



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

# **Social Work and Social Work Education in Sweden**

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## FACTS ABOUT SWEDEN

- Area: 450,000 km<sup>2</sup>, the third largest country in Western Europe
- Longest north-south distance: 1,574 km
- Longest east-west distance: 499 km
- Capital: Stockholm (second largest Gothenburg)
- Population: 9.4 millions, 0,1 % of the worlds population (22/km<sup>2</sup>)
- Languages: Swedish; recognized minority languages: Sami (Lapp), Finnish, Meänkieli (Tornedalen Finnish), Yiddish, Romani Chib



## .....MORE FACTS

- Form of government: Constitutional monarchy, parliamentary democracy
- Parliament: 349 members in one chamber
- Religion: 80 percent Evangelical Lutheran. Islam second biggest, many other religious beliefs
- Life expectancy: Men 79 years, women 83 years
- Forests: 53 percent - Mountains: 11 percent - Lakes and rivers: 9 percent



## SOCIAL WORK IN SWEDEN

- 30.000 practitioners, 95 percent within municipalities, less than 1,5 percent in full time private practice
- Heterogenic activities: Child welfare, Social Care, Drug and Alcohol Treatment, Social Assistance, and much more – often individual or family oriented
- Most social workers are affiliated with a social work union. Through the union there are ethical guidelines
- There is an authorization system (however only 13 percent have gone through this)



# SOCIAL WORK IN SWEDEN

- BSW education at 12 universities
- MSW since 1980s, however not so many practitioners have MSW (7 percents)
- Social work is a university subject, several theory attempts
- Integration with Social Care



# SOCIAL WORK IN SWEDEN

- One of the first in Europe with research education in Social work
- 1980–2009: 252 Doctoral dissertations in Social work, also growth in senior research
- Four scientific journals in social work
- Pluralism when it comes to research areas, theories and research methods



# SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN SWEDEN – HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- First social work education 1921 (1944 in Gothenburg)
- 1977 – integration with the university system
- Social work – academic profession and discipline
- From 7 to 17 national social work programmes in 8 years
- BSW provides the students with a general competence in Social Work
- BSW in Social Work is a very popular programme



# SOCIAL WORKERS IN SWEDEN AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

- In Sweden there are about 30 000 social workers  
(Swedish professional title is *Socionom*)
- Sweden: 1 SW in 300 inhabitants
- United Kingdom: 1 SW in 600 inhabitants
- Italy: 1 SW 1600 inhabitants
- Uganda: 1 SW in 6500 inhabitants





# UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

- Gothenburg University College 1891 (private)
- 1907 independent university college (national status)
- Formally founded in 1954,
- Reform 1977- incorporation of colleges
- 8 faculties, 40 0000 students
- 5 700 staff
- Urban university in the city



# DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK IN GOTHENBURG

- 120 staff members 1400 students
- Social work programme 3, 5 years (BSW)
- Master programme, 2 years (MSW)
- International Master Programme, 2 years
- Erasmus Mundus M-family together with universities in Portugal, Norway and Uganda
- Doctoral programme 4 years
- Psychotherapy programme 3 years/part-time
- Supervision course (3 semesters)
- Single subject courses/Contract teaching
- Several undergraduate courses at the faculty level that are of interest for social work students



# RESEARCH AT THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

- Approx. 25 PhD students
- From evaluations to global comparisons
- 3 profiles - 3 chairs/professors:
  - Children, youth and family research
  - Social exclusion (poverty, abuse, homelessness)
  - Social care with specialization in ageing and disability
- Other research areas:
  - Professionalization and organisation
  - Gender and sexuality



# CURRENT THEMES IN SWEDISH SOCIAL WORKER DEBATE AND RESEARCH

- Work-family/care balance
- Gender equality
- Immigration
- Child poverty – growing differences
- Education
- Children; positions, rights and participation
- Segregation and exclusion



**THANK YOU!**

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