

Title: Negotiating suburbs: Youth, partnerships and the future of 'areas of exclusion'

One of the central debates on equality of education, social policy and social cohesion in Sweden revolves around the country's disadvantaged so-called 'areas of exclusion'. At the centre of attention have, time and again, been suburban areas built as a part of large-scale housing project of the 1970s, the so-called 'Million Programme'. These areas have ever since been represented as a 'problem' in public debate, defined in terms of social and/or ethno-cultural Otherness. A series of violent uprisings, car and school fires or local confrontations with the police throughout Sweden in the past ten years have further reinforced the representation of problems and 'exclusion'.

The focus of this paper is representations of juvenile delinquency and social unrest among youth in Swedish multi-ethnic areas during this decade. Using interviews with informants from the police, schools, voluntary organizations, municipality representatives, social services, all involved in work on social inclusion among youth in one of the Million Programme areas in Sweden, as well as field notes, we analyse various discursive conceptualizations of the *causes* of urban unrest and *the means to solve* these problems.

With an analytical framework inspired by Michel Foucault and his theorisation of governing as the point of departure, the analysis indicates a strong focus on the family in general, and the migrant parents in particular, as a problem and as in need of normalisation, to Swedish core values. For organisational representatives, the point of departure is that parents are uninvolved and lack necessary knowledge and ability to foster children in right way – thus parents have to be taught how to act as responsible and involved parents and how to foster their children in accordance to, for representatives, desirable norms.

Additionally, there is an emphasis on partnership between different organisations, such as NGO's, police, schools etc. Partnership is seen as an effective and holistic solution/technique for the promotion of security in the suburban environment; and here schools are seen as important hubs for these programmes, which target both young people 'at risk' and their parents, and illustrate preventive measures and normalising procedures.

Our final point is that the advocated probematisations and solutions may be seen in the light of the on-going changes of welfare policy, where the main responsibility for the welfare of citizens are put on the individuals themselves, rather than on the collective and the state.

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