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C4i Campaign

Botkyrka

From multicultural to intercultural

C4i project

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Botkyrka

The Municipality of Botkyrka is the most ethnic and religious diverse municipality in Sweden. 160 nationalities out of 193 in the world are represented with over 100 languages.

This process started with the migration of workforce to Sweden in the 1960', the migration of political refugees in the 1970' & 1980' and the migration from civil war and armed internal conflicts in the 1990' and forward. The majority of the inhabitants in Botkyrka with immigrant background are born in Sweden (2013). Around 70 % of our inhabitants live there lives in a multilingual environment and the majority of the youth in Botkyrka is trilingual. 55% of the inhabitants in Botkyrka have immigrant background (statistic term) and 25% of this persons have origin in a Middle East country. The total percentage of the inhabitants with a foreign background is 19 % in Sweden.

The segregation in Stockholm with a combination of poverty and visible diversity correlates and questions the Swedish self-image as anti-racist and this is a situation inherited to the next generation. This context affects the intercultural interaction among certain groups in Botkyrka which can allow spreading of rumours and conflicts among the inhabitants.

Rumours

The results of the study about the common rumour- themes in Botkyrka are:

Theme 1: Criminality.

Theme 2: Incompatible cultures.

Theme 3: Unfair distribution of public resources.

Theme 4: The Swedish culture is threatened.

The municipal authority has adopted an Intercultural strategy which describes why an intercultural perspective is important for Botkyrka. Through studies from the Multicultural centre in the municipality to identify rumours that hinder the work of creating an intercultural Botkyrka we now have our first working fields ready. Botkyrka is not the nation's most crime-loaded municipality, nor the most crime- affected inhabitants in the country. The level of crime has not increased dramatically in the recent years.

Overall the inhabitants in Botkyrka doesn't pay much extra in taxes because the inhabitants in the northern part costs more than inhabitants in the southern part since the most of the extra cost is compensated through the local governmental financial equalization.

The idea that some cultures are incompatible with each other, especially the western culture in relation to all other cultures in the world, first arose in the 1800s by nationalism and colonialism. This idea is still highly prevalent in present- day diversity communities. The idea that a culture is pure and unchangeable, at any price, is an idea that first surfaced with nationalism. The elite of the 1800s created the nationalist state ideal that became part of the Swedish culture.

Key challenges

Research about rumours has shown that these cannot be understood outside the social, cultural and economic context within which they circulate. The rumours which are identified in the research by Multicultural Centre (MCC) are linked to the socioeconomic pattern which characterises Botkyrka as municipality. Nowadays, the internet also functions as an ideal medium for rumours. This type of information dissemination can be interpreted as a marginal phenomenon in a society which considers it self to be modern and rational. It requires however considerable thought to realise that rumours are in many ways a central medium for the dissemination of information even in these societies.

Main intercultural **challenges** in Botkyrka are:

- Poverty and visible diversity correlates and question the Swedish self- image as anti racist
- The situation is inherited to the next generation
- No big clashes, people from different backgrounds don't meet (isolation, alienation)
- Botkyrka Youth Council: the new generation must be aloud to be proud of the family's history and identity and still be Swedes. Above all, we do not want to be considered "non-Swedes". This makes special demands as Sweden's most ethnically mixed municipality

Main objectives

The Division for Democracy, Human Rights & Intercultural Development in the municipality of Botkyrka in cooperation with the key stakeholders works with the pilot project.

The Anti rumour- campaign started in March 2013 as the pilot project of Botkyrka within the establishment of the local UNESCO center. The project is based on Barcelona's successful work with an Anti-rumour-strategy which has been named the "best practice" by the Council of Europe. The goal with this campaign is to identify indicators of social change, illuminate and counter rumors and prejudices that lead to racism, discrimination and xenophobia in Botkyrka.

Our steps from multicultural to intercultural

1987: The Multicultural Centre is established by Botkyrka with mission to reflect diversity in the national self image and migration-related phenomena in the Swedish heritage.

1997: Bad reputation and low self esteem – We needed a change. A successful process started of strategy making to change our situation and self image (political leadership).

2002: Youth Council and Shoo established - Youth reactions to the stigma of the place as an engine.

2004: Political decision to use antidiscrimination as main strategy of change (from relate passively to diversity to prevent or handle discrimination).

2005: The political focus is operationalised at the Municipal Head Office.

2007: Members of ECCAR (European Coalition of Cities Against Racism).

2009: Strategy for democracy and participation adopted by the Municipal Council.

2010: Strategy for an Intercultural Botkyrka adopted by MC (5,10,15 year goals).

2014: Revised strategy for democracy and strategy for creativity (with an intercultural lens). Soon to be decided upon in the MC



Campaign

The Botkyrka C4i campaign encompasses all the districts and citizens in the municipality. The **target group** for the campaign is **the youth in the municipality** since Botkyrka have a very young average age. The aim is to engage youth who actively want to contribute to nuance and/or dismantle rumours but also reach the general population.

The steering group

Botkyrka has a *steering group* for the **“Anti-rumour network: Botkyrka free of prejudice”**. The Steering group works actively on the campaign to develop and disseminate the aim with the campaign. This network is composed by locally based researches and stakeholders from the civil society in Botkyrka, and of civil servants from the Municipal Head Office and from the Culture and Leisure Department.

The mission of the steering group is to find an effective method to dismantle or nuance rumours that counteract an intercultural Botkyrka. Another main goal for their work is to identify and develop indicators.

Since the target group are all the citizens in Botkyrka, it is important to work with key persons in the community. Therefore, the steering group works for instance with different officials that have any kind of impact in the daily life or through their work. The youth from all the municipal districts are also included through the Youth Council of Botkyrka.

As the scientific support of the local work against rumours in Botkyrka, the Multicultural centre prepared a report with a scientific overview about research on rumours since World War 2. With the support of that overview, we thereafter chose the rumours. This report was followed up by another report with information and nuances statistics about the chosen rumours – about criminality and insecurity, threatened Swedish traditions and resource distribution which is a base for the future work.

Goals

One **main goal** for the Botkyrka C4i campaign, besides the obvious purpose to dismantle rumours that create hostility and/or conflict, is to identify and develop indicators that follow social change in regard to the break down of rumours and prejudices that lead to racism, discrimination and xenophobia.

The local goals are:

- To develop method of dialogue that enhances an equal share of knowledge and cooperation between researchers, civil society and municipal administration (mainly to secure the voice and knowledge of the civil society in equal terms).
- To design and carry through the Botkyrka model for capacity building of Anti Rumour agents (in cooperation with Fanzingo and the Multicultural centre/research).
- To design and accomplish a number of activities within the Anti- rumour network.



- To use communication as strategy to break down rumours with the support of a communication plan
- To develop indicators that measure the effect of the Anti- rumour campaign in Botkyrka.
- A number of working- tools for the Anti- rumour agents.
- To design a number of intercultural activities within the frame of the training courses for the anti-rumour agents within the Botkyrka municipal administration.

The **national goal** is to start cooperation with other municipalities at regional, national and international levels to strengthen the aim of the campaign. Mainly through the Unesco LUCS platform (national platform to disseminate the Antirumour campaign to other Swedish cities).

Utility goals:

XX part of the Antirumour network Botkyrka Prejudge free understand that they have the tools to counter rumours that prevent intercultural development in the municipality X months after the end of the project.

XX part of the officials in Botkyrka understand that they have the tools to counter rumours that prevent intercultural development in the municipality X months after the end of the project.

The intercultural approach as one of the major strategic focus of the municipality

5 year goal: *The municipal administration.*

Goals in annual plans and multiannual plans supported by dilemma concept, assigned process managers, guidelines, capacity building on web, dilemma concept to support the paradigm shift concerning the concept of intercultural skills and the role of inhabitants and local stakeholders in the solutions to enable a sustainable intercultural development. Annual follow ups of the department goals.

10 year goal: *Botkyrka as a place and Stockholm region.*

The Antirumour Campaign as a main engine, intercultural democracy and human rights activities at local level, i.e. scientific circles, Botkyrkas röster, Youth Council, Culture and leisure activities, interreligious activities against violence, neighbourhood mobilisation (successful counteract of riots) equality data with stakeholders from the civil society. Libraries, One stop shops, Multicultural centre and other public spaces.

15 year goal: *Intercultural impact nation wide.*

Unesco LUCS, national platform for intercultural development in Swedish cities. *The trinity concept.*