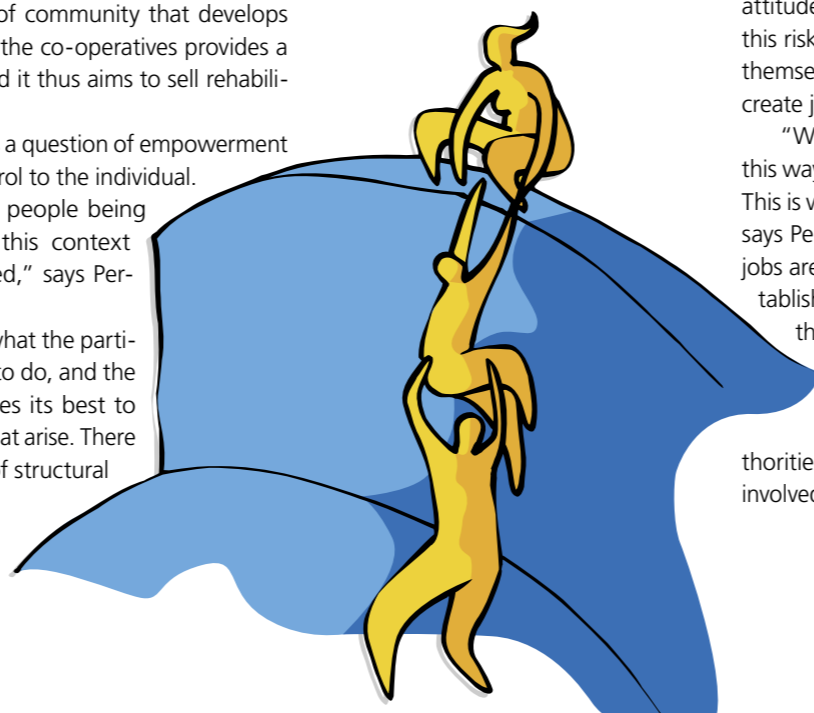
The project is now working to attract more assignments and jobs by means of marketing.

It also wants to increase its profile with the authorities that provide the funding that the individuals involved are dependent on. Although the authorities are

members of the Development Partnership, knowledge about the Partnership is not particularly widespread within their organisational structures.

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Kuben.nu

The Association of Municipalities in the County of Kalmar and Rock City in Hultsfred are co-operating in order to achieve a structural change in learning in the region and thus create new routes into working life. The Development Partnership, which is called Kuben, aims to do this by creating both physical and web-based forums that are available to all, irrespective of ethnic background, functional disability, gender or age. The Development Partnership also wants to make computer technology available to all.

"Today, informal skills and experience that have been acquired outside of traditional schooling count for nothing. We want to change this, but to do so we have to influence the existing structures," says Stefan Svensson, Co-ordinator of the Kuben Development Partnership.

Kuben wants to use the latest Information Technology to create new forms for learning and thus new routes into working life.

"The systems must be open and available to everyone, and we believe that it is fully possible to achieve this," says Stefan Svensson.

The Development Partnership is running various subprojects to achieve its goal. One of these subprojects is working with the libraries in the county. Study and learning environments will be created in all of the municipal libraries in the County of Kalmar. These will be physical forums where the public will be able to use computers, the Internet and other new technical aids. The idea is that the libraries, which are open and accessible environments, should begin to work more actively with learning and not simply act as centres where people can borrow books or other materials.

These study environments will be open to all. Kuben will also run certain specific activities to ensure that they really are accessible to everyone, even, for example, to those who have a disability or were born abroad.

"We believe that running limited, narrowly-defined programmes for specific groups contributes to an increase, not a reduction, in segregation and discrimination. Instead, we have to make things available to everyone, but on the basis of their own individual situations," says Stefan Svensson.

Kuben is also attempting to find effective models for the infrastructure for adult learning. In the Municipality of Hultsfred, the Partnership is therefore running a "model building" subproject called Lärkan (Skylark). One employee is working as an adviser in the field of adult education. Lärkan, however, is also a forum for people who work in the learning field.

The idea is that Lärkan should help the Development Partnership to find forms for co-operation between various players and link together individuals who work with learning, but also to create a physical forum that is open to all.

The Partnership is also in the process of developing something it calls the AssistCenter. This subproject has a specific target group, i.e. people with a functional disability. It concerns education and self-realisation at the individual level on the basis of each individual's situation and needs. The participants have, for example, learned to work with computers and read about the EU.

AssistCenter focuses directly on



companies, as the aim is to find work for the individuals involved.

"Even though we are working with a specific target group in this case, the subproject is still teaching us lessons that we can put to good use in the other subprojects," says Stefan Svensson.

Another subproject is working to create a portal for lifelong learning. Kuben will develop a forum on the Internet for players in the field of learning. The new technology will be used to its full potential.

The portal will also make it easier for individuals to work with their own learning on the web, for example by producing web-based courses that are available to all.

The creation of the portal is about using IT to create availability and accessibility. The Development Partnership believes very strongly in this project, especially as 90 per cent of the population of Kalmar now have access to broadband – an excellent precondition for the success of the project.

"All of our subprojects are now up and running and going well. But we have to realise that changing structures, which is our aim, will take time," says Stefan Svensson.

He says that one of the objectives of Kuben is to counteract the gender segregation that exists on the labour market today. All of the subprojects therefore try to actively apply an equal-opportunities perspective so that current gender structures are not inadvertently bolstered or maintained.

The Partnership aims instead to create gender-neutral methods so that learning really becomes available to all irrespective of gender, ethnic background, disability or any other factor.

"We want to turn the spotlight on the systems that exist today so that various players in society can see the prevailing structures and their own roles in them. This will also enable peo-

ple to see how they can influence and change these structures," says Stefan Svensson.

Kuben is co-operating transnationally with a Development Partnership in Girona in Spain. This Partnership is also interested in using new technology in learning and is co-operating in the work on the portal. The aim is to develop a Spanish equivalent.

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Praxis

– New arenas for teleworking

The Praxis Development Partnership aims to make it easier for people with functional disabilities to telework, or telecommute, as part of their rehabilitation. By creating better opportunities for disabled people to telework, Praxis believes that it will be possible to reduce the number of people on the sicklist and the number of those who are forced to retire on a disability pension, while also improving the quality of life of the individuals concerned. Praxis is co-ordinated by the Swedish Rheumatism Association, and the Development Partnership is trying to develop effective models for teleworking for rheumatics. The Partnership's goal is to publish a handbook that presents possible solutions and good examples.

"The handbook is the most important part of our work. Everyone knows that there are problems with rehabilitation as it stands today, but we have conducted a deeper analysis and identified possible solutions and good examples," says Rolf Greiff, the Co-ordinator of the Praxis Development Partnership.

In order to produce effective solutions for teleworking, the Development Partnership has recruited 19 participants or pilots, as they are called, throughout the country. These are all rheumatics and on the sicklist. Individual rehabilitation plans have been drawn up for all of these pilots and the aim is that all of them should be able to return to their place of work, perhaps with slight changes in their duties. Most of the pilots are office workers who do administrative work. However, Rolf Greiff says that the Praxis pilots include both a teacher and a person who works with marketing, and

that changes in routines at their workplaces enable them both to do their jobs by teleworking.

A pilot's rehabilitation plan runs over a period of 13 months. The idea is that all the uncertainties relating to teleworking should be resolved by then so that the pilot is rehabilitated and can go on working. Teleworking gives the rehabilitation process more flexibility and is more adaptable to the situation of the rheumatics themselves. Praxis conducts a follow-up with the pilots and their employers once a month in order to see how things are going and to check on both the positive and negative aspects. The project has also created a close network around the individuals concerned that includes the Social Insurance Offices and the relevant trade unions.

"All of the pilots are very satisfied and things are going well for them. Their employers are also very understanding. Otherwise, the response from employers has varied. They are usually positive, but sometimes they have had financial problems or been unable to redistribute the work as required," says Rolf Greiff.

The pilots receive rehabilitation benefits from the Social Insurance Offices, which are also members of the Development Partnership. The employers, on the other hand, are responsible for costs for installing the computers and the IT solutions needed for teleworking in the pilots' homes.

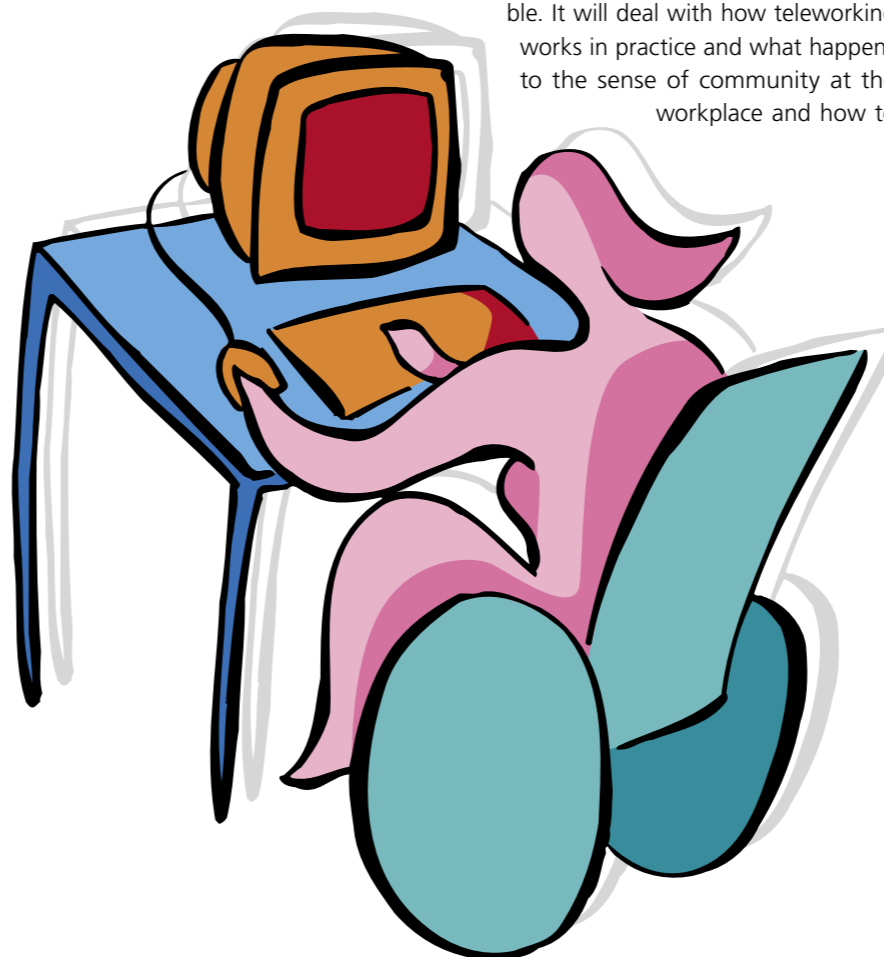
An evaluator has interviewed the staff of the Development Partnership in order to write a report that Praxis will use as part of a self-analysis process.

"This will be about the obstacles that exist to arranging telework and how working methods can be changed for the better," says Rolf Greiff.

The most important task of the Development

Partnership, however, is to produce a handbook on how teleworking can be used as rehabilitation. It will be possible to use this handbook both for rheumatics and for people with other disabilities. Concrete advice and models for teleworking will be developed on the basis of the follow-up of the pilots and the interviews with the project staff. The handbook will, for example, contain guidelines on how Social Insurance Offices can change their working structures so that they become more flexible and advice to companies on how to arrange teleworking in the best possible way.

"A lot of the handbook will be generally applicable. It will deal with how teleworking works in practice and what happens to the sense of community at the workplace and how to



avoid teleworkers becoming isolated, which is one of the biggest problems associated with teleworking," says Rolf Greiff.

Praxis is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in Greece and Germany. Together, these Partnerships wish to improve information on the opportunities for people with functional disabilities to work and study. The Transnational Partnership also wants to improve access to information and knowledge about where it can be found for disabled people. Work is also underway to improve information for employers about the conditions governing the disabled and what they can offer, so that employers see the possibilities and not just the problems.

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Advantage Gothenburg

– world cultures in focus

The Advantage Gothenburg Development Partnership is co-ordinated by the National Museum of World Cultures in Gothenburg. The aim is to strengthen the self-esteem of individuals and to find good routes into working life for people with a different ethnic background. Advantage Gothenburg, however, will also result in one of the inaugural exhibitions of the Museum.

“It is important to highlight peoples’ competence and culture as resources for Swedish society and the Swedish labour market. This is what our Development Partnership is trying to do,” says Katarina Mlekov, Project Manager for Advantage Gothenburg.

The Partnership works with various cultural activities that aim to increase the cultural awareness and self-confidence of the individuals involved, and thus create drive and the ability to take action on their part.

The National Museum of World Cultures in Gothenburg is under development and will open at the end of 2004. One of the Museum’s most important tasks is to demonstrate that cultural diversity is a positive force for social development. The participants in the project, 20 job seekers who come from the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia) but who live in Gothenburg, are contributing their own stories to an exhibition which, among other things, will cover migration from Africa during different eras. At the same time as the Museum is creating its

exhibition, it is also trying to develop a model to help people with a different ethnic background to achieve their own goals – which may be to find a job, to study or to start their own company.

“Our aim is that, after the project, the participants should either be working, studying or running their own companies,” says Katarina Mlekov.

The project participants have all been through a regular recruitment process. In other words, they have all had to apply to join the project, which Katarina Mlekov believes increases motivation. Advantage Gothenburg is currently conducting a survey of the participants to find out what they want to do.

Individual trainee and/or action programmes will be drawn up on the basis of this survey. If a person’s goal is to find a job within a particular occupation or area, the Partnership will contact a suitable “sponsor” company and match this company with the participant concerned. If additional training is required, Advantage Gothenburg will work to ensure that the participant receives this training, with the final goal being for the participant to get a job with the sponsor company concerned on completion of the training. People who wish to study further will be able to receive practical training in their chosen occupational area while awaiting the start of a course.

Some of the participants that wish to study may need to add to their basic education first. Katarina Mlekov mentions a participant who wanted to apply to the Chalmers University of Technology as an example. He needed to study a number of other subjects first before he qualified to apply. Another of the Advantage participants is a physicist and has worked as a physics teacher. He was therefore able to give the first participant lessons within the framework of the project so

that he could apply to, and be accepted by, Chalmers University.

When participants are accepted to a course of study they leave the Advantage project as the goal has been reached in their case. If participants are not accepted, a new round of planning takes place and a new action programme is drawn up. A participant may, for example, wish to boost his or her knowledge in the area concerned by undergoing a period of practical training before applying again. In such cases, Advantage helps the participant to find a training place.

For those who wish to start companies, the project receives assistance from the Swedish Association of Ethnic Entrepreneurs, which assesses the ideas put forward. The Association also provides training for the participants on what they need to know about how to run companies in Sweden. They learn about the legislation, the VAT regulations and everything else they need to know as entrepreneurs in Sweden.

In parallel with the participants’ individual trainee programmes, those who want to also have the opportunity to be involved in the work on the exhibition on the Horn of Africa. This is part of the largest inaugural exhibition, which will be about Africa.

“The Museum has professional personnel, but our 20 participants from the Horn of Africa clearly have special expertise regarding their own culture and background. We would of course like to make the most of this and we are therefore using their knowledge in the documentation of objects and in the development of the content of the exhibition,” says Katarina Mlekov.

Two researchers are also involved in the work of the Development Partnership. A researcher from France is working with the documentation of the Museum’s objects from the area on the basis of the knowledge and experience of the participants. The project is also co-operating with an historian who uses a method called reminiscence work. The idea is that getting individuals to talk about their own history and culture will increase their self-awareness, which is to their ad-

vantage when they try to make their way in Swedish working life.

Transnationally, Advantage is working with Development Partnerships in Austria and Scotland. The partners believe that this co-operation will help to spread the working method throughout Europe and facilitate the integration of people of different ethnic backgrounds in other countries too.

The Partnership is working closely with the various urban districts in Gothenburg and will spread information to politicians, schools and others. The Partnership has also been active in providing information about Advantage Gothenburg at companies and trade fairs and in associations. The primary aim of these information activities has been to recruit sponsor companies, but also project participants.

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Exit

– From prison to Social Co-operative

“Exit – From prison to Social co-operative” is a Development Partnership that wants to help people who have been released from prison to become part of the community and to find a place to live and work. The Partnership has a special focus on women who have recently been released.

“Released prisoners have always found it difficult to return to society and to find jobs and a place to live. Nowadays, this is even more difficult because the prisons in Sweden are overcrowded and many of the prisoners are drug abusers. We are trying to counteract the exclusion suffered by many released prisoners,” says Pernilla Svebo Lindgren, Co-ordinator of Exit.

The project is aimed at a small group of people with their own special needs and preconditions. Exit bases its work on these particular needs and preconditions in order to help the individuals concerned to find their way to a situation in which they can work and support themselves. The project feels that it is important that people who have been prisoners themselves are on hand to help those who have recently been released. This is why four self-help associations for previous offenders form the driving force in the Development Partnership.

These are Föreningen Bryggan, KRIS, Vävstugan and Ateljé Trädet. The partnership employs four project managers who have either been prisoners before and/or have been drug abusers and who come from the four self-help organisations.

“We focus mainly on people who are over the age of 30, that is those who are tired of a life of crime and who want to change their lives,” says Pernilla Svebo Lindgren.

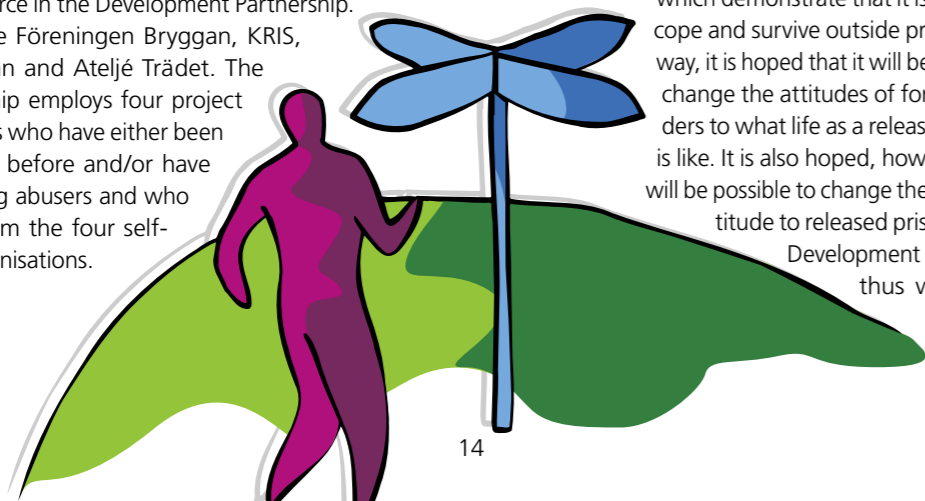
Four co-operatives have been started within the framework of the Partnership. Pernilla Svebo Lindgren says that 12 per cent of all those sentenced, including those sentenced to probation, are women, and that five per cent of all those sentenced to prison are women. Women are a group that require special measures, and two of the co-operatives are therefore for women only. Exit also wishes to set up a halfway house for women.

The four co-operatives are called Karins döttrar, Ateljé Trädet, Villa Solberg and Café Solberg. The Development Partnership’s vision is for all four co-operatives to become self-supporting.

Karins döttrar is a weaving and handicraft co-operative for women, while Ateljé Trädet is a women’s handicraft centre. Villa Solberg is a recently-started halfway house for men. It provides both accommodation and vocational training.

Exit is also in the process of starting a café called Café Solberg which will be for both women and men.

The Way Out! wants to highlight good examples which demonstrate that it is possible to cope and survive outside prison. In this way, it is hoped that it will be possible to change the attitudes of former offenders to what life as a released prisoner is like. It is also hoped, however, that it will be possible to change the public’s attitude to released prisoners. The Development Partnership thus works with



different objectives and at different levels. The work covers both individuals and structures.

In August 2002, Exit started a training course for 13 former offenders on how to run co-operatives. The four existing co-operatives were formed by people who completed this course. The course was held on two half-days per week and the participants learned how to draw up a business plan and how to conduct marketing. They were also taught what a co-operative is and how to form a strong group and then incorporate new people.

The Partnership consists of a total of 12 different authorities and organisations. The task of the authorities involved is to support, but not to control. A working group for the exchange of knowledge and experience has been formed to facilitate co-operation. This is as much for the authorities’ sake as for the released prisoners, as there is a lack of knowledge on both sides as to why things are as they are and they are not used to working together.

The Development Partnership has also formed a working group that addresses system and structural issues. This group, for example submits comments to the enquiry on pay subsidies, studies the results of other enquiries and recent developments and tries to come up with positive changes.

The work of The Exit Partnership has led to concrete results. Several released prisoners have found jobs, and interest in, and knowledge about, the Partnership is spreading. At the Högsbo correctional facility there is, for example, a project manager who meets the prisoners to inform them about Exit.

Pernilla Svebo Lindgren says that the Partnership is now working to start the café in order to create more jobs. The partnership also wants to create more occupational training places at, for example, Café Solberg.

“We also want to open a halfway house for women. Women who have been released from prison face major problems today. Many of them are homeless and drugs are in circulation at many of the temporary accommodation centres available to them. We also hope that

the project will encourage society to do more for these groups so that better alternatives than simply drawing supplementary benefits are provided,” says Pernilla Svebo Lindgren.

Exit also co-operates transnationally with Development Partnerships in Italy, Greece, Germany and the UK under the name Le Mat. Study trips are one feature of this co-operation. The Karins döttrar co-operative has visited Rome, for example. Interviews will be conducted during all the study trips and will eventually be compiled in a book.

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Meeting the future

It is difficult for young people to gain a foothold on the labour market today. Those who have not attended an upper-secondary school, or who have left without a complete leaving certificate, find this even more difficult. At the same time, many industries are experiencing a severe shortage of labour. A number of municipalities in Skåne have noted this and are trying to do something about it.

In the municipalities of Klippan, Åstorp and Perstorp in Skåne, it has been noted that far too many young people are leaving the upper-secondary schools without having anywhere to go. Many of them fall into drug abuse or a life of crime. Meanwhile, some of the companies in the area have a severe shortage of labour and this will become even more acute over the next few years when many of their employees retire. The municipalities of Klippan, Åstorp and Perstorp have therefore joined forces in a programme that focuses on a clearly defined target group in an effort to reduce these problems.

The target group for the Development Partnership consists of young people who leave the upper-secondary schools without having anywhere else to go and without any concrete plans or objectives. This group is growing at an alarming rate, with major costs for society as a result. The goal of Meeting the Future is to reduce the size of the group in the risk zone by making it easier for the young people concerned to gain a foothold on the labour market.

“We have now found a number of enthusiasts in the various municipalities who have ideas on how to change the upper-secondary schools. It is often possible to identify the pupils that will have problems later while they are still in the primary or secondary schools. We want to develop ways of following up these pupils more easily and effectively in co-operation with pupil welfare teams, that is with welfare counsellors and study and careers counsellors, but also to run company-orientation programmes already at the secondary school level. Pupils should have more opportunities to visit a range of companies and to spend periods of practical training in companies,” says Eva Sandel, Co-ordinator of the Meeting the Future Development Partnership.

Most of the activities of Meeting the Future focus on introducing more practical training and work-experience periods into the upper-secondary schools. It has been noted that there is a demand for apprentices in many companies. The Health Care Programme and the Industry Programme are two of the national upper-secondary school programmes that are supposed to be vocationally-oriented, but the target group feels that they are too theoretical. Attempts are therefore being made to improve methods for learning at the workplace.

The Meeting the Future Development Partnership also co-operates with the upper-secondary school in Klippan, which is attended by pupils with various forms of functional disability. Many of these pupils are dependent

on outside assistance in order to get around – public transportation services for the disabled and so on. The partnership has therefore started a project that gives these pupils the opportunity, during school hours, to acquire a licence to drive vehicles for the disabled. Meeting the Future and the school are now developing training material and setting up a driving circuit on the school grounds. The project has also leased a driving-school car that has been adapted to the needs of the disabled. During the autumn of 2003, a group of around 10 pupils will begin preparations to take their driving licence during their time at upper-secondary school.

The Partnership also applies a gender equality perspective. Some 600 pupils are following vocationally-oriented programmes at the Klippan upper-secondary school. Six of these are girls. Initially, they had no female role models and did not know each other because they were studying different programmes. Meeting the Future is therefore helping them to form a group so that they can get to know each other, meet other women who have achieved success in occupations where men predominate and form networks with girls in other schools.

“Discriminated groups are not always given a high priority. Efforts to change their situation seldom lead to quick results in the short term, but Equal provides an opportunity to tackle these problems and to try new solutions,” says Eva Sandel.

She says that the Partnership’s ideas met an overwhelmingly positive response initially, but that crass reality in the municipalities began to make its mark after a while. Nor is it self-evident that a project can always live up to the goals and visions it had from the start. A project must be allowed to change, nothing can be fixed and predetermined from the beginning.

“It was not possible to make such major changes in so short a time as we first thought. We are working with a major problem that must be dealt with and must be given the time and money required,” says Eva Sandel.

Meeting the Future is also co-operating transnationally with Development partnerships in Spain, Italy, Germany and France. These countries have similar target groups, that is young people at risk, but different situations. In Sweden, these young people are to be found in the schools and it is here that the resources must be invested. In the schools, preventive measures can be implemented at an early stage. In other countries, however, there is a need to go out and find the young people who have dropped out of, or been excluded from, the system and to invest more in treatment, programmes and other measures.

“The perspective that you get when you meet people from other countries is fantastic. The measures needed and the problems involved are entirely different in the different countries. It is because of these differences, however, that there is so much experience to share. It’s very exciting,” says Eva Sandel.

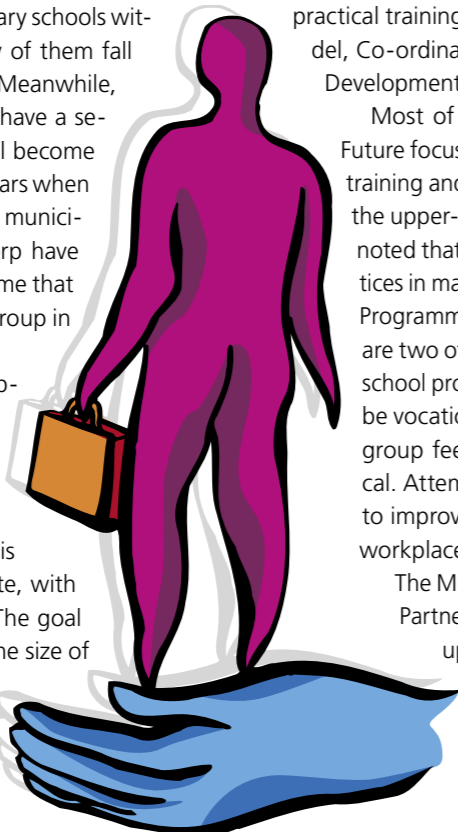
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Better Release

– release from prison as a change of culture

The Better Release Development Partnership aims to highlight the problems and the cultural change entailed in being released from prison. The Partnership wishes to improve the release situation for people who have served a prison sentence. The overall aim is to make it easier for former prisoners to re-enter society and the labour market. The Partnership's activities are based on three national themes and three local subprojects.

"Today, people are expected to handle more or less everything themselves from day one of their release, and preferably to become a useful member of the community right from the start," says Jenny Hulth, Information Officer for the Better Release Development Partnership.

A successful release process, however, requires effective co-operation between individuals, the authorities, organisations and associations. The measures taken must be characterised by a common, holistic view and continuity. At present, there are both structural and personal problems that obstruct this process. Better release aims to clarify and improve co-operation between authorities, organisations, NGOs and companies in order to achieve the greatest possible continuity and competence throughout the release process.

The Development Partnership is running three subprojects at three different correctional facilities; Sagsjön in Gothenburg, Storboda outside Stockholm and Tygelsjö outside Malmö. These three facilities have different themes and

problems. Together with Sagsjön, the Development Partnership is working on the release situation for women. Storboda has an urban/structural theme as the focus is on the problems involved in being released in a large city. Tygelsjö is working with a multicultural theme, i.e. what is it like for a person of foreign origin to be sentenced and then released into Swedish society?

The national activities of the Development Partnership are based on three themes. Under the theme Obstacles/Opportunities, the Partnership is investigating and documenting the obstacles and opportunities that exist in connection with release and proposing improvements. Better Release has, for example, compiled a questionnaire on issues relating to the release situation that has been sent to KRIS (an association for ex-offenders), personnel at correctional facilities, prisoners and lay probation officers from voluntary organisations such as the National Association of Voluntary Social Workers (RFS).

The Existential Issues theme aims to help prisoners to better understand themselves and the world around them through an internal, personal process. In such a process, individuals can experience a change of culture and create the potential for breaking with their criminal backgrounds and becoming part of Swedish society. The Christian Council of Sweden and the Swedish Muslim Council work actively with this theme. At Tygelsjö, for example, prisoners are invited to join a discussion group with a priest to talk about personal issues, such as how to relate to things in the outside world.

The Communication/Opinion theme attempts to create a dialogue with politicians and authorities in order to highlight the release situation. Within the scope of this theme, the Development Partnership will publish its results and generate discussion and debate on issues relating to release.

One of Better Release's activities is called the Vision Room. The idea is to bring society into the prisons. At Storboda and Tygelsjö, rooms have been set up where, among other things, it is planned to hold meetings between the prisoners and representatives from associations, trade unions, employers and others. Study circles and other forms of training can also be held in these rooms. It is also intended that the prisoners should have access to web-based information channels. The Vision Room concept is based on the idea that the prisoners should be able to use their time in prison to build up interests, contacts and knowledge that they will continue to find useful after they are released. Better Release hopes that it will soon be possible to open a Vision Room at Sagsjön too.

Sagsjön, which is a correctional facility for women, has opened a halfway house where, for example, prisoners on parole will live. The facility has also established contacts with external players, including the Salvation Mission, a Christian organisation in Gothenburg that carries out social work. In this collaboration, the Mission discusses its activities with the personnel and the prisoners, so that that the prisoners know where they can turn. The Salvation Mission also has a women's centre and trains personnel in parental issues, i.e. how they should relate to prisoners that have children. Sagsjön has also established contacts with the prostitution unit of the City of Gothenburg. This unit has a clearly defined target group and task in the Partnership.

"We have failed to get important players like the National Board of Health and Welfare and the municipalities to join the Partnership. They have not really been interested, which is a pity," says Jenny Hulth.

Better Release is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in Germany, France and England. The closest collaboration is with the Women into Work Development Partnership in England which has, for example, conducted a survey of the obstacles that face women who want to enter the labour market.

Jenny Hulth says that both Better Release and Wo-

men into Work have discovered that the problems that arise after release are often due to a lack of confidence and a tendency to give up on the part of the individuals concerned, as well as a lack of support from society.

"The lack of self-confidence seems to be a bigger problem than the structural obstacles, but it's impossible to say which comes first. Does low self-confidence arise from continually having to battle against the system, or is it inherent from the start? Self-confidence is at any rate at a very low ebb and this is a big problem," says Jenny Hulth.

However, Jenny Hulth also says that the prisoners are full of praise for the activities of the Development Partnership and the fact that they themselves have the chance to be involved and influence their own situation and release process.

Better Release

– release from prison as a change of culture

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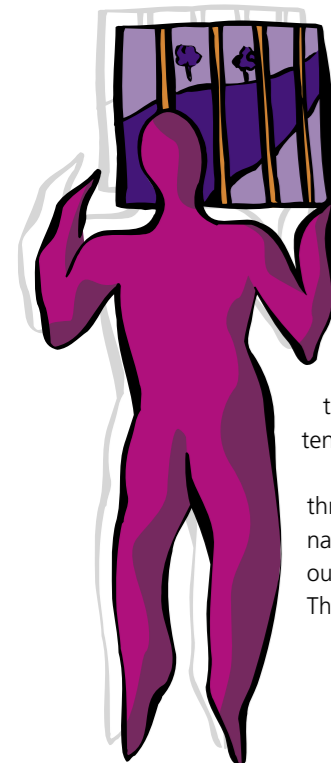
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School@Work

From its base in Siljansnäs in Dalarna, the School@Work Development Partnership aims to find good methods to develop better schools by combining education and entertainment. Another aim is to create employment for people in the 55+ age group who, for a variety of reasons, are outside the formal labour market.

The project with the highest profile is called Siljan Flying Circus. Young people from the upper-secondary schools are building an outdoor theatre on the shores of Lake Siljan. They are also constructing turn-of-the-century aircraft that will be used as props. However, the work of the Development Partnership really consists of two parts: a theoretical part and a practical part.

The target group is also made up of two parts: those in the 55+ age group and young people at school. In the case of the 55+ age group, the Partnership wants to find ways for them to make a useful contribution to society even though they are outside the regular labour market. The aim, above all, is to find concrete work for them to do in the schools. In the case of young people at school, it is a question of finding methods for utilising the limited resources of the municipalities to make the schools as good as possible.

The theoretical part involves two working groups that are seeking means and methods to start and run social projects and companies. They are studying, for example, how resources can be organised in an effective way so that social projects can become self-financing. The working groups are called Enthusiasts Academy and ProSeed.

Much of the theoretical work of School@Work deals with social entrepreneurship and developing new business ideas in the social field, for example co-operatives. The Development Partnership has also been involved

in setting up an academic five-credit course that will be held at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm in the autumn of 2003 in co-operation with the Royal Institute of Technology, the Stockholm School of Economics and the University College of Arts, Crafts and Design. Carl Rönn, the Co-ordinator of School@Work, will be one of the lecturers.

The practical part of the Partnership's work consists of two subprojects called Silent Wings and Siljan Flying Circus.

Siljan Flying Circus is a collaboration between the five municipalities in the Siljan area and their upper-secondary schools. The collaboration above all involves pupils in the Individual Programme, which aims to integrate the pupils into the national programmes. In concrete terms, the project uses the construction of aircraft as a means of motivating the young people concerned. They learn subjects such as mathematics, physics and English in a very practical way by studying drawings and building aircraft which they will then fly themselves.

Members of the 55+ age group who have aviation skills and training act as tutors during the construction of the aircraft, which is how this group is involved in a concrete way.

An important objective is to motivate pupils in the Individual Programme, many of whom are tired of school, to go on studying, thus making it easier for them to enter a national upper-secondary school programme and, in the long run, the labour market. All of the pupils taking part therefore have an individual study plan.

The Siljan Flying Circus subproject is also building

an outdoor theatre where the aircraft will be used as props. The partnership is planning to hold the premiere of a play there in the autumn of 2004. The construction of the theatre covers many different practical elements and items so the project involves co-operation with other upper-secondary school programmes apart from the Individual Programme, for example the Construction Programme and the Arts Programme.

"We hope that this will make more girls interested in joining in. Siljan Flying Circus is about so much more than just technology and building aircraft," says Carl Rönn.

The project is working deliberately to interest both girls and boys in courses and occupations that traditionally they would not otherwise consider. It is also trying to introduce more "soft" activities and values into what are traditionally male-dominated courses and occupations.

Silent Wings is a subproject that teaches young people with a hearing disability to fly gliders. There is an airspace classification in the field of aviation that does not stipulate radio communication as a requirement, and in such areas it therefore does not really matter whether a pilot can hear or not.

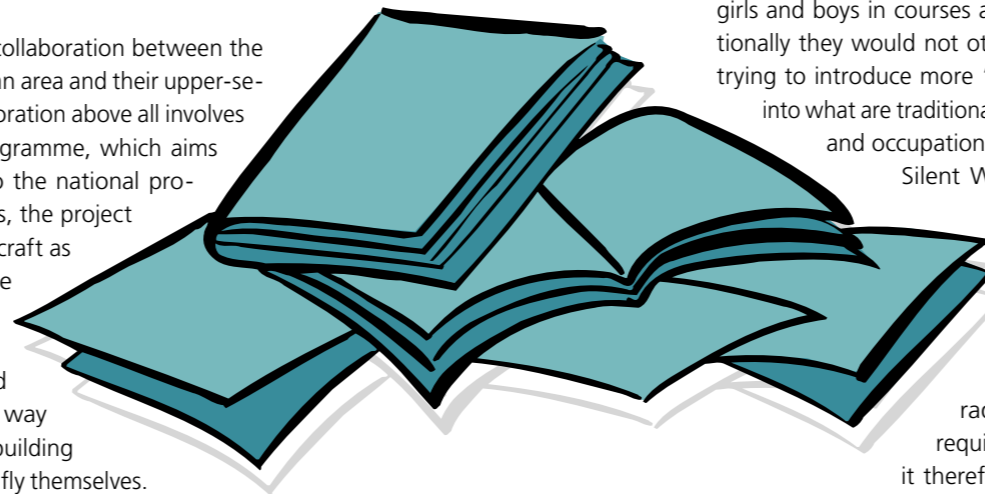
Silent Wings has close links with Siljan Flying Circus, and one of the objectives is to close the gap between young people who have functional disabilities and those who do not.

"We are a large project in our very small niche. We are working with lots of other things too, not just aviation, even though the aircraft are the most concrete and visible part of our work," says Carl Rönn.

School@Work works with the public and NGO sectors with regard to its aircraft activities. It also works with companies, however, as the theoretical part of

the project entails finding alternatives for apprenticeship programmes as a route for young people into the labour market. The project co-operates transnationally with partners in Germany, France and Italy under the themes of tourism and social entrepreneurship.

TV4 is following the work of the Development Partnership in order to make a documentary about it.



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Success

– Partnership for successful rehabilitation in rural areas

The Success Development Partnership is trying to find good rehabilitation models for small municipalities in sparsely-populated, rural areas. These new methods should reduce the municipalities' high sicklisting costs. The new aspect of the Partnership's methods is that rehabilitation should take place locally. The Development Partnership is a collaboration between the Municipality of Arvidsjaur, the Activa foundation in the County of Örebro and the Luleå University of Technology.

"Today, people are sent away to the large towns and to the coast for rehabilitation. It should be possible to find effective methods for co-operation between the small municipalities and also to activate the companies, because they can't afford to be without their employees," says Göran Sjöberg, Co-ordinator of the Success Development Partnership.

The starting point for the activities of the Development partnership is that small municipalities in sparsely-populated, rural areas often have high sicklisting costs. People are excluded from the labour market despite the fact that many companies have a shortage of labour. Success wishes to create a model for how small municipalities can use work-oriented rehabilitation to help people to reenter working life with better results and at lower costs than today.

Success has three main activities. It is working with a rehabilitation model in the Municipality of Arvidsjaur, it is conducting research, and the Activa foundation in Örebro is working with a model designed to help young with functional disabilities to enter the labour market.

"In Arvidsjaur, all the players that can conceivably

be involved and affected by the problem, including companies, are active in the project," says Göran Sjöberg.

Success is testing a method on people on the long-term sicklist in the County of Örebro. This method has been developed by Activa and is called "Activa employment". Young people are employed by Activa, which has careers guidance officers who then help these young people to find places at companies. Initially the individuals involved receive grants, but these are gradually reduced and there is a transition to regular pay. The Activa foundation provides ongoing support to the individuals and their employers. Success is now using this method for a new target group.

The Development Partnership has brought together methodology groups that are examining areas such as how referrals are conducted and the range of people that a sicklisted person meets. These groups have 19 members who are on the long-term sicklist. The aim of this work is to show how people get jobs and not, in the first instance, to find jobs for individuals, although this has been one concrete result of the project.

The rehabilitation model provides individual support for people on the long-term sicklist at the same time as it co-ordinates efforts and active co-operation between the authorities. The practical work-oriented training is closely linked to companies and their need for labour, and to the opportunities offered by the local community.

A group of researchers from the Luleå University of Technology and Örebro University is following the work. The researchers also bring a gender equality

perspective to the work by attempting to explain differences in rehabilitation measures for women and men. The Development Partnership hopes that this will improve rehabilitation measures for women and remove these differences.

Success is also co-operating with a Norwegian professor, Johans Sandvin. He is expected to bring a methodological, philosophical and ideological perspective to the work and to provide support in finding new methods.

Sandvin is helping the Development Partnership to see the importance of co-operating from the point of view of the individual and of making the individual the focal point of the work. Current rehabilitation systems are based on referring and admitting individuals to various institutions rather than allowing the individuals concerned to choose for themselves. Individuals do not have a lot of influence when it comes to their own rehabilitation.

"This is a system error. We say to people on the sicklist "this is what you have to do, but of course the choice is yours". A rehabilitation programme often involves no more than running around from one authority or institution to another," says Göran Sjöberg.

Success believes instead that society's role should be to listen to individuals and then simply help them to find the right authority or institution for their needs.

"In all our activities we have noted a dramatic increase in the awareness of authorities and organisations about how they can co-operate, and there is greater consensus between them. They have a better understanding of rehabilitation methods," says Göran Sjöberg.

Success is part of a transnational collaboration, Work-Links, together with Development Partnerships in

Finland, Ireland and Spain. This collaboration revolves around developing models and methods for the labour-market integration of groups that face various obstacles and difficulties. The common starting point is the specific conditions that apply in sparsely-populated areas and rural areas.

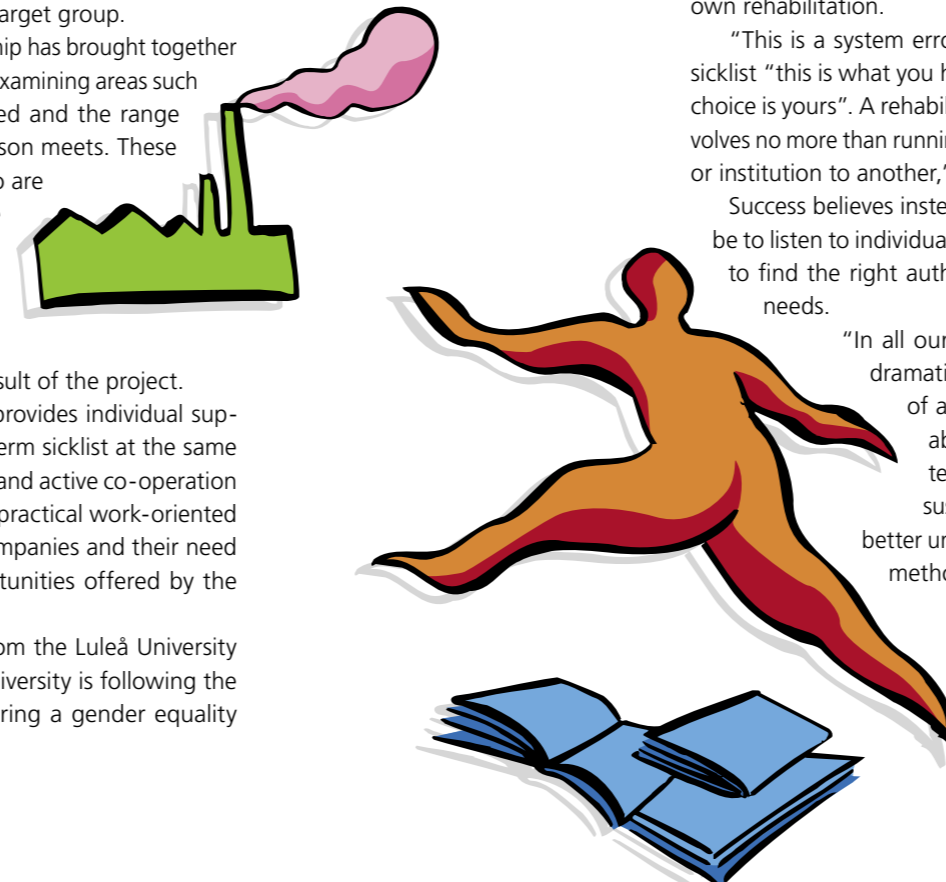
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Mobility – a right for all

The Mobility project aims to help young people with functional disabilities to travel abroad for practical training. The idea is that the disabled should have the same opportunities to enjoy free mobility as anyone else, their disabilities should not be an obstacle in this respect. The Development Partnership is a collaboration between the International Programme Office and two NGOs: Urkraft in Skellefteå and Stiftelsen Activa in the County of Örebro.

Free mobility is one of the rights of all the citizens of the EU, including those who are young and unemployed. The International Programme Office in Sweden works to realise this through a system called Interpraktik (international practical training). This system helps young people to get practical training in Europe as a means of gaining entrance to the labour market. Unemployed young people receive an Interpraktik grant over a period of five months which pays for their travel and their board and lodging.

Over the last five years, more than 3 000 young people have travelled abroad under the Interpraktik scheme with the help of the International Programme Office. Approximately 70 per cent of these have subsequently found work or have been able to begin studying. However, only 10 of these 3 000 young people have had functional disabilities. The Development Partnership wishes to increase the percentage of young people with functional disabilities in the Interpraktik scheme.

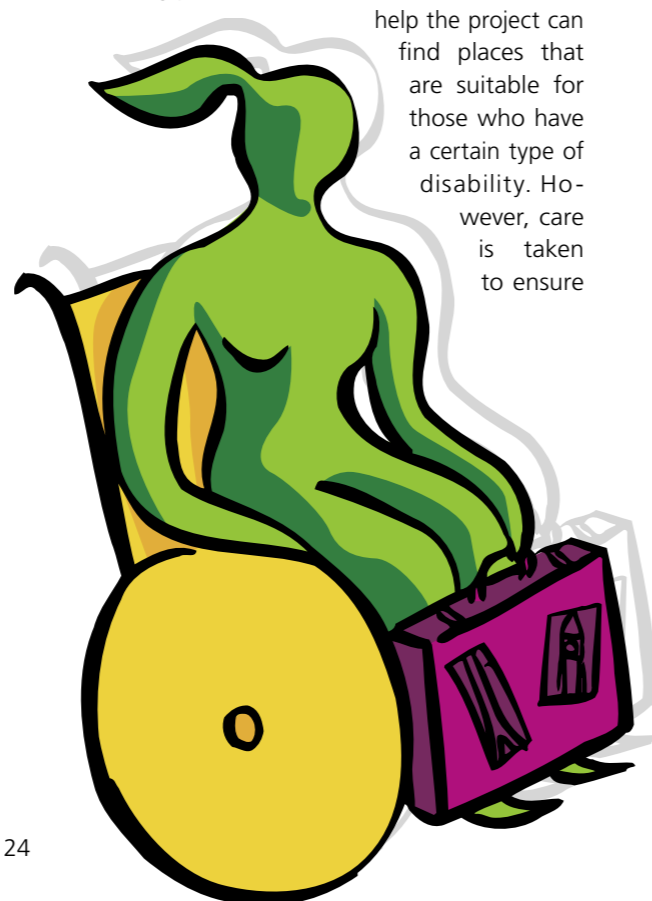
The Partnership is working to develop special measures and to provide special assistance, if needed, so that the opportunity to travel and get practical training in Europe is really open to everyone, irrespective of whether they have a disability or not. The Partnership's goal is to send off approximately 100 young people

for practical training during the project period, and that at least one third of these should be young people with a functional disability. The Mobility project has, for example, established contacts with the automobile manufacturer Volvo and signed an agreement under which two practical training places for disabled youngsters will be provided in Gent in Belgium.

"The good thing about Volvo is that they can offer a wide range of jobs depending on the interests of the trainees," says Bertil Bucht, Co-ordinator of the project.

In most cases, the young people arrange their own training places, but for those who want or need

help the project can find places that are suitable for those who have a certain type of disability. However, care is taken to ensure



that those who can cope for themselves are given the opportunity to do so.

The project is trying to promote a more even gender distribution among the trainees by making employment officers, administrators and careers advisers aware that most of the trainees at present are girls and that boys should therefore be encouraged to take part in the project.

"It is in fact important to get more boys to take the chance to travel out into Europe and to give them the chance to grow! But, as an evaluator has pointed out, in the final analysis it is a question of helping those who just can't see how they could "go off by themselves", and these are often young people with functional disabilities.

Transnationally, Mobility is collaborating with a Development Partnership in Berlin.

"They are interested in their youngsters being able to come here for practical training, and we are interested in getting practical training places there," explains Bertil Bucht.

The national Development Partnership includes Stiftelsen Activa, an NGO in Örebro that helps people with functional disabilities to find work and at work.

The Partnership also tries to influence attitudes. Bertil Bucht says that the initial reaction that the International Programme Office got from careers advisers in Örebro was that a young person with a functional disability would not be able to cope with a period of practical training in another country. Now they have seen that it does work, however, and their attitude is very positive.

The young people themselves may also find the thought of travelling abroad on their own frightening, alien or even impossible. It is therefore important to provide good examples and correct information so that the young people are told by those who have travelled under the Interpraktik scheme what the good points and the bad points have been.

It is important that preparations for the period of practical training are adapted to the individual con-

cerned as far as possible. The project provides useful information and tells the trainees what it is like to work abroad. The project also works actively to boost the self-confidence of the trainees. Close contact is maintained with the trainees during the training period itself, coaching is provided and a follow-up is conducted when the young people return home.

The Development Partnership is also working to spread the Interpraktik concept, to change the attitude of the employment offices and to demonstrate the value of Interpraktik by providing good examples.

"At the moment, there is a certain amount of restraint as Interpraktik is not so well known around the country as yet and people find it easier to invest in what they know well and know works," says Bertil Bucht.

The Development Partnership also conducts surveys and interviews in an attempt to identify the obstacles that exist for young people with functional disabilities who want to go to another European country for a period of practical training. The possibilities that exist for overcoming and eliminating these obstacles are also analysed.

"It is difficult for young, disabled people to overview all of the possibilities to get support and assistance that exist, and we can help them with this too," says Bertil Bucht.

Mobility – a right for all

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Access

– Working Life and Education

The Access Development Partnership aims to create flexible systems that ease the transition between work and studies. The Partnership is also working to gain the same recognition for learning outside the formal education system that is awarded to formal training courses. The Urkraft Association in Skellefteå is an important player in the Partnership.

Access models its work on that of an organisation in the UK. This organisation, which is called the National Open College Network, has developed a national model for the accreditation or validation of knowledge using a certification system called NOCN.

Urkraft is an example of an organisation in Sweden that lies outside the formal education system. It offers “alternative” courses and experience in programmes where the participants primarily learn by doing things, i.e. the learning process is very “hands-on”. Access tries to create “examinations” that can be used to measure this kind of knowledge too. The participants are asked to demonstrate that they have acquired skills or knowledge through what they do. Their skills and expertise, which may relate, for example, to producing local television broadcasts, can thus be validated and the individuals concerned are given a certificate outlining what they are capable of and what they have learned in the course of their training. Access is also working to set up a system for the quality assurance of such alternative training programmes.

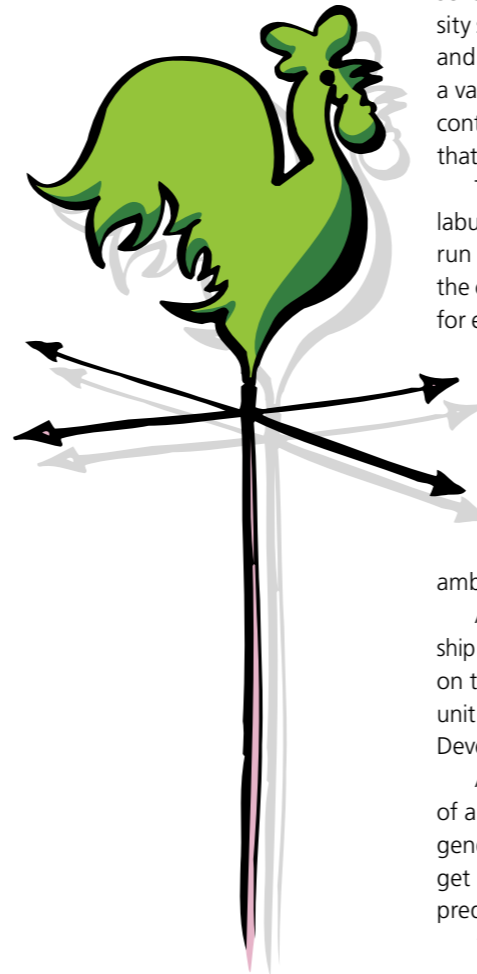
The problems associated with the lack of flexible validation systems are also evident in certain new industrial and commercial sectors. Many of the employees in the IT sector are, for example, self-taught and they

therefore find it difficult to get their knowledge validated. However, it is equally important to highlight and recognise traditional forms of learning. In the spring of 2004, participants in an Urkraft programme will be awarded five credits for following the university course “Working Life in Transition”, as well as credits through the NOCN system.

Similar trials have previously been conducted in various parts of Sweden. What Access is doing now is to link these trials to each other, to increase quality and to give the work a more long-term perspective. The partnership is, for example, working on a model in the Skellefteå region which in practice entails working with a municipal organisation that orders what it wants in the region on the basis of local needs and wishes. The universities of Umeå and Luleå then run some parts of their normal range of courses in the region.

Skellefteå is an area with concrete problems. Many people, primarily young women, are leaving the region, which is leading to a gender imbalance in the local population. The people who move often do so in order to get an education.

“Those who stay are often perceived as a problem, because many of them don’t have the training or skills that are in demand in the region. Our work in Skellefteå focuses largely on making the most of the human resources that exist there and on not classifying them as a problem. Flexible higher-education courses must be provided for those who want to stay in the area too, they shouldn’t have to move to get an education. We believe that the model we are testing in Skellefteå may provide a good and flexible way of doing this, and that it may also provide growth potential for the region,” says Ove Svensson, who co-ordinates research and training for the Access Development Partnership.



The training model in Skellefteå is part of the Partnership’s effort to create an effective validation system that covers all forms of learning. People must be able to see what different kinds of courses are worth so that they can compare them. Once they have completed a course, they should also be awarded a certificate that outlines what they have learned. This is an important prerequisite for making lifelong learning a reality and for enabling people to build on and increase their skills and expertise. An individual who, for example, has trained as a youth recreation leader at a folk high school and who wants to go on to study at a university should not have to start from the beginning again and study things that he or she already knows. With a validation system, such individuals would be able to continue developing their competence from the level that they have already reached.

The Development Partnership has drawn up a syllabus for the Urkraft training programmes that will be run in the autumn. This represents one step towards the creation of validation models. The participants will, for example, follow a five-credit university course that will provide them with an understanding of the changing labour market and their own role on this market.

Another Access subproject is working on the development of a training course for those who will work with validation. It will be possible to follow this course part-time in line with the ambition to make the education system flexible.

A research and development unit within the Partnership is investigating how concrete work can be conducted on the creation of a recognised validation system. The unit also records and describes what is happening in the Development Partnership’s various subprojects.

A working group is also investigating, on the basis of a gender equality perspective, how to break down gender segregation on the labour market and how to get more women to work in professions where men predominate, and vice versa.

“People have to dare to try something different.

We’re trying, for example, to get more women to work in the technical and engineering sectors, and to get more men to work in the care sector,” says Ove Svensson.

Another Access subproject is working to create a system for the recognition of the knowledge and skills acquired in the Interpraktik scheme, which is run by the International Programme Office for Education and Training.

Access – Working Life and Education

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Rehabilitation of traumatised refugees in sparsely-populated areas

The “Rehabilitation of Traumatized Refugees in Sparsely-populated Areas” Development Partnership aims to find a model for working with recently-arrived refugees who have suffered traumatic experiences. The municipalities of Dorotea and Lycksele are co-operating with the Refugee Medical Centre in Linköping to find an effective model for how Sweden can receive new refugees in a way that makes it possible to make the most of the resources they offer and to increase their self-confidence.

The Development Partnership works with quota refugees from Sierra Leone and Liberia. The largest group of such refugees is located in Dorotea and Lycksele. The refugees have experienced severe trauma in their own countries. The local medical centre in Dorotea therefore contacted the Refugee Medical Centre in Linköping to get help. The co-operation between the Refugee Medical Centre and the municipalities led to a Development Partnership within the Equal Programme. Adult education associations, the Employment Office, the municipal adult education service, the Social Insurance Office and Swedish business and industry have shown an interest and are members of the Partnership.

The Development Partnership hopes to create a recognised and accepted method of working with recently-arrived refugees who have experienced traumatic situations. The aim is to highlight the resources that people have to offer and to increase their self-confidence.

“But we also believe that this is the right thing to do from the economic point of view, as we can save money in the long run by putting human resources to good use. This will also reduce the risk of problems

arising later that would require specialist help,” says Lilian Ralphsson of the Refugee Medical Centre in Linköping.

“It has happened so many times that good measures have failed because they have not been followed but been allowed to peter out. Our goal is to really make sure that follow-up is carried out.”

A trained social worker and a psychologist have conducted a survey of all the refugees from Sierra Leone who are over the age of 16 and living in Dorotea and Lycksele. This survey has covered their life and family situation, their schooling and possible higher education and their job experience. The refugees have also been asked what their goals are, and ways and means of achieving these goals have been discussed. This survey has resulted in an action plan that forms the basis of the Employment Office’s work in the process that, hopefully, will lead to a job or further study.

Two mentors are employed by the Development Partnership, one in Dorotea and one in Lycksele. It is the task of the mentors to support and guide the refugees throughout the project period. The mentors play an important role in ensuring that things are not left undone or left hanging in the air. In the spring of 2004, the social worker and the psychologist will follow up the plan together with staff from the Employment Office and the refugees themselves.

– The Employment Office conducts ongoing follow-ups and maintains contact with all of the refugees, but also with the mentors.

– The Development Partnership has also employed two psychotherapists, one in Dorotea and one in Lycksele, to offer support and psychotherapeutic treatment aimed at removing psychological obstacles resulting from traumatising.

Both municipalities have set up Refugee Centres. These act as meeting places. The mentors are located there and there are also computers with access to the Internet. Various players can come to the centres for information, courses and so on. The idea is that it does not always have to be the refugees who seek contact with social bodies and institutions – sometimes these bodies and institutions can come to them.

The Development Partnership also organises study circles for the refugees in line with their own wishes. Courses have been arranged, for example, in dancing, swimming, sewing and using computers. A course for people who have little experience of studying has also been arranged. The participants go on study visits and learn the language by doing practical things, like exploring the countryside.

“We have also run a highly-appreciated study circle for Swedes about Sierra Leone. This was led by one of the refugees,” says Lilian Ralphsson.

The Refugee Medical Centre has previously worked in a similar way with Bosnian refugees in Norrköping. Although the model has now been slightly modified, the Centre knows that it works and hopes that the method will be used in the future to help refugees with traumatic experiences who come to Sweden.

Due to the great distances between the Refugee Medical Centre in Linköping and Dorotea and Lycksele, the Partnership is using alternative means of communication.

“We are using telemedicine, for example, which means working over television links. In this way, the psychotherapists in Dorotea and Lycksele can receive help and guidance from a psychologist in Linköping. They can see each other and communicate directly despite the fact that they are at different ends of the country,” says Lilian Ralphsson.

The Development Partnership is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in Germany, Greece and France. These Partnerships are jointly studying how refugees are received in the different countries today and are trying to develop joint working methods.

Rehabilitation of traumatised refugees in sparsely-populated areas

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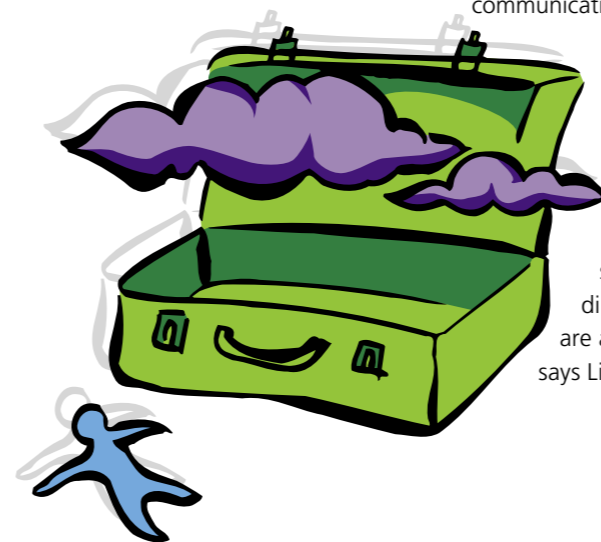
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Iftin

The Iftin Development Partnership aims to develop methods to improve the integration of people with a foreign background into Swedish society and working life. By investigating the methods used in other countries, Iftin is hoping to find methods that will work in Sweden too. The work of the Development Partnership focuses on people from Somalia.

"Iftin is a Somali word that means "light". Many Somali people in Sweden are excluded from working life and from society in general. The Iftin Development Partnership wants to act as a road that will lead out of the tunnel into the light, that is towards participation in the life of the community and the labour market and towards social integration," says Ibrahim Adan, Co-ordinator of the Iftin Development Partnership.

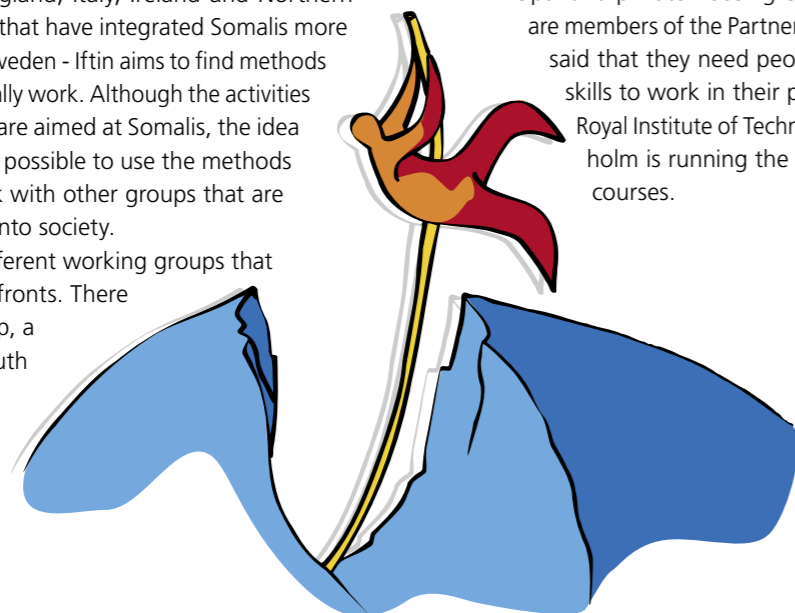
By co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in England, Italy, Ireland and Northern Ireland - countries that have integrated Somalis more successfully than Sweden - Iftin aims to find methods and models that really work. Although the activities of the Partnership are aimed at Somalis, the idea is that it should be possible to use the methods developed to work with other groups that are poorly integrated into society.

Iftin has six different working groups that work on different fronts. There is a women's group, a men's group, a youth group, a gender equality group, a validation group and an enterprise group.

One of the reasons why Iftin has groups for women, men and young people is to ensure that no-one is overlooked. However, women, men and young people also have different needs and situations that must be taken into account in the work, and the Partnership feels that this is done best in separate groups. The women's group, for example, has a female project manager and the group strives to promote and defend the interests of women and to create networks for women.

The gender equality group meets all the other groups and the participants to talk about how to work with gender equality and what this entails. The Development Partnership consistently applies a gender equality or mainstreaming perspective, for example in the recruitment of participants.

In the enterprise group, the Partnership has started training courses for Somalis in environmental and property management. This is in response to the municipal and private housing companies that are members of the Partnership who have said that they need people with these skills to work in their properties. The Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm is running the environmental courses.



"Sweden is well to the fore in the environmental field and this experience is being put to good use by our transnational partners," says Ibrahim Adan.

The Development Partnership also conducts an individual survey for all the participants in order to draw up individual action plans. This survey covers the interests and previous education of the participant concerned and what he or she wants to do in the future. The surveys also form the basis for the Development Partnership's efforts to develop a method for the social integration of Somalis and other groups.

Iftin's aim is to survey 40 participants by 2004. The resulting individual action plans should also help the participants to start their own companies or begin a training course. Iftin can also help to match individuals with suitable companies.

"This is a method that has been very successful in England, where many Somalis have acquired a higher education and now have jobs," says Ibrahim Adan.

Iftin is also looking at conditions relating to starting and running companies.

"This is very complicated in Sweden, where there are lots of rules and regulations. We have discovered that it is easier in England and we are trying to learn about the structure of the system there so that we can help to change the system in Sweden."

"Somalis traditionally have an entrepreneurial spirit and a desire to integrate. Despite this, few Somalis run companies in Sweden today. We want to find out why," says Ibrahim Adan.

The Development Partnership is also trying to find a system for the validation and evaluation of the immigrant's previous experience and education in Somalia. The vision is to shorten the period between a person arriving in Sweden and the person being able to begin studying or working. Iftin has therefore sent a questionnaire to all the transnational partners to find out what they do in their countries and to learn from this.

The Development Partnership believes that the fu-

ture is bright and is very positive about the potential for finding effective integration methods.

"We think that the chances of success by implementing changes and improvements are high. We have a lot to learn from other countries and we can achieve a lot if we co-operate with them," says Ibrahim Adan.

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Focal Point

– social companies in Kävlinge

The Focal Point project is working to find jobs for people who are currently outside the labour market, to reduce the numbers of those on the sicklist and to counteract exclusion at the workplace. As part of this effort, the Development Partnership is looking for good methods that will facilitate co-operation between organisations, authorities and companies.

The Focal Point Development Partnership is located in the Municipality of Kävlinge in Skåne. The Partnership includes companies, NGOs, the Employment Office and the Social Insurance Office. Focal Point has two main objectives: to help people outside the labour market to find work and to create healthier workplaces, i.e. to reduce the numbers of those on the sicklist and to counteract exclusion at the workplace.

The Municipality of Kävlinge has 25 000 inhabitants and 2 000 companies. Only 640 of these companies have employees, and of these 640 only 138 have 10 employees or more. It is these companies that Focal Point primarily wants to co-operate with, as they are the companies that have the most resources for taking on trainees, or even new employees. Unemployment in the municipality is low - between three and four per cent. The number of those on the sicklist is high, but still among the lowest in Skåne.

The partnership has a number of subprojects. One of these, "Workplaces of the Future", is striving above all to reduce the number of those on the sicklist and exclusion on the labour market. Another subproject, "Labour Available", is trying to help the long-term unemployed and those on the long-term sicklist to find work by arranging practical training places at local companies. Focal Point believes that developing more

extensive and more committed co-operation between organisations, authorities and companies is an extremely important part of this work.

Focal Point is training employees at various workplaces to act as ambassadors. These ambassadors learn how to create a better workplace. They are also given a questionnaire with 24 questions on the psychosocial work environment to take to their workplaces. The course leader analyses the answers from the various workplaces and gets an indication of their current "state of health". The ambassadors then choose, in consultation with their work-mates, two points that they will work together to improve. It may be, for example, that there is a need for meetings at the workplace where the employees can get information or discuss problems, or that some employees feel that no-one at their workplace listens to their ideas. The starting point is that people will not feel well until they are "seen" at their place of work.

Twenty-eight ambassadors have been trained so far. Focal Point's target is to train 90. The training is provided over a two-day intensive course, and the participants then have a total of seven half-day meetings with one meeting every second week.

Focal Point also helps unemployed people find practical training places. The ambassadors play an important role by providing support for the trainees. Not all of the workplaces that the trainees come to have ambassadors, because the trainees themselves decide what occupations they want to work in and the Partnership tries to meet their wishes as far as possible. At workplaces where there are no ambassadors, Focal Point tries instead to maintain close and frequent contacts with the employers concerned.



A lot of the Partnership's work is about trying to motivate the individuals involved and to get them to believe in themselves.

"There are shortcomings in the present systems that we want to do something about. We hope that our work will demonstrate effective methods for how to create a more open and healthier labour market," says Christer Stenberg, Focal Point's Project Manager.

As an example of a system failure he mentions a person who was sicklisted for 10 years before finding a practical training place through Focal Point. He was very motivated and wanted to return to the labour market. At the end of the training period he was offered a temporary position. If, however, he accepted this position he would be certified as fit to work by the Social Insurance Office and lose his sickness benefits. There was no guarantee, however, that he would be offered a permanent post when the temporary position came to an end. This put him in a very difficult position as he had a family to provide for. If he was not given a job after his period of temporary employment he would have to apply for supplementary benefits. This would cut his income by half.

"I would not have dared to accept a temporary position in such a situation, you have to support your family. The Social Insurance Office is right, you are not sick if you can work, but there should be some kind of bridge between these systems so that people have something to fall back on – and live on. As things are now, the system is counterproductive," says Christer Stenberg.

Focal Point believes that work on counteracting discrimination in working life should begin already in the schools. The partnership therefore also has a project called "Young in Kävlinge". Secondary-school pupils are being asked to describe how they perceive their situation at school and whether they

are seen and receive support by taking photographs, painting a picture or writing an essay or a song. This will result in a competition between the schools in Kävlinge and an exhibition of the work submitted to the competition will be held.

Focal Point is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in Spain, Italy, France and Germany.

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Towns Together

Towns Together is a Development Partnership that works with business development. The Partnership helps companies to discover new opportunities and groups of customers on the basis of a diversity perspective. The aim is to help people and companies to see the positive potential that exists in increasing diversity. The Partnership includes players in the public, non-profit and business sectors and works mainly in the districts of Biskopsgården in Gothenburg and Rosengård in Malmö. Towns Together focuses on working with diversity from an ethnic perspective.

“We work to combat discrimination on the basis of the sustainable development concept. Economic growth reduces discrimination,” says Rosie Rothstein, the National Co-ordinator of Towns Together.

The urban districts of Biskopsgården in Gothenburg, Rosengård in Malmö and Rinkeby in Stockholm all have a high level of unemployment and a high percentage of residents who were born abroad. The fact that the population of these districts is young and has an international background should instead offer potential for strong economic growth.

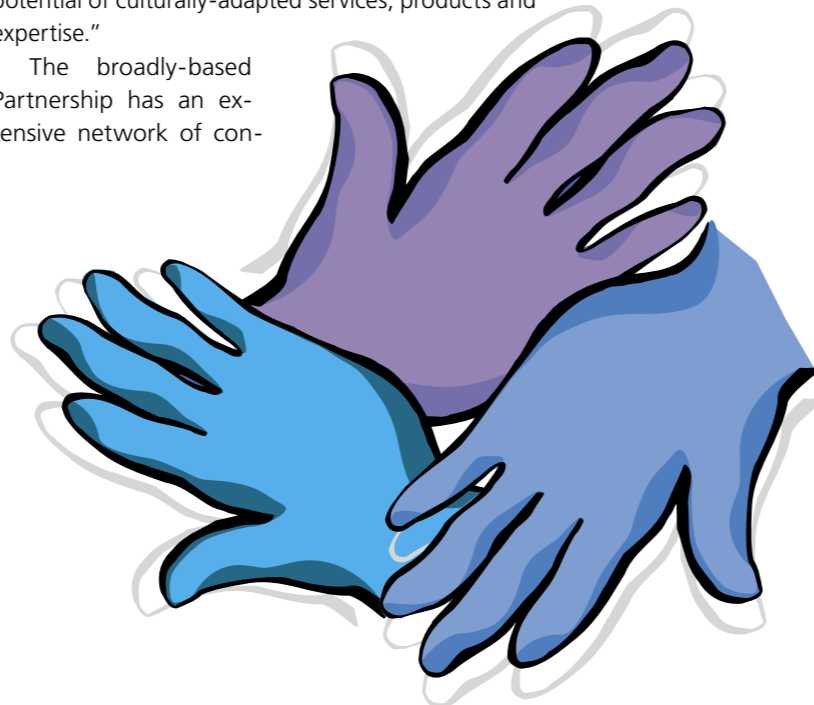
In 1999, Biskopsgården and Rosengård therefore decided that something had to be done and together with FöreningsSparbanken, the housing companies, SIOS (the Co-operation Group for Ethnical Associations in Sweden) and others they formed a Development Partnership that was given the name Towns Together. The aim was to create opportunities for the people living in these areas – areas that often suffer from high unemployment, major population turnover, cramped living conditions and run-down housing environments. Together, the partners wanted to reverse the negative trends and counteract the exclusion that is often suf-

fered by people living in certain urban districts.

Apart from the National Partnership, there are also Local Partnerships in Biskopsgården, Gothenburg and Rosengård, Malmö. Rinkeby co-operates closely with Towns Together. The work of the Development Partnership ranges across all sectors of society – business and industry, the public sector and the non-profit sector, that is sectors that have both shared and diverse interests.

The target group consists of companies and other organisations that see a commercial interest in terms of diversity, improved service or new products, or that need new labour. Towns Together, quite simply, wants to help companies to make contact with new groups of customers. In its description of its work and aims, the Development Partnership writes that: “Towns Together helps companies to discover the commercial potential of culturally-adapted services, products and expertise.”

The broadly-based Partnership has an extensive network of con-



tacts and is well-positioned to help companies. The Confederation of Swedish Enterprise is an active partner that helps to market the activities and uses its company network to get more companies to take part. The Development Partnership contacts different companies, discusses possibilities with them and, on the basis of their specific situation, helps them to see the commercial opportunities of working with a diversity perspective.

When Towns Together works with a company, the first step is to find out what the pattern of consumption is in the area concerned. This is done partly by conducting surveys and partly with the help of the SIOS network. The first question to answer is whether there is a market, and if so what there is a market for and how it can best be reached. The Development Partnership helps the company with this. For example, the company may best reach its customer target group by setting up business in the area or by employing people with the cultural skills required to meet the new group of customers. Different companies and organisations work with diversity in different ways. The important thing is that ethnic groups are seen as customers, not as victims.

FöreningsSparbanken, a major Swedish bank and a member of the Partnership, has, for example, employed people of different ethnic backgrounds because the bank views them as an economic asset and an asset when dealing with its multicultural group of customers.

Together with Fonus, a national chain of undertakers, Towns Together has studied how the company can best relate to various groups of customers in connection with consultations on family law and funerals, as people of different ethnic backgrounds may have different needs and wishes.

“We are also running study circles in everyday economics in the three areas in order to help people to structure their personal finances and see how they can improve them,” says Rosie Rothstein.

Towns Together is co-operating transnationally with a Development Partnership in Utrecht in the Netherlands. This is called Social Partners in Co-operation and Rabo Bank in the Netherlands is an active partner.

“Our co-operation focuses a lot on exchanging experience. There’s no point in continually reinventing the wheel. But we also co-operate on a practical level, for example by arranging joint seminars,” says Rosie Rothstein.

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Resource Exchange

The aim of the Resource Exchange Development Partnership is that recently-arrived immigrants and refugees who have been issued with residence permits should be able to begin supporting themselves more quickly through the provision of work or training. The partnership is working to develop a model for an introductory workplace programme. This model is now being tested in the school system in the Farsta district of Stockholm.

The model will be developed over the period 2002 to 2004 in co-operation with six different schools. To date, just over 20 participants have completed the one-year introduction programme under employment-like terms and conditions. Being able to work and support oneself is a decisive step towards successful social integration. The participants have worked, for example, as teaching assistants, child minders, library assistants, caretakers, receptionists, kitchen staff and recreation assistants.

“We think that the school system is an excellent arena for such an introduction programme, as the schools are both central social institutions and major employers. Many of the participants are also parents, and learning about Swedish schools and seeing how they work can help them to better understand the demands and expectations that the schools have with regard to both children and parents. They will also be able to develop a network outside the family circle,” says Lena Rogeland, Co-ordinator of the Resource Exchange Development Partnership.

To join the introduction programme, the participants must have training or experience relating to schools or a desire to work in the school system. They must also be in need of a one-year introduction programme that will enable them to get and keep a job on

the Swedish labour market. The Employment Office and Farsta Urban District Council were responsible for recruiting the first group. Now, participants are being recruited by the Urban District Councils of Farsta, Vantör, Skärholmen and Hässelby, as well as by the Employment Office.

The introduction programme should be run under terms and conditions that resemble those of regular employment as closely as possible. The workplace is an important forum for the meeting between new arrivals and Swedish society. Each participant is in close contact with a mentor throughout the programme and receives language training on the basis of his or her individual needs. Their language skills are tested by Sfi-Centrum (Swedish for Immigrants) both before and after the introduction programme. The Employment Office is responsible for matching individuals with jobs on the open labour market.

The schools that co-operate with the Development Partnership feel that they have significantly increased their knowledge of other cultures, which is of great value in the multicultural school environment. They believe that it is positive that adults with different backgrounds and experience come to work in the schools, both for the children and the staff. They also feel that they are playing an active part in the process of integration – a process that they believe is an important responsibility for all workplaces.

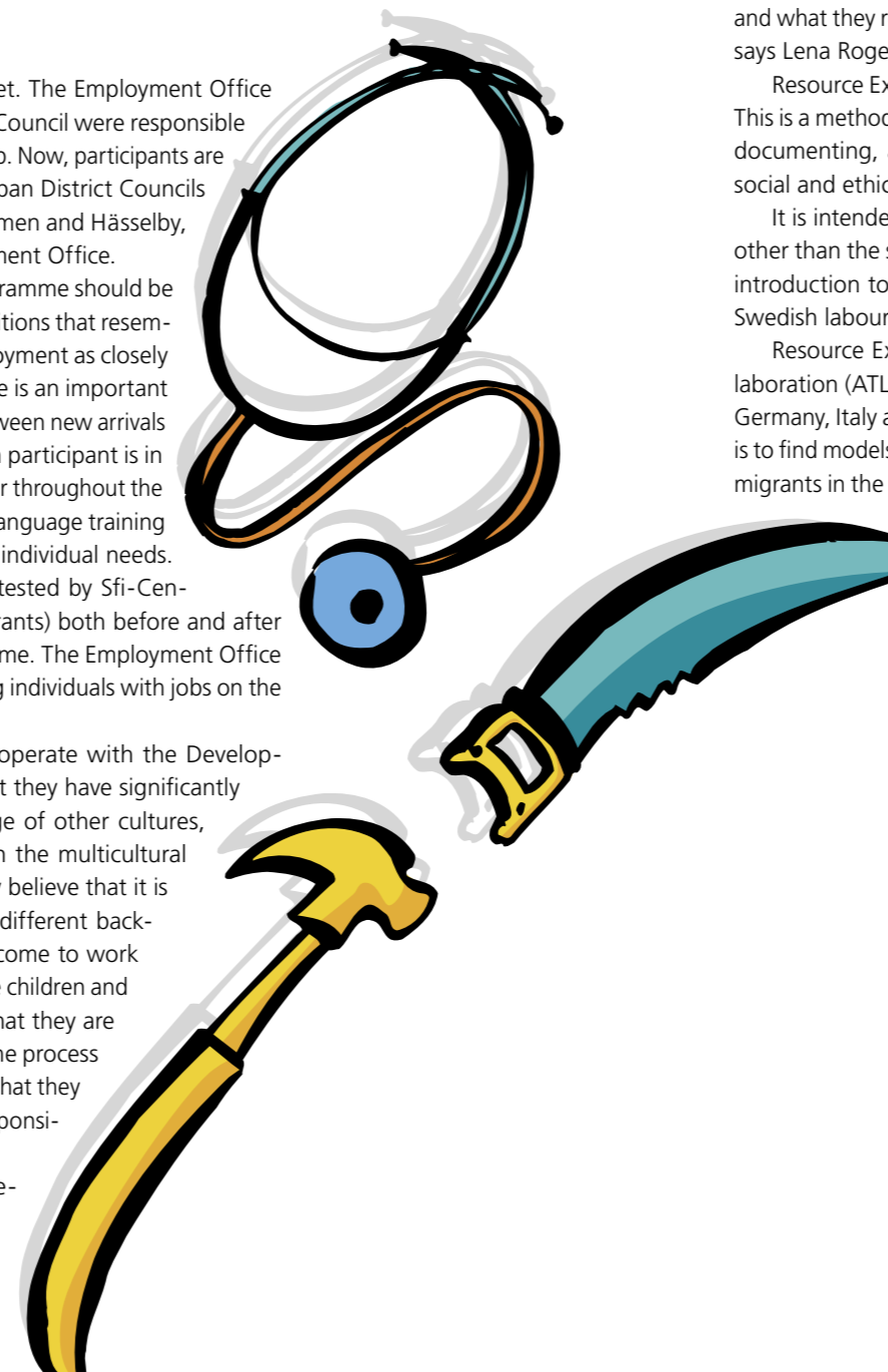
The work of the Development Partnership focuses on three values:

equality, diversity and participation. “We talk a lot within the Partnership about what these values entail and what they really mean in order to keep them alive,” says Lena Rogeland.

Resource Exchange works with Social Accounting. This is a method and a control instrument for planning, documenting, analysing and reporting the project’s social and ethical objectives and performance.

It is intended that the model can be used in areas other than the school system. It should function as an introduction to Swedish society and a route into the Swedish labour market.

Resource Exchange is part of a transnational collaboration (ATLAS) with Development Partnerships in Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. The joint objective is to find models and methods for the integration of immigrants in the respective countries, both in the labour market and in society in general.



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Diversity in Entrepreneurship

The Diversity in Entrepreneurship Development Partnership works in three municipalities: Flen, Katrineholm and Vingåker. The Partnership wants to contribute to the development of a strong entrepreneurial spirit in the region and to change the structures that present obstacles to people who want to start new companies. It is recognised that certain groups find it more difficult than others to enter the labour market and start their own companies, and the Partnership is working to influence and change the discrimi-

In recent years, the area around Flen, Katrineholm and Vingåker has seen the closure of many companies and redundancy and unemployment are high. In addition, there is no strong tradition of self-employment or entrepreneurship in the region.

The Diversity in Entrepreneurship Development Partnership is a collaboration between municipalities, business organisations, banks and national organisations. All of the partners have undertaken to consider whether they can eliminate the obstacles that their particular organisation places in the way of those who want to start and run their own companies, and if so how. An overriding goal of the Partnership is to identify and deal with the obstacles that exist to the setting up of new companies and to entrepreneurship. It is not one of the main aims, however, to create a certain number of new companies.

Diversity in Entrepreneurship has identified various groups that, generally speaking, find it more difficult to start companies and the Partnership is therefore focusing on improving the situation for these specific groups. The question is: why is it so difficult for these groups to start and run companies? On the basis of the identified groups, the Partnership has set up three

working areas. Each area has a development and mobilisation team.

The Partnership has chosen to call the three working areas Diversity, Culture and Young People. In the Diversity area, the Partnership is working with women from ethnic minorities and with people who have functional disabilities. There is a relatively high percentage of people with a foreign background in the region and the Development Partnership has noted that the women find it more difficult to gain a foothold on the labour market.

In the Culture working area, the Partnership is attempting to establish whether there are opportunities for those working in the cultural sphere to start some form of business in order to better support themselves. The Young People area aims to make it easier for young people to enter the labour market by way of their own entrepreneurial efforts.

The three development and mobilisation teams are working to bring together their various partners with the target groups in order to generate interaction and to identify the obstacles to the setting up of new businesses.

Diversity in Entrepreneurship runs training courses aimed at the individuals covered by the three working areas, but also at its partners. They are trained in subjects such as the EU, equal opportunities and diversity. Within the framework of the Partnership there is also a study circle for unemployed women from ethnic minorities.



“There are a number of obstacles to starting companies. A lot of permits are required, for example. People must also be able to offer some form of security before they can get a loan. Things might be easier if there was more co-operation between different organisational cultures,” says Niklas Witt, who chairs the Diversity in Entrepreneurship Partnership.

Niklas Witt says that everyone involved in the Partnership, both partners and participants, has begun a journey that will hopefully lead to the discovery of the obstacles and problems facing new businesses, but also of possible changes and improvements. It is a question of finding the problems and then of dealing with them.

The Partnership is therefore conducting research in order to find out what it is that prevents people from setting up or investing in their own companies. In the course of time, the Partnership aims to disseminate this knowledge throughout Sweden and the rest of Europe so that its work can provide good results and improve the labour market even for people who do not live in Flen, Katrineholm and Vingåker.

Diversity in Entrepreneurship is involved in two Transnational Partnerships. The Wide Partnership comprises co-operation with projects in Italy, Germany and the Netherlands that aim to make it easier for people with functional disabilities to start companies.

The Opera Transnational Partnership is about empowerment and making it possible for people to start and run new companies. This comprises co-operation between Diversity in Entrepreneurship and Development Partnerships in Austria, the UK and Italy.



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EFF – Empowerment for the Future

The Empowerment for the Future Development Partnership wants to help excluded people – drug and alcohol abusers, the homeless, prostitutes, criminals and others – to leave the margins of society and enter the community and the labour market. In order to achieve this goal, the Partnership is working to develop companies in the social economy.

The EFF Development Partnership is co-ordinated by the Basta Work Co-operative. Basta is a company that offers people a route away from abuse and misery by providing work, accommodation and meaningful leisure activities.

The starting point for the work of the Development Partnership is that social companies give individuals greater opportunities to change their situation in life. In order to develop the social economy and to help people to start and run social companies, the Partnership is running a number of subprojects.

One of the subprojects offers vocational and entrepreneurial training. In co-operation with one of the partners, the insurance company Folksam, Basta has created a one-year course that four students are following at the moment. During the year, these students will study for upper-secondary school matriculation and alternate between periods of theory and practice. The practical training places are guaranteed, and the students will also study subjects such as ethics and conflict management.

The course is structured individually on the basis of the final objectives of the students. The four students on the course at present are former drug or alcohol abusers and are studying to become a tiler, a carpenter, a groom and an electrician.

“Unfortunately, it is difficult to find funding as we

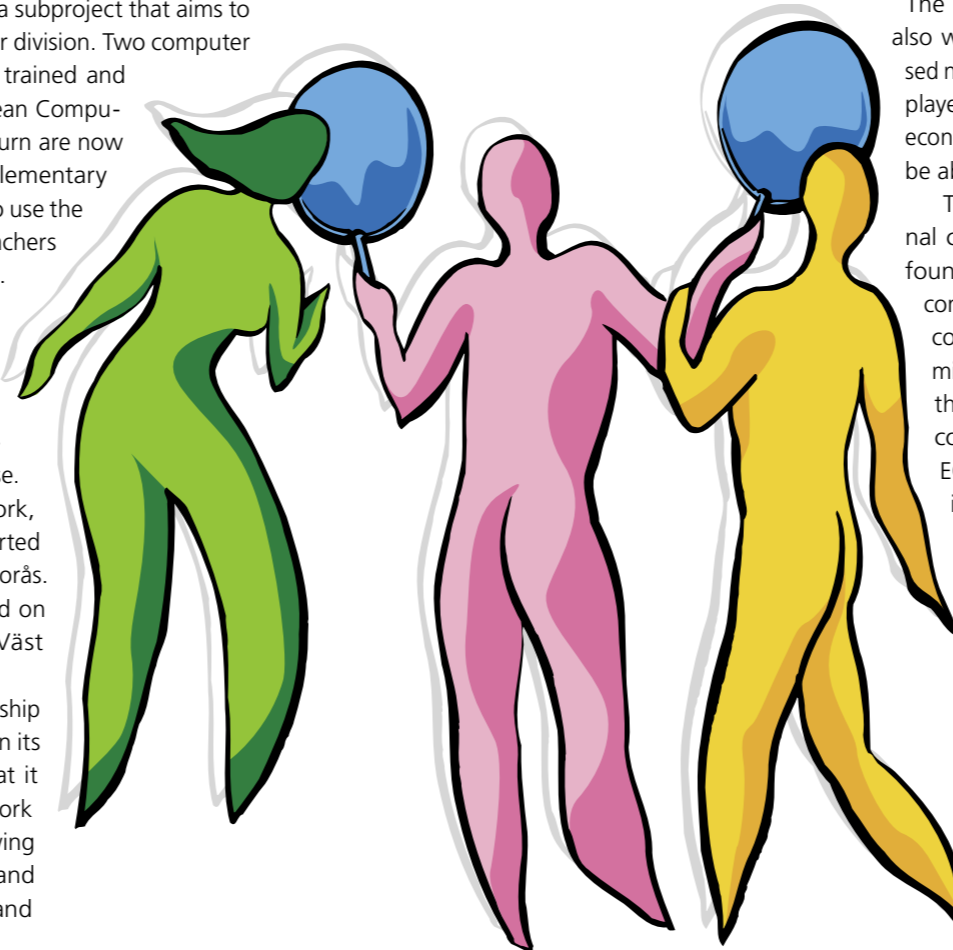
are talking about adult education here. If the course was for young people there would be no problem. Nevertheless, we feel that it is a good course and that everyone involved, from the participants to the companies where they do their practical training, are very satisfied,” says Alec Carlberg, who chairs the Development Partnership.

The Partnership also has a subproject that aims to create an advanced computer division. Two computer science teachers have been trained and have both acquired a European Computer Driving Licence. They in turn are now teaching Basta residents elementary computer science and how to use the Office package. The two teachers are also producing a website.

As EFF’s target group consists of excluded people who often have problems with drug or alcohol abuse, the Partnership works with various models to prevent relapse.

Within the EFF framework, an NGO called FUNK has started a new work co-operative in Borås. This co-operative is modelled on Basta and is called Basta Väst (Basta West).

The Development Partnership is also conducting research on its work and documenting what it does. The School of Social Work in Lund is continually following events in the subprojects and registering the thoughts and feelings of the participants.



Women are always in the minority in contexts such as this and are often an overlooked and disregarded group. The Development Partnership is therefore trying to apply a gender perspective and is conducting special interviews with women to find out about their situation and how they perceive it, as well as what their needs and wishes are.

EFF wants to market the idea of social companies to ministries, social services committees and others. The Partnership is therefore developing strategies for how social companies can market themselves effectively.

The Development Partnership is also working to create a web-based network through which various players that work with the social economy and social companies will be able to contact each other.

The Partnership’s transnational co-operation has led to the foundation of an international company, ECCO, in London. This company will sell social-economic expertise and it is intended that, in the long run, it will become a consulting company. ECCO has also been involved in the setting up of a transnational, distance-learning, diploma course. 30 people are currently following this

18-month university course which is about the social economy and social enterprise.

“There are major differences in the way that terms in the field of the social economy are used in different countries, so we are also working on an international dictionary for the social economy,” says Alec Carlberg.

EFF – Empowerment for the Future

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Added Value

The European labour market is facing serious problems. It is expected that there will be a major shortage of labour within a few years. Meanwhile, many people are excluded from, and discriminated on, the regular labour market. In order to solve this problem, the Added Value Development Partnership is working actively to find effective models for co-operation between different players on the labour market. The Partnership's activities are aimed at helping people with varying degrees of work capacity to gain a foothold on the labour market.

"We want to influence things and we look for solutions to the problems we come across in the course of this work. By doing this, we hope to contribute, indirectly, to the development of a labour market policy that serves people in a better way than the policy that is pursued at present," says Mats Fahlén, Co-ordinator of the Added Value Development Partnership.

Added Value is a collective name for four different subprojects that are being conducted in Skåne.

The Fribo subproject is being run in Östra Göinge. This project works with the psychologically disabled. Fribo aims to create the preconditions that will enable psychologically disabled people to live by themselves in service accommodation. In addition to the accommodation areas there are communal areas where staff are also available. Meaningful leisure activities and rewarding work are two other important ingredients in the Fribo subproject. Glimåkra is the "pilot location" for the subproject. The plan is to transplant the project to other areas throughout the Municipality of Östra Göinge.

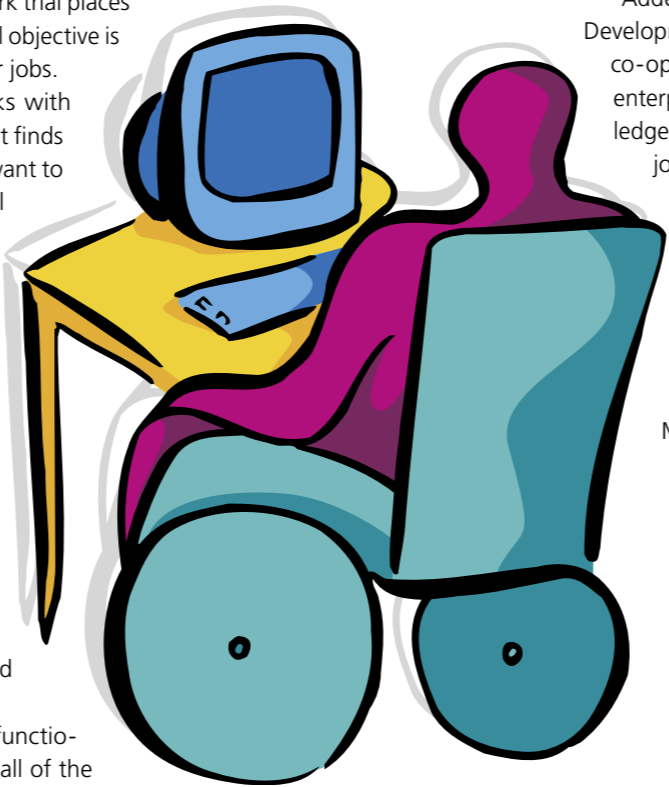
The Chamber of Commerce subproject aims to create networks between individuals, companies and

authorities in order to improve the opportunities for people with functional disabilities to enter the labour market. The Chamber of Commerce will act as an organisation for collaboration between companies working in the social economy.

The Slussen subproject is helping job-seekers to find work trial places either in the open labour market or in social companies. A social company has other, more flexible opportunities to provide work trial places for the functionally disabled than regular companies. On completion of the work trial period and following a survey of the outcome, the intention is that the individuals concerned should move on to work trial places on the open labour market. Slussen's final objective is that these individuals should find regular jobs.

The Employ Ability subproject works with the mentally disabled. The subproject first finds out what the individuals involved really want to work with, and then tries to find practical training places. Once individuals have been allocated a practical training place, Employ Ability maintains close contact with them and provides help and support. The objective is that the participants should enter the labour market after completing their period of practical training. In order to make this possible, the project is working to change employers' attitudes to people with functional disabilities. Employ Ability is developing tools that can be used to decide the best path to take on the basis of each individual's capabilities and limitations.

The terms "social economy" and "functional disability" are a common feature of all of the



subprojects of the Added Value Development Partnership.

"It is difficult to define these terms exactly, and maybe it is not always a good idea to use them," says Mats Fahlén. "Perhaps we should talk more about capabilities than disabilities and about opportunities rather than obstacles. Is a functional disability only a physical obstacle or does it entail a psychological obstacle as well? Perhaps there are even more criteria involved?"

In Sweden, Added Value is co-funded by a number of organisations such as Samhall, the Social Insurance Office and the Employment Office in Broby. Other stakeholders in the project include the County Labour Board, Region Skåne and the School of Health Sciences at Jönköping University.

Added Value also co-operates transnationally with Development Partnerships in Germany and Italy. This co-operation focuses, among other things, on new enterprise and covers the exchange of ideas, knowledge and experience. The co-operation also entails joint development work.

"We work mainly on the basis of the interests of the individual and we put the individual at the centre of everything we do. But the project is also about co-operation between various players – co-operation that must take place if we are to be successful in bringing about changes," says Mats Fahlén.

Added Value

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Slup.se – Development Partnership for Social Economy in the County of Stockholm

The Development Partnership for Social Economy in the County of Stockholm (slup.se) is working to improve the position of the social economy in the county. The goal is to influence structures on the labour market that have a discriminating effect and that constitute obstacles to work or the setting up and running of companies.

The Development Partnership is a collaboration between municipalities, authorities, companies and organisations in the County of Stockholm. The players in the social economy have joined forces with various public bodies to form a broad partnership.

“One of the strengths of the composition of the Partnership is that prominent and powerful players are co-operating with weaker players on the same terms. They are members of the same working groups and are working towards the same goals,” says Birgitta Israelsson, Project Secretary of slup.se.

The Development Partnership works with three different themes: Training, Support Services and Social Accounting.

Under the Training theme, the Partnership is using eldercare as an example to see how structures can be improved in the county. By studying how eldercare works, the Partnership aims to find methods that can be generalised and applied to other sectors.

Slup.se has started a training course in care and healthcare for women with a foreign background. This is a two-year course and is held in Swedish. The women study for upper-secondary school matriculation and qualify to work as nursing assistants. The 16 women on the course have a lot of influence on the training, which is based on their needs and wishes.

“We can see how they are continually growing as individuals and how their self-confidence is increasing,” says Birgitta Israelsson.

The Development Partnership has also started a two-year course for immigrant associations on how to start and run care and healthcare businesses. The course is set up as a study circle in which the associations learn all they need to know to run a company, for example the responsibilities of employers and financial and legal aspects. Six different associations are following the course, which is being run by the Workers’ Educational Association (ABF). A participating association may, for example, be interested in starting a nursing home for its older members with staff who speak their language. On the course, the association will be able to get help from individuals and organisations that are used to helping people start companies.

Under the theme of Support Services, the Partnership has formed different working groups to build up a support structure for the new social companies and co-operatives. These working groups will survey the needs that exist for companies in the social economy and try to ensure that these needs are seen and heard to a greater extent than today

There are three different groups for Support Services. “Local Economic Development and Democracy and Integration” is the largest group. The second group, “Business Development and Public Procurement”, is investigating whether companies in the social economy find it more difficult to win public tenders and if so why. This group is also looking at what must be changed with regard to public procurement to counteract the discrimination of social companies. The third group,



“Economics, Financing and Lending”, is trying to find alternative forms of financing for social companies as they often find it difficult to get a bank loan.

The groups for Support Services co-operate, for example by arranging joint workshops in which representatives of the municipalities meet representatives of the social economy.

The third theme that slup.se works with is Social Accounting. Social accounting is a method for evaluation and self-improvement that mainly relates to the social aspects of the operation concerned. Slup.se has started a one-year course in social accounting which is being followed by the Stockholm City Mission and Verdandi (the Workers’ Society for Fellowship and Solidarity), among others. The course is directly linked to the activities of the participating organisations, which apply social accounting to their own operations.

In this social accounting process, the organisations examine their objectives, improve them and involve all the relevant stakeholders in the work. The organisations then check whether they have achieved their objectives.

“This is also a method for demonstrating to the outside world that the operations concerned embrace social values, that is that the organisation does what it does in a good way,” says Birgitta Israelsson.

Slup.se has also started a survey of the prevalence of social accounting throughout Sweden. The Partnership wants to find a method that everyone can use. The main objective is not, however, to find a standard that will enable companies to compare their social accounting with that of other companies, but that the companies should work internally with social accounting.

Slup.se is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in Italy, Greece, the Netherlands and Finland. All of these Partnerships are working to develop the social economy and there are three joint working groups in the areas of social accounting, support services and voluntary and professional work.

“The difficult thing about the work of our Part-

nership is how to ensure that there is good feedback in the big organisations so that many people become interested and involved. The thoughts and ideas that come up must gain the understanding and support of those who work with these issues every day if they are to have an effect and change structures,” says Birgitta Israelsson.

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Future Keys

Future Keys Development Partnership aims to spotlight the situation of women working in agriculture and forestry. The Partnership also wants to make it possible for women to live and work in the countryside on their own terms and on the basis of their own needs and situation.

Sparsely-populated, rural areas are undergoing depopulation, both in Sweden and throughout Europe. It is, above all, women and young people who are leaving the countryside to move to the towns and cities. This is restricting growth, and the aim of Future Keys is to reverse this trend and to contribute to increased growth in both Sweden and Europe.

“As a group, women who live and work in the countryside have a very low profile and there is very little research about them. We want to find out what strategies they have for earning a living. Above all, we want to focus on young women and their visions, dreams and goals in life. We also want to find out more about the impact that location has on livelihood. We wonder whether it is possible for women to go on living in rural areas and to support themselves, but also if they want to stay where they are,” says Charlotte Haglund.

The Development Partnership started work on 1 January 2003. During the spring, the Partnership focused on surveying the situation in five pilot counties: Norrbotten, Jämtland, Östergötland, Jönköping and Skåne.

The survey examined the similarities and the differences between the different counties. This included investigating the characteristics of the respective counties and finding out what projects and activities for women are underway there. The Partnership looked at how women in the respective counties support themselves and at the obstacles and opportunities that exist for them where they live. The intention is to form local Partnerships in the various counties during the autumn that can concentrate on specific problems and issues in the county concerned.

Under the auspices of the Development Partnership, a researcher at Linköping University has interviewed 40 women in the target group in the five pilot counties. Through these interviews, the Partnership is attempting to find out about the needs, wishes, dreams and goals that the women have and whether they feel that it is possible for them to stay in the countryside and earn a living, but also if they want to stay. The Development Partnership will structure its work on the basis of these interviews.

The Development Partnership is also developing a training package that is primarily intended for women. The aim is to strengthen their resolve and to help them to see opportunities that will enable them to remain where they are

and earn a living. However, the training package will also be used to inform various players that work with the target groups about the problems that exist and how changes can be achieved. In addition, a special youth project will be launched.

Future Keys is also planning to arrange various seminars and activities for the women. One of the aims, for example, is to arrange exchanges with, and study visits to, other countries, primarily those involved in the Transnational Partnership.

Transnationally, Future Keys is working with eight different countries. The projects that the Partnership is co-operating with in Europe, however, have a more general focus on entrepreneurship for both women and men in urban as well as rural areas. Nevertheless, the projects are still working together to put the situation of women in rural areas on the European Commission’s agenda. The Commission has, for example, invited Future Keys to inform them about the project.

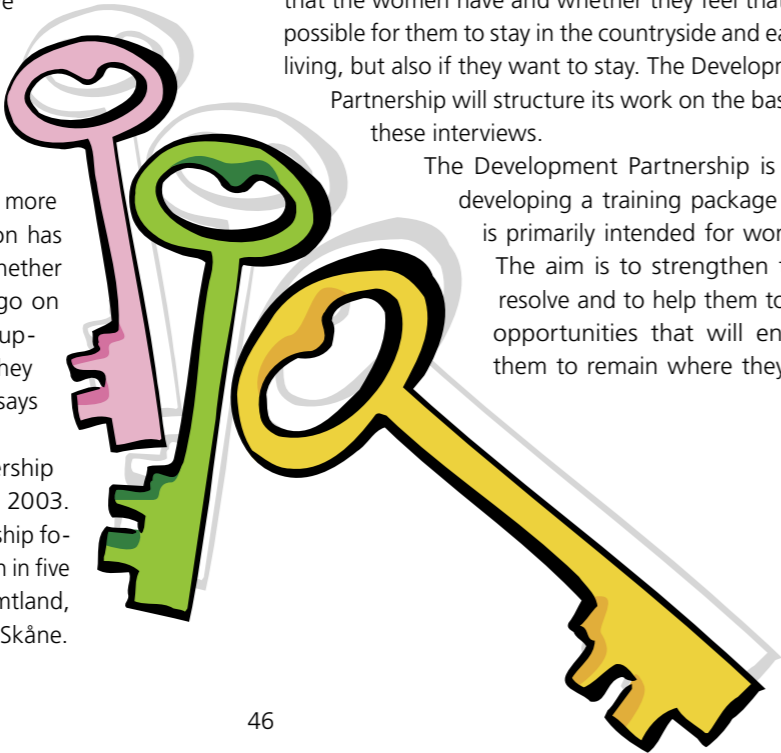
“There is a lot of interest there and it seems as though there is a great need in Europe. Women who live and work in rural areas form a group that is largely disregarded and overlooked throughout Europe and we need knowledge about their situation,” says Charlotte Haglund.

The vision of Future Keys is, above all, to highlight the needs of women in rural areas. However, the Partnership also aims to surmount the obstacles that exist in prevailing structures in order to make it possible for women to continue to live and support themselves in such areas.

In addition, the Partnership aims to change attitudes to women who choose to go on living and working in the countryside. It is also important, however, to change attitudes by making it attractive and possible to go on living there.

“It appears that young people who grow up in the countryside often leave for a while but are keen to return if they get the chance. It also seems that women who have moved would really like to go back,

but it has to be possible for them to earn a living. Our work is a first step towards making this possible,” says Charlotte Haglund.



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NESE

– New Economy and Social Entrepreneurship

The NESE Development Partnership wishes to change administrative organisations in the public sector in terms of their structures and their approach to players in the social economy. However, the Partnership also wants to change the attitudes of players within the social economy so that they can work in a more efficient and competitive way. The overriding goal is to form closer ties between the public sector and the social economy so that they work with, and not against, each other.

“NESE gives various discriminated groups the opportunity to change their activities and their lives. NESE is also needed because the co-operation between the public sector and the social economy needs to be changed. Above all, they need to think about their new roles,” says Sven Bartilsson, Co-ordinator of the NESE Development Partnership.

NESE is a collaboration between bodies that wish to assist in the establishment of the social economy, the public sector and associations.

Twelve different activities are currently being run within the framework of NESE. These activities are based on the ideas of various associa-

tions about what they want to do, how they want to develop their operations and how they want to sell their services.

NESE supports various ethnic associations that want to start co-operative businesses in the field of eldercare. The idea is that these businesses should be independent and continue to function even when the Equal period comes to an end. The activities concerned arise in the border zone between urban district councils and associations and they are based on the public sector. The aim is to meet the needs that people themselves express and to support them. NESE wishes to contribute to this by creating an effective model for co-operation. This may relate, for example, to how public officials should respond to a Turkish association that wants to set up an old peoples’ home, and to how the association should approach the public officials.

The Partnership is also studying how public procurement works in the case of social companies.

“There are lots of difficulties. We have therefore started something we call arena activities, which are basically workshops. Those who take part are people who have the power to change and influence the prevailing structures. We use cases from NESE’s various activities in order to examine problems, study the applicable legislation and so on. The aim is to change things for the better,” says Sven Bartilsson.

Arena activities are arranged when problems arise. Such an activity may be, for example, a training day on the social economy for people who work for an urban district council. The Development Partnership sees this as a means of finding ways to enable the establishment of social companies. The activities focus on co-operation between different players and the nature of regulations and attitudes in the public sector. An important

part of the work of the Development Partnership is to provide advice and guidance to public officials.

NESE is also conducting a study on the supply of capital for social companies. This study will help to increase the knowledge and expertise of social companies in terms of how to run at a profit and how to create capital, i.e. how to run a successful social company. On the basis of this study, NESE will arrange seminars for social companies.

NESE is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in Italy, the UK and Germany that are also working in the field of the social economy. Together, these Partnerships are working to strengthen the relationship between the voluntary sector and the public sector. They are also co-operating with regard to certain themes, such as funding, support structures and the social economy.

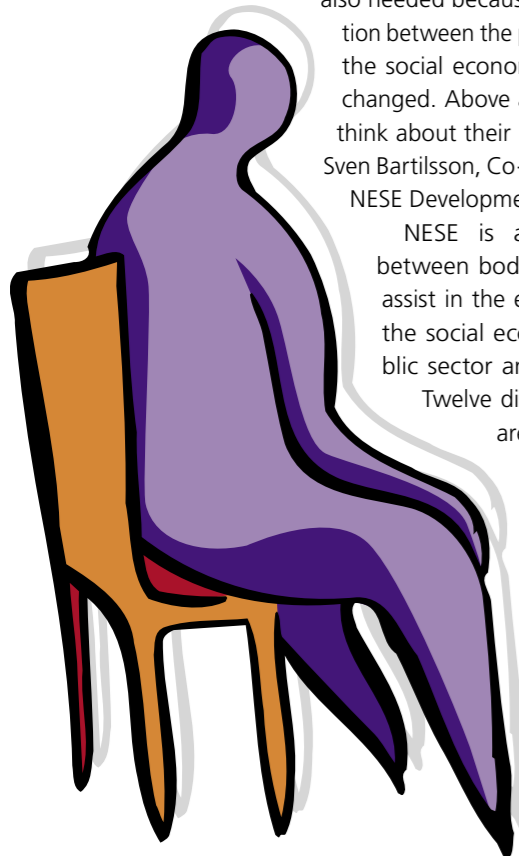
“We are learning a lot from this exchange of experience. We are seeing how people work in other countries, how they solve any unexpected problems that arise and how they deal with various aspects of the work. Above all, we are finding out what doesn’t work,” says Sven Bartilsson.

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People – Partnership for Equal Opportunities and Lifelong Learning

The People Development Partnership wants to find ways and means that will help disadvantaged groups to enter the labour market. The Partnership's activities also relate to learning at the workplace in the sense of moving learning and training to the workplace itself. The Partnership is running projects in Lindesberg, Gnosjö and Söderhamn.

The People Partnership is running three subprojects in three different regions. All of the subprojects have different orientations and working methods.

"The three parts overlap and the staff are learning a lot from the exchange of experience with the other subprojects. This means that the projects can be developed in a different way than if they had been three separate projects. All three subprojects are about finding ways to help disadvantaged groups to enter working life and to develop at work," says Ann-Christine Larsson, a Research Assistant for the People Development partnership.

In Lindesberg, a municipal training centre called Masugnen is working to help people on the long-term sicklist to return to the labour market. Many of the participants are on sick leave from care and healthcare jobs with the municipality or county council.

The Partnership in Lindesberg has individual discussions with all of the participants in order to determine what it is they want to do and how to proceed. It charts the formal and informal competence of each individual and works with stress management. The Partnership also arranges group meetings where the participants, among other things, analyse what is going on in the world around them and look, for example, at what the newspapers are writing about people on long-term sick leave.

"Many of the participants have a stress-related history of illness and they have said that the group meetings, above all, have helped them a great deal. They feel that it is really valuable to meet people whose experience is both similar and different," says Ann-Christine Larsson.

The Partnership also holds discussions with the individual participants together with representatives of other stakeholders, for example the employer, the Social Insurance Office and the Unemployment Office. An individual plan is then drawn up for each participant and the person concerned either begins job training or studying depending on his or her own wishes.

In Gnosjö, a limited company called Industriellt utvecklingscentrum i Gnosjöregionen (Industrial Development Centre in the Gnosjö Region) is in charge of the Partnership's work.

The Local Partnership is working on the preconditions for the induction of new employees at local workplaces. In a survey conducted together with companies in Gnosjö, it was discovered that the companies were not happy with earlier competence development programmes. It was therefore considered important to develop a pedagogical model for the companies' training work. As part of this effort, nine people have been selected from five different companies to follow a course where they learn to act as tutors. This course focuses on aspects of learning and

on the best way to introduce new employees to a workplace. The participants discuss, for example, the fact that different people learn in different ways, and from different starting points, and how to deal with people from different cultures and different language groups. The Partnership believes that the companies must learn more about effective teaching methods and how people learn in order to improve their internal training. This will also make it easier for the companies to induct trainees, trial workers and so on.

Part of the Partnership's plan is for temporary employment agencies in the Gnosjö region to employ people who have a foreign background and whose Swedish is limited. With the support of Swedish for Immigrants, the tutors will then work with these new employees at the workplaces concerned. The intention is to provide a form of trainee programme in which the Swedish course will be very practically based. Each individual participant will also have a mentor. These mentors will be people with a foreign background who have already made some progress in their careers on the Swedish labour market.

In Söderhamn, the municipal Centre for Flexible Learning is in charge of the People Partnership's activities and is working with industrial workers who have a limited formal education. This subproject focuses on finding models for competence development and learning at the workplace.

The Local Partnership has established contact with a logistics company and, together with the municipality's guidance unit, has investigated what the company's employees would like to do. Two people have now been given the opportunity to study for upper-secondary school matriculation. To provide cover while these two are studying, the company has taken on three previously unemployed people as trainees.

Together with a pulp mill in Söderhamn, the Partnership has started a trainee course in which four unemployed people are acting as a pilot group in order to test the model adopted.

"We are trying to link training directly to work. The four trainees are following a work team in order to learn the jobs involved at first hand. This means that they are getting training at the workplace that is directly related to the operations concerned. If they are studying business economics, for example, the company's Finance Manager is invited to come and talk to them about the financial aspects of the company," says Ann-Christine Larsson.

The People Development Partnership is co-operating transnationally with a Development Partnership in the UK called Workforce Future. The Partnerships are working together to develop tools for competence development, to change the attitudes of employers to various discriminated groups and to develop effective learning structures for workplaces.

People is also researching and following up the progress of the various activities on an ongoing basis.

"Within the national Partnership we also talk a lot about gender equality and what it really entails, although we don't work with the issue in our projects in any concrete way. In our research, however, we will examine whether there are differences in the treatment of men and women at the workplaces," says Ann-Christine Larsson.

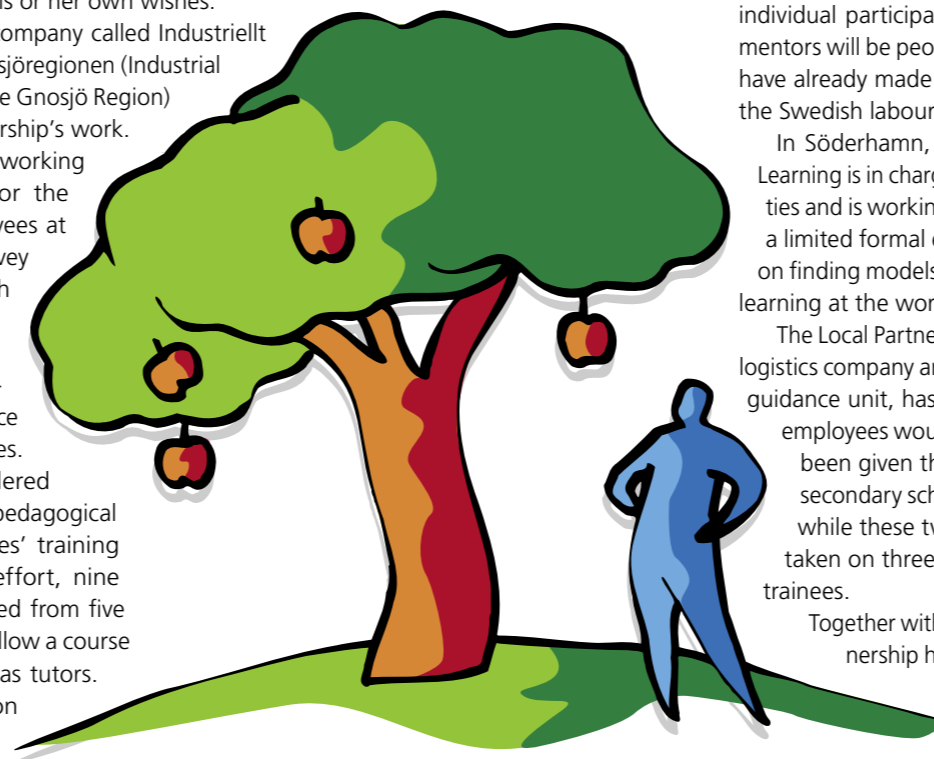
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Diversity Faces

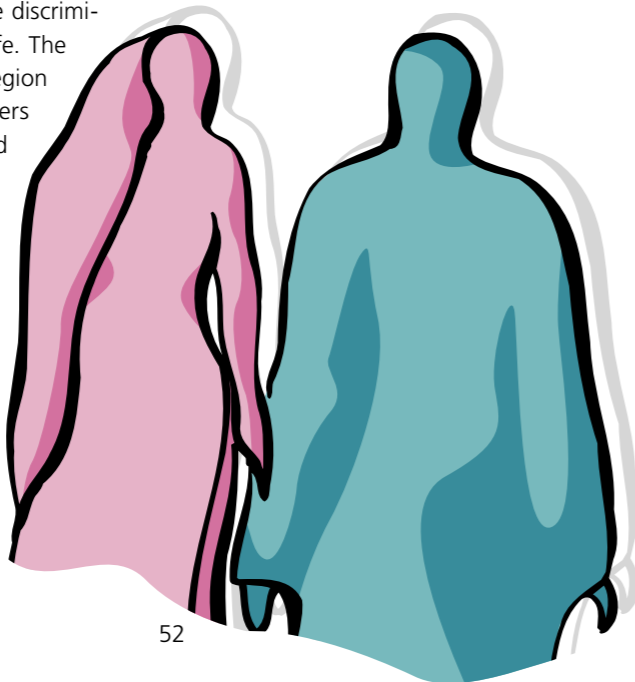
Östergötland is striving to become Europe's foremost region of diversity. Diversity Faces in Östergötland Development Partnership wishes to demonstrate that diversity is both profitable and necessary. The aim is to strengthen work on diversity and integration in the county and to create a regional network for the exchange of experience. Business and industry, the public sector, clubs and associations and private individuals will work consciously and in collaboration to remove obstacles to greater and deeper diversity.

Diversity Faces is the name of a Development Partnership in Östergötland that consists of 12 different players from the private and public sectors, from associations, from business and industry and from trade unions. The Partnership aims to extend diversity both within its own organisations and in co-operation with other bodies. Together, the partners are making a conscious and deliberate effort to remove discrimination and inequality from working life. The objective is to make Östergötland a region that welcomes all individuals and offers them opportunities to use their skills and expertise irrespective of gender, age, ethnic background, sexual orientation or functional disability.

"The Partnership is important. We will therefore work very hard to develop it. We don't want our efforts and ideas to die out, we want to see them go on living among the partners that we have involved in the project, and even spread beyond the Partnership," says Annika Bodelius, Co-ordinator of Diversity Faces.

The Development Partnership will act as a forum for organisations, companies and associations that want to work with diversity issues. Diversity Faces works with these issues on the basis of two platforms. These are called the Experimental Workshop and the Experience Dialogue.

The Experimental Workshop aims to develop and test methods for increasing diversity and reducing discrimination and exclusion. The Workshop provides financial and expert support to development projects that relate to diversity. Companies, municipalities and others can apply for funds from the Experimental Workshop for pilot projects regarding the development and testing of models for the promotion of diversity. One application to the Workshop related to recruitment, for example, that is to finding methods for recruiting employees of diverse backgrounds. An application from the Municipality of Norrköping, which was granted,



concerned the development of a model or a tool that can be used to influence the attitudes and values of working groups or teams. The Municipality has trained 12 diversity ambassadors and aims to train ambassadors in every municipality in the county. The ambassadors will arrange workshops for companies, municipalities and others. A film called "Blåögd" (Blue-eyed) will be used to initiate discussions about how racism and oppression arise and what it means to belong to a majority. Individuals will be given the opportunity to process their attitudes to themselves, to their colleagues and to the working group.

All applications for funds from the Experimental Workshop must include a commitment to share the knowledge acquired in the project concerned and to help to disseminate it, for example in seminars. The goal is to find effective methods for increasing diversity and integration throughout the county. Annika Bodelius stresses how important it is that the results and methods of the different projects are not forgotten.

Diversity Faces second platform is called the Experience Dialogue and works with the dissemination of knowledge and the creation of networks. This entails, for example, arranging seminars for the exchange of knowledge. Some of these are aimed at a specific target group that may benefit from the knowledge concerned, while others are more general – open seminars on gender equality for example. One of the seminars arranged by the Development Partnership was called "What is a real man?" and concerned gender roles.

The Experience Dialogue is also working to integrate effective methods for promoting diversity into the regular operations of companies and organisations. The aim is to lay the foundations for long-term work on diversity issues in the county and for a broad exchange of experience between different players.

Diversity Faces is part of a transnational co-operation project (The X Train) that also involves Development Partnerships in Scotland, the Netherlands, Portugal and Italy. These Partnerships are working

together at the social, organisational and individual levels to counteract discrimination and exclusion in working life. This work includes influencing attitudes and disseminating result. The partnerships are also co-operating to develop tools for distance learning for vulnerable and discriminated groups.

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www.diversityfaces.com

Diversity as the Human Resource Philosophy

The “Diversity as the Human Resource Philosophy” Development Partnership wishes to develop the way that human resources professionals think and work with regard to the diversity concept. The Partnership aims to help workplaces to see the differences between their employees as useful resources, not as obstacles or problems. The Municipality of Malmö, which is a member of the Development Partnership, is testing various models in order to find good ways of changing working methods so that they promote diversity instead of increasing exclusion..

“Diversity as the Human Resource Philosophy” wishes to develop and support values, norms, structures and working methods that help to increase diversity at the workplace. The activities of the Development Partnership focus primarily on ethnic diversity.

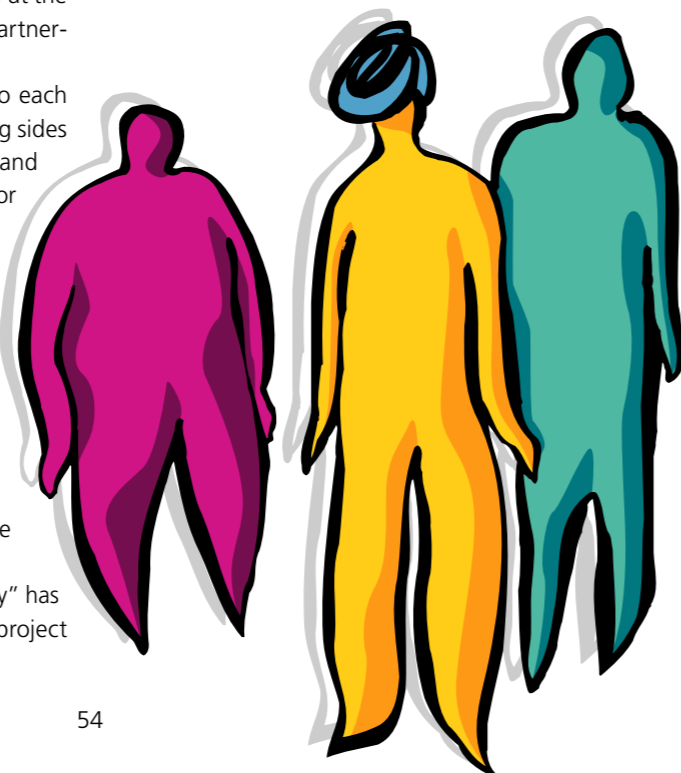
“It’s all about how the employees relate to each other and make the most of each others’ strong sides – about seeing possibilities instead of obstacles and barriers,” says Per Broomé, who is responsible for the research work of the Partnership.

In the City of Malmö, the Development Partnership is testing various methods that workplaces and employers can use to change their approach in order to promote diversity. The effective methods that are developed in the course of these projects will be circulated to municipalities, authorities and companies throughout the country. The target group consists of people who work with HR issues at the workplace.

“Diversity as the Human Resource Philosophy” has three main parts. The first part is the change project

that is being conducted in the municipal organisation of the City of Malmö within the framework of the Development Partnership. The City of Malmö is a major employer (approximately 20 000 employees). A large proportion of the population of Malmö is of foreign origin, and diversity is therefore an issue of high priority.

One of the City’s subprojects concerns managers who were born abroad. Despite the fact that a high percentage of Malmö’s population has a foreign background, few of the managers in the municipal organisation have such a background. The subproject is investigating what structures exist that obstruct diversity and how they can be changed.



Another of the City’s projects is working to implement concrete changes in recruitment procedures. A working group is examining, among other things, how jobs are structured and designed to see whether this in itself erects barriers and excludes people. The project aims to establish how to avoid such excluding barriers.

The City’s management training programme emphasises aspects such as the attitude that managers should take to the concept of diversity and how they should work with diversity in a concrete way.

The City is also running other subprojects that all aim to eliminate structures that discriminate and exclude people from working life.

The Development Partnership’s second main activity is the research conducted by the IMER (International Migration and Ethnic Relations) unit, at the University College of Malmö. The research group is studying how the City of Malmö addresses diversity in practice and is, in this light, examining specific areas such as the healthcare, care and school systems. The researchers are also evaluating the City’s diversity project and following the various subprojects on an ongoing basis.

The third and final main activity of the Partnership entails disseminating the results of the first two activities. The results are distributed to human resources professionals, mainly through the Centrum för Personal och Utveckling (Centre for Personnel and Development) and the journal “Personal & Ledarskap” (Personnel and Management). By giving lectures at IMER, the Partnership is also able to reach other people who have a general interest in diversity issues. The Development Partnership’s researchers also lecture to students who are studying to become human resources professionals.

The research group will follow up to what extent changes takes place in the approach to diversity, both in the City of Malmö and in the rest of Sweden following the dissemination phase.

The Development Partnership is involved in transna-

tional co-operation with Partnerships in Denmark, the UK and Germany. The Partnerships select a subject or theme together and conduct various activities relating to this subject or theme – arranging conferences for example. In the spring of 2003, the Partnerships worked together on the theme of recruitment. This involved examining obstacles to diversity in the recruitment process and how these obstacles can be overcome. The Partnerships also compare attitudes to diversity in the different countries and look at what they do similarly or differently.

The main focus of “Diversity as the Human Resource Philosophy” is on ethnic diversity, but the transnational co-operation also covers other aspects of diversity. The Development Partnership in Denmark, for example, focuses on gender equality and conducts organisational research from the gender-equality point of view.

Per Broomé is positive about the chances of achieving change.

“In the City of Malmö at least there is a strong political desire to work with these issues and they are working hard to implement the results in their organisation and spread them to their staff,” says Per Broomé.

Diversity as the Human Resource Philosophy

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DISI – Diversity in Swedish Industry

The DISI Development Partnership is working to develop the business concepts of Swedish companies so that they cover diversity issues. Diversity is also linked to competence, because companies that have different perspectives and ranges of experience in their workforce are strong and competitive. The strength that comes from having a diverse workforce is also linked to the corporate social responsibility (CSR) of the companies.

The idea for the DISI Development Partnership emerged in discussions between IVF Industriforskning och Utveckling AB (an industrial research and development company) and Volvo Personvagnar AB. Within the framework of DISI, Volvo Personvagnar AB and six of its subcontractors are working to achieve internal changes with regard to how they view and work with diversity. The Centre for the Study of Diversity and Practical Integration (CEMPI) is assisting and supporting the companies in their efforts to achieve change. The Development Partnership focuses on ethnic diversity and gender equality, but nevertheless tries to refrain from limiting the companies' own definitions of diversity. The companies themselves define what diversity means to them and how they intend to work to promote it.

CEMPI has held discussions with the seven different companies. Over the course of a day at each of the companies, CEMPI met three different groups. The first group consisted of four members of the management and the second of trade union representatives, while the third and final group was a pilot group appointed by the company. CEMPI met the three groups separately.

"We are co-operating with seven different companies that are permitted to define their own rules. We are talking about seven different processes, or individuals," says Jorge Plada of CEMPI.

The groups discussed the issues involved until they arrived at a definition of diversity. They spoke about their experience of diversity and discussed the concept of competence in terms of social competence, cultural competence and professional competence in relation to diversity.

The next step in DISI's work is to compile and interpret the information gathered during the discussions. This will be followed by a feedback stage, i.e. returning to the companies and presenting what has emerged. The most interesting points will be discussed with the companies. The feedback provided will form the basis for the next steps in the companies' work – to draw up an action plan and manage the process of change.

DISI is also running group activities and has formed three different groups of companies. The Partnership believes that by discussing with others the companies will be able to broaden their perspective as to what diversity is. Presentations and lectures are also held during the group activities, for example by the School of Economics at Gothenburg University. The School of Economics also plays an important role in the Development Partnership by supporting the companies and helping them to draw conclusions.

The companies have asked for more information and instruction on the legislation on discrimination and how to avoid discrimination at the workplace. DISI is therefore working to get representatives of the four different anti-discrimination ombudsmen to come to the companies to provide information about the legislation.

A large part of the work concerns changing at-

titudes and combating prejudice. This is largely done through dialogues in which the participants work with their own attitudes and become aware of their own prejudices, for example with regard to people with a different ethnic background or to the opposite sex.

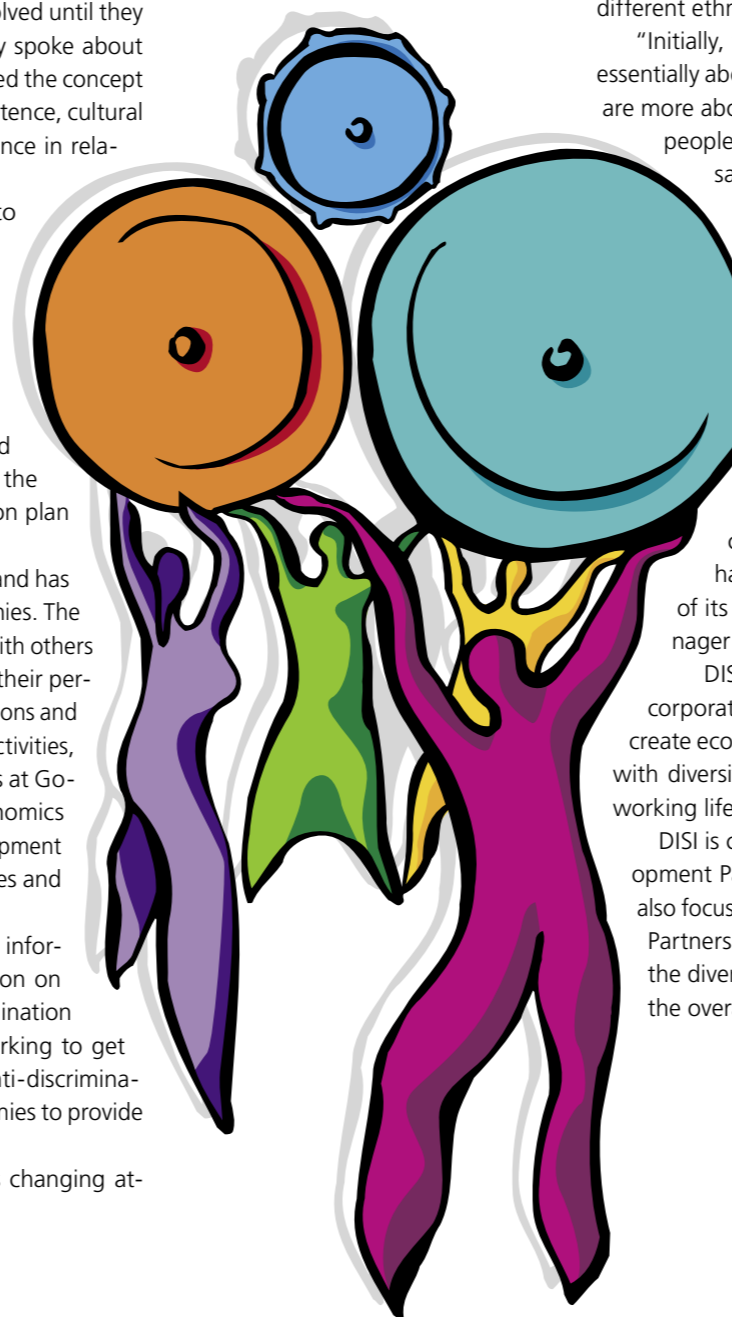
"Initially, many people thought that diversity was essentially about recruitment. But now the discussions are more about the different skills and expertise that people have and that they are really an asset," says Jorge Plada.

The Development Partnership has helped the companies to conduct inventories of the competence available at their workplaces, as everyone has many different skills and areas of expertise in addition to their formal education and professional competence.

"At one of our companies, absence due to illness fell from 20 per cent to 2 per cent in six months after it had conducted an inventory of the skills of its employees," says Jan Bäck, Project Manager of DISI.

DISI aims to link the work on diversity to corporate social responsibility. This can help to create economic drivers for the companies to work with diversity and help to reduce discrimination in working life and society at large.

DISI is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in Germany and France that also focus on the motor industry. The Development Partnerships are jointly studying the impact that the diversity work of industrial companies has at the overall social level.



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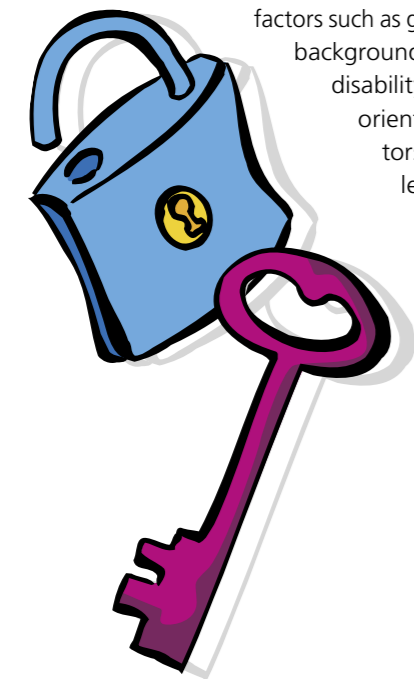
Web site: <http://extra.ivf.se/disi/>

Key Forces

The Key Forces Development Partnership in the County of Blekinge is working to counteract discrimination in working life on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, functional disability or ethnic background. The aim is to highlight the value of individual differences and thus create positive attitudes to diversity. In order to achieve its objectives, Key Forces is training diversity consultants and disseminating knowledge on diversity issues to politicians and the public.

The Development Partnership is made up of non-profit, municipal and state organisations and authorities. The broad composition of the Partnership means that it comprises a wide range of expertise.

Key Forces has trained 22 diversity consultants. These consultants have been trained to see society as consisting of a number of individuals who are all different. They have also learned about factors such as gender, ethnic background, functional disability and sexual orientation – factors that often lead to discrimination and exclusion.



The diversity consultants will act as information officers and hold regular consultations at various workplaces in the public and private sectors in order to discuss the situation in working life in general and at the workplace concerned in particular. The idea is to create a discussion and a dialogue with the companies and their employees on attitudes and prejudices regarding gender, ethnic background, functional disability and sexual orientation. During the consultations, for example, the participants will discuss what gender equality and diversity really entail. The Partnership will begin to market the services of its diversity consultants to companies during the autumn of 2003.

“The ideal is to hold three three-hour meetings per workplace. Having time to discuss all four pillars requires at least a couple of return visits,” says Marie Klang, Co-ordinator of the Key Forces Development Partnership.

The 22 consultants have been recruited from among job seekers of a variety of ages. They have different origins and backgrounds and thus form a diverse group.

“Their range of backgrounds and their first-hand knowledge of diversity is a strength,” says Marie Klang.

Key Forces is also trying to disseminate knowledge on diversity issues to politicians and the public. The Partnership has therefore organised seminars at which the ombudsmen against discrimination on the grounds of disability, ethnic background, sexual orientation and gender have informed the participants about their work. Key Forces has also arranged various cultural events on the theme of diversity, for example plays, concerts and exhibitions of paintings and photographs, at these seminars.

“A lot of this work is about establishing contacts

with politicians in order to bring about the necessary changes,” says Marie Klang.

The Development Partnership therefore aims to inform the politicians in the county about its work and diversity issues on an ongoing basis.

Capturing the attention of the media and getting them to write about the work of the Partnership is another way for Key Forces to spread knowledge about diversity in working life and to put these issues on the agenda.

Key Forces is also conducting research in Blekinge in order to investigate attitudes to gender, ethnic background, functional disability and sexual orientation. This is being done by means of questionnaires and interviews.

Transnationally, Key Forces is co-operating with Development Partnerships in the Czech Republic, France and Austria. The Partnerships are working towards several common goals. These relate to changing attitudes to discriminated groups and to combating and counteracting discrimination in society. Training programmes are a central factor in the work of all the Development Partnerships and several joint workshops on dissemination, training and research have been held.

“Or work has come at the right time, especially considering the future shortage of labour. We emphasise the benefits of diversity in the information we provide to companies and authorities and discuss why they should work with diversity,” says Marie Klang.

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Rural Renewal

In Sweden’s four northernmost counties, the Rural Renewal Development Partnership is working to make it possible for people to go on living in their home areas and to support themselves. The Development Partnership aims to change systems that restrict local development. Primarily, the Partnership wants to change recruitment systems and to counteract obstacles to enterprise in order to give people the opportunity to stay and earn a living in the areas concerned.

The sparsely-populated rural areas of Norrland have problems in the form of depopulation and long distances. Unemployment is high in the region. The aim of Rural Renewal is to make it possible for people to go on living in these areas and to educate and support themselves. New options and alternatives must be tested so that people will not be forced to move because they cannot earn a living.

The Development Partnership is working in the inland areas of the four northernmost counties, i.e. Jämtland, Västernorrland, Västerbotten and Norrbotten. The target group is made up of public authorities and organisations that are responsible for local issues and that are able to influence the local labour market. Rural Renewal works with 12 subprojects and three theme areas.

The first theme area concerns local working methods. The Development Partnership supports local initiatives by trying to find methods that help individuals to develop their own ideas and remove obstacles to the implementation of these ideas. The Partnership wishes, for example, to change and develop the working methods of the Employment Office and the Social Insurance Office. Rural Renewal is also working to transfer decision-making from the regional to the local level and to

ensure that the decisions made take into account the interests of the communities involved at large.

Rural Renewal’s second theme area relates to the fact that young people must be given the opportunity to work or pursue further education. The Partnership is running various subprojects that aim to change the way that young people in the area look at the region so that they see possibilities that will enable them to go on living there. They should not be forced to move because there are no jobs and they cannot support themselves. Increasing peoples’ knowledge about the world around them is often an important factor in stimulating new ideas and initiatives.

“A lot of young people have the attitude that there’s nothing they can do, they feel that they cannot change or influence things. Perhaps they feel that they would rather live “in exclusion” on benefits. Our activities aim to show them what a job might mean and how it could enrich their lives,” says Ulf Brangenfeldt, Co-ordinator of the Rural Renewal Development Partnership.

The third theme area is called “Commercialisation” and concerns helping excluded individuals and those who have not received enough support to put their ideas into practice. Rural Renewal wants to increase and improve the possibilities for developing both new and existing companies in order to create more jobs. In this theme area, the Partnership is working with the Sami, who often find it dif-

ficult to get into commercial fields outside the traditional areas of reindeer herding and handicrafts. Special attention is being paid to Sami women, who often find it more difficult than the men to enter the open labour market or start and run companies. The Development Partnership bases its work on the Sami’s own ideas and wishes and helps them to develop and build on these ideas. Rural Renewal aims to help the Sami to make the most of their unique knowledge and expertise with regard, for example, to natural resources.

An Experience Council made up of expert researchers from four different universities, including the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, is linked to the Development Partnership. The Expert Council provides support and advice to the subprojects and their target groups. The researchers apply their expertise and specialist knowledge to analyse problems and indicate possible solutions as to how to work to bring about social changes. Another important role of the Expert Council is to disseminate results to those who are responsible for the issues concerned at the local, regional and central levels.

The Development Partnership has also interviewed people living in sparsely-populated rural areas about what they actually do to support themselves.

“It is important to start out from the actual situation that individuals find themselves in if you want to change things for the better. We want to help people become more satisfied with their lives, as this is important in being able to solve other problems too,” says Ulf Brangenfeldt.

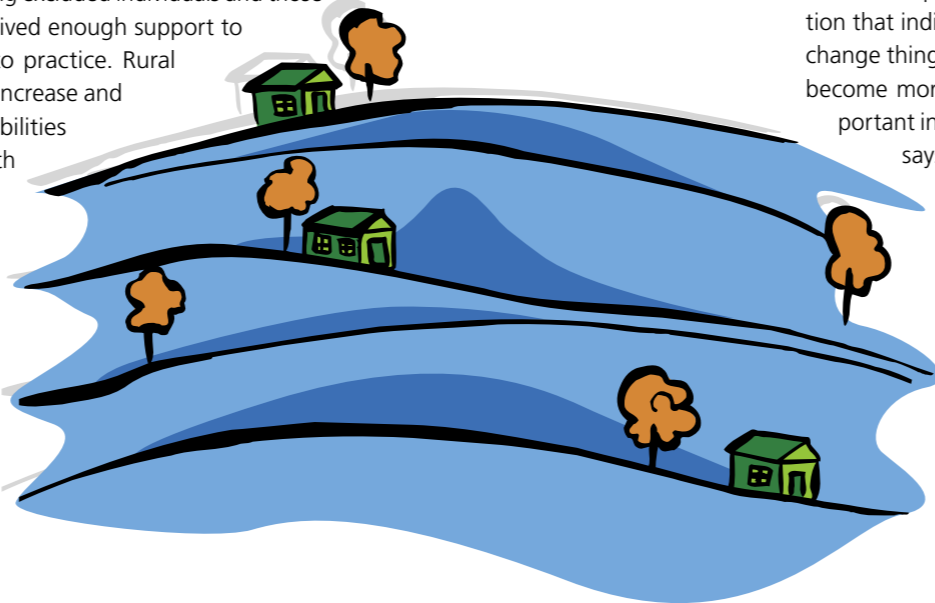
Rural Renewal has identified several problems that it is now analysing and trying to solve. The Partnership has also learned a lot more about how people in rural areas support themselves

“The result are important if we are to be able to act as agents of change. It is the results that we will put into practice at various players – municipa-

lities, employment offices, companies – so that they can lead to changes in the way that these organisations work. The results must bear fruit and provide new possibilities and potential,” says Ulf Brangenfeldt.

However, bringing about structural changes that will make it easier for people to live and support themselves in sparsely-populated rural areas requires political decisions. Rural Renewal therefore intends to work intensively to market its results and models to politicians, but also to train people in the organisations that work with these issues, for example the County Labour Boards. Handling changes in working structures requires knowledge about the specific problems of rural areas and about how people can, and want to, earn a living. In order to work in a rewarding way with, for example, the Sami, knowledge about their wishes, ideas and general preconditions is also required.

Rural Renewal is co-operating with Development Partnerships in Italy, Germany and Spain that are also working with rural economics. The Partnerships are working together to study whether it is possible to create more “green jobs” in the environmental and economic fields in rural areas, for example. The co-operation also concerns tourism and the possibilities that exist for the local development of businesses in the field of tourism.



Rural Renewal
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Normgiving Diversity

The Normgiving Diversity Development Partnership aims to highlight and combat the discrimination of homosexuals and bisexuals in the church, the police force and the armed forces. The Partnership wants to make an issue of what has previously been a non-issue.

"We realise that we will not change the world with one project, but it may make an impression and form the basis for long-term changes," says Elisabet Qvarford, a Project Manager at the Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees (TCO), one of the 13 partners in the Development Partnership.

Normgiving Diversity is working with the Church of Sweden, the police force and the armed forces. These are institutions that have previously been regarded as homophobic and conservative. They are also three institutions that have long played a central role in forming and representing social norms (which explains the name of the Partnership), and they are made up of professionals with a high profile.

"If these three organisations can become open and inclusive workplaces we will have achieved a lot. The fact that they have a normative function can, in the long run, hopefully also influence other workplaces to become more open," says Elisabet Qvarford.

The Church subproject

EKHO (Federation of Ecumenical Groups for Christian Homosexuals and Bisexuals) is one of the initiators of the entire project and, together with the Parish and Benefice Association of the Church of Sweden, is also behind the subproject that deals with the Church of Sweden. The subproject has chosen to work with three pilot dioceses: Stockholm, Gothenburg and Härnösand.

In Gothenburg, the subproject has developed a training day for representatives of the trade unions and employers. In part, the training provided focuses on the relevant anti-discrimination legislation, but the course above all involves discussing what homosexuality and bisexuality are, what the everyday situation is for homosexuals and bisexuals, what attitudes they face and so on.

"We point out that this is a work environment issue and not a theological issue. It is important to realise this, as many people in the church claim that it is really a theological issue," says Elisabet Qvarford.

The Police subproject

"Unfortunately, the work in this subproject got off to a slow start for several reasons," says Elisabet Qvarford.

All of the County Police Authorities are independent, and therefore decide for themselves if they want to take part in the project or not. However, although the initial response was poor, training days are now being arranged.

"We are working hard to publicise our activities – to tell people that we exist. We attend meetings and congresses arranged by the various authorities to market Normgiving Diversity and inform them about what we do," says Elisabet Qvarford.



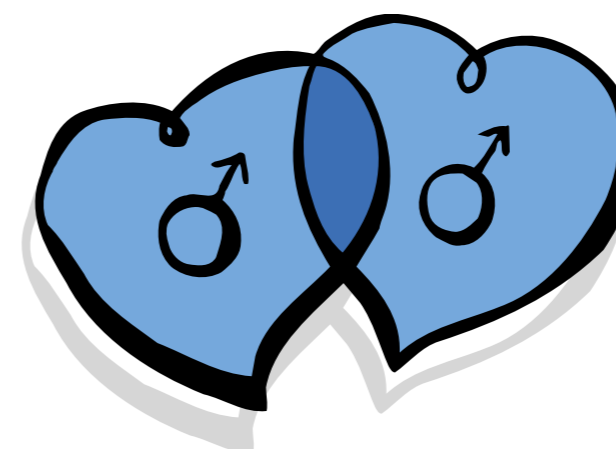
The Armed Forces subproject

Unlike the police, the armed forces fall under the umbrella of a single authority. The leadership of this authority has clearly declared in favour of the project and wants to take part. The Project Manager for Normgiving Diversity has visited all the regiments in Sweden to lead a three-hour course on the issues involved. This course is mainly aimed at trade union representatives and senior officers.

"We sent letters to all the regiments asking them to set a date for the course. They weren't able to say "no thanks" or decide whether to take part or not. The central leadership had already decided that everyone had to take part," says Elisabet Qvarford.

Other work

There is not a great deal of research on the situation of homosexuals and bisexuals in working life. Together with the Development Partnership Homosexuals and Bisexuals in the Care Sector and the Centre for Gender Studies of the University of Karlstad, Normgiving Diversity has therefore conducted extensive interviews with those who are openly homosexual or bisexual and those who are not open about their sexual orientation within the respective professional groups.



In addition, the Partnership has co-operated with the Institute for Working Life and Homosexuals and Bisexuals in the Care Sector to distribute 28 000 questionnaires containing 84 questions on working conditions and exclusion. One of the aims of the questionnaire is to find out if there are differences in the level of well-being among homosexuals and bisexuals in comparison with heterosexuals.

The Development Partnership is also backing the production of a play that will be performed at 20 different training events at a variety of institutions. The play will be about hetero-normative exclusion mechanisms and why homosexuals and bisexuals do not want to be open about their sexual orientation at work.

In co-operation with Homosexuals and Bisexuals in the Care Sector and HomO (the ombudsman against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation), the Partnership has also produced a training package consisting of a book, a CD and a video. This will be used in the project's training activities and by HomO.

Normgiving Diversity co-operates closely with the Development Partnership Homosexuals and Bisexuals in the Care Sector. While Normgiving Diversity focuses on workplaces where men predominate, Homosexuals and Bisexuals in the Care Sector focuses on workplaces where women predominate. One of the reasons for co-operating is to find out whether there are differences in attitudes depending on whether men or women predominate at a workplace. The Partnerships also want to find out if there are differences in peoples' attitudes to homosexual men and homosexual women.

There are four Development Partnerships in the Equal Programme that focus solely on sexual orientation: two in Sweden, one in Finland and one in the Netherlands. These Development Partnerships are co-operating closely on a transnational basis.

Normgiving Diversity
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Universal Access to Working Life

The aim of the Universal Access to Working Life Development Partnership is to reduce the discrimination and exclusion of the functionally disabled on the labour market. The Co-ordinator for the Partnership is the Co-ordination Committee for the National Associations for Disabled Persons (HSO).

"According to labour market statistics, disabled people have a higher level of unemployment and a lower level of education and training than people who are not disabled. We will work above all to reduce unemployment among the disabled. This entails working with attitudes as well as access," says Erik Särnell from HSO, the Co-ordinator of Universal Access to Working Life.

Access of course relates to physical accessibility, i.e. a disabled person not actually being able to get into the workplace concerned because of physical obstacles or not having the strength to work full time every day, but it also relates to communicative and psychosocial accessibility.

"We want people to see solutions rather than problems. These people are an asset at the workplace and we want employers and other employees to see this," says Erik Särnell.

Current legislation stipulates that public authorities must make all public environments accessible to the disabled by 2010. There is no such legislation, however, in the case of private companies. The partnership is therefore working to establish a direct dialogue with companies.

The Development Partnership's main focus is on the workplace as a workplace. There is, however, also a focus on the customer, and the Partnership informs companies about how to treat people with functional disabilities. In an open dialogue with the companies,

the Partnership presents good examples of how to act and what has worked well for other companies.

The Partnership is running a number of subprojects and activities. The main activity, however, is the creation of a Competence Centre for Accessibility (CCA). The project is working in a limited number of areas to market the services of people trained in accessibility. There are already training course in accessibility, but they focus only on the physical environment. CCA also examines informative and communicative accessibility and psychosocial accessibility. Universal Access to Working Life has employed consultants who already have a lot of knowledge about the physical environment. These will be given further training in line with their own wishes and interests.

Material as a basis for the procurement of this training has been presented to the County Labour Boards and it is estimated that courses will begin in the autumn of 2003 or the spring of 2004.

Consultants have already begun working within the framework of the Partnership in Stockholm and Skåne. The next step will be to employ consultants who will work in Umeå and, eventually, Gothenburg.

A Regional Partnership in each of the respective areas will market the services of the consultants to employment offices, authorities and others. These Regional Partnerships will also support the consultants. The idea is that the consultants should be able to continue their work and earn a living from it even after the end of the Equal Programme.

Another of the Partnership's subprojects is called Agenda 22 Companies. This subproject is studying the factors that lead private employers to begin working with accessibility.

The Partnership also has a media project, as the media's description of the disabled affects public at-

titudes and thus the attitudes of employers. The media project aims to inform people working in the media how they should, and should not, write about people with functional disabilities. At present, the media often present a very stereotyped image of the disabled – they are either victims or heroes. The media project has run pilot courses at Dagens Nyheter (a major daily newspaper) and Sveriges Radio (Swedish Broadcasting Corporation). The Partnership does not present a finished concept but aims to generate an open dialogue. On the basis of their knowledge and experience of living with a disability, members of the project talk about how they react to the way they are described in the media.

"Our starting point is that we are the experts. We tell the newspapers, "if you write like this, we react like this," and then we discuss this together," says Erik Särnell.

This subproject has also helped to develop a five-credit course with a disability perspective that will be taught as part of the journalism course at Gothenburg University.

Another subproject concerns developing accessibility on the Internet for disabled people. This project is being run in co-operation between HSO, the Swedish Handicap Institute (HI), a company called ETC and the Royal Institute of Technology. HI is testing how the accessibility of communication tools works in practice, the Royal Institute of Technology is studying how consultants work and ETC is working with marketing.

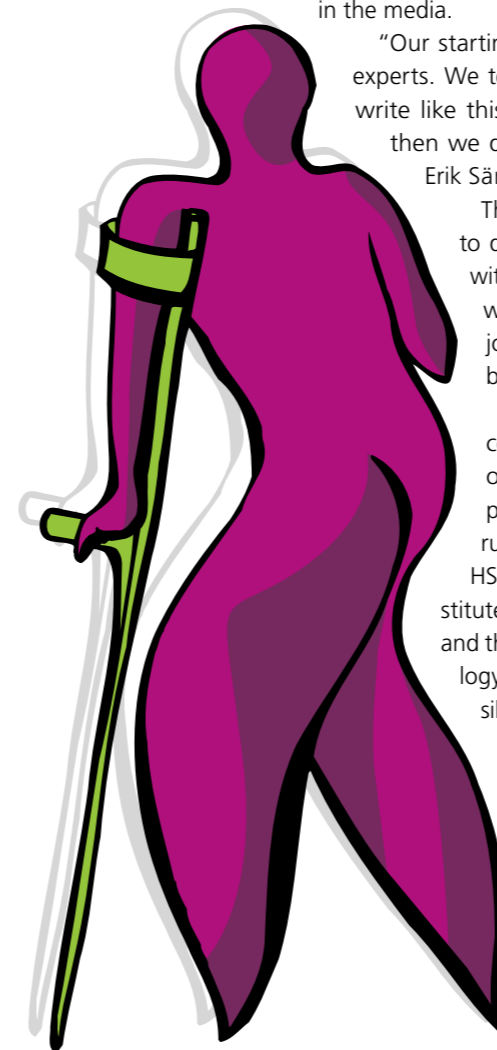
Transnationally, Universal Access to Working Life is co-operating with Development Partnerships in Italy, Portugal, Spain, France and England. All of the countries are working with different themes and different target groups.

"This is proving to be a very rewarding collaboration, there has been a lot of interest in our work and we are also discovering interesting features in our partners' projects that we can take up in our work," says Erik Särnell.

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Homo- and Bisexuals in the Care Sector

Homosexual and Bisexuals in the Care Sector is a Development Partnership that is working to make it possible for everyone to be open about their sexual orientation and to be treated with respect at their place of work. The Partnership aims to counteract negative attitudes by providing information and discussing the issues involved, and focuses on municipal child care/preschools and eldercare.

"When I tell people about my job, many of them say: "being homosexual or bisexual isn't a problem these days is it?" But, even though things often go very well, there are still problems with the attitudes of some heterosexuals," says Anette Sjödin, Co-ordinator of the Homosexuals and Bisexuals in the Care Sector Development Partnership.

The climate at many workplaces today is not honest and open. As a result, many people do not dare to be open about their sexual orientation. This is a big problem because, in a legal sense, people cannot be discriminated against if their sexual orientation is not known – even though the reason for not being open is that there is prejudice at the workplace and the individuals concerned therefore feel that they are the victims of discrimination anyway.

"All homosexuals and bisexuals constantly have to deal with the problem of being made, or having to become, "invisible". Highlighting sexual

orientation as a basis for discrimination is therefore an important task," says Anette Sjödin.

The Development Partnership decided to focus on the care sector because it is a sector that concerns relations between people. In professions where human relations play a central role, mutual respect is of the utmost importance. The Partnership believes that respect should permeate working life as a whole, and that this includes respect for third parties.

The Partnership is working along two parallel lines. The first of these relates to research.

There is not very much research on the situation of homosexuals and bisexuals in working life. Homosexuals and Bisexuals in the Care Sector is therefore co-operating with the Normative Diversity Development Partnership and the Centre for Gender Studies at Karlstad University in order to investigate the current situation and to find ways of counteracting the exclusion and discrimination of homosexuals and bisexuals. Extensive interviews have been carried out with those who are openly homosexual and those who hide their sexual orientation in a number of occupational areas (child care/preschools, eldercare, the church, the police and the defence forces). Focus groups made up of representatives of the various occupations have then been presented with certain given situations and have discussed alternative, possible responses. In this way, the Partnership hopes to learn more about how to create a positive and inclusive work environment.

Together with the Institute for Working Life and Normative Diversity, the Partnership has also conducted an extensive survey on working conditions and vulnerability. Almost 14 000 individuals completed the questionnaire which aimed, for example, to find out whether there are differences in the sense of well-being among homosexuals and bisexuals in comparison

with heterosexuals, that is whether a person's sexual orientation has an impact on their sense of well-being at work. The results of this survey indicate, among other things, that a large proportion of all homosexuals and bisexuals, around 25 per cent, are not at all open about their sexual orientation at their place of work.

Through its co-operation with Normative Diversity, the Partnership also aims to find out if there are differences in attitudes depending on whether a workplace is mainly staffed by men or by women. In addition, the Partnership wants to examine if there are differences in the way that people view homosexual and bisexual men and homosexual and bisexual women.

The second line that Homosexuals and Bisexuals in the Care Sector is working along relates to training and education.

"Prejudice grows from ignorance. We therefore want to raise this issue at the workplace and increase the level of knowledge by providing information and generating discussion," says Anette Sjödin.

The Partnership has established contacts with municipalities and employers throughout Sweden, informed them about its activities and identified those who are interested in pursuing the issue further. In the autumn of 2003, the Partnership will co-operate more closely with approximately 15 municipalities and, in line with their wishes, arrange conferences, help them to write diversity policies, run courses and so on.

"The response has been good. The 15 municipalities we have met are all very positive and say that they have really gained something. They feel that this has raised new ideas on an issue that was largely ignored before. We have to remember, however, that the resources of the municipalities are stretched and we have to find reasonable ways of moving forward," says Anette Sjödin.

Three of the 15 municipalities will later be selected as pilot municipalities for even closer co-operation.

The Partnership believes that disseminating information and knowledge, for example at seminars and

conferences arranged by the Partnership or by others, is an important task.

Together with Normative Diversity and HomO (the Swedish ombudsman against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation), the Partnership will develop a training package consisting of a book, a CD and a video. These are intended to get people to react and will be used over a long period to influence attitudes in the long term.

Together with Normative Diversity, Homosexuals and Bisexuals in the Care Sector is involved in transnational co-operation with Development Partnerships in the Netherlands and Finland. Of all the activities taking place under the umbrella of the Equal programme, only these four Partnerships are working specifically with discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. Together, the Partnerships arrange conferences and other activities in order to reach employers and employees throughout the EU and to bring up the issue of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation for discussion. The Partnerships also co-operate on research.

"Our project will be needed as long as there are homosexuals and bisexuals who can't be open about their sexual orientation," says Anette Sjödin.

Homo- and Bisexuals in the Care Sector

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Kista Open Academy

The Kista Open Academy Development Partnership wants to realise the “open university” concept in Sweden. The Partnership is therefore trying to influence education and training systems to become more open and flexible by changing the regulations and conditions governing the opportunity to study. The aim is to counteract social, economic and ethnic segregation.

“People who want to study today face a lot of obstacles. If you look at these obstacles one by one they may not seem so bad, but when you put them together, as we have done, they seem insurmountable,” says Ebba Träskelin, Development Manager at Kista Open Academy.

Finland is the Development Partnership’s model for how an open university could be created without the exclusion structures that exist in the established Swedish universities and colleges. There has been an open university in Finland for ten years. It has over 40 000 students and is well established. An open university does not have any formal entrance requirements. Instead, individuals themselves decide whether they will be able to follow and complete the course concerned.

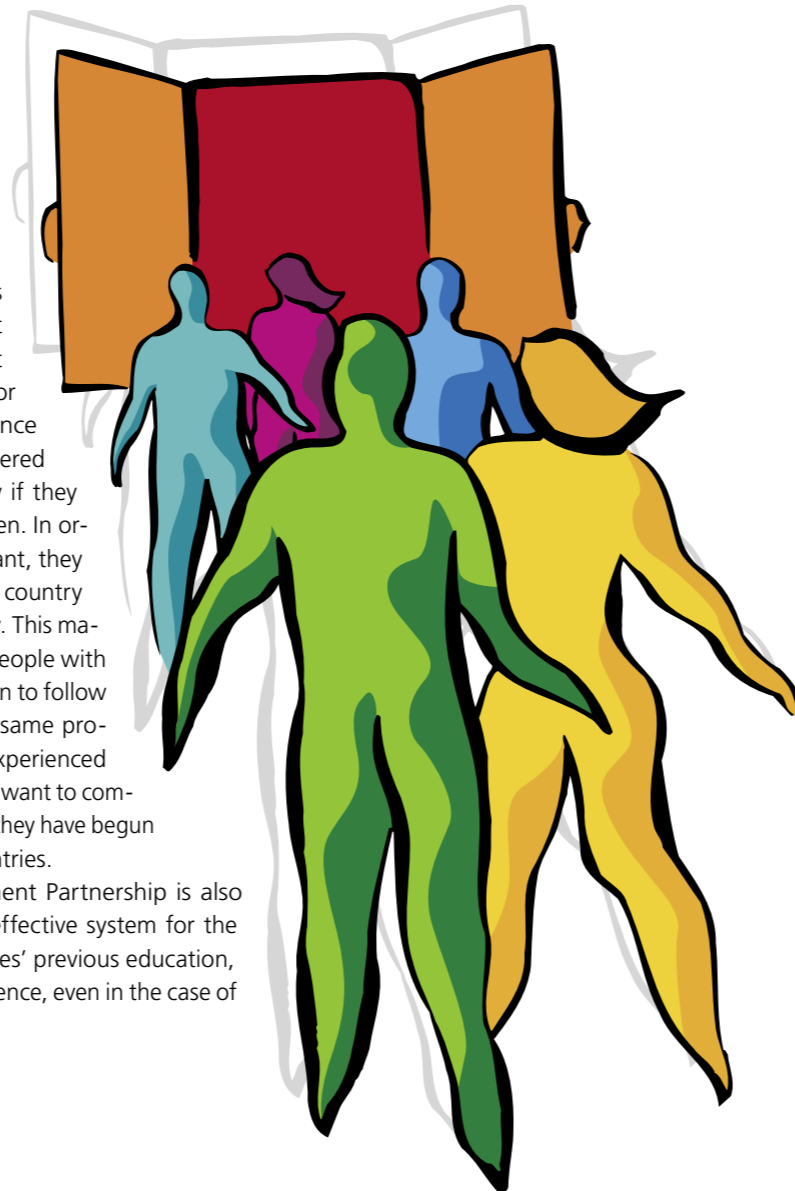
Kista Open Academy’s (KOA) activities are aimed at the unemployed, immigrants and asylum seekers, children and young people. The project aims to promote lifelong learning by realising the open university concept in Sweden. The main objective is to counteract social, economic and ethnic segregation.

KOA therefore works on different fronts. An important part of the Development Partnership’s efforts is to research and analyse the regulatory systems surrounding higher education in Sweden. The Partnership is investigating structures that seem to place obstacles in

the way of people who want to study. It is also making comparisons with the situation in Norway and Finland, which are covered by the national Partnership, and conducting comparative surveys with its transnational partners in the UK and Italy.

KOA has found a number of obstructive structures in the student grants and loans system that it wishes to influence and change. One of the things KOA wants to change is that people cannot receive support from this system for following a distance learning course offered in another country if they still reside in Sweden. In order to receive a grant, they must travel to the country concerned to study. This makes it difficult for people with families and children to follow such courses. The same problem can also be experienced by immigrants who want to complete a course that they have begun in their home countries.

The Development Partnership is also trying to find an effective system for the validation of peoples’ previous education, training and experience, even in the case of



knowledge, skills and expertise that were not acquired within the formal education system.

“Many university and college courses require special entrance qualifications today. This excludes people who do not have the formal qualifications but who may well be able to follow the course anyway,” says Ebba Träskelin.

KOA is also running an infrastructure project that is developing a learning centre in Kista outside Stockholm. This centre has already started to advertise courses that, in line with the concept of the open university, are open to all without formal entrance requirements.

Another of the Partnerships activities concerns course development and working with IT teaching methods in order to create flexible distance learning courses.

“People have different learning styles. Some want to read, some want to listen and some want to do both. There also have to be opportunities for revision. It is important that there are local learning centres where people can go to get support and guidance. There is a chronic shortage of local learning centres in the major urban areas, so we are now building one in Kista. This is necessary to provide flexibility and the possibility to develop an individual syllabus that is adapted to the situation and capabilities of the individual concerned,” says Ebba Träskelin.

KOA wants, at as early a stage as possible, to motivate children and young people to pursue a higher education. The Partnership is also seeking good methods for improving the language skills of multilingual children with the aim of giving all children in Sweden equal conditions and opportunities.

In the name of gender equality, KOA has also striven to ensure that there are equal numbers of men and women at all levels of the Partnership, from the leadership down.

“But we don’t see equality as just being about women and men. It is also about co-operation between different groups under the same terms and

conditions. The Partnership therefore includes municipalities, companies, universities and colleges and immigrant associations on the same terms. We also try to ensure that there is equality between immigrant children and Swedish children by giving them the same opportunities and by trying to reduce segregation,” says Ebba Träskelin.

KOA is co-operating transnationally with two Development Partnerships in the UK. One of these works with asylum seekers and recent immigrants. The aim is that they should have the same educational opportunities as British citizens. The other Development Partnership works to improve opportunities for people to study by developing regulations and courses and creating good learning environments. KOA is also co-operating transnationally with a Development Partnership in Italy that is trying to improve opportunities for training and further training for the employees of small companies.

Kista Open Academy
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Libra

The Libra Development Partnership wants to open up the construction industry, which has traditionally been regarded as a typically male sector, to women and people with a foreign background. In the belief that greater diversity will be good for the sector, Libra is working to influence values and attitudes to groups that are currently excluded from the industry. The long-term objective is that the composition of the workforce in the industry should match that of society as a whole.

Throughout Europe, it seems that fewer and fewer people want to work in the construction industry, and many people are also leaving the industry. Libra is striving to make the industry more attractive to both men and women and to Swedes and those with a foreign background.

The Libra Development Partnership has eight different models that focus on eight different problem areas in the construction industry. Each model comprises a number of activities or subprojects. On the basis of these pilot models, Libra will develop a number of effective models that can be used in the construction industry throughout Europe to counteract discrimination and exclusion and to attract new groups. The project aims to test new avenues in order to find future recruitment models for the construction sector.

The Development Partnership's two experimental areas are the counties of Skåne and Halland, which make up one area, and Västra Götaland.

Model 1 is the largest and most important model. It concerns influencing values and attitudes with regard to women and people with a foreign background. The Development Partnership has interviewed 518 people working in the construction industry in the counties of Skåne and Halland. Employees have been asked,

for example, how they think their workplace would be affected if there were more people of the opposite sex or of a different ethnic background. The answers to this questionnaire will be used to develop a course on diversity and equality issues that will aim to change values and attitudes at construction companies. This course will comprise, among other things, an interactive drama session on the theme of attitudes to diversity at the workplace. A further 500 interviews will be conducted in Västra Götaland in the autumn.

"The people who now work in the construction sector must be seen and heard. In order to be able to implement positive and long-term changes it is important to listen and start discussions at the workplaces on the basis of their own reality," says Åsa Douhan, Co-ordinator of the Libra Development Partnership.

Model 2 is about getting more women to remain in the building professions. Libra has reviewed the research to examine why women leave their jobs in the construction industry. A lawyer has also been commissioned to study whether there are any legal possibilities to introduce flexible working hours and job sharing, as well as individual action plans following maternity leave, in order to create more "family-friendly" companies. The Partnership also wishes to influence the development of equipment, clothes and footwear in women's sizes.

Model 3 aims to promote life-long learning by offering training to women and people with a foreign background who have worked in the building sector so that

they can take up another occupation within the sector, for example as teachers or supervisors. Increasing diversity among the teaching staff for building and construction programmes is an important step towards achieving long-term changes in attitudes and values.

Model 4 will attempt to increase the interest of young people with a foreign background in applying to building and construction courses, while model 5 will try to do the same with regard to women.

"Models 4 and 5 lie further in the future as they require thorough research before they can be started," says Åsa Douhan.

Model 6 aims to influence values and patterns of behaviour with regard to women and people with a foreign background on the part of school administrators, teachers and pupils at the upper-secondary level and above. This will entail, for example, trying to introduce diversity as a subject on courses for apprentices in the construction industry. The Development Partnership has also initiated the production of an interactive play on the theme of attitudes and diversity that will be performed at schools in Stockholm, Skåne and Halland. Each performance of the play will be followed by a discussion.

Model 7 will work with the development of new forms of training for recent immigrants. A first step will be the development of better system for the validation and translation of the qualifications that people have acquired in their home countries.

Model 8 is working to increase the status of the building professions in society by capturing the interest of the media, profiling companies and providing information to households, schools and ethnic organisations in the most common languages.

"It is easy to talk about counteracting discrimination and segregation, but it is difficult to actually put things into practice. This must be allowed to take time. What we can do in three years is to kick things off," says Åsa Douhan.

The Swedish Construction Federation (an

employers' organisation), the Swedish Building Workers' Union and the Swedish Union of Clerical and Technical Employees in Industry are important players in the Development Partnership, and Libra's objectives are in line with the congress decisions and action plans of these organisations.

"Work on increasing diversity and combating discrimination has now begun in the construction sector. It is therefore important to lay a knowledge-based foundation on which to build future efforts and change processes," says Åsa Douhan.

Libra is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in France, Portugal and Belgium. This co-operation has made it clear that the problems are similar in the different countries. Together, the Partnerships aim to draw up different strategies that will make it easier for groups that are currently excluded to find work in the construction industry.

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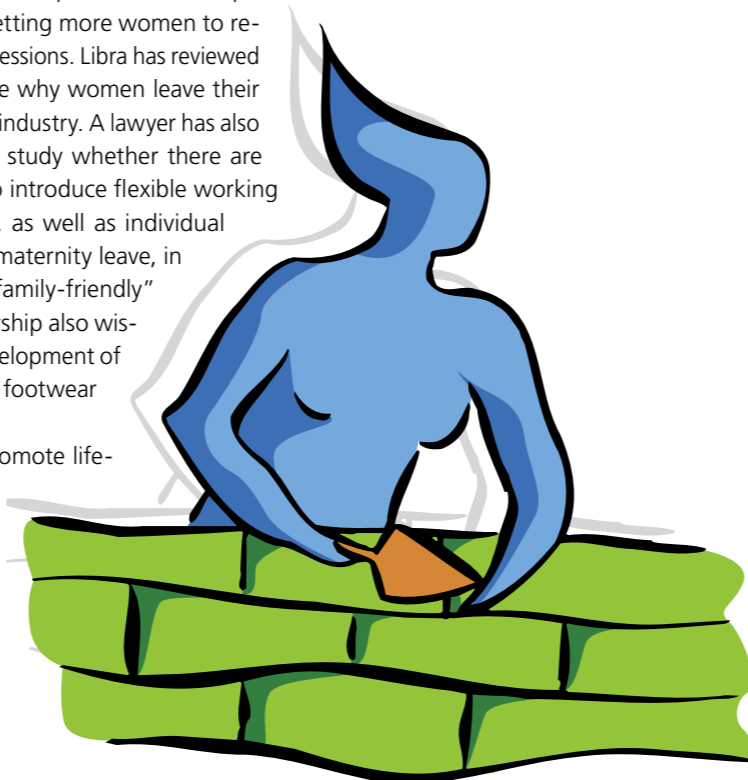
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Real Diversity

The Real Diversity Development Partnership is working to increase awareness about, and change attitudes to, diversity at the workplace. The starting point for Real Diversity's activities is the belief that by discussing and working with diversity issues, business and industry can help to strengthen and develop young people and bring an end to the sense of exclusion that many of them feel. The Partnership also believes, however, that business and industry also have a lot to learn from individual young people and youth organisations.

"It's a question of mutual learning and of the coming together of people who would perhaps never meet otherwise," says Malin Hagald, a Project Manager for the Ideas for Life Project of the insurance company Skandia.

The Development Partnership is a collaboration between the Council of Swedish Youth Organisations (LSU), the Swedish Integration Board, the insurance company Skandia and Föreningssparbanken (a major Swedish bank). One of the joint activities of these organisations is a mentor project. Staff at Skandia and Föreningssparbanken act as mentors for unemployed young people from associations affiliated to LSU. During the spring of 2003, 21 young people in Stockholm and Gothenburg had regular meetings with their own, individual mentors. Similar projects will be started in Malmö and Sundsvall in the autumn of 2003.

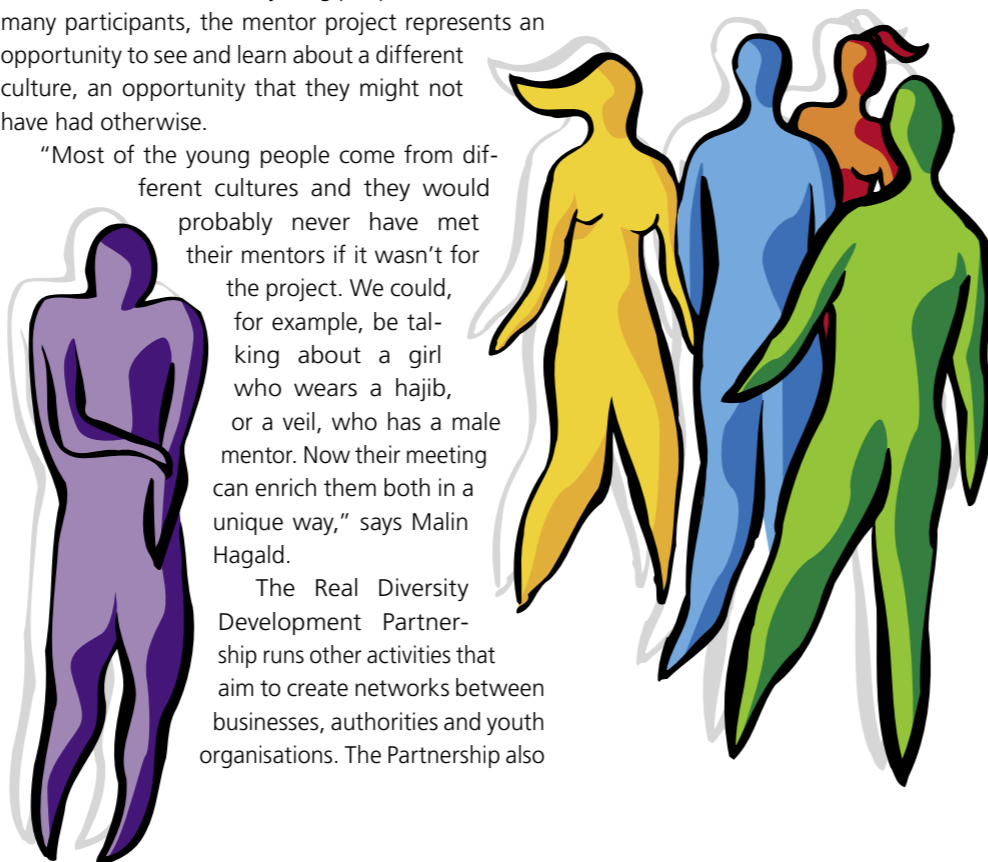
"People want to become mentors for a variety of reasons, both personal and professional. One of the professional reasons is that these young people are the customers of the future and it is important to learn how to interact with them. The youngsters think it's fantastic that there is an adult who cares about them

and what they do. The project is very much appreciated by both parties," says Malin Hagald.

The mentors are there to provide support and assistance to the young people. What they talk about in the regular meetings is up to them to decide for themselves. Some young people may wish to gain a greater insight into how business works and to learn more about how to gain a foothold on the labour market. This is not a job-oriented activity however, the aim is not to find jobs for the young participants but to arrange a meeting of minds at which experience can be exchanged, something that is as much for the mentors as for the young people involved. For many participants, the mentor project represents an opportunity to see and learn about a different culture, an opportunity that they might not have had otherwise.

"Most of the young people come from different cultures and they would probably never have met their mentors if it wasn't for the project. We could, for example, be talking about a girl who wears a hajib, or a veil, who has a male mentor. Now their meeting can enrich them both in a unique way," says Malin Hagald.

The Real Diversity Development Partnership runs other activities that aim to create networks between businesses, authorities and youth organisations. The Partnership also



arranges workshops, seminars and conferences aimed at business and industry and youth organisations.

Real Diversity intends to conduct an inventory of young people in working life and in clubs and associations from a diversity perspective. The Partnership has also conducted a survey of attitudes in the form of qualitative interviews with selected individuals from Skandia, Föreningssparbanken and the associations affiliated to LSU. The aim of this survey is to acquire a better and broader picture of attitudes to diversity at companies and in youth organisations.

All of Real Diversity's activities aim to develop tools and methods that can be compiled in a handbook for companies and organisations. This handbook will then act as a source of information and support that provides concrete methods for increasing diversity at the workplace or organisation concerned.

Real Diversity is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in the UK and Ireland. This co-operation mainly concerns mutual learning and the creation of networks. The Development Partnerships have two joint transnational working groups. One of these is investigating the prevailing attitudes to diversity, while the other is focusing on how we can change these attitudes. The working groups are also examining the similarities and differences between the countries.

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Life Long Learning within the Food Chain in Scania

This Development Partnership will attempt to break down the barriers between the different sub-sectors of the foodstuffs industry and instead create a common, cohesive labour market. The Partnership also wants to improve the utilisation of the skills and know-how of the industry's employees and to develop their career opportunities. The aim is to make the foodstuffs industry an attractive sector.

The project covers the entire foodstuffs chain from production (agriculture, cultivation, livestock herding), processing (slaughter-houses, dairies), distribution, wholesale and retail, and preparation (catering, school kitchens) to the consumer.

"I am becoming more and more convinced that this project is really needed. Many aspects of society relate to food, which is both good and bad, but there is still no status attached to working in the foodstuffs chain - unless you have your own television show of course. It is not an interesting sector for young people to work in either, many of the jobs are boring and people often have no idea what happens before or after their place in the chain. Many employees feel that they are stuck in a rut and that there are few career opportunities," says Peter Lundqvist, Co-ordinator of Life Long Learning within the Food Chain in Scania.

The Development Partnership chose to work in Skåne because it is a clearly-defined region with a strong foodstuffs sector at all levels. There is also a great deal of interest in the foodstuffs sector among politicians in Skåne.

Life Long Learning within the Food Chain in Scania is running various subprojects in order to achieve its objectives of helping people to develop and pursue a career, increasing the status of the jobs involved and creating better working conditions within the sector.

A working group is now trying to develop methods for describing the knowledge and skills of employees in the sector, for example that an employee is good at working in a group, is good at organising things, has a good knowledge of important technical aspects and so on.



In other words, describing what individuals are good at so that these descriptions can then be used to help the individuals concerned to advance in their careers, to match their skills with the needs of the industry and to develop competence. The hope is that this will lead to greater mobility within the sector.

One subproject is focusing on career paths. The Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO), one of the partners, is arranging seminars for various trade unions and their members. The aim is to get people who work in the sector to think about possible career paths, to help them to see that it is fact possible to develop within the sector and that there are opportunities for advancement and for using what they have learned.

A validation and advisory centre is being developed in Kristianstad. This will help individuals to develop and pursue a career by providing advice and assessing their skills.

Another of the Partnership's objectives is to create networks. One of these networks will be for female entrepreneurs along the entire foodstuffs chain. The Partnership also wants to establish networks between various players in the training field, including companies, providers of advanced vocational courses and universities, in order to create further training and competence development opportunities for the sector's employees.

There is also a subproject that is working to improve understanding and co-operation between large-scale kitchens or catering departments and their suppliers.

All of the Partnership's subprojects are interlinked and work towards the same objective, that is to achieve greater flexibility within the sector.

"A lot has already happened. We are receiving fantastic support from training providers who want to be involved. People in the sector are positive, which shows that the project is working at the individual level, and the companies and organisations involved are in tune with the project and enthusiastic," says Peter Lundqvist.

When the Development Partnership began work, however, it was more difficult to get a response from the various players in the foodstuffs industry.

"They wondered whether it would really work and felt that things were largely fine as they were. Now that we have got going, however, the response is positive and we have received a lot of understanding and support from the industry in Skåne," says Peter Lundqvist.

An overriding goal for the Development Partnership is to develop methods for assessing competence and to issue criteria that are nationally viable within the foodstuffs sector and, in the long run, can also be used throughout the EU. This is why the Partnership is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, England and Belgium.

The Transnational Partnership has, for example, formed a network for training. It is now producing joint training material for courses in food hygiene.

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Improving Representation of Women in Business Management

The Centre for Policy and Business Studies (SNS) has, together with some of Sweden's largest companies, formed a Development Partnership called "Improving Representation of Women in Business Management". The members of the Partnership want to work together on special measures that will improve career opportunities for women so that more women can reach management posts. This entails, among other things, working to develop management training programmes and recruitment processes in order to highlight the needs of women.

The percentage of women in management posts in Swedish companies is relatively low. Although, in an international comparison, Sweden can point to good results in terms of the percentage of women in senior posts in the political sphere and in public administration, Sweden is lagging far behind other countries in this respect in the business and industrial sectors. This is a problem from both the gender-equality point of view and in terms of democracy. If Swedish companies fail to make the most of the skills, knowledge and expertise that women have to offer, there is also a risk that they will become less competitive in relation to companies in other countries that succeed in doing this.

"This is why our project is needed," says Johanna Laurin, Co-ordinator of the "Improving Representation of Women in Business Management" Development Partnership.

The Partnership is studying and investigating the current situation at companies throughout the country. It is also trying to find concrete and influenceable rea-

sons as to why there are so few women in management posts in Swedish companies and performing comparative studies of the situation in other countries.

This research is being conducted in close co-operation with the Stockholm School of Economics, Stockholm University, Gothenburg University and a number of analysts and journalists. To date, the Partnership has published four reports, and six more are in the pipeline.

An important part of the Partnership's work consists of disseminating knowledge and information and attracting attention to the issue. The Partnership does this by holding roundtable meetings with the government and meetings with companies, arranging seminars and conferences and by submitting articles to the debate pages of newspapers.

"We want to attract attention to the issue, and we have succeeded in doing so. So far, 222 articles have been written about our activities," says Johanna Laurin.

However, attracting attention and disseminating knowledge is not enough. Concrete measures must also be taken. It is not tenable to say that there are too few competent women available, or that women are not interested in management posts. There are other factors behind the fact that there are so few women in management posts today.

SNS believes that it is important to support the right attitudes within the companies and that managers must set a good example, for instance by encouraging men to take more parental leave, in order to achieve change.

In October 2002, nine leading company executives signed a debate article in the national newspaper "Dagens Nyheter" on the measures they intend to

take to contribute to the creation of a flexible working life. They emphasised the importance of establishing a management style and philosophy that permits a balance between private life and working life and of taking a long-term view of staff development and the opportunities that employees have to enjoy their work and do a good job. In the article, the executives also said that they will work to make it easier to combine a family and a career, strive to create more flexible working methods, always ensure that there are women among the candidates when recruiting senior managers and have working groups with a mixture of skills, expertise and experience.

34 companies are backing "Improving Representation of Women in Business Management". The Partnership's work has attracted a lot of attention.

"This means that a lot of people now feel that they are under pressure to do something. Margareta Winberg's threat to introduce legislation on a quota system also helped to attract attention to the issue and to the Development Partnership. There are now twice as many women in senior posts in listed companies as there were 12 months ago," says Johanna Laurin.

The Development Partnership is co-operating transnationally with two Partnerships in Italy and one in Spain.

"I don't believe that the issue will die out now, we have really put it on the agenda and started a genuine process of change," says Johanna Laurin.



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KomTek – municipal technical schools

– a method for boosting technological development

Fewer and fewer students are applying to technical courses and technical colleges in Sweden. The KomTek Development Partnership wishes to reverse this trend and arouse young peoples' interest in technology. Above all, KomTek wishes to increase the interest of young women in technology as this is traditionally a field in which men predominate and young women are often not encouraged to take an interest in technology in schools and society at large today.

"KomTek is a growth project. We have to invest in technology if Sweden is to retake its former lead and increase its rate of growth," says Maria Svensson, a Business Strategist for the Municipality of Örebro and one of the contacts for the KomTek Development Partnership.

The Development Partnership works in several different ways to increase interest in technology and to influence society. The largest project so far has involved opening a municipal technical school (KomTek) in Örebro. The organisation and running of the technical school can be compared to that of the well-established municipal music schools. The idea is that the technical school should act as a complement to the regular school system and to industry in terms of providing all-round technical knowledge. The pupils will be offered the opportunity to increase their technical know-how individually or in groups with the help of skilled teachers.

The school's premises were inaugurated in February 2003 and 12 different courses were offered during the spring. Even more courses will be run in the autumn of 2003. The technical courses have names like "The House of Dreams", "Drum Rolls and Echoes", "Mys-

tifying Mobiles", "Young Inventors & Designers" and "Thingamajigs & Thingamabobs".

"The names of the courses are important because we don't want to fall into old, boring stereotypes about technology. The teaching method is based on the idea that learning should be fun," says Maria Svensson.

The courses are held in the afternoons and evenings, i.e. after regular school hours, and are open to pupils from the first year of primary school to the final year of upper-secondary school. KomTek has presented everything that the pupils have produced during the courses in exhibitions.

"The objective is that there should be a 50/50 split between boys and girls on the courses. In the spring term, approximately 35 per cent were girls and 65 per cent were boys, so we will have to work harder to reach more girls and arouse their interest," says Maria Svensson.

KomTek also offers unemployed people the chance to follow one of the school's courses during the day.

Another part of the Deve-



lopment Partnership's work is to visit middle schools and meet the pupils there. KomTek is co-operating with five schools in the municipality and spends a day together with each class. During the day, the pupils work with creative technology, that is they create, solder and design things themselves using recycled materials. KomTek has arranged an exhibition of their work too.

KomTek also tries to spread information about its work and the municipal technical school to the wider community. The Partnership therefore co-operates with preschools, primary and secondary schools, universities and colleges, companies and trade unions - that is with representatives of all parts of the chain from school to working life. In October 2003, for example, the Partnership will arrange a theme day for companies, authorities, organisations and other stakeholders under the title "Girls and Technology". The theme will be gender equality.

"We have already realised at KomTek that you have to work in different ways with boys and girls. We have, for example, both mixed groups as well as groups that consist only of girls. It seems that the girls increase in confidence and dare to do more if they are on their own, but we haven't had time to conduct a thorough evaluation of the first term yet," says Maria Svensson.

KomTek is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in Spain and the Netherlands. The Spanish Partnership is co-operating with an employers' organisation in the metalworking industry which is trying to get more women to work in the industry. The Partnership in the Netherlands is working with local IT development.

The three Partnerships intend to produce a joint guide to the situation in the different countries. They have therefore interviewed girls between six and ten years of age and women between 30 and 40 in Sweden, Spain and the Netherlands. The interviewees have been asked, among other things, what they think of when they hear the word technology, and how they

view technology. The Transnational partnership will compare the answers provided in the different countries and in the different age groups.

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Gender Equality

In the county of Gävleborg there is a Development Partnership that is working to put equal opportunity issues on the agenda throughout the county. The Partnership aims to break down the inflexible structures that make today's labour market so gender segregated.

"The labour market must become more flexible if the county is to survive," says Birgitta Keller, Co-ordinator of the Partnership for Gender Equality in Gävleborg.

Conditioned gender roles often govern our choice of education and career. A fundamental step towards a more equal society is therefore to increase knowledge and awareness of these roles.

The Partnership's target group is made up of preschool teachers, teachers, trainers and educators, study and vocational guidance officers, employment office staff, managers, recruiters and politicians. In other words, people who in the exercise of their professions influence others in connection with recruitment or educational and career choices. Increasing the knowledge of this group with regard to gender roles and equal opportunities may help to reduce gender segregation on the labour market.

This segregation begins already in the schools as many courses and programmes are still predominantly followed by either women or men. The Partnership believes, therefore, that we must begin by taking action within the education system if we are to achieve lasting changes in working life.

The Partnership for Gender Equality in Gävleborg has identified a number of areas as areas that must be focused on in order to increase equal opportunities at the workplace:

- Work organisation, staff and management development

- How to achieve a better balance in working life and reduce the number of those on the sicklist
- How to create gender-neutral validation methods
- Teaching methods. How are women treated on technical courses?
- How do guidance officers influence their clients when discussing training and career options?
- Employment measures under the motto "full time – a right, part time – a possibility"

A working group has been formed for each of these areas. These groups are now working within their respective areas to find effective ways and means of achieving changes. As all of the areas are interlinked in one way or another, both co-operation and specialisation are required.

"We want to influence those who influence others in these areas. This includes, for example, recruiters, teachers, politicians, managers and vocational guidance officers. These professional groups have a lot of power to influence individuals' educational and career choices - perhaps more power than they themselves realise. This means that they also have the power to counteract gender segregation," says Birgitta Keller.

The Partnership for Gender Equality in Gävleborg is also developing a training course that it calls EDL (Equality Opportunities/Do/Learn).

EDL will be an equal opportunities course for the defined target group, that is those who have the power to influence others. It is important that the course is well adapted to the target group and suits their needs. Representatives of the target group, for

example politicians, are therefore involved in the design of the course.

"We are trying to ensure that both supply and demand will continue. We want the issues and the methods to survive after the end of the project period and the disbanding of the Partnership," says Birgitta Keller.

The Development Partnership tries to work from the inside out. This means that it is waiting to publicise or market itself until it has something to present. This stage is now approaching. The Partnership feels that highlighting what it is working on and how is at least as important in the effort to break down segregating and discriminating structures as the concrete project work. The aim is to achieve long-term structural changes and to ensure that these changes survive.

"If the entire county works towards the same goals we can set lasting change processes in motion," says Birgitta Keller.

The Partnership has 23 partners. These include the County Labour Board, the ten municipalities in the county, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and the Social Insurance Office.

The Partnership for Gender Equality in Gävleborg is co-operating transnationally with Development Partnerships in Austria, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands. This co-operation covers both the exchange of experience and more practical co-operation on things like workshops. The aim is to develop models that are not tied to one particular nation but can be used throughout Europe. The Partnerships therefore co-operate closely on certain themes, for example teaching methods and health.

The Transnational Partnership is also working to create a website as a joint forum, www.gender-platform.net

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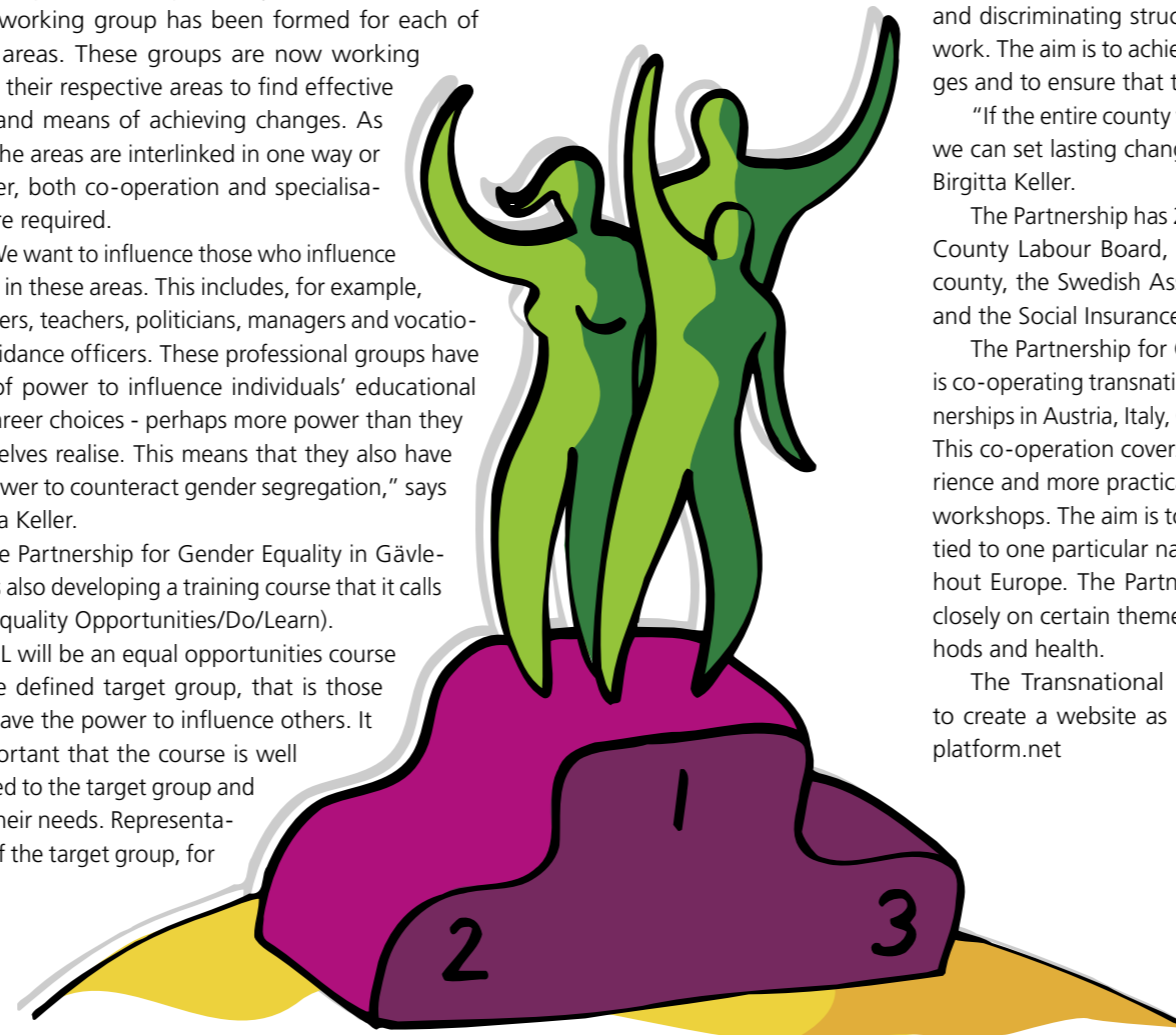
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Word Power

The Word Power Development Partnership aims to find methods for helping women who have an immigrant background and speak Swedish as a second language to make inroads into Swedish society and working life. In Helsingborg, the Partnership has therefore started a three-year course in which such women study Swedish and social studies and are given the opportunity to take part in practical training.

The background to the Word Power project is that preschool teachers in the Söder district of Helsingborg, where a large proportion of the population are immigrants, discovered that many of the children had a poor vocabulary. It was believed that this was partly because the parents spoke poor Swedish. The teachers therefore wanted to establish closer contacts between school and home and realised that they had little or no contact with the mothers. It turned out that many of these women had lived in Sweden for several years but still spoke very poor Swedish. Nor did they know much about how Swedish society works. The Word Power project was therefore started in order to help the women follow their children's schooling more easily and effectively, and to help them make inroads into working life and the life of the community. The project provides a form of Swedish course for immigrants, but in a new way.

"The course that the Partnership runs is very different from the courses run by SFI (Swedish for Immigrants, a national programme). It is not intended to be a straightforward Swedish course either," says Maud Wiberg, a mentor for the Word Power Development Partnership.

The course, which is run under the auspices of the municipal adult education service, takes up the same

themes that the children are studying in school. If the children are reading about the EU, for example, then the women on the course will also study the EU. The women also spend one day a week in school with their children.

"We want them to be able to feel involved in their children's schooling, to understand how Swedish schools work and to be able to help the children with their homework," says Maud Wiberg.

All of the teaching centres on the participants themselves and is based on their needs and wishes. The participants produce their own textbooks and use other educational materials than those traditionally used in SFI courses. The aim is to increase the self-confidence of the participants and teach them enough about how society works so that they can cope for themselves.

The third year of the Word Power programme is a sandwich course. The participants alternate between one month of practical training and one month of schooling. The women themselves can choose where they want to do their practical training. They may, for example, choose a library, a clothes shop, a nursing home or a preschool. The Partnership strives to fulfil their wishes as far as possible and has therefore established co-operation with

a number of different players in both the private and public sectors.

The activities of the Development Partnership have given several of the women the motivation and the opportunity to continue studying. Some of the previous participants are studying to become teachers, preschool teachers or assistant nurses. One of them, for example, is now working at the pathology unit at Helsingborg hospital, while others have found work as cleaners.

"The project's activities are intended for women with a limited education, but it turns out that many of them are extremely keen to study and the goal of ending their dependency on benefits has been achieved beyond all our expectations," says Maud Wiberg.

The Word Power admits a new class each year, with an ongoing admission period throughout the autumn. There are 25 students in each class.

Maud Wiberg says that several attempts have been made to involve the women's husbands and to get them to play an active part in the activities, for example by trying to get them to come and play chess with the children and by starting discussion groups, but it has been difficult to get them interested.

"Initially, all of the men were sceptical about the prospect of their wives beginning to study, but they gradually realised that this was actually a good thing and now their attitude is positive," says Maud Wiberg.

Some of the participants in the Word Power have joined forces and formed a politically and religiously independent organisation, open to both women and men, called Bilahodod, which means "open borders". These women want to do things together and meet other women. They have, for example, taken part in a study circle organised by the Workers' Educational Association in which they have learned study techniques. Bilahodod is also attempting to form ties with sports clubs and cultural associations.

The Word Power is in contact with Development Partnerships in Denmark and the UK. The Partnerships exchange experience and learn from each other, for example with regard to teaching models.

"We have different starting points and target groups, but many of the problems and discriminating structures are the same," says Maud Wiberg.

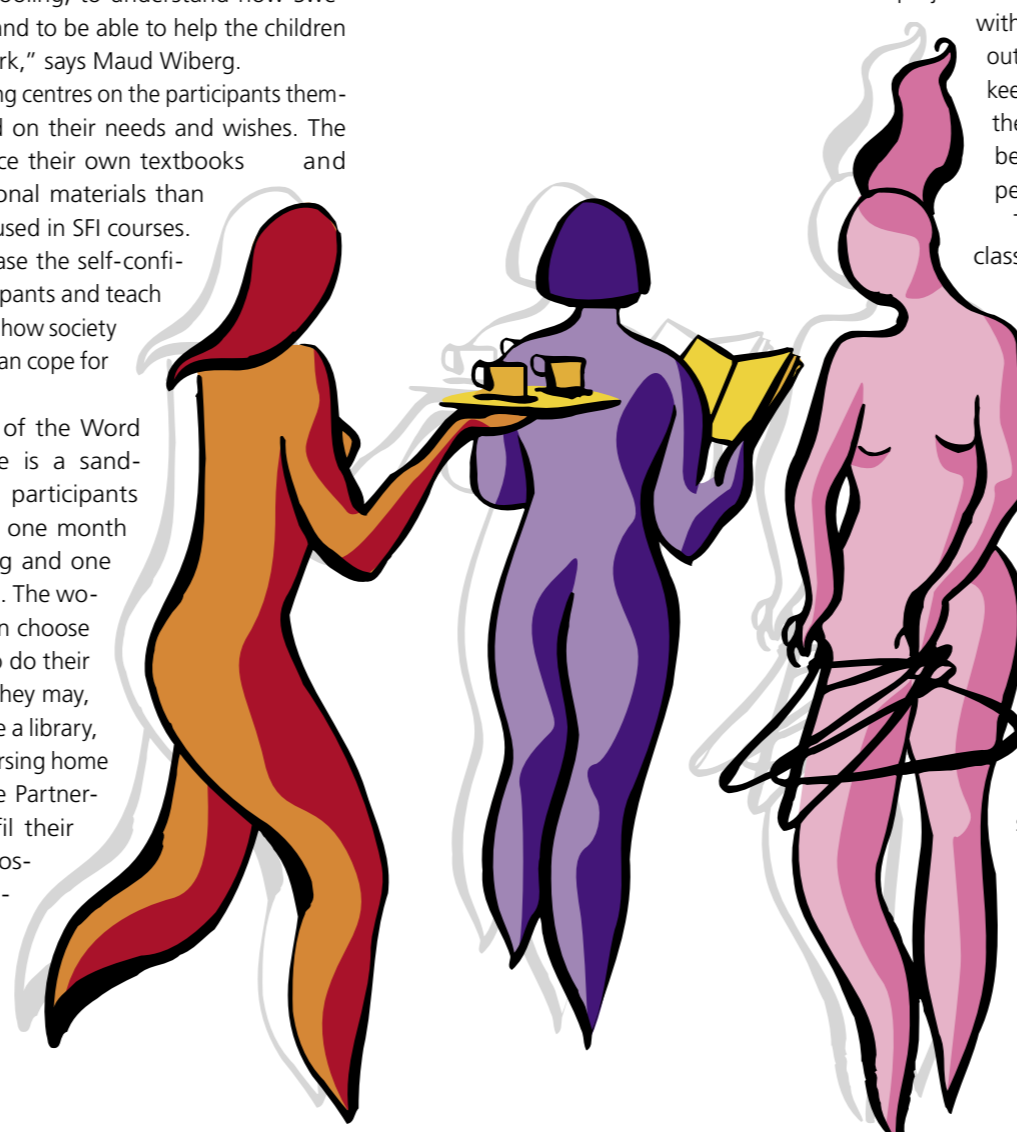
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Gender Equality Developers

Gender Equality Developers is a Development Partnership whose vision is to reduce gender segregation on the labour market. One step in this direction is to get sectors in which men or women predominate to co-operate on issues relating to gender equality. The Partnership also wishes to develop a method for working with organisational development with the aim of increasing gender equality.

"We have discovered that the level of knowledge and awareness of these issues is rather low, and that there are many stereotypes and prejudices. This is a subject that most people think they know a lot about, simply because they are men or women. People have notions about the pros and cons of the issue and about what the situation really is, but in reality their knowledge is limited," says Charlotte Isaksson, Project Manager for the Gender Equality Developers Development Partnership.

The Development Partnership includes organisations from the armed forces, the police, and the fire-fighting and rescue services. A school, a preschool and a hospital are also among the partners. The aim is to create methods that will enable organisations to become better at working with long-term organisational development in order to increase gender equality.

"The organisations have responded extremely positively," says Charlotte Isaksson.

The work of the Development Partnership consists of three basic elements that run in parallel and focus on several different fronts in the participating organisations.

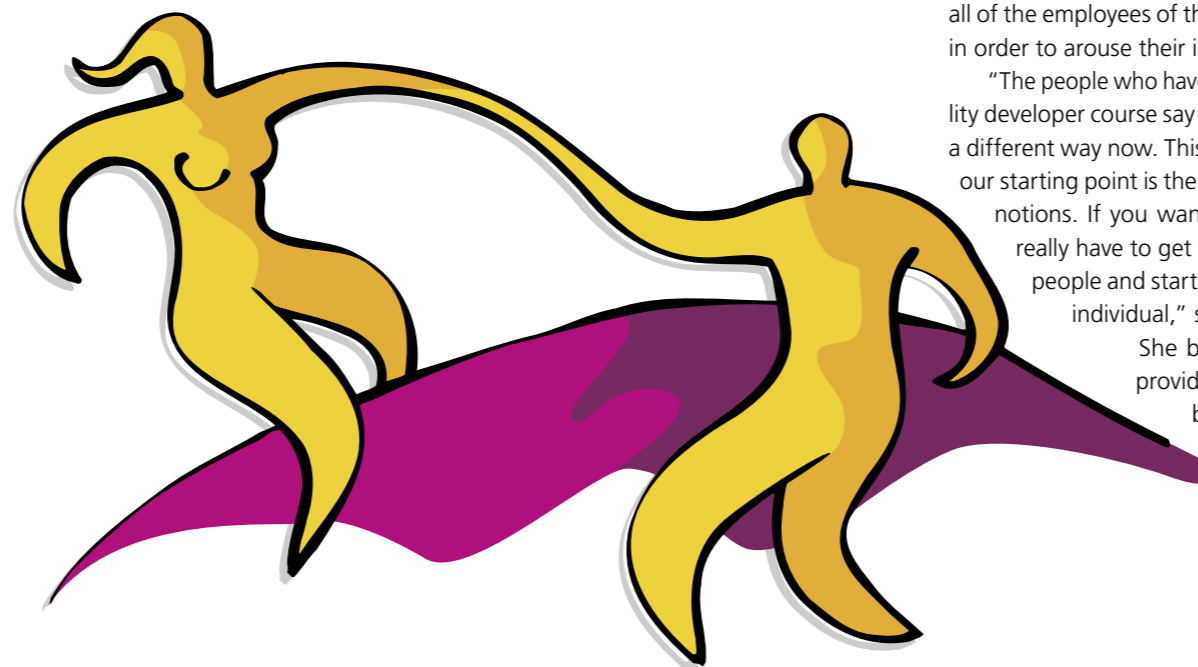
One of these elements involves the extensive training of gender equality developers. Employees from the various organisations in the Development Partnership

follow a 15-day, process-oriented course that is divided into four sessions over a period of six months. Each group contains a maximum of 12 participants who work a lot with group dynamics and with their own values and attitudes and those of the group. The course also entails reading a considerable amount of literature and attending lectures.

The aim is to have a wide range of participants in the groups, preferably from as many different organisations as possible, in order to create a dynamic group situation. As the participants work with values and attitudes during the course, it is valuable for them to meet people who have different backgrounds and experience.

"The participants feel that it is very rewarding to hear about other peoples' experience," says Charlotte Isaksson.

The course is not primarily for those who already work with these issues, but rather for those who do not



specifically work with gender equality but are in a strong position to influence matters at their workplaces.

When the trained participants return to their workplaces, the intention is that they should put what they have learned into practice by running local development projects that focus on equal opportunities and the gender perspective. Together with the employer, they should identify the areas that they believe to be important at their particular workplace.

"We have a lot of faith in this method, and especially in the unconventional aspect of it in that people take themselves and their own notions as a starting point. These are issues on which everyone has an opinion and this arouses strong feelings," says Charlotte Isaksson.

The Development Partnership's second basic element is a three-day management training course. The most senior managers in the various organisations are given gender equality training. The managers play an important role as they are the people who will enable the gender equality developers to run their concrete projects.

The third basic element entails the running of open seminars, in parallel with the two training courses, for all of the employees of the participating organisations in order to arouse their interest and curiosity.

"The people who have completed the gender equality developer course say that they look at the world in a different way now. This is really satisfying given that our starting point is the participants' own values and notions. If you want something to happen you really have to get to the bottom of things with people and start from the point of view of the individual," says Charlotte Isaksson.

She believes that the project will provide good results, as the members of the Development Partnership are working intensively to implement a gender equality perspec-

tive in their organisations. The school that is involved in the Partnership has reported several positive effects and says that the staff now notice things they did not see before, for example in the way that the children express themselves to each other. Now they can see the causes and not just the symptoms. This paves the way for their efforts to change negative factors and to tackle the causes in an effective way.

"Being able to incorporate gender quality aspects and to highlight the fact that gender does matter requires training. It's a question of learning to see how you can help to identify and highlight gender equality problems," says Charlotte Isaksson.

Gender Equality Developers

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Arrival Gothenburg

The Arrival Gothenburg Development Partnership is working to influence and improve methods for the reception of refugees. The starting point for the activities of Arrival Gothenburg is to improve peoples' psychosocial state of health. All of the Partnership's activities also have a two-way focus. This means that as the work concerns asylum seekers, they must be prepared for integration as well as for repatriation in the event that their asylum applications are denied.

The Swedish system for the reception of refugees is not really working as intended. The processing of applications takes a long time, which means a long period of waiting and uncertainty for the applicants. Many also appeal against the initial decision, which means an even longer wait. Many asylum seekers are in a poor state of health while they await a decision. Arrival Gothenburg's activities are intended to act as a complement to the activities organised by the Swedish Migration Board, and the Partnership is striving to improve the reception system.

"It is a question of beginning to co-operate and of putting what to do and how to do it into concrete terms," says Lotta Lidén, Co-ordinator of the Arrival Gothenburg Development Partnership.

The health perspective forms the focus of all Ar-

rival Gothenburg's activities and the aim is to create motivation as a counterbalance to the passivity that can arise in the current system. The activities are aimed at asylum seekers with their own accommodation who often have no contact with society at large.

"The activities have a two-way orientation, which is problematic. As we are talking about asylum seekers we have to prepare them to stay and to return. This is difficult for both us and them, but those of us working in the Development Partnership have to be careful not to make this too much of a problem," says Lotta Lidén.

All of the knowledge and skills that the participants acquire in the course of the activities must therefore be useful whether they stay in Sweden or must return to their home countries. They must have a plan that they can follow whatever happens. If a person has their application denied, the Development Partnership discusses the situation with them individually and then accompanies the person concerned to the Migration Board.

Arrival Gothenburg runs day-to-day activities in the form of training courses in Swedish, European studies and how to start and run small businesses, and also provides information on important social issues. The latter involves group discussions on current events in Sweden and the refugees' home countries.

The business course is structured in such a way that it provides opportunities for the participants to apply what they have learned in practice, so that they may be able to start a business if they have to return home. They are taught the basics about how to start and run a company both in Sweden and their home country. Many of the participants are Arabic-speakers from the Middle East and the course has a teacher with the required cultural competence who is also well informed about Swedish conditions and what is

required to run a company here. All of the teaching is carried out in Swedish.

A lot of study visits are arranged as a complement to the course in order to increase the participants' knowledge of the local area as well as their knowledge of various companies in Gothenburg. Opportunities for practical vocational training in a number of specific occupational areas are also provided.

One of the Partnership's objectives is to increase the employability of the group. Arrival Gothenburg therefore offers practical training to those who want it. Current participants, for example, are receiving practical training at a hairdresser's salon, an arts centre, a handball club and a carpenter's workshop. They are either working in trades that they have learned earlier and want to continue working in, or are trying out new occupations that they are curious about.

A lot of the work done aims to increase the asylum seekers' level of participation and involvement in the life of the community and to counteract discrimination. Discrimination, alienation and deliberate exclusion are facts of life for asylum seekers and present obstacles to their opportunities for development. Arrival Gothenburg therefore attaches a lot of importance to combating all forms of discrimination.

The Development Partnership is planning to recruit cultural ambassadors who will meet asylum seekers and help and support them in their new society. The cultural ambassadors will be former refugees who have gained a firm foothold in Swedish society.

Arrival Gothenburg also aims to move the validation of previously acquired skills and qualifications to an earlier stage of the reception process, as it believes that refugees are also entitled to validation and competence development measures. This will make things easier for the individuals concerned to draw up effective action plans that can be followed irrespective of whether they stay in Sweden or return home.

"We are also working to influence the prevailing structures. Our daily activities enable us to find good

examples of things that work. But influencing structures takes time, and this is work that must be carried out on an ongoing basis," says Lotta Lidén.

One of the things the Development Partnership wants to do in this context is to establish a joint review of the situation of each individual asylum seeker. At present, separate reviews are conducted by all the players an asylum seeker meets – the Migration Board conducts a review and so does the municipality, Swedish for Immigrants and so on.

Arrival Gothenburg is a member of the Transnational Partnership ASPIRE (Asylum Seeking Participation is a Reality). The overriding objective of ASPIRE is to improve the situation of asylum seekers during the waiting period. Arrival Gothenburg is also involved in national co-operation with the Development Partnerships Module 16-20, RE-KOMP and the Rehabilitation of Traumatized Refugees in Rural Areas. These Partnerships mainly co-operate with regard to disseminating information and exerting influence.

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RE-KOMP

The RE-KOMP Development Partnership is looking for ways to improve the reception of recent immigrants and asylum seekers in order to help the individuals concerned to develop their competence and their ability to control their own lives. RE-KOMP works with measures designed to promote the health and develop the competence of recent arrivals, and to give them the tools they need to understand, and learn the codes used in, the society in which they have arrived.

The Development Partnership runs several projects in Malmö and Uppsala. All of the activities are based on the needs and situation of recently-arrived refugees, immigrants and asylum seekers. The focus is on areas such as crisis and trauma, educational levels, parenthood and health-promoting activities.

“People who are excluded and discriminated against don’t feel well, they don’t know the codes in terms of how to behave in Swedish society. This is why measures to promote their health and develop their competence are so important,” says Katarina Löthberg, Co-ordinator for the Uppsala part of the project and the transnational co-operation.

In Uppsala, the Partnership is running a subproject called “The Health Track” which is a health-promoting introductory programme for recently-arrived adults. At the same time as the participants study Swedish, they also take part in rehabilitation and health-promoting activities. The subproject has a dietician, for example, who talks to the participants about healthy eating. The Health Track project is run in co-operation with Swedish for Immigrants (SFI), staff from the Migration Board, a physiotherapist, a dietician and others.

“Simply learning Swedish is not enough. You also

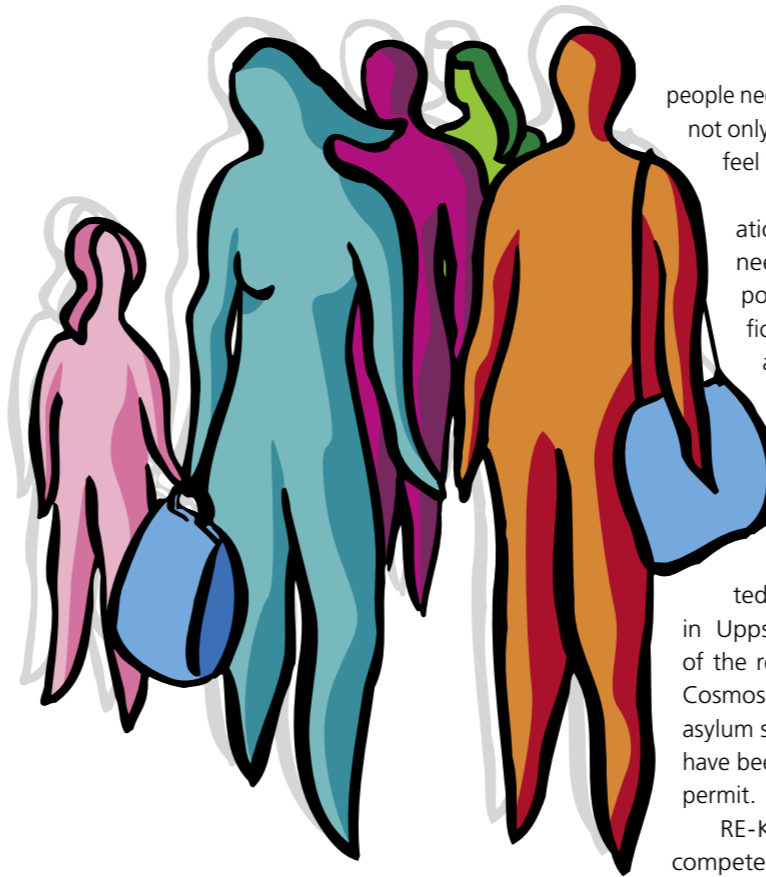
have to learn how society works, learn to know yourself and, above all, feel well both physically and mentally,” says Katarina Löthberg.

In the youth project “We Break the Code” for recently-arrived young people in Uppsala, young people are helped to understand society, i.e. to learn the codes. The young people involved are able, for example, to meet teachers who speak their own language and who know both the Swedish codes and the codes used in the young peoples’ home countries. The course is designed on the basis of what young immigrants and SFI teachers have identified as being difficult for people when they arrive in a new society and what they need to learn.

RE-KOMP’s activities also incorporate a gender equality perspective. Various studies conducted by the Integration Board have revealed that women in general receive a poorer introduction than men. One of the reasons for this is that women who become pregnant soon after arriving in Sweden are often sicklisted and fall behind in the introductory programme. When this is then followed by a period of maternity leave they fall even further behind and find it difficult to make up for the time lost. RE-KOMP tries to counteract this by allowing these women to participate in the activities on their own terms and to the extent that they can.

“We work a lot with anti-discrimination and gender equality perspectives. In the case of the adults we have organised the activities so that they are adapted to the situation of the women. We don’t demand a 40-hour working week,” says Katarina Löthberg.

In Malmö, a health information project is underway in which international health information officers provide information to new arrivals in their own languages about Swedish healthcare, diet and other health issues. The information officers emphasise that



people need physical activity, and not only mental stimulation, to feel well.

“A better health situation is the most urgent need. If your health is poor you will find it difficult to take part in other activities, find a job and function effectively in society,” says Katarina Löthberg.

The Development Partnership has therefore started the Cosmos centre in Uppsala as an extension of the refugee health service. Cosmos is open to both new asylum seekers and those who have been granted a residence permit.

RE-KOMP also has a joint competence development programme. Through this programme, the staff of different organisations learn about each others assignments and what the organisations have to offer so that they can co-operate with respect and understand how the entire system works.

“Meeting all the needs of the individual requires co-operation between all the players involved and the State and other public authorities and organisations,” says Katarina Löthberg.

The Development Partnership is also testing a model in Malmö in which asylum seekers are allowed to take part in the municipality’s introduction programme together with those who have already been granted a residence permit.

“If and when they return to their home countries

they will be better equipped, the waiting period will have been put to good use,” says Katarina Löthberg.

RE-KOMP is part of a Transnational partnership called ASPIRE! (Asylum Seekers Participation is the Result!). ASPIRE! also includes Development Partnerships in Germany, the Netherlands, Ireland and Portugal and an organisation in the Czech Republic. The Swedish Development Partnerships Module 16-20, Rehabilitation of Traumatized Refugees in Rural Areas and Arrival Gothenburg are also members of ASPIRE!.

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Using Benchlearning to Improve Efficiency in DPs

The task of this Development Partnership is to act as a resource and provide assistance to the other Development Partnerships in Sweden. The aim is to support the other Partnerships and to help them learn from each other. The method used is called benchlearning.

“This is a method that is based on promoting change by learning from good examples,” says Christian Pleijel, a consultant at Karlöf Consulting, the company that co-ordinates the “Using Benchlearning to Improve Efficiency in DPs” Development Partnership.

Karlöf Consulting is also the organisation that works actively to provide support and assistance. The company has previously worked extensively with various networks and has developed the benchlearning method.

Benchlearning is an organisational development method that should involve all of the personnel. It focuses on learning and the participation of everyone working at the organisation concerned. The method is based on learning by studying best practice and the positive experience of others, a form of learning by example. Benchlearning was, for example, the method used by an old people’s home that had a serious problem with thefts and did not know how to deal with this problem.

Karlöf Consulting therefore arranged for staff from the home to visit a hotel. This hotel was also vulnerable to thefts and subject to stringent demands regarding security. As a result, it had developed good security routines. The staff from the home examined how the hotel arranged its security and how it handled, for example, the problem of thefts. By studying how another organisation had solved its security problems,

the home was subsequently able to develop a good system of its own.

Karlöf Consulting uses a similar approach when it works with the Equal Development Partnerships. The method has, however, been adapted to the special composition and working methods of the Development Partnerships.

“Using Benchlearning to Improve Efficiency in DPs” arranges meetings for all the co-ordinators of the Equal Development Partnerships in Sweden. The Partnership sees this as its most important task and the meetings are run entirely on the co-ordinators terms. They are able to speak openly about the problems they have had as well as the good results they have achieved and how. They exchange experience and learn from each other.

The Development Partnership also provides active support, i.e. it helps other Development Partnerships with their problems. This may relate, for example, to how to organise projects and realise ideas. The Partnership helps other Partnerships to understand what empowerment means and how to work with it. “Using Benchlearning to Improve Efficiency in DPs” also helps the co-ordinators to incorporate the gender-equality perspective into their projects and to actively apply a gender

perspective. Studying how others have successfully organised their work may help a Development Partnership to see how it can organise its own work in the best possible way.

When the need and desire arises, Karlöf Consulting also provides direct coaching to the Development Partnerships. These specific needs often emerge at the co-ordinator meetings and a closer co-operation with the Development Partnership concerned is then established for the required period of time.

All of the help is provided on the Development Partnerships’ terms, i.e. it focuses on the areas in which they need support and assistance. A co-ordinator may feel, for example, that his or her project is not running as well as it should. If so, “Using Benchlearning to Improve Efficiency in DPs” will use benchlearning to help

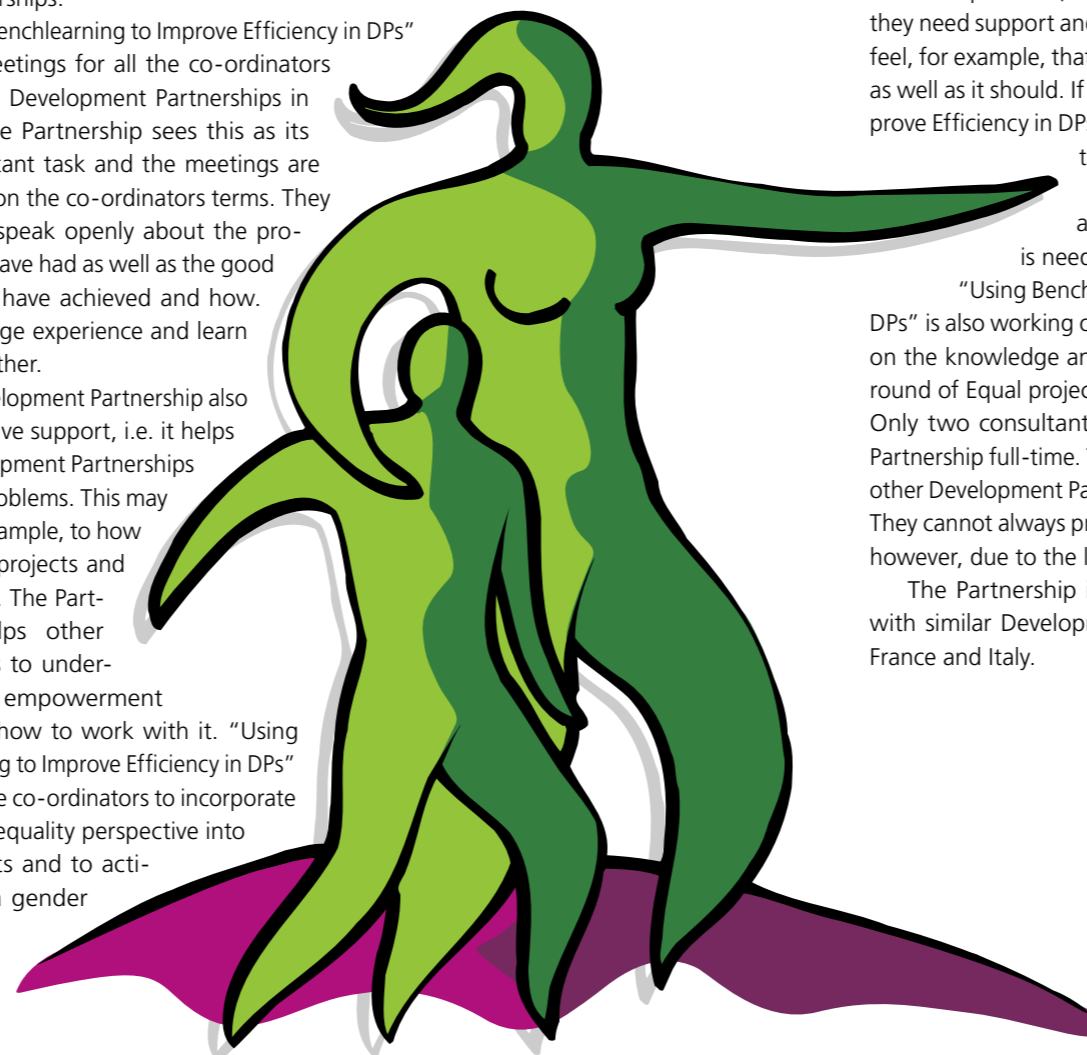
the Development Partnership concerned to move forward. Perhaps a new direction or a new method

is needed.

“Using Benchlearning to Improve Efficiency in DPs” is also working on a handbook that will be based on the knowledge and experience gained in the first round of Equal projects.

Only two consultants work with the Development Partnership full-time. These consultants support all the other Development Partnerships when the need arises. They cannot always provide all the help that is needed, however, due to the limited personnel resources.

The Partnership is co-operating transnationally with similar Development Partnerships in Germany, France and Italy.



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The Umbrella Project

The aims of the Umbrella Project are to increase interest in, and knowledge about, diversity at the workplace and to create public opinion against all forms of discrimination. By using channels such as a webzine, books and seminars the Project wishes to inform and influence decision-makers and the media.

“Our key objective is to influence the media, to play a part in shaping the public debate,” says Owe Ivarsson, Co-ordinator of the Umbrella Project Development Partnership.

The Umbrella Project aims to influence decision-makers in order to bring about change – change in the form of legislation if necessary, but the most important thing is still to change behaviours and attitudes in society. The Project wishes to bridge the gap between reality and what is regarded as being politically correct.

The Umbrella Project visits trade fairs in order to meet important people and to publicise the Project and the work it does. One example of this work is the seminars that are arranged to draw attention to important issues. The Project’s activities are largely based on networks and the idea that exerting influence must be a long-term process, but also on the idea that the Partnership can co-operate with other organisations and positive forces that can increase the impact of the work done.

The Umbrella Project is also co-operating with journalism courses at the universities and colleges. At the Mid-Sweden University College in Sundsvall, the Project is supporting seminars on diversity and is offering scholarships to students who wish to write a thesis that relates to Equal’s policy areas. One of the Project’s visions is to be able to offer a five or 10-credit course on diversity at some point in the future.

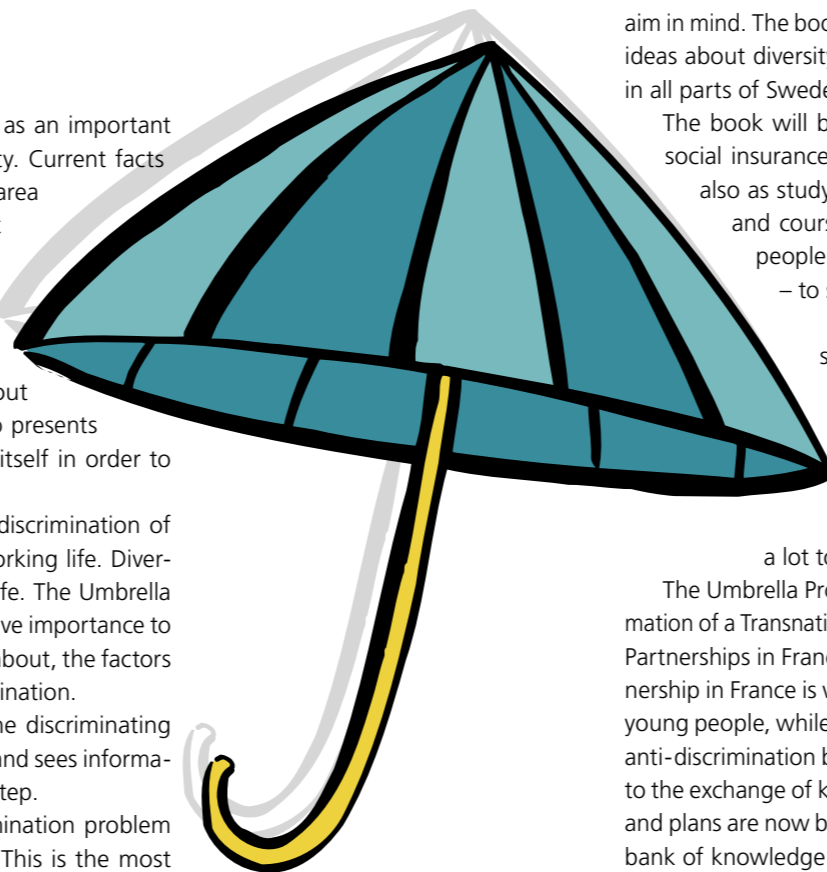
The Partnership runs a webzine as an important part of its effort to increase diversity. Current facts and information of relevance to the area are published in this webzine, but there are also articles, reviews and columns. Through the webzine, the Project aims to reach people who work with discrimination issues at, for example, authorities throughout Sweden. However, the webzine also presents news items concerning the Project itself in order to reach other parts of the media.

The focus is on combating the discrimination of various groups and individuals in working life. Diversity is vital to an effective working life. The Umbrella Project therefore feels that it is of decisive importance to increase interest in, and knowledge about, the factors that lie behind exclusion and discrimination.

The Project wants to combat the discriminating structures that exist in society today and sees information as being a very important first step.

“There is one overriding discrimination problem – that between women and men. This is the most fundamental problem. If we can get closer to genuine equality between the genders a lot of other pieces will fall into place,” says Owe Ivarsson. “Discrimination is seldom based on any factual grounds, for example that an individual cannot actually do a job due to a functional disability. Instead, discrimination is often based on ignorance and prejudice.”

Eliminating discrimination is not a job that can be done quickly, however. It is instead a long-term process that entails changing structures and attitudes at authorities that come into contact with discriminated groups. In 2003, the Project co-operated with the Swedish Integration Board to publish a book entitled



“Think for Yourself – a Book about Diversity” with this aim in mind. The book is a compilation of thoughts and ideas about diversity and discrimination from people in all parts of Sweden.

The book will be used by 16 000 employees at social insurance offices around the country and also as study material for various conferences and courses. The book is designed to get people to think and to talk to each other – to start discussions.

“When we look back we can see that things have changed, for example the portrayal of gender roles and of women in the media has changed since the 1950s,” says Owe Ivarsson. “We have made progress, but there is still a lot to be done.”

The Umbrella Project has been involved in the formation of a Transnational Partnership with Development Partnerships in France and the Netherlands. The Partnership in France is working with local arts centres for young people, while the Dutch Partnership consists of anti-discrimination bureaus. This co-operation has led to the exchange of knowledge between the countries, and plans are now being laid for the development of a bank of knowledge on corporate social responsibility on the Internet.

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