

# English summary

An examination of Lugna Gatan's subway and "junior" programmes.

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The Lugna Gatan programme in Stockholm started in 1994. The basic idea is to reduce levels of violence, vandalism and other forms of offending among youths in the county of Stockholm by means of activities run by young persons who themselves have experience of asocial behaviour and of not fitting in. The objective is to reduce crime and social marginalisation among the youths participating in the project, and to reduce corresponding problems in those areas where these youths are active. This study illuminates two types of activity included in the Lugna Gatan programme; the subway programme and the "junior" programme. Activities associated with the junior programme were studied in the suburbs of Skarpnäck and Rågsved, two of thirteen areas where this programme has been introduced.

The study shows that the Lugna Gatan model is valued both by those participating and contributing to the programme, and by others, such as the public transport provider Storstockholms Lokaltrafik (sl) who finance parts of the project. The study also indicates, however, that there are a number of areas where there is a lack of clarity that needs to be addressed and shortcomings primarily in relation to leadership, which need to be attended to if the programme is to function better.

#### INTERVIEWS, PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION AND STATISTICS

Approximately 60 interviews have been conducted within the framework of the study, with hosts, 'juniors', parents, key-informants and persons responsible

for various aspects of the programme. Participant observation has been conducted on approximately 20 occasions. Statistics covering both offences reported to the police and convictions have been collected.

#### HOSTS WORKED WELL IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERVENTIONS BUT WERE INACTIVE FOR LONG PERIODS

In the year 2001 there were 35 “hosts” working on the subway system. These were distributed over three supervisors who in turned answered to a manager. The programme cost a total of slightly over ten million sek. The public transport provider sl funded this programme in its entirety. A total of 201 persons worked as hosts between 1995 and 2000. These had a mean age of 23 at the time of their employment and a large majority had an immigrant background. Almost two-thirds had been convicted of offences, many of them on a number of occasions. On average they worked for just over two years in the Lugna Gatan programme.

The study indicates that the hosts do a good job when they are called upon to intervene in various situations. They act calmly and with assurance. sl are pleased with their work. The study also shows, however, that the hosts are often under-occupied over the course of their shifts. There are often relatively few incidents requiring them to intervene, particularly during the afternoon shift.

#### SHORTCOMINGS IN THE WAY THE WORK IS SUPERVISED

Virtually all 201 of those who have worked as hosts are today either in work or studying. Of those in work, however, many are still employed within the Fryshuset organisation. It is not possible to say to what extent their experience as hosts has played a significant role in their ability to find employment or to study in spite of their occasionally criminal backgrounds. To a large extent, it appears that the youths employed had already “turned the corner” before they became hosts in the programme.

The problems that emerged in the interviews conducted with hosts related to a lack of clarity and of supervisory competence. Since the study was conducted, changes have been initiated in the way the work of the programme is supervised. The National Council’s assessment is that it is important that the weaknesses that exist in this area be addressed, particularly given that one of the programme’s aims is to provide “rehabilitation through work”.

#### THE JUNIORS ARE SATISFIED, BUT CRIME PREVENTIVE EFFECTS ARE UNCERTAIN

The “juniors” programme involves the juniors patrolling the neighbourhood together with supervisors, and various meetings where juniors and supervisors participate. In the suburb of Skarpnäck, the project also involved the running of a café.

The juniors comprise youths from the neighbourhood, of whom many are young offenders. Those juniors who were interviewed were very pleased with the programme, as were most of their parents. Key informants from the local area were more satisfied in Skarpnäck than in Rågsved. In Rågsved there was a feeling that collaborative aspects hadn’t worked particularly well.

It is uncertain however to what extent the programme succeeded in producing any direct crime preventive effects. Nor was the work of the programme of a kind that might reasonably be expected to have any decisive impact on crime in the neighbourhoods in question.

#### A GOOD BASIC IDEA – BUT A NEED TO ADDRESS WEAKNESSES

On the whole, this study indicates that one of the basic ideas of the Lugna Gatan programme – that of involving young people with experience of social isolation in crime prevention with other young people – may be of value and worth developing further. The study also shows, however, that there is confusion that needs to be cleared up and weaknesses that must be addressed if the programme is to function more effectively. The study finds no support for the contention that the Lugna Gatan programme has far-reaching effects of the kind that are sometimes reported in the media or by Lugna Gatan themselves on their web site. It might therefore be worthwhile for Lugna Gatan to re-examine their goals. Working internally to produce goals more suited to follow-up work may provide a way of developing and ensuring the quality of the work conducted.

Lugna Gatan's subway and junior programmes have dual goals; they are designed both to recruit and help young people at risk of developing serious criminal tendencies and to fulfil a more general crime preventive role in the neighbourhoods where the programmes are conducted. The subway programme has been successful in attracting older youths with repeat convictions to apply for positions and to work as hosts. At the time of the study, virtually all of these individuals were either in work or were students, although many were employed within the Fryshuset organisation. The juniors programme appears to have achieved its goal of attracting both well-adjusted youths and young offenders. It is unclear however if their efforts have had any impact on crime levels in the neighbourhoods where they are active.