

**LÅNGT
IFRÅN LAGOM**

STRATEGY FOR AN INTERCULTURAL BOTKYRKA

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Reference

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Summary

For several decades, Botkyrka has worked to create the same possibilities and life opportunities for our citizens as for the Swedish average. The conditions for many of Botkyrka's residents are still unfavourable and we need a comprehensive approach in order to meet the challenges.

Botkyrka is continually receiving new citizens from all corners of the world. At the same time, increasing numbers of our citizens were born and have their roots in Sweden without any memories of immigration, although they have an ethnic background which is not Swedish. The municipal Youth Council has emphasised that the new generation must be able to be proud of their family history and identity and yet feel that they are Swedish. Particularly, they do not want to be considered as non-Swedes. This is a crucial question for Botkyrka and it makes special demands on us as Sweden's most ethnically mixed municipality. If we succeed in handling the challenges correctly, the experience of living and acting in a multicultural environment will give all those resident in our municipal district, regardless of background, an advantage in an increasingly globalised world. Botkyrka is working to attain a development which is to the advantage of all our citizens both now and in the future.

This strategy is an important step towards a sustainable Botkyrka and delineates the starting-points for a long-term and systematic activity within the municipality. It draws attention to the limitations for the individual's development which can arise as a result of attitudes linked to gender and social or ethnical background and which have a restrictive effect. The strategy deals with three principal spheres with associated paths of action: anti-discrimination, the municipality as a place, and the municipal authority as an

organization. The ambitions outlined in the strategy shall provide the basis for establishing targets and undertakings within the framework of the ordinary regulating system, at the governing and at the administrative and executive levels.

The paths of action which are identified will be expressed in terms of targets and undertakings in future one-year plans for the various committees that define the work of our different departments, and shall subsequently be turned into concrete efforts in the municipal activities. The strategy concerns the whole of the Botkyrka municipal district, and thus embraces all the committees, boards and wholly-owned municipal companies. It replaces earlier guidelines for ethnic diversity to combat ethnic discrimination. Other documents developed locally to develop the work towards diversity and against discrimination need therefore to be updated to ensure that they are in accordance with the targets and paths of action in this intercultural strategy.

Why is an intercultural strategy needed?

Botkyrka is a multicultural but segregated community with great differences in living conditions, where gender and social and ethnic backgrounds interact. The effect is a restrictive environment which prevents people from liberating their capabilities and realising their opportunities in life. Many of Botkyrka's citizens have at some stage left their previous network of family, friends and work colleagues and have started a new life in Sweden without any natural entrance into the new society. This means that many of our citizens have not entered into the society on the same conditions as the majority of the population. A contributory reason is also the failure of the Stockholm region to find employment for the region's international population, as has been noted by OECD¹. Many of our citizens are living in poverty for reasons which often interact and reinforce each other.

By developing an intercultural strategy we express a realisation that a sustainable development can be achieved only if we in our activities give space for more perspectives. It is also necessary that we cooperate with local ac-

¹ OECD Territorial Reviews, Stockholm Sweden, May 2006 (ISBN91-86-57497-3)

tors and strive together with those who are involved to analyse and build the cultural and social rooms in which we live and which we share.

The creation of growth and a sustainable society requires an intercultural community characterised by interaction and movement between individuals and groups. The challenge is to achieve this from the present position in which different ethnic and socio-economic groups live close to one other but are alienated or in ignorance of each other.

To reach this goal, we must make a long-term and conscious effort from several directions, together with other stakeholders within the public, voluntary and private sectors. The strategy provides support for the development of structures and activities to match the social changes which have taken place during the last 40 years. The development has not yet to a sufficient degree influenced the way in which we organize and lead the social development. As a municipal authority we must ensure that the social and economic expansion takes into consideration the civil rights, opportunities and responsibilities of each individual man and woman.

The strategy clarifies the direction in which the municipality shall strive. It provides a clear foundation for how employees shall act in their professional roles with regard both to their immediate service to citizens and users and to questions of community planning. The fact that our population wishes to and can grow is decisive for the municipality. Together, we must create the best conditions for different groups of girls and boys, women and men to grow, regardless of social and ethnic background. We do this, in the municipality, regionally and nationally, by actively working to nurture the potentials and opportunities in life of our citizens and by eliminating discrimination within the municipal district as an organisation. The strategy shall create conditions for individuals and groups not only to coexist but also to interact to achieve joint goals. In this way, we shall create a positive spiral which will give the local residents a greater belief in the future, more employment opportunities and increased growth. It will also contribute to the prevention of conflict, social division and social exclusion.

From multicultural to intercultural

Interculturality is a relatively new concept in Sweden. Whereas the word “multicultural” describes a passive state, the word “intercultural”² indicates dynamic action. Interculturality describes an interchange and interaction between human beings with different origins and different frames of references. This interchange is rooted in the equal value and equal rights of all persons regardless of their social, religious or ethnic background. The purpose here is to find ways of dealing with cultural differences within the framework of basic democratic values and starting from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the different International Conventions on Human Rights.

It is a question of creating joint rules of behaviour based on acknowledgement, participation, identity, self-reflection and an acceptance of the need for mutual learning. The concept also includes a consideration of prejudices and discrimination and of the behaviour which governs social relations (on different levels – the state, the family, the civil society and the place of work).

An intercultural competence thus presupposes both an attitude towards others which is marked by openness and flexibility and a consciousness of different cultural expressions, including one’s own.

The concept includes an expectation that increased justice and equality will be created among citizens in order to break down the negative consequences of segregation. This is an essential foundation for the sustainable development of society.

An intercultural approach in Botkyrka requires that all the elected, civil servants, but also partners and stakeholders outside the municipal organisation take responsibility for building up the following:

- The municipality will work to achieve the municipal authority’s goals for all girls and boys, women and men, regardless of their social and ethnic backgrounds, in all the municipal districts, on the ba-

² Sources: Interkulturellt ledarskap: förändring i mångfald, Pirjo Lahdenperä (Studentlitteratur AB, 2008). Europarådet (www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/concept_EN.asp). Lund University, Dept of Sociology. ”En monokulturell eller interkulturell utbildning?” Tiina Karlsson, (Karlstad University, 2009). Statliga Språk- och kulturarvsutredningen (SOU 1983:57, ”Olika ursprung – Gemenskap i Sverige”).

sis of Swedish legislation and the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- The municipality will, to an even greater extent, develop a respectful and mutual dialogue and a good cooperation between users, citizens and the institutions in the civil society.
- All employees and managers will in their work develop the ability to critically reflect on their own cultural expressions. We all have a tendency, whether we have a Swedish or other ethnic background, to take our own expressions for granted and to consider them to be the only right ones.

This is what we shall attain

The strategic paths of action which are indicated will together create changed conditions for the residents in the municipality within a fifteen year period. Within this time-frame, the girls and boys, women and men who have Botkyrka as their home will, regardless of social and ethnic background, not only have the same possibilities of education, work and housing as the population in the rest of the county – they will also have an advantage on a globalised labour market and in society at large.

This presupposes that we achieve the following goals:

- In 15 years' time, our mustering of strength will have contributed to developing the social and labour culture in Sweden so that the competences of our international population are developed and used in the social and economic development of the community. We shall then have broken the current pattern and created the conditions for and intercultural society in which neither social and ethnic background nor religious faith are an obstacle to achieving access to power and resources on equal terms.
- In 10 years' time, Botkyrka will be a place where girls and boys, women and men widen their social networks and opportunities in a globalised world.
- In 10 years' time ethnic diversity will be seen as the primary foundation for growth and development in Botkyrka and the surrounding region.

- In 5 years' time, a non-discriminatory, intercultural attitude will be one of the competences which characterize the activities and attitudes of managers and employees within the Botkyrka authority.

The starting-points for the work

The work towards an intercultural Botkyrka includes a number of valuable experiences of development work which create better conditions for our residents. An important foundation is the Ålborg project which meant that we identified six decisive challenges for a sustainable development in the municipality in a generation perspective. In parallel, we started a strategic project to eliminate discriminatory elements from the service provided to our citizens and to communicate the municipal authority's own picture of Botkyrka, both outwards towards the surrounding world and to our own residents, to create pride in Botkyrka as a place and to increase social solidarity.

At approximately the same time, we joined the European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR) where we cooperate with cities and municipalities in Europe with challenges similar to those in Botkyrka, with a particular focus on the problem of discrimination. The Coalition offers a given structure for all the cities in the network to identify and rectify structural discrimination³ and everyday racism. The municipality's six challenges for a sustainable Botkyrka fall well within the framework of the ECCAR ten-point plan which the municipal authority has undertaken to follow.

We take the lead towards equality in a mixed Sweden

In order to achieve our ambition of an intercultural Botkyrka, a broad mustering of power is needed. Government efforts, regional investments and municipal activities must interact to strengthen a positive development. At the same time, a sustainable future requires that those who interpret and decide

³ Structural discrimination arises when regulations, norms and prevailing patterns of behaviour in social institutions become a limitation and an obstacle for certain ethnic groups and immigrant groups to achieve the same life opportunities as the majority of the population. Structural discrimination often but not always arises unconsciously as a result of a system in which different ethnic groups have unequal opportunities for action and interpretation. The structural discrimination may be a part of the social institutions' working procedures and routines but it can also mean that these groups become invisible (in analyses, planning etc).

on the way forward are indeed representative, with respect to both knowledge and experience, of the place and the people where the change will take place. A dialogue between citizens and users is therefore of central importance.

Three principal spheres with associated paths of action are indicated below. They must be made concrete within the framework of the ordinary regulatory system at both the governing and the administrative and executive levels.

In addition, a fundamental effort is required to develop relevant statistics, indicators and routines in order to monitor the development within these spheres.

Three primary fields to go from words to action

1. Anti-discrimination

Anti-discrimination is an all-embracing path of action which is related to all legislated causes of discrimination. The starting point is the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the current discrimination legislation. The aim is to ensure that no citizen or employee is subjected to discriminatory treatment because of gender, ethnic group, religion or other faith, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender-independent identity or expression.

In all our planning, steering, distribution of resources and execution of the activities of the municipal authority, we will counteract power structures which lead to conditions of inequality among our residents. The municipal authority shall ensure that all the citizens, on equal terms and in an equal manner have access to power and influence in the municipality and are received well and offered good municipal service.

2. The municipality as a place

The municipality as a place embraces fields in which we can make our own efforts but also fields in which problems must be solved together with other partners and stakeholders on a regional or national level. Here it is important to notice that different groups have different needs. Those who have newly arrived need to learn more about Sweden as a society. Persons who have been living for a long time in Botkyrka, who were born here or have grown

up here, need to find stability, a sense of belonging and a faith in the future. The municipality as a place has three dimensions:

- Employment, education and capacity building.
- Housing and segregation.
- Identity, sense of home and participation.

3. The municipal authority as organisation

Here the municipal authority's responsibility as an employer and service-provider is in focus. The municipal authority must develop internal processes to ensure that all persons benefit from the activities on equal terms regardless of their background. At the same time, the municipal authority must resolve the inequalities which currently exist within, for example, education, the labour market and housing. As an organisation, the municipal authority has three tasks on which to focus its attention:

- Recruiting and working conditions.
- Reception and service to citizens.
- Dialogue and cooperation with users and associations.

1. Paths of action: Anti-discrimination

The Botkyrka municipal authority will

- carry out activities across the borders between different departments in order, together with the groups concerned, to identify, prevent and create an awareness of cultural customs and patterns of behaviour which limit the actions and life opportunities of the individual woman or man, for example destructive social control in the form of honour-related oppression.
- develop cooperation with local actors as advisors in order to obtain a true picture of the situation in the municipality concerning racism and discrimination in different districts of the municipality.
- prevent and create a preparedness to deal with conflicts and crimes of hatred related to racism and discrimination, through for example information and preventive activities, as a part of the work of the municipal authority to achieve security and safety.

- carry out a capacity building programme within the different departments of the municipal administration and within political committees in order to increase the general awareness of racism and discrimination as a social problem.
- investigate the possibility of sharpening the procurement demands on the suppliers to the municipal authority, by developing the municipal authority's current anti-discrimination clause in order to give the strategy greater force.
- carry out activities together with housing companies in order actively to oppose discrimination and to ensure that all persons have equal rights on the housing market regardless of their ethnic background.
- work actively to prevent discrimination and to promote equal opportunities and equal rights for girls and boys at school and in higher education, especially with regard to pedagogics and the treatment of pupils and parents.
- Actively work in favour of diversity and against discrimination within the cultural and recreational sector with regard to both representation and availability, to correspond to the interests of and be available for all residents in the municipality, regardless of gender and background.
- support the development of the municipal Multicultural centre as the national knowledge centre within the field of discrimination.

2. Paths of action: The municipality as a place Employment, education and capacity building

Regardless of social and ethnic background or faith, men and women shall have the same opportunities and conditions with regard to education and paid employment that give them economic independence throughout their lives.

The Botkyrka municipal authority will

- make efforts to ensure that more of Botkyrka's pre-schools and schools develop intercultural teaching and intercultural leadership.
- make efforts which strive towards a heterogen socio-economic and ethnic composition among the pupils in our pre-schools and schools.

- make efforts to turn the ethnic composition of our schools from a problem into a competitive advantage, e.g. by developing and marketing an international or intercultural emphasis in several of the pre-schools, schools and upper secondary schools in the different districts of the municipality.
- develop an intercultural approach in the teaching and attitude towards pupils and parents within the school and education for both children and adults.
- develop incubator environments⁴ which attract a broader competence-base among our residents.
- develop a regional cooperation which can give new arrivals a faster and long-term sustainable road towards being self-supporting, and which can meet the educational background and linguistic skills of each young immigrant and achieve a more efficient introduction of newly arrived pupils into the compulsory and upper secondary schools
- develop the municipal authority's introduction of new arrivals, including SFI (Swedish for immigrants), so that new citizens are given the opportunity to more quickly activate their citizen rights and responsibilities, for example through simple routines for the validation of a foreign education so that full advantage can be taken of their competence and skills. The emphasis shall be on facilitating an early participation in the life of the larger community.
- organise a consistent and permanent cooperation to achieve a better match between the personnel requirements of industry and the public sector and the capacity built work force.

Housing and segregation

By physically linking together different parts of the municipality and creating attractive meeting places to increase social interaction, we contribute to an

⁴ An incubator environment is one which strengthens the development of entrepreneurial ideas and the ability to proceed from idea to a commercial enterprise. The incubator offers, for example, coaching, network, access to a dynamic place and financing. An incubator helps to prepare young enterprises to cope with those obstacles which often lead to failure, to develop the entrepreneur's ability to run an enterprise and to offer guidance regarding external financing.

intercultural Botkyrka. To reduce restrictive neighbourhood effects⁵ and to liberate life opportunities for women and men with different social and ethnic backgrounds, segregation shall be broken within and between the different districts of the municipality.

The Botkyrka municipal authority will

- work for efforts at a regional level to break the negative effects of segregation and work to eliminate the restrictions on our residents' opportunities in life.
- develop the municipality's work on urban renewal in all parts of our municipality so that this contributes to the creation of residential districts which are socially and ethnically mixed, and adapt the way of executing the work so that a dialogue with the residents is given a central place in all the general planning.
- create and maintain meeting places where women and men of different ages from different parts of the municipality and with different social and ethnic backgrounds can meet. We shall also ensure that all our residents have access to these meeting places regardless of functional disabilities and across social, ethnic and religious borders. This concerns not least our pre-schools and schools, leisure centres, libraries and other natural meeting places.
- make efforts within each committee to develop the residents' networks outside their own spheres and outside their own social and ethnic groups.

⁵ Theories relating to neighbourhood effects say that individuals are influenced by who their neighbours are. An economically weak person is influenced negatively if many in the same district are in the same situation, or more probably if there are few who are in a better situation. The theory says that there is a critical limit where the composition of a person's close socio-geographical surroundings becomes contagious. A person's social capital, i.e. the network outside the local group and the local region, has an important effect on the ability to break away from a negative neighbourhood effect. Neighbourhood effects can be identified by studying the development of education, professions and incomes. Theories of neighbourhood effects are central features of urban research and theoretical research regarding socialisation, networks and stigmatisation.

Sources: Neighborhood Effects and the Welfare State. Towards a European research agenda? Roger Andersson (Institute for Urban Research, Uppsala University, 2008).

Are immigrants' earnings influenced by the characteristics of their neighbours? Environment and Planning" S. Musterd, R. Andersson, G. Galster & T Kauppinen, T (Institute for Urban Research, Uppsala University, 2008).

Identity, feeling at home and participation

Girls and boys, women and men in all our municipal districts shall, regardless of social, ethnic or religious background, feel at home, and have confidence in each other and in democracy.

The Botkyrka municipal authority will

- support a mobilisation of the civil society and its voluntary organisations for a joint effort to achieve an intercultural development of the community.
- develop efforts across administrative borders and in cooperation with local actors to strengthen the immigrants' sense of belonging and of feeling at home in the municipality and in the district in which they live. The schools play an important role, and the principles for the social economy established by the municipal council (KS 2005:392) are a good starting point for other types of cooperation.
- use the municipal authorities efforts within the culture and creative economy sector as a concrete tool to achieve the goal of identity, feeling at home and participation.
- make efforts to increase the participation in elections and the sense of participation among different groups of girls and boys, women and men, regardless of their social, ethnic or religious identity.
- support a concrete cooperation between associations and different religious denominations across social, ethnic and religious borders and between different districts, in order to reduce the social distance between districts and groups as a step towards counteracting neighbourhood effects and strengthening the sense of social togetherness.
- develop the forms for dialogues with religious denominations. The purpose is to create mutual trust and a suitable base for a cooperation between the municipal authorities and the different religious groups within the municipality, in which many residents experience a sense of belonging and security, in order to deal with problems and challenges of mutual concern.

3. Paths of action: The municipal authority as an organisation

Recruiting and working conditions

The distribution of managers and employees in the municipal administration shall in the long term reflect the composition of women and men with different ethnic backgrounds among the municipality's inhabitants. Moreover, the managers and employees in the municipality's activities shall possess the generic skills⁶ which are required for them to be able to contribute to the development of an intercultural Botkyrka.

The Botkyrka municipal authority will

- build further on the job-competence profiles for positions in the municipal district by establishing the basic knowledge and skills required so that managers and employees in different activities are able to contribute to a sustainable intercultural Botkyrka. When recruiting staff, the municipal authority shall actively seek persons who possess these generic skills.
- carry out a development project designed to support the various administrations in identifying the basic competence requirements in addition to the theoretical education required by the various administrations in order to contribute to the fulfilment of this strategy within 15 years.
- make efforts to ensure that the whole chain of recruiting, career opportunities and salary development are free from discriminatory aspects or limitations based on gender or ethnic and social background.

⁶ "Generic skills" are specific knowledge and skills which are required in addition to the theoretical professional knowledge. Generic skills is a joint concept for those skills which are necessary in an organisation in order to work in fields with different pre-conditions. The concept contains a consciousness of the need to continually reassess the organisation's modes of work in order to meet the needs of different groups. The emphasis lies in being aware of how the activities can be improved in practice, through experience of and understanding of the fields in which we work.

One example from the educational field can be that we, in addition to our professional competence, place importance on the ability to meet and work with pupils who lack motivation and are troublesome. In some parts of Sweden, the basic problem can be that the society and/or family give the individual a limited identity, whereas in Botkyrka it may be that the society and/or family has given the individual a limited ethnic and/or male/female identity. The problem can express itself in similar ways in both groups, but the solutions may in part be different. An important ability in both cases is, on the basis of a good understanding of the local conditions, to create trust and a dialogue between the citizen and the user, in this case with both pupil and parent.

Source: www.eukn.org/eukn/themes/Urban_Policy/Social-inclusion-and-integration/quec-eran-skills-audit_2007.html

- ensure that the municipal administration's capacity building of elected representatives, leadership development and employee training provide a good foundation for the implementation of the municipal strategies for democracy and participation, gender equality and intercultural development.
- create intercultural workplaces in all the departments by actively working to ensure attitudes and working routines from all aspects of discrimination. This involves making unwritten norms and values visible, which is a basis for meeting and dealing with diversity.

Attitude towards and service to the citizens

The activities within the Botkyrka municipality shall be characterised by treatment on equal terms and an intercultural attitude.

The Botkyrka municipal authority will

- further develop the municipal authority's ordinary planning and follow-up so that we, in an even more goal-oriented manner, are able to work to achieve good results for all our citizens and users.
- support the development of the activities of the various administrations different departments in the municipality so that multilingualism is seen and used as a resource in meetings with the user whenever this is possible and suitable.
- develop the municipal authority's web-site as a complement to personal contacts to provide information about community services, different educational and employment routes, and each citizen's rights, opportunities and responsibilities. This tool shall also be available for use in education.

Dialogue and cooperation with users and local associations

The Botkyrka municipal authority will

- provide further capacity building regarding an intercultural approach, in order to assist all employees and managers in developing an ability to critically reflect on our own cultural expressions which we often take for granted and consider to be the only right thing.

- work with pilot workplaces to identify the decisive generic skills associated with managers and employees in Botkyrka.
- develop forms for dialogue and cooperation with users and organisations in the civil society, in order to guarantee that the quality of the work is offered and distributed in an equal manner between girls and boys, women and men on the basis of their needs, regardless of social or ethnic background.
- develop the information provided by the municipal authority to the citizens as a means of ensuring their citizen rights.
- carry out efforts in all the municipal committees to support the elected members and employees in developing the conditions for a respectful and mutual dialogue between citizens and users. The aim is to achieve the municipal authority's target for all girls and boys, women and men, regardless of their social, ethnic and religious background, in all the working fields of the municipality.

Implementation, responsibility and organization

To achieve an intercultural Botkyrka, a long-term systematic work of change is required, where the goals and regulation are clear, at the same time as the elected representatives, managers and employees have sufficient knowledge and access to work-adapted methods, working routines and support to be able to shoulder their part of the responsibility for its implementation in their daily work. Four strategic success factors need to be given particular attention: goals and steering, capacity building and knowledge, methods and working routines, and finally support and coordination.

At a top municipal level, the municipal administration is responsible for ensuring that work comprising these four success factors is initiated and continuously developed. The departments have a corresponding responsibility in the fields of administration-specific regulation, capacity building, method development, support and coordination.

The Municipal Council has given the Municipal Executive Board the final responsibility for the creation of an intercultural Botkyrka. The Committee for Democracy drafts the documentation as a preparation for all-embracing decisions regarding the efforts, follow-up and evaluation. The Personnel

committee has a corresponding role to play with regard to the municipal authority as an organization. Each committee is responsible for ensuring that its activities live up to the directions outlined in this strategy.

Each Head of Department has the primary responsibility for ensuring its implementation within the administration concerned. He or she is responsible for ensuring that the employees show an intercultural approach in their professional activity and for the development of intercultural workplaces. Each department is responsible for identifying those managers and employees who are key persons for achieving the goal of the strategy.

The Executive Director of the Municipality has the ultimate administrative responsibility for ensuring that the work towards an intercultural Botkyrka against discrimination is carried out in accordance with this strategy.

Support from the municipal administration

The municipal administration has the primary responsibility throughout the community for leading, coordinating and supporting the work, and also for the development of working routines.

The municipal administration has the primary responsibility for ensuring that the personnel work is developed in accordance with the ambitions expressed in this strategy. The heads of department are responsible for its implementation.

The trade union organizations have an important role to play with regard to the creation of equal conditions in the workplace. Their participation and influence is guaranteed within the frameworks of the current cooperation agreements.

Follow-up and evaluation of the work towards an intercultural Botkyrka

The work towards an intercultural Botkyrka will be followed-up in an overall municipal perspective through a process based on a plan covering several years which will provide the basis for a reporting to the Municipal Executive

Board. An external evaluation of the work to achieve an intercultural Botkyrka will also be carried out once during the working period.

The follow-up shall focus on the process of creating an intercultural approach, and on those results and indicators which reflect the development within key areas towards an intercultural Botkyrka free from discrimination from a citizen, user and employee perspective. These indicators will as far as possible be established in connection with the revision of the indicators coupled to the municipal authority's programme for a sustainable Botkyrka.

As a part of our membership in the European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR), we also have an undertaking to submit an annual report to the Coalition on the basis of the agreed ten-point programme.