

LÅNGT IFRÅN LAGOM

Facts about Botkyrka –context, character and demographics (C4i)



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The Botkyrka context and character

In 2010, Botkyrka adopted the intercultural strategy – Strategy for an intercultural Botkyrka, with the purpose to create social equality, to open up the life chances of our inhabitants, to combat discrimination, to increase the representation of ethnic and religious minorities at all levels of the municipal organisation, and to increase social cohesion in a sharply segregated municipality (between northern and southern Botkyrka, and between Botkyrka and other municipalities¹). At the moment of writing, the strategy, targeted towards both the majority and the minority populations, is on the verge of becoming implemented within all the municipal administrations and the whole municipal system of governance, so it is still to tell how much it will influence and change the current situation in the municipality.

Population and demographics

Botkyrka is a municipality with many faces. We are the most diverse municipality in Sweden. Between 2010 and 2012 the proportion of inhabitants with a foreign background increased to 55 % overall, and to 65 % among all children and youngsters (aged 0–18 years) in the municipality.² 55 % have origin in some other country (one self or two parents born abroad) and Botkyrka is the third youngest population among all Swedish municipalities.³

Botkyrka has always been a traditionally working-class lower middle-class municipality, but the inflow of inhabitants from different parts of the world during half a decade, makes this fact a little more complex. The inhabitants of Botkyrka have the same socio-economic status as working and lower middle class, but the variety of the family histories of our inhabitants are much more diverse concerning the issue of class.

Four characteristics show some of the complexity of the inhabitants of Botkyrka:

1. Botkyrka recently (2013) reached the magic change when the majority of our inhabitants with immigrant background are born in Sweden.
2. The majority of the youth in Botkyrka speak three languages.

¹ Botkyrka municipality, "Strategi för ett interkulturellt Botkyrka. 2010-05-12" (Strategy for an intercultural Botkyrka. 2010-05-12), at <http://www.botkyrka.se/SiteCollectionDocuments/Kommun%20och%20politik/Strategi%20för%20ett%20interkulturellt%20Botkyrka.pdf> (accessed 3 June 2013).

² The municipality provided the statistics on Botkyrka.

³ See the public service company Swedish Television's homepage section "Finder" (*Pejl*), at <http://pejl.svt.se/stockholm/botkyrka> (accessed 5 June 2013).

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3. Botkyrka is the first municipality where the Swedish majority population is not the majority (45% with majority origin), but the biggest demographic segment among many minorities.⁴

4. The inhabitants with foreign background encompass more than 160 different countries of origin.

Notable minority populations

In addition to migration from Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, other notable minority populations in Botkyrka are Chileans, Colombians, Lebanese, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Filipinos, Chinese, Afghans, Moroccans, Indians, Iranians and Ethiopians, as well as Poles, Bosnians and Russians.⁵

From the 1980s and particularly from the 1990s non-Western immigration replaced European immigration, shaping Northern Botkyrka into an area heavily dominated by residents deriving from non-Western countries. As a consequence, the three administrative areas of Northern Botkyrka, Fittja, Alby and Hallunda-Norsborg, are among the most heavily racialised, turning up over and over again in the political debate, in the media and in cultural productions including feature films, television dramas and pop songs as urban spaces with Million Programme high-rise buildings made of concrete, and labelled and treated as immigrant areas. In Northern Botkyrka over 65 % of the population has a foreign background, in some areas 90–95 %, and close to 70 % have a non-Western background.

Southern Botkyrka covers the southern part of Botkyrka municipality, which altogether had 44,447 inhabitants as of 2011. The area is divided between the administrative districts of Tumba, Storvreten, Vårsta-Grödinge and Tullinge.⁶ Tumba with 16,926 inhabitants is the central administrative district of the municipality itself and the historical origin of Botkyrka as a modern urban place; Storvreten with 6,428 inhabitants is the poorest part of southern Botkyrka, having the highest concentration of low-income whites, although nowadays the area has a majority population with a foreign background and it is

⁴ In absolute numbers, in total 1,797,889 residents in Sweden belonged to the foreign background-population in 2010, of whom 1,384,929 were foreign-born and 412,960 were Swedish-born with two parents born abroad. Of this foreign background population 633,292 in all still had foreign citizenship. To generalise, minority Swedes are those who were born in or who have one or two parents from the three continents of Asia, Africa and South America. For detailed foreign-background population statistics, see Tobias Hübinette, *Den svenska utländsk bakgrund-befolkningen den 31 december 2011* (The Swedish foreign-background population 31 December 2011), Multicultural Centre, Botkyrka, 2012.

⁵ The statistics on Botkyrka come from Tobias Hübinette, *Demografisk översikt över de 32 största invandrargrupperna i de 24 största kommunerna* (Demographic overview of the 32 biggest migrant groups in the 24 biggest municipalities), Multicultural Centre, Botkyrka, 2009.

⁶ The municipality provided the statistics on southern Botkyrka.

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also a Million Programme district; Vårsta-Grödinge with 4,199 inhabitants is a countryside area and almost solely dominated by majority Swedes; and finally Tullinge with 16,894 inhabitants is the richest part of the municipality itself and also strongly dominated by majority Swedes. Close to 25 % of the population in southern Botkyrka has a foreign background. However, 60 % of those with a foreign background have Nordic, European and Western backgrounds, meaning that among those with a foreign origin in southern Botkyrka the majority derives from Western countries where the population is largely white and Christian; those inhabitants who come from non-Western countries and who live in southern Botkyrka are heavily concentrated in Storvreten.

Southern Botkyrka is in other words an urban district in Greater Stockholm dominated by majority Swedes. In terms of social class, it is a heterogeneous place, with Tumba as the prime example, with all social strata being represented among its population, from working-class residents in for example Tuna and Segersjö to high-income inhabitants in Uttran. Southern Botkyrka is neither poorer nor richer than any other urban district in Greater Stockholm. Rather, it represents the average in the capital region in terms of class, gender, income, education and so on. Instead, southern Botkyrka distinguishes itself as being the most important incubator and stronghold for new single-issue populist parties in Greater Stockholm. According to the results in the national, regional and municipal elections of 2010 as many as a quarter of the votes cast in southern Botkyrka supported three single-issue protest parties, the Tullinge Party (*Tullingepartiet*), the Sweden Democrats (*Sverigedemokraterna*) and the Botkyrka Party (*Botkyrkapartiet*).⁷

Political structure

The Social Democrats have governed Botkyrka since the municipality was formed in 1971 except for the period between 1991–1994. Since 2006 they have formed a coalition with the Left Party (*Vänsterpartiet*) and with the Green Party (*Miljöpartiet*). The traditional opposition bloc in Botkyrka consists of the four Swedish historical centre-right parties.⁸

The municipal parliament (*kommunfullmäktige*) of Botkyrka consists of 61 elected councillors, and the municipal council (*kommunstyrelse*) of 13 members headed by a municipal commissioner (*kommunstyrelsens ordförande*), a deputy municipal commissioner (*kommunstyrelsens vice*

⁷ The election results are available at the Election Authority, section “Previous elections” (*Tidigare val*), at http://www.val.se/tidigare_val (accessed 28 May 2013).

⁸ Namely the traditionally Conservative and nowadays mostly Neo-Liberal Moderate Party (*Moderaterna*) with 21.6 per cent of the votes in the last municipal election, the traditionally Left-Liberal Liberal People’s Party (*Folkpartiet*) with 5.2 per cent, the Lutheran-dominated Christian Democrats (*Kristdemokraterna*) with 3.5 per cent, and the traditionally agrarian-based Centre Party (*Centerpartiet*) with 1.5 per cent, which failed to gain any seat in the last election.

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ordförande) and a second deputy municipal commissioner (*kommunstyrelsens andre vice ordförande*). The ruling Social Democrats hold the first two positions, while the last position is held by a representative from the biggest opposition party the Moderate Party. Although there are several elected councillors with a foreign background in the municipal parliament, the composition of particularly the municipal council does not statistically reflect the diversity of the municipality's population, and especially not the inhabitants with a non-Western background.

The municipal administration of Botkyrka

Botkyrka municipality is organised according to seven sub-municipal bodies which are known as administrations (*förvaltningar*). : the Municipal Council administration (*Kommunledningsförvaltningen*), the Education Administration (*Utbildningsförvaltningen*), the Care Administration (*Vård- och omsorgsförvaltningen*), the Culture and Leisure Administration (*Kultur- och fritidsförvaltningen*), the Social Services Administration (*Socialförvaltningen*), the Labour Market and Adult Education Administration (*Arbetsmarknads- och vuxenutbildningsförvaltningen*) and the Infra Structure Planning Administration (*Samhällsbyggnadsförvaltningen*).⁹ These are separate bodies from the Municipal Council itself. The municipality is also the owner of several companies and foundations, of which the most important is the public housing company Botkyrkabyggen which has 12,000 apartment units, and where as much as one-third of the municipality's population lives.¹⁰ Botkyrka residents report the most cases of discrimination per head, and proportionally it is the ninth-largest municipality in the country for registered hate crimes.¹¹

Botkyrka in the Swedish context

Botkyrka municipality, which covers 224 km², is a part of a wide urban area known as Söderort or Greater Southern Stockholm (*Södra Storstockholm*), and includes the municipalities of Haninge, Huddinge, Nacka, Nynäshamn, Salem, Södertälje and Tyresö, as well as the southern part of the municipality of Stockholm, usually known as Stockholm City (*Stockholms stad*).

⁹ An overview of the administrative structure of Botkyrka municipality is available at <http://www.botkyrka.se/kommunochpolitik/forvaltningarochbolag/kommunalabolagochstiftelser#> (accessed 4 June 2013).

¹⁰ Interview with Jan-Erik Sandh, Key Account Manager of Botkyrkabyggen, Tumba, 19 March 2013.

¹¹ Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, *Hatbrott 2012. Statistik över självrappporterad utsatthet för hatbrott och polisanmälningar med identifierade hatbrottsmotiv* (Hate crimes 2012. Statistics on self-reported exposure to hate crimes and police reports with identified hate crime motives), Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, Stockholm, 2013, p. 202.

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Botkyrka is one of Sweden's 290 municipalities, and is geographically located in the south-western part of Stockholm County (*Stockholms län*), which is one of 20 Swedish counties. Stockholm County covers the 26 municipalities that make up the capital region of Sweden known as Greater Stockholm (*Storstockholm*).

The current population of Sweden stands at just over 9.5 million and that of Greater Stockholm is 2.1 million. The population of Botkyrka stood at 86,657 in 2013, and is the 22nd-largest in Sweden and the fifth-largest in Greater Stockholm, after the municipalities of Stockholm (885,653 residents), Huddinge (101,360), Nacka (93,137) and Södertälje (89,990).¹² The municipality has the fourth-fastest rate of population growth in Greater Stockholm.¹³ Botkyrka is characterised by a high birth rate compared with the other municipalities in Greater Stockholm and the country as a whole, as well as by the fact that the annual number of new residents to the municipality, of which most are immigrants from abroad, exceeds the number of those who move out.

The term "immigrant" was officially discarded in Sweden in 1999, and replaced with the term foreign background (*utländsk bakgrund*).¹⁴ People of "foreign background" is therefore the official term and statistical category in Sweden describing migrants and their children. The demographic category of foreign background includes all registered residents in Sweden regardless of citizenship who are either born abroad or who are born in Sweden with two foreign-born parents.¹⁵ (See section 4.1.)

Migration is not new to Botkyrka. Since the 1960s it has been the municipality in Greater Stockholm with the highest rate of immigration, particularly from non-Western countries. In Sweden, Botkyrka is widely associated with non-Western immigration and non-white people.¹⁶ In the Greater Stockholm area, Botkyrka, together with the municipalities of Stockholm, Huddinge and Södertälje, receives the biggest number of newly arrived refugees and

¹² For these numbers, see Statistics Sweden's homepage section entitled "Population statistics" (*Befolkningsstatistik*), available at http://www.scb.se/Pages/ProductTables___25795.aspx (accessed 16 May 2013).

¹³ After Stockholm, Nacka and Huddinge.

¹⁴ The term "immigrant" (*invandrare*) had in its turn replaced the term "foreigner" (*utlänning*) in 1969: Ministry of Culture, *Begreppet invandrare. Användningen i lagar och förordningar* (The term immigrant. The use in laws and regulations), Fritzes, Stockholm, 1999.

¹⁵ Statistics Sweden, *Personer med utländsk bakgrund. Riktlinjer för redovisning i statistiken* (Statistics on persons with foreign background. Guidelines and recommendations), Statistics Sweden, Örebro, 2002.

¹⁶ A summary of Botkyrka's migration history can be found in Vendela Heurgren and Leif Magnusson (eds), *NoBo. Boken om Norra Botkyrka* (NoBo. The book about Northern Botkyrka), Multicultural Centre, Botkyrka, 2006.

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immigrants including unaccompanied refugee children from non-Western countries annually.

However, these figures for Botkyrka conceal the fact that most of this migration has been to the northern part of the municipality, Northern Botkyrka (*Norra Botkyrka*), which is spatially, administratively and historically as well as statistically and psychologically sharply separated from the southern part of Botkyrka, southern Botkyrka (*Södra Botkyrka*), along both ethno-racial and socio-economic lines. In the south, majority Swedes dominate as inhabitants.

Botkyrka is also the poorest municipality in Greater Stockholm measured by income per head. As many as 17.2 per cent of its inhabitants below 18 years are categorised as being poor, and this concerns 23.8 per cent of all children and youngsters with a foreign background and 6.1 per cent of all children and youngsters with a Swedish background.¹⁷ However, it is highly probable that many “third-generationers” also are included within the 6.1 per cent, reflecting the fact that in contemporary Sweden poverty is extremely racialised, as nationwide 2.7 per cent of all majority-Swedish households with children are categorised as being poor compared with 40 per cent of all immigrant households with children born in Sweden.

While southern Botkyrka has a longer urban history, going back to the construction of the mill town (*bruksort*) and the railway station Tumba in the 18th and 19th centuries respectively, and later on the English garden city of Tullinge founded a century ago, Northern Botkyrka was built as part of the government’s Million Programme (*Miljonprogrammet*) which between 1965 and 1975 built 1 million housing units during the time of Swedish high modernity and under the governance of the Social Democrats. The urban development project of the Million Programme which included high-rise buildings as well as chain houses was mainly for the benefit of the Swedish working class and lower middle class; however, the construction period coincided with a period of high labour immigration during the record years (*rekordåren*) of growth for the Swedish economy between 1950 and 1975.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the influx of foreign-born workers into the Swedish industry consisted of Nordic and European immigrants. As a predominantly working-class and industrial municipality, Botkyrka received labour migrants from countries like Finland, Poland, Yugoslavia, Greece, Spain and Germany. At the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s Turks and Turkish Kurds arrived as well as Christian minorities from Turkey, Syria and Lebanon. These groups settled mostly in the newly constructed Northern Botkyrka. From the 1970s other non-European, non-Protestant, non-white and non-Western migrant groups followed at a time when labour immigration was replaced by refugee immigration.

¹⁷ The statistics on poverty among children and youngsters are taken from Tapio Salonen, *Barns ekonomiska utsatthet* (Children’s economic vulnerability), Save the Children, Stockholm, 2012, p. 61.

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Municipal administration in Sweden

Municipalities in Sweden have a great deal of local self-government (*kommunalt självstyre*) capacity in relation to the state and the county governments, including the right to decide on their own taxation rates (*kommunal beskattningsrätt*).¹⁸ This means that political decisions and responsibilities as well as the policies that are put in place are highly localised throughout the country, from everything from the level of taxation to the governing political parties and regional traditions. So even if the national government as well as the Stockholm County administration is currently ruled by a coalition consisting of the four traditional centre-right parties, Botkyrka, which is ruled by the Social Democrats, still has much local autonomy.

On the other hand, since the 17th century Sweden has also at the same time been a heavily centralised nation-state, similar to France. This means that when national governments choose to intervene in certain areas of society, it usually has a strong impact also on a local level. Generally the county has primary responsibility for health care services including dental care as well as cultural policies, public transport and regional planning. However, for most residents the municipality is the public authority they have the most interaction with. The municipality has primary responsibility for social welfare and social services, elderly care and child care, schools and adult education, leisure centres and activities for children and youth, as well as public housing, public health policies, security issues and local employment issues.¹⁹ As more than two-thirds of the taxes go to the municipality, and as Botkyrka also has a higher taxation rate than the other Greater Stockholm municipalities it is not surprising that the municipality is most directly associated with public services, including activities which in reality are under the governance of the state, such as policing, or the responsibility of the county, such as public transport.²⁰

¹⁸ For more information on how Sweden is governed, see Government Offices of Sweden, "How Sweden is governed", at <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/9395> (accessed 4 June 2013), and the section "Municipalities, county councils and regions" on the homepage of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities, at http://english.skl.se/municipalities_county_councils_and_regions (accessed 3 June 2013).

¹⁹ All in all, around two-thirds of the public services and activities in Sweden are municipal, and the municipalities employ altogether over 1 million people and own around 2,000 companies.

²⁰ For an overview of the Swedish taxation system, see the Swedish Tax Agency, at http://www.skatteverket.se/privat/skatter/arbeteinkomst/vadblirskatten/skattetabeller/kommunala_skattesatsermmunder2013/omskattesatser.4.2b543913a42158acf800016728.html (accessed 4 June 2013).

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International steering policy to relate to at the municipal level

With regards to policy documents on a European and national level, Botkyrka has been bound to the Lisbon Treaty from 2000 and the Europe 2020 Strategy from 2010 as well as the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities from 2007 and other similar agreements which all stress the vital importance of creating a society marked by social sustainability in the development of European cities, with a strong emphasis on labour market issues.²¹ The Leipzig Charter specifically stresses the marginalisation of certain deprived urban areas as an issue which the EU countries' respective city policies must address specifically to be able to combat the increasing inequality divisions and segregation patterns.

National steering policy with impact at the municipal level

Since 1996, Botkyrka has also been one of the prime target municipalities for national urban policy aimed at combatting the dramatically increased housing segregation and unemployment rate in certain areas in Sweden's big and medium-sized cities. This worrying development especially concerns the capital area and the two other big city areas of Greater Gothenburg (*Stor-Göteborg*) and Greater Malmö (*Stor-Malmö*). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has also repeatedly pointed out the lack of integration of migrants and their descendants into the Greater Stockholm labour market and the extreme residential segregation in Greater Stockholm along racial lines as being a serious threat to both future regional growth and future social sustainability in the Swedish capital region.²²

Between 1996 and 2006 the Social Democratic government implemented three different urban policy programmes and interventions. The three programmes—the Blomman Enterprise (*Blommansatsningen*), National Examples (*Nationella exempel*) and the Big City Enterprise (*Storstadssatsningen*)—involved several hundred millions SEK.²³ However,

²¹ The Lisbon Treaty and its process are documented at http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/index_en.htm (accessed 3 June 2013), and the EU 2020 Strategy is available at http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm (accessed 3 June 2013). The Leipzig Charter is available at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/themes/urban/leipzig_charter.pdf (accessed 3 June 2013).

²² See for example OECD, *Integrating distressed urban areas*, OECD, Paris, 1998; OECD and Stockholm County Administrative Board, *Territorial reviews. Stockholm, Sverige*, Stockholm County Administrative Board, Stockholm, 2006.

²³ "Blomman", meaning flower, was the nickname of the then Social Democratic Minister of Integration Leif Blomberg (now deceased). An evaluation of the effects of these programmes in Botkyrka can be found in Hassan Hosseini-Kaladjahi, *Stora fiskar äter fortfarande små fiskar Helhetsutvärdering av storstadssatsningen i Botkyrka kommun* (Big fish are still eating small fish. A

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since 2006, when the current government coalition of four centre-right parties came to power, these programmes based on strong interventions and backed by relatively substantial economic funds have gradually been replaced by a non-interventionist *laissez-faire* policy. Thirty-eight urban districts in 21 municipalities signed local development agreements (*lokalt utvecklingsavtal*) with the government from 2007 and onwards, which in its turn provided the municipalities with specialised and updated statistics through the government body Statistics Sweden. The areas of Fittja, Alby and Hallunda-Norsborg, i.e. the whole of Northern Botkyrka, were all involved initially but from 2012 this list has been reduced to 15 urban areas in nine municipalities, excluding Botkyrka altogether. In the latest government budget for urban policy (2012) only SEK 2.5 million remains for a policy field which in practice does not exist anymore except for what is called knowledge exchange in the form of occasional seminars and conferences.²⁴

Since its initiation in the 1990s the focus of Swedish urban policy for ameliorating social exclusion, structural discrimination, residential segregation, unemployment and poverty has been on the urban areas which are dominated by migrants and their descendants, mostly having their origin in the non-Western world, specifically labour market problems.²⁵ These urban areas are socially excluded from the rest of the city in terms of high unemployment rates and are currently referred to as ‘alienation areas’ (*utanförskapsområden*).

The general image of who is marginalised and where marginalisation is geographically located is therefore, as a consequence of these urban policy and labour market foci, firmly established among the Swedish population at large. For the vast majority it is a matter of “immigrants”, which in practice means non-whites regardless if they have immigrated to Sweden or if they have been born in the country, and about “immigrant areas” (*invandrarområden*) or simply “suburbs” (*förorter*), as they almost always relate to Million Programme areas on the outskirts of the historical city centres. Not surprisingly, this is also the dominant image in the contemporary political and media discourse as it is articulated in the continuous discussions on social exclusion, integration and marginalisation. In accordance with this, there is no formulated policy on majority Swedes who are—or who experience that they are—marginalised in some way or other, and the only occasion when majority

comprehensive evaluation of the Big City Enterprise in Botkyrka municipality), Multicultural Centre, Botkyrka, 2002.

²⁴ For the 2012 budget, see the Government Offices of Sweden, at <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/15168> (accessed 4 June 2013). For a critical analysis of Sweden’s urban policy from its start in 1996 to its demise after 2006, see Mikael Stigendal, “Segregation som blev utanförskap” (Segregation which became alienation), *Invandrare & Minoriteter* 39(1) (2012), pp. 5–9.

²⁵ Roger Andersson, Åsa Bråmås and Emma Holmqvist, “Counteracting segregation: Swedish policies and experiences”, *Housing Studies* 25(2) (2010), pp. 237–256.

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Swedes are discussed in relation to social exclusion and poverty seems to be almost in a playful way, when the American English derogatory and colloquial term “white trash” is brought up in the media.²⁶

²⁶ See for example Kristina Edblom, “De är stämplade som white trash” (They are stamped as white trash), *Aftonbladet*, 4 November 2012, pp. 24–25. For a background to the concept itself, see John Hartigan, Jr, “Who are these white people?: 'Rednecks', 'Hillbillies', and “white trash' as marked racial subjects”, in Ashley “Woody” Doane and Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (eds), *White out. The continuing significance of racism*, Routledge, New York, 2003, pp. 95–111.