

STYRDOKUMENT I BOTKYRKA KOMMUN

Strategy for equality in Botkyrka



Strategy
Programme
Plan
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**BOTKYRKA
KOMMUN**



Document replaces: Strategy for a gender equal Botkyrka, Strategy for an intercultural Botkyrka, Botkyrka's public health policy and development plan equity in health, Policy and action plan for the prevention of violence and oppression in the name of honour and the municipality's decision to adopt the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as its programme for the target group. Alcohol, drugs and tobacco policy for children and youth activities adopted by the Municipal Council on 23/02/2012 is applicable until further notice.

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Strategy for equality in Botkyrka

This is Botkyrka municipality's strategy for equality in Botkyrka. The strategy addresses the municipal organisation: all committees, boards and wholly owned municipal companies and includes both operations and workplaces. The documents *Guidelines for equal operations* and *Guidelines for equality in the workplace* provide concrete expression, support and guidelines regarding the municipal organisation's execution of the strategy's objectives.

We want to achieve a more equal Botkyrka with reduced disparities

The municipality has a responsibility for all Botkyrka inhabitants to have the best conditions for a good life. The municipality wants to contribute to the development of a sustainable society in which both present and future generations are assured a good environment and health, economic and social welfare and justice – A sustainable societal development in Botkyrka.

At the same time, there are great differences in life and living conditions and in health between different individuals and groups of girls, boys, women and men. Social and economic disparities are increasing both in Botkyrka and in Sweden as a whole. We want to break today's pattern and build an equal society in which gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation, age as well as social and economic background or situation, do not pose an obstacle to well-being and access to basic rights, power and resources on equal terms.

We all want Botkyrka inhabitants to feel at home here and to have the same opportunities in life. We also want experiences of living and working in the diversity found in Botkyrka to yield benefits for life as a whole. A society with reduced disparities leads to increased social cohesion, security and participation. This benefits everyone - regardless of social and economic background or situation.

Equality in Botkyrka

Equality is the umbrella covering all our operations. Equality is based on the equal value of all people and our rights and responsibilities. The concept of equality always has a comparative perspective on individuals and groups. Comparisons are based on society's prevailing conditions, values and norms.

We want:

- Botkyrka to be an intercultural place characterised by cooperations and meetings across group and district boundaries, equal life opportunities and social cohesion.
- all girls, boys, women and men in Botkyrka to have the same power to shape their lives and society.
- all in Botkyrka to have the right to an independent life, their own sexuality and privacy.
- Botkyrka to be easily accessible for all – here functional diversity is not a disability.
- Botkyrka to be a place where all inhabitants have the opportunity for a long life with good health and well-being.

Common starting points

We have chosen to have a particular focus on the five equality dimensions that are described above and that are also based on human rights: intercultural equality, gender equality, freedom from violence and oppression in the name of honour, accessibility and the good and equal health of the population. These are all key pieces of the puzzle for our achieving a more equal Botkyrka and a sustainable societal development. They are based on:

- **The equal value and equal rights of all people**
All inhabitants have rights that we as a municipality must by law and international conventions ensure and promote for all residents. Human rights are a fundamental framework.
- **Equality sometimes means active differentiation.**
Inhabitants differ in the extent to which they need municipal services and support. Equal treatment sometimes means different treatment!
- **Co-creation and representation.**
The citizen's focus, dialogue and cooperation is central. We rely on the experiences of the individual resident, the best available knowledge from research and from practical on-site work. For this reason, it is important

that those who interpret and decide on ways forward are representative in terms of experiences and of the place and the people for whom the change will take place.

- **Joining forces for equal life opportunities**

Complex societal challenges demand complex solutions. Central government initiatives, regional investments and municipal operations must interact in order to strengthen an equal societal development. The work is to be conducted at the societal, group and individual levels within municipal operations and in collaboration with research, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders.

The municipality's responsibilities

The municipality is responsible for a large part of the services that affect the life and living conditions of the inhabitants in Botkyrka throughout their lives; schooling, social services, health and social care, spatial planning and support to culture and recreation. We are also responsible for the conditions of employees in the workplace. As a municipality, we can therefore contribute to a more equal Botkyrka, both through the content of operations and as a major employer.

We are to:

1. Improve the conditions for the lives of all Botkyrka inhabitants, today and in the future.
2. Steer towards equal and gender equal distribution of power, money and resources.
3. Measure the differences and make them visible.
4. Rectify unjustified differences and highlight good examples.
5. Analyse how planned measures and decisions affect equality.
6. Improve our working methods so that different groups of girls and boys, women and men have access to operations on equal terms and at a high quality.

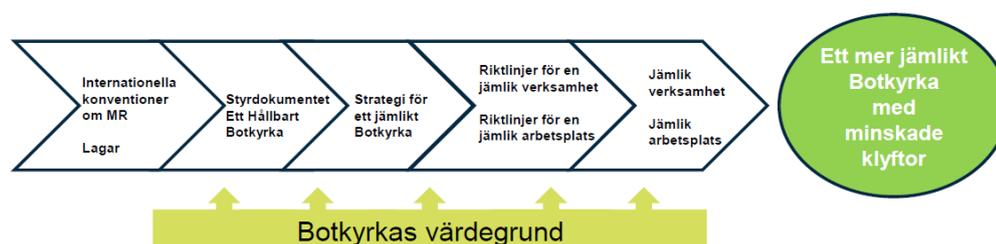
We are taking the lead in Sweden

One strength is that Botkyrka is a place where many inhabitants have a family history that begins beyond Sweden's borders. In comparison with other parts of Stockholm and Sweden, we are more accustomed to living together in diversity.

Our concerted efforts will help to turn societal development in a sustainable direction in accordance with the Municipal Council's identified challenges for a sustainable Botkyrka for future generations. This also contributes to the development of societal structures in Sweden that harness the experiences and skills of Botkyrka inhabitants in society's social and economic development.

How everything fits together

Our work is based on international human rights conventions and legislation relevant to operations, such as the Swedish Constitution, the Discrimination Act, the Local Government Act, the Education Act and the Social Services Act. Besides this, we are a politically governed organisation, which means that we also relate to the political ambitions of the Municipal Council's identified challenges for a sustainable Botkyrka. Strategy for equality in Botkyrka is to contribute to a sustainable and more equal Botkyrka with reduced disparities. To support the work, we have guidelines for equal operations and equality in workplace. Botkyrka's basic values permeate all our work.



The strategy's five equality dimensions

The strategy's five equality dimensions are interculture, gender equality, freedom from violence and oppression in the name of honour, accessibility and the good and equal health of the population. These are all key pieces of the puzzle for our achieving a more equal Botkyrka. The following section describes what is specific to each dimension, in addition to the common starting points for equality in Botkyrka.

What do we mean by different groups of women and men?

By this we mean groups that are key to follow in order to achieve equal living conditions for Botkyrka residents. We restrict ourselves to the grounds stated in the Discrimination Act: gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation and age as well as social and economic background or situation.

A Botkyrka resident can be intersected by different group identities in a great variety of ways that can vary over time. This means that one and the same person might therefore be privileged in one respect and subordinate in another.

Why girls, boys, women and men?

Most people identify with the legal gender they were assigned at birth, but not everyone. This means that a so-called binary view of gender – with a division into girls, boys, women and men – can be problematic, among others for people who do not identify themselves according to the binary gender division woman/man.

At the same time, in Botkyrka, we also need tools for systematically working to eliminate inequality between women and men in society and our operations. That is why we choose to make clear at the overarching level that our ambitions in municipal operations embrace girls, boys, women and men, and that we therefore restrict our-

Botkyrka is to be an intercultural place characterised by cooperations and meetings across group and municipal boundaries, equal life opportunities and social cohesion.

Today we live in a multicultural but segregated society in which people all too rarely meet. Botkyrka has residents with origins all over the world and speaking over 100 different languages. Many Botkyrka residents have a family history of immigration going back several generations. The majority of Botkyrka's young people have another mother tongue in addition to Swedish. Almost 90 per cent of Botkyrka's children up to 15 years of age were born in Sweden. Sweden's long-running and simplistic debate about the failure of integration policy bears a negative view of residents and an undertone that integration between new and old Swedes is impossible. In Botkyrka this is possible - thanks to our moving from multicultural thinking and planning to intercultural.

Particular starting points for an intercultural Botkyrka:

1. **We see that Swedish integration policy has stagnated in an outdated picture of newly arrived inhabitants of foreign background**
As a municipality, we must build a Swedishness that is inclusive. Inhabitants of foreign background are not second-generation immigrants but first-generation Swedes.
2. **Botkyrka's ethnic and cultural diversity is a norm and an asset.**
As a Botkyrka inhabitant, you should be able to be proud of your background, history and identities and still be Swedish. You do not need to choose. The municipality's diversity is an asset for all inhabitants and the municipality. This gives us a head start in an increasingly globalised world.
3. **We are moving from multicultural to interculture**
We are creating conditions for moving from co-existence to interaction for achieving common goals. We do this by promoting equal meetings, cooperations and dialogue between city districts and between different individuals and groups. We focus on what we have in common while valuing a high degree of individual difference. In this way, we create a stronger social cohesion and break the negative effects of segregation.
4. **We focus on the rights of the individual**
We are creating conditions for individuals to make their own life choices and choose their identities. This also helps us to make differences within and between groups visible.
5. **We conduct active work together with civil society against racism and discrimination**
We have knowledge of, make visible and rectify various forms of structural discrimination and everyday racism. For this to succeed requires knowledge of the place of Botkyrka, its inhabitants and cooperation with different

stakeholders. Everyone should also have the ability to critically reflect on their own cultural expressions.

All girls, boys, women and men in Botkyrka are to have the same power to shape their lives and society.

Research and studies show that society, including municipalities, meets girls and boys, women and men on different terms – as citizens, service users and employees. We want to see this changed. For example, girls and boys in Botkyrka are to have the same opportunity for influencing, thriving and attaining good results in school. It is a question of women's and men's representation in associations and among elected representatives. It is a question of women and men having the same opportunity for education and work, which affects their economic independence. It is a question of having and taking the same responsibility for the unpaid care of children and the elderly. It is a question of having the right to live a life without violence and deciding over their own body and sexuality.

Particular starting points for a gender equal Botkyrka:

1. Operations on equal terms regardless of gender

We are to achieve equally good results and quality for all Botkyrka inhabitants regardless of gender.

2. Our operations are to contribute to Sweden's objectives of gender equality policy:

Equal distribution of power and influence; economic gender equality; gender equal education; equal distribution of unpaid care and household work; gender equal health and that men's violence against women must end.

3. We counteract traditional gender patterns where we often differentiate unconsciously

As a municipality, we are aware that we differentiate and evaluate on the basis of gender. No one is to be discriminated against or encounter prejudices, customs and traditions based on notions of the superiority or inferiority of a gender or on rigid roles for men and women.

4. Gender mainstreaming is the strategy chosen by Sweden and Botkyrka for achieving a gender equal societal development

We are to be gender equal when making plans, adopting major and minor decisions, allocating money and meeting citizens.

5. Always gender, but not gender alone

Gender cuts across all groups of people. Regardless of group, women and men within the group usually have different conditions. In order to make gender inequality visible, our starting point is the two legal genders,

girl/woman or boy/man, but we are aware that not all people define themselves by their legal gender. This is to be reflected in how we problematise our gender equality work.

In Botkyrka, all are to have the right to an independent life, their own sexuality and privacy

Throughout Sweden, and also in Botkyrka, we find a diversity of lifestyles, life choices, cultures and customs. What unites us is our equal freedoms, rights and obligations and political democracy. It is therefore never acceptable that someone's freedom and dreams in life are limited by threats and violence based on the "honour" of family or relatives. This is a violation of the individual's human rights.

The question of honour is a special challenge, and here Botkyrka can show the way.

Particular starting points for a Botkyrka free from violence and oppression in the name of honour:

1. We assume that violence and oppression in the name of honour is part of an overall gender oppression that is structural

The work to prevent and act against violence and oppression in the name of honour is a part of fulfilling the gender equality policy objective that men's violence against women must end. In this strategy, we have chosen to raise this area alongside the section on gender equality because it is an important part of achieving a gender equal Botkyrka with reduced disparities.

2. We counteract cultural notions of gender, power, and sexuality

that lead to violence and oppression in the name of honour and men's violence against women in general.

3. Violence and oppression in the name of honour is exercised collectively

It is often sanctioned by a person's relatives and surroundings. In its most extreme form, it results in threats of violence, actual violence and sometimes deadly violence.

4. "Honour norms" are rooted in the reputation of the family or collective

Reputation is often strongly tied to women's sexuality and notions of virginity and chastity. Those living in an environment influenced by "honour norms" can be limited by social pressures and norms in terms of the freedom to choose their clothes, friends, education, jobs and partners.

5. The question of honour is not limited to or linked to a certain religion or ethnicity

Violence and oppression in the name of honour exists to varying degrees all over the world. It particularly affects girls and women, but often boys and men as well. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are other particularly vulnerable groups.

Botkyrka is to be easily accessible for all – here functional diversity is not a disability.

A Botkyrka without barriers makes the municipality an attractive place to live and work in regardless of functional capacity. Unfortunately, there are still many barriers in the way of all people being able to meet and participate on equal terms. Some of the barriers are to be torn down because the law requires us to do so. Most of the barriers should be torn down anyway because it is a matter of solidarity and inclusiveness and gives the individual greater autonomy and independence.

Particular starting points for an easily accessible Botkyrka:

1. We work for functional diversity not to be a disability

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is our guiding principle. In Botkyrka, no one may experience discrimination due to the lack of accessibility.

2. Together we are to tear down the barriers that exist and design society so that everyone can participate

This is necessary for some and at the same time makes everyday life more convenient for everyone.

3. It is when environment and surroundings are inaccessible that disabilities arise

Functional diversity is diversity with respect to physical, mental or intellectual functional capacity. It is linked to a person and need not pose a barrier to participation. However, if environment and surroundings are inaccessible, disabilities arise. It is thus the environment that poses a barrier to people with diverse functional capacity participating in society on equal terms.

4. We focus on people's different needs in different situations in life – not separate solutions for certain groups

By using universal design as a general guideline for decision-making, planning and implementation, we no longer focus on “normal people” but rather on the human diversity characterising reality. This also reduces unplanned additional costs for accessibility measures that are very often done subsequently.

5. A focus on greater autonomy and independence

When the general solutions for increasing accessibility are insufficient, we ensure participation and equality through individual support and solutions.

Botkyrka is to be a place where all inhabitants have the opportunity for a long life with health and well-being

Health is what most of us value most highly - an important resource in everyday life. It contributes to the ability to get an education, to work and make a living, and to participate in the general life of society. Good and equal health among Botkyrka inhabitants is therefore a common concern of society - not just an end in itself, but also a means and a strong driving force for growth and sustainable development in Botkyrka.

But health is unequal. There are major differences in health between different groups of women and men with different social and economic living conditions. The better the living conditions and the higher the social position in society in relation to others, the better the health and the longer the life. We want to see this changed. We are to reduce the unjustified, systematic and avoidable health disparities. All Botkyrka inhabitants are to have conditions for living in safe environments that promote health and prevent ill health.

Particular starting points for good public health in Botkyrka with reduced health disparities:

1. Health inequality is a major societal challenge that requires action

Health disparities take a toll in human suffering, poorer life opportunities and premature death, but also in the form of societal costs such as production losses, healthcare and sick leave. We need to create conditions for a sustainable societal development and to make optimal use of society's combined resources.

2. We are creating societal conditions for good health for all

We are strengthening the factors in society that promote health and prevent ill health among Botkyrka inhabitants: a good start in life; skills and education: work and good work environment; opportunities to make a living; safe housing and local environment; care and social support; which are in turn of significance to lifestyles.

3. Central are empowerment, participation and sense of context

Together with Botkyrka inhabitants, we are creating supportive environments that help to strengthen confidence in their own ability and trust in others. A life that is meaningful, comprehensible and manageable is central to health.

4. We work for all Botkyrka inhabitants but we adapt our work on the basis of needs

We adapt operations and initiatives for all, proportionately based on different needs and conditions. Groups in more vulnerable situations might

need extra support to reduce the negative effects of poorer living conditions and health, such as young people with no grades, single parents, the unemployed, new immigrants and those with functional diversity, mental ill health and substance abuse.

5. Health-promoting conditions early in life reduce later problems

Public health work is important for all age groups – and particularly among children and young people in order to reduce negative chains of events later in life. We know that there are correlations between health, school results, work and life as an adult.

