



# Working together for a drug-free society.



City of  
Göteborg

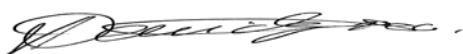


**A**s we gather in Göteborg, we do so with a common purpose. We believe in the importance of maintaining restrictive and humane drug policies. We believe that the fight against drugs is a common and shared responsibility, and that this fight must build upon international cooperation. We believe that joint efforts nurture good ideas.

In Göteborg, we have a bipartisan agreement when it comes to restrictive drug policies. Indeed, it is on the very top of our agenda. This year, the City of Göteborg focuses extensively on activities to manifest our fight against drugs and drug abuse. We have especially marked this year to further highlight the intentions of the United Nations conventions in this area.

It is our firm belief and vision that a drug free society is an essential path in furthering the emancipation of human beings. For this purpose, we must all come together – public institutions and the civil society. Above all, we must build our efforts on active citizenship.

Our work against drugs must be put in a societal context. We must build a socially sustainable society, starting by securing good living conditions for our children and youth. We must work together to create a society free from fear, with a right to security – a society where everyone can reach their full potential. Our public health policies must tackle broad community cohesion issues such as poverty and social inequalities. Drug abuse is never solely the concern of the individual, but demands the attention of every one of us. We must all get actively involved, and we must provide the information and guidance necessary. Our vision will not be realized quickly. The road lies long ahead, but we will neither tire nor falter. We must all do our part for the promising future ahead.



**Dario Espiga**

Deputy Mayor  
Chairman, Committee for Allocation  
of Social Welfare  
Social Democratic Party  
January, 2009



**Carina Liljesand**

Deputy Mayor for the Opposition  
Vice Chairman, Committee for Allocation  
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January, 2009

# A life with dignity – a life without drugs

## Sweden's drug policy

The goal of Sweden's drug policy is: a drug-free society. This is an ambitious goal expressing the Swedish society's attitude to drugs: drug abuse will continue to be socially unacceptable and illegal drugs will not become integrated into society. There has long been unanimity in Sweden over the drug question regardless of whichever government has been in power. Everyone has the right to a life with dignity without drugs.

The restrictive Swedish drug policy is based on a balance of preventive measures, care for drug abusers and drug control.

### Facts about drugs in Sweden

- Drug abuse among young people in Sweden is one third of the European average.
- In 2007, 10 per cent of Swedes aged 16–84 answered that they tried cannabis on at least one occasion in their lifetime. This is also a low figure compared internationally.
- Sweden has around 26,000 heavy drug abusers, which is close to the European average of 0.5 per cent of the population.
- The most common drugs are cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines and benzodiazepines.
- In 2004, 135 people died in Sweden as a direct consequence of drug abuse.
- An overwhelming majority of the Swedish population are in favour of zero tolerance of drugs. Nine out of ten are for example against legalizing cannabis.

Source: Drogutvecklingen i Sverige, Report CAN 2008.  
(In Sweden the term heavy abuse refers to injecting drugs over the past 12 months or using drugs on a daily or almost daily basis over the past month.)

## The drug situation in Sweden

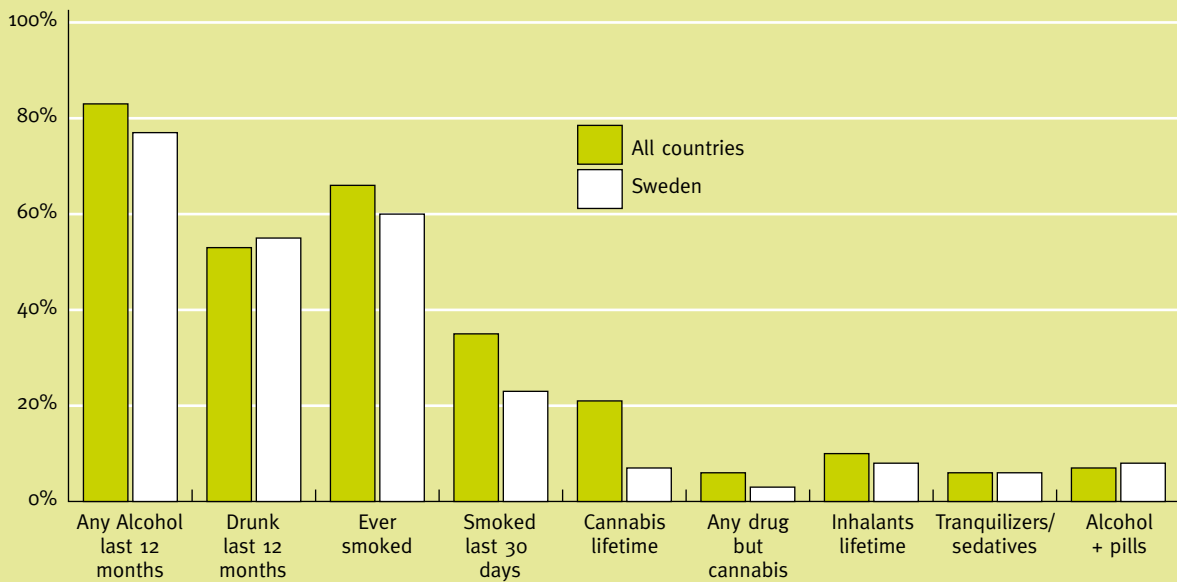
Every year since 1971 there have been comprehensive national drug abuse surveys for ninth year elementary school pupils (aged 15–16), and since 2004 also for second year upper-secondary school pupils (aged 17–18). The surveys are completed anonymously in the classroom by nationally representative samples of classes. Around 9,000 pupils took part in the 2008 survey. One of the survey questions is, "Have you ever tried drugs?" In 2008 six per cent of the ninth-year pupils answered "Yes" to this question, which can be compared with the mid-seventies when twice as many answered "Yes". It is worth noting that fewer and fewer young people are trying drugs today.

Relatively few young people in Sweden experiment with drugs as compared with most other European countries. Most young people also have a negative attitude to drugs – taking drugs isn't seen as "cool". One factor contributing to the low numbers is that drug abuse, for instance smoking hashish, is a punishable offence in Sweden.

For established drug abusers, who often have a complex of psychosocial problems, the picture is not so bright. Heavy abuse of drugs like heroin often leads to crime and poverty.

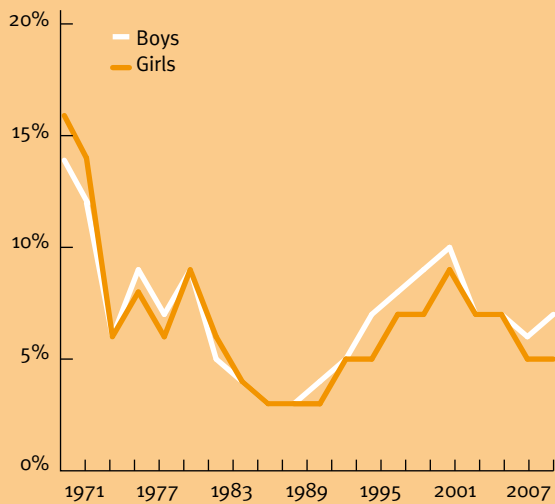
## Sweden compared with 35 other countries participating in ESPAD

(The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs) in 2003. The survey is for 15–16 year olds.



## Swedish pupils in ninth grade who have tried drugs 1971–2008

Source: CAN



# Göteborg and drugs

Göteborg is to be a drug-free city. This is stated in the City of Göteborg Alcohol and Drugs Political Strategy adopted by the City Council in 2001. The strategy is based, just as the national strategy, on three main divisions: preventive measures, restricted availability (control) and care and treatment. This strategy is the major policy document which remains unchanged.

Besides this strategy, detailed action plans are drawn up: What must be done? Who will do it? The current action plan runs from 2007–2010.

The fight against drugs has been and is today an important question for the city's politicians. One example of this is that the City of Göteborg has chosen to continue developing efforts against drugs even in times when savings are being made and other cities have been phasing out treatment of drug abusers. This is believed to be one of the explanations

why Göteborg shows the most positive results of all Sweden's larger cities in the most recent major national survey of heavy drug abuse. Another explanation is that Göteborg, unlike Malmö and Stockholm, was spared heroin until the beginning of the nineties. Until then amphetamines were the serious drug problem in Göteborg.

In the nineties yet another deadly drug came to Göteborg – GHB. GHB is a fluid made using ethyl alcohol and caustic soda. The intoxicating effects of the drug are similar to those of alcohol and last up to four hours. GHB is very difficult to dose accurately and can give rise to severe breathing difficulties which can at worst be fatal. A number of young people have died in Göteborg in recent years after drinking GHB. GHB became a classified drug in 2000.

## Facts about Göteborg

- Göteborg was founded in 1621 and is the second largest city in Sweden with over 500,000 inhabitants.
- Around 21 per cent of the population were born in other countries – mostly in Iran, Iraq and Finland.
- The city covers an area of 450 km<sup>2</sup> and is divided into 21 City District Committees.
- There are several major industrial groups in Göteborg such as Volvo and SKF who employ large numbers of the inhabitants. Tourism and pharmaceuticals with companies like AstraZeneca and Nobel Biocare are also fast growing industries.
- Göteborg is the largest port in the Nordic countries handling a significant amount of Swedish imports and exports.

## Facts about drugs in Göteborg

- 10 per cent elementary school pupils and 18 per cent of upper secondary school pupils said in 2007 that they had tried drugs on at least one occasion. Göteborg is at the same level here as Stockholm and Malmö.
- In the latest estimate of heavy drug abuse in 2004 Göteborg had around 2,800 drug abusers.
- It is estimated that there are around 1,000 heroin abusers in Göteborg.
- The most common drug used by young people is cannabis.
- After amphetamines and cannabis, heroin is the drug most drug abusers seek care for from the city's treatment groups for drug abusers.
- Göteborg has been severely affected by the drug GHB.
- There were 23 drug related deaths in 2006 in Göteborg.

Source: Prevention and Development Unit

# Drug intervention in Sweden

As previously mentioned the three cornerstones in the Swedish drug policy are preventive measures, care for drug abusers and drug control. Actions against drugs are comprehensive and often involve different authorities working together as well as contributions from the private sector and NGO's.

The last decade has seen developments in preventive work in Swedish municipalities. The goal is to build up protective factors and to make early identification of children and young people at risk of becoming drug abusers. Examples of preventive measures are parent education, campaigns and social and emotional learning in schools.

When it comes to care and treatment, Social Services in each municipality are responsible for providing help for residents who abuse drugs, from counseling to stays in treatment centres. Health services are however responsible for medical care such as detoxification and substitute treatment.

The Swedish Social Services can also use enforcement legislation when voluntary intervention does not suffice. A young person in Sweden who is using drugs and thereby putting his or her social development at risk can be taken into compulsory care in accordance with the Care of Young Persons Act and remain in care until at most the age of 21.

In accordance with The Care of Alcoholics, Drug Abusers and Abusers of Volatile Solvents Act, adult drug abusers can be taken into compulsory care for a maximum period of six months. Both these acts are intended to break life threatening drug abuse and to motivate the client to undertake voluntary treatment.

Drug control lies largely under the jurisdiction of the police and customs authorities. Municipal authorities however are responsible for awarding licences to serve alcohol and for supervision of restaurants and bars. A restaurant or nightclub where drugs have been found risks losing their licence to serve alcohol.



# Preventive measures

## What is the City of Göteborg doing about the drug problem?

**Preventive measures.** To be effective there must be a large number of preventive measures at many different levels. The City of Göteborg works on preventing drug abuse together with several other instances such as the health authorities, the police and NGO's. Each of the 21 City District Administrations in Göteborg is responsible for preventive work in that district. The Prevention and Development Unit from the Administration for Allocation of Social Welfare provides support.

Here is a summary of the preventive work in Göteborg:

### Parents

Parents are offered support from the Maternity Welfare Centres and the Child Health Services. The City Districts in Göteborg arrange programmes with Parent Management Training. Courses are offered to all parents but some programmes are directed to parents who are experiencing difficulties with their children.

All prospective parents are given information about alcohol and drugs at the Maternity Welfare Centres.

### Schools

**Drug habit surveys.** Every third year the Prevention and Development Unit carries out comprehensive drug habit surveys in all the Göteborg elementary schools, the ninth year, and upper secondary schools, the second year. Each school is offered help to analyze the results and to discuss suitable measures.

#### **Training for teachers, pupils and parents.**

The Prevention and Development Unit provides training in evidence-based methods to help teachers create a safe and secure classroom environment.

Courses strengthening pupils' social skills and against bullying are also offered, as well as courses for parents in strengthening parent and child relationships.

**Student health.** To be able to go to the school nurse or counselor with drug problems or just whenever a student feels unhappy or down can be the saving of many young people. Developing and strengthening student health care is a priority area. An example of this is training in Motivational Interviewing (MI).

### Information

**Campaigns.** Over the last few years several campaigns have been launched in Göteborg to draw attention to and encourage discussion about this issue.

**Information Centre.** The City of Göteborg has an information centre for alcohol and drug issues, within the Prevention and Development Unit, providing information about: drugs, treatment, legislation, prevention and much more.

**Education.** The Prevention and Development Unit offers courses for various professional categories and for the general public, in order to spread factual information and preventive methods.

### Restaurants and bars


The Alcohol Licensing Unit and RUS (Restaurants Developing Cooperation) work together to prevent or reduce violence, injury and damage resulting from the use of drugs in restaurants.



# Care

Helping someone leave drug usage is often a long and complicated process. It can be a question of helping a drug abuser to become drug-free, or of finding housing or a meaningful occupation. Authorities, health care and NGO's must work closely together if the individual is to receive the best possible help. In the City of Göteborg, the ultimate responsibility for

providing assistance to anyone with a drug problem lies with the Social Services in the 21 City Districts. Around 1,500 trained social workers deal with applications, reports and operations. The City Districts also investigate whether a drug abuser must be taken into compulsory care because of drug abuse. In the Göteborg social welfare offices, there are as a



rule social welfare secretaries specialized in working with drug abuse. The Administration of Social Welfare provides the City District Administrations with the following support:

## Outreach work

**Field workers** work with young people to prevent drug abuse. The field workers work in daytime, evening and night hours in places frequented by young people, both in the city and on the internet.

**Social welfare secretaries** attached to the police do outreach work together with the police youth and drug groups to reach young people and adults in need of help from Social Services.

**Social welfare secretaries** at remand prison attend any drug abuser who is held on remand or arrested in order to motivate treatment.

## Support and treatment for young people

In Göteborg there are four open care centres, (the youth team **Mini Maria**) for young people with alcohol or drug problems. Trained social workers, doctors, nurses and psychologists work at these centres. They provide information, counseling and treatment for young people up to the age of 21, and for family members. The centres are located in the Central, West, North East and Hising Island districts and are administered in conjunction with the health authorities.

**The contact pool** puts young people in touch with a contact person. Contact persons are dedicated adults aged 23–40 who have time to listen and who can point the way to alternative lifestyles.

## Treatment for adults

**Addict care** provides support and treatment for adults with drug problems and their families. There are four centres located in the Hising Island, West and North East districts. One treatment centre in the Centre district, Järntorgsmottagningen, is run jointly with the

health authorities and the Swedish Prison and Probation Service.

**Semillan** is an open care centre for pregnant women who drink alcohol or abuse tranquillizers or other drugs. Semillan works with preventing injury and providing support for women who abuse drugs and for their children.

## Housing support and employment

**The Housing unit** in the Administration for Allocation of Social Welfare can help find housing for persons who have been unable to obtain housing on the normal housing market due to drug abuse or other psychosocial problems.

Vital elements of the work done by this unit are motivation, support and treatment and also support to find some form of employment. This can be anything from simpler tasks for a short period daily to an internship or ordinary job. In some housing there are nurses. Their task is to reach people with untreated psychiatric illnesses. The housing unit provides just over 1,000 rooms or apartments.

**The Kajskjul treatment group** provides daily employment in a conference centre and lunch restaurant for persons who want to end their drug abuse. This group also works with counseling and family meetings.

**KrAmi** is a joint project where the Swedish Prison and Probation Service, Social Services and the employment office work together to help persons who have put crime and drugs behind them to return to society through employment or education.

Helping drug abusers requires a joint effort. One example of this is the drug treatment centre, Järntorgsmottagningen, in central Göteborg where the City of Göteborg, the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and the health services work together.



# Control

As previously mentioned police and customs have the main responsibility for deterring drug dealing or smuggling, but the municipal authorities also contribute.

In the City of Göteborg the **Alcohol Licensing Unit** and **RUS** (Restaurants Developing Cooperation) work together with the police and restaurant proprietors to make restaurants drug-free. Bars and restaurants are often the first place young people come into contact with drugs and restaurant staff are also vulnerable – several studies show that bar and restaurant staff abuse drugs to a greater extent than other professional categories. The Licensing Unit supervises establishments with licences to serve alcohol while RUS provides

training and support for restaurants to develop alcohol and drug policies.

The City of Göteborg also collaborates with other authorities in an information centre against **criminal gangs and organized crime**. The greater part of the drug dealing in Göteborg is controlled by criminal gangs.

Drug abuse, for instance smoking hashish, is a punishable offence in Sweden.



# Challenges for the future

In Göteborg we have come a long way in the fight against drugs and drug abuse. At the same time much remains to be done: drugs are still readily available and there are risks groups where drug abuse is on the increase.

We must continue to improve our methods and make good use of the results that research has given us.

Here is a summary of the chief priorities in Göteborg in coming years:

## **Inventory of heavy abuse in Göteborg**

As from 2010 inventories of heavy abuse in Göteborg will be made every five years. The intention is to obtain as accurate a picture as possible of the problem so as to provide correct measures.

## **Continued drug prevention in schools**

The City of Göteborg will continue to train school staff in evidence-based methods creating a good social climate and further health and learning. Support for parents, for instance structured parenting courses, must be expanded.

## **Drug abuse in bars and restaurants will be stopped**

To reduce access to drugs, continued collaboration with authorities fighting crime will be vital. Over the

next few years the Licensing Unit, RUS, police and bar and restaurant proprietors will be working more closely together to make bars and restaurants drug-free. Supervision will be more vigilant and proprietors will be given support in their work against drugs.

## **Training in the national guidelines for working with drug abuse**

To improve the standards of care for drug abusers, common guidelines for the care of drug abusers have been laid down by the Swedish Board of Health and Welfare for Social Services, Health Authorities drug the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. These guidelines will begin to be applied in Social Services in Göteborg over the next few years.

## **Better care for upper secondary school pupils**

Providing an improved care service for upper secondary school pupils (aged 15-18) who use drugs is an important project. Today there are no standard routines for providing support to become drug-free and to continue schooling for pupils. The Education Administration and Social Services have therefore initiated a project to establish routines.

The City of Göteborg can never accept drugs in this society. Everyone has the right to a life with dignity!

