

Educational Reforms and Special Needs Education in Sweden

— Five Case Studies in Western Sweden —

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Sweden is one of the Nordic welfare states. Over the course of the 1980s and 1990s the Swedish welfare system has become progressively more locally autonomous. In the 1990s the former centralized educational system has also evolved into a more decentralized one. In this paper, after describing both general facts on Western Sweden and the Swedish system of child care and education, educational reforms will be examined in connection with special needs education through five case studies in Western Sweden, in order to better analyse educational administration and school reforms in Japan.

1. GENERAL FACTS ON WESTERN SWEDEN

1-1) Geography and Population

While the land area of Sweden is 449 964km², about 1,2 times as large as Japan, it has a small population of around one-fourteenth of Japan (8 847 625 at the end of 1997). There are three populous areas; Eastern Sweden with the largest city of Stockholm, Western Sweden with the second largest city of Göteborg and Southern Sweden with the third largest city of Malmö. As for counties [*län* in Swedish], of which there were 21 at the beginning of 1998, they are Stockholms län, Västra Götalands län and Skåne län (Fig.1-1 and Table 1-1). In this paper, Västra Götaland [*Västra Götalands län, Västra Götalandsregionen*] is named Western Sweden.

Västra Götaland is approximately 300km wide both from north to south and east to west. Its land area is almost 24 000km² (6% of Sweden's land area) and almost 1,5 million people live there (17% of Sweden's population). Though its land area and population is nearly two-seventh of Hokkaido Prefecture in Japan, it has more industrial plants than any other county in Sweden.

Län is a national administrative division. Besides that, there are 20 county councils [*landsting*], overlapping counties outside Gotlands län. As for more primary local governing bodies, there were 288* municipalities [*kommun*] at the beginning of 1998, one of which (Gotland) in particular is able to work as in the same way as *landsting* (*289 municipalities in March 1999).

Sweden is not only industrially advanced like Japan, but also rich in forestry and so forth. Especially Västra Götaland has 49 various sized and characteristic municipalities, including Göteborg, the most industrial and business-orientated city of Sweden. It is similar in variety to Japanese prefectures and

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Figure 1-1 Counties and Provincial Capitals of Sweden

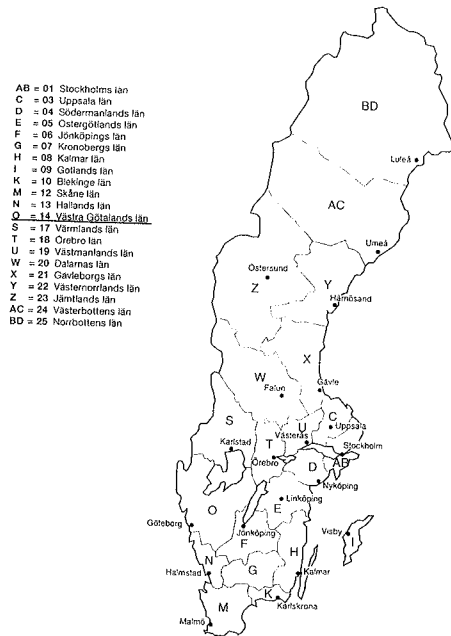


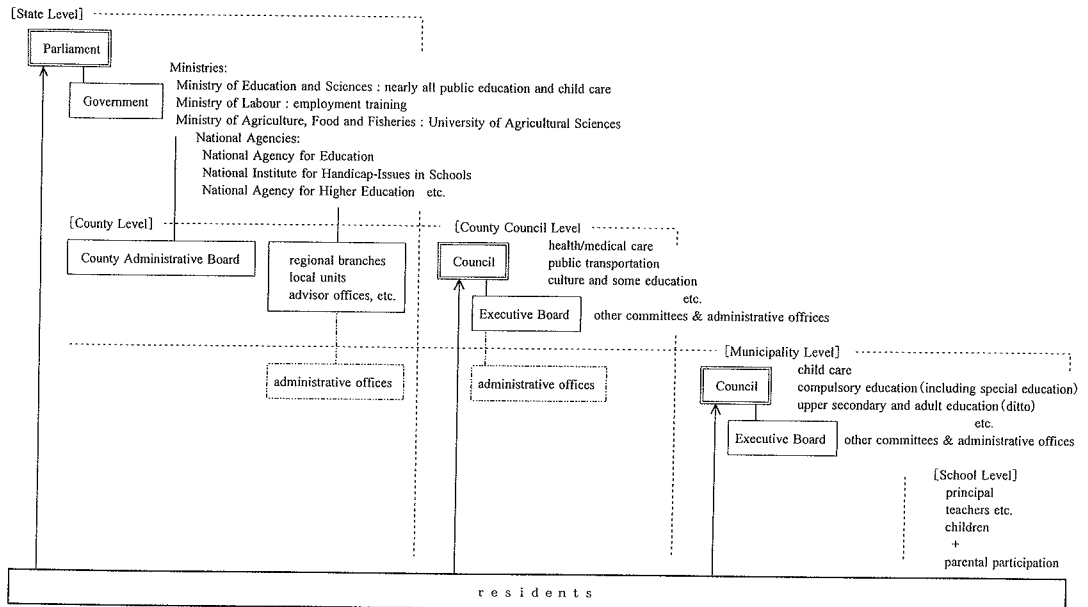
Table 1-1 Land area and Population of 21 Counties(December 1997)

Code	Land area(A)		Population(P)		P/A (per km ²)
	(km ²)	%		%	
AB	6 490,0	1.6	1 762 924	19.9	272
C	6 989,1	1.7	290 473	3.3	42
D	6 062,4	1.5	256 870	2.9	42
E	10 562,0	2.6	414 360	4.7	39
F	10 474,8	2.5	328 068	3.7	31
G	8 457,9	2.1	179 021	2.0	21
H	11 170,9	2.7	240 160	2.7	21
I	3 140,1	0.8	57 791	0.7	18
K	2 941,3	0.7	151 692	1.7	52
M	11 027,1	2.7	1 116 603	12.6	101
N	5 454,3	1.3	271 325	3.1	50
O	23 941,6	5.8	1 485 611	16.8	62
S	17 586,0	4.3	280 178	3.2	16
T	8 516,7	2.1	275 163	3.1	32
U	6 301,7	1.5	258 541	2.9	41
W	28 193,2	6.9	285 232	3.2	10
X	18 191,6	4.4	284 636	3.2	16
Y	21 678,2	5.2	254 354	2.9	12
Z	49 443,4	12.0	133 143	1.5	3
AC	55 401,2	13.5	259 163	2.9	5
BD	98 910,7	24.1	262 317	3.0	3
Total	410 934,2	100,0	8 847 625	100,0	22

* Land area excludes water area of lakes, etc.

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Sweden 1999; Table 34.

Figure 1-2 Governing System (e.g. Education) in Sweden (Drawn by Akio Watanabe, 1999)



municipalities. These are some of the reasons why Västra Götaland is examined as a comparable region of Sweden in this paper.

1-2) Local Government in Västra Götaland

Governing System in Sweden(Fig.1-2)

In Sweden, representatives are elected to Parliament, county councils and municipalities. Parliament [*Riksdag*] is the highest level, passing laws and making decisions that affect all of Sweden. County councils are governed by assemblies elected by the residents of county council districts. The primary responsibilities of the county councils are to administrate health and medical care services, and other regional matters such as public transportation, culture and so on. Municipalities are governed by municipal councils [*kommunfullmäktige*] which are elected by the residents of each municipality. The municipalities are in charge of municipal operations and services, e.g. child care, compulsory education, upper secondary and adult education, care services for the elderly people and so forth.

As mentioned above, Sweden is divided into counties. In every county, the State maintains a county administrative board [*länsstyrelse*] both to ensure that the state-level decisions and legislation are followed, and to be responsible for planning and development in the county. The administrative board is headed by a county governor, who is the State's representative in the county. Västra Götalands län was established on 1 January 1998 combining the old three counties of Göteborgs och Bohus län, Älvsborgs län and Skaraborg län excepting the municipalities of Habo and Mullsjö.

Incidentally, Västra Götaland includes three provinces [*landskap*] as an old fashioned geographical division, Västergötland, Dalsland and Bohuslän. While provinces do not have any formal function today, they are important as regards culture, identity and traditions.

At the beginning of 1999, Västra Götalandsregionen with Göteborg and Regionen Skåne with Malmö were established on a trial basis, in order to increase regional self-government. Two new regions are governed by directly elected regional officials. Decision-making and responsibilities relating to the development of each region were transferred to the regions from the State. The new administrative unit took over responsibility for important societal functions such as health and medical care, public transportation, regional culture, and business development. Västra Götalandsregionen is governed by its council consisting of 149 officials, who were elected on 20 September 1998.

Relationship between the Region and the County Council/County

In Västra Götaland, the county councils have been phased out by the establishment of Västra Götalandsregionen (January 1999). Västra Götalandsregionen has taken over the operation and responsibilities of the Bohus, Älvsborg and Skaraborg County Councils as well as the corresponding operations of the City of Göteborg.

From 1999, Västra Götaland is both a county and a region. Geographically, the two are exactly the same. But the Region also partially takes over the county administrative boards' responsibility for the overall development of Västra Götaland. It has more independence and greater power relative to the State. Regional development decisions are made by the Regional Council rather than Parliament and the Government. It also means that the Västra Götaland County's role is more purely one of a monitoring and supervisory public

authority. It is needless to say that the Region and the County should work together closely in many areas.

Increasing Self-Government

It is expected to make the decision-making and planning of region more simplified and increasingly autonomous. Residents had their first practical contact with the Region in the autumn 1998 general election. Göteborg residents, who have never voted in county council elections, also cast their first votes for the Regional Council. For other residents of the Region, county council elections were supplanted by the regional election.

The Regional Council (149 members) and the regional administrative board are the highest level of decision-making bodies and act as the region's "parliament" and "cabinet". The Regional Council appointed members to various political posts. 46 000 people had a new employer.

The administrative board has its office in Vänersborg (Fig.1-3). It has primary responsibility for regional development issues and the coordination of such issues. Under the board are three commissions: a regional development commission, a culture commission and an environmental commission.

The health and medical services board has overall responsibility for healthcare issues, ensuring that all residents have access to the county and regional healthcare that they require. Ten local health and medical services committees are under the administration of the board. They interact with municipalities and other local organizations, as well as the populace, ensuring in particular that residents have access to primary healthcare for all, free dental care for children and young people, and specialized dental care and adult dental care in their municipalities. The Region takes over four major hospital groups.

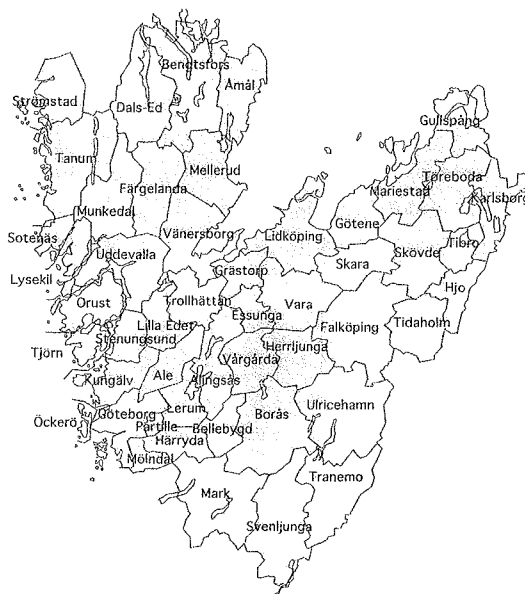
The regional development office is located in Göteborg. Regional development responsibility includes fields such as business development, infrastructure issues, higher education and research, and tourism. The Region interacts with the municipalities, universities, county administrative boards, various business organizations, and so forth.

The culture office is located in Uddevalla. The Region subsidizes cultural institutions of regional interest, such as theaters and museums, and participates in various foundations. It also supports regional cultural projects.

The environmental office is located in Borås. A public authority in environmental issues remains within the municipalities. The Region carries out active environmental efforts in cooperation with other organizations.

The Region and the municipalities have established a limited company to take over the last county council companies' bus lines, ferries, rail traffic and so on. The regional transportation company is half owned by the

Figure 1-3 49 Municipalities of Västra Götaland



Region, half by the municipalities. Its main office is in Skövde and four subsidiaries are set up for the Frybodol, Skaraborg, Sjuhärad and Göteborg areas.

Difficult Aims of the New Region

The ultimate reason for establishing the new Region is said to be in order to improve the ability of the region's residents to live good lives. Unified, powerful Western Sweden with increased self-government is expected to provide a better foundation for growth and development. A new, larger, unified region will be better able to develop its infrastructure, such as transportation, to ensure economic growth in connection with the European Union and global competition in the 21st century. That will also permit resources, such as healthcare, culture and education, to be better used and coordinated for a high standard of living.

The effects that the establishment of the Region is hoped to achieve, are primarily long-term and indirect. A stronger and more competitive region would attract more companies, increase employment, bolster the tax base. And that, in turn, would create a better foundation for the future of healthcare and other public services, allowing them to develop and continue to provide good care and services.

The catchphrase is that a vital, growing region means better quality of life. But it may be not so easy to realize. In economy and industry, several giant companies in Western Sweden, e.g. Volvo (vehicle) and SKF (bearing), have shown a decline and have also announced heavy staff cuts. Is the Region going to be more well-off and cooperative, as is hoped, as well as stronger and more competitive? In education in particular, that is a difficult question to answer.

2. CHILD CARE AND EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS AND REFORMS

2-1) Child Care

Recent Reforms

During the build-up years, child care services were under strong central control, exerted through state grants and through the norms and guidelines issued by the National Board of Health and Welfare [*Socialstyrelsen*]. State grants were used not only as an inducement for expansion but also as a means of steering activities. Central norms and guidelines existed to guarantee a minimum standard of quality, e.g. as regards premises, staff training, the number of children per group and the content of activities. As a result, child care services were fairly uniform throughout in Sweden.

New regulations regarding the child care system came into force in 1995. Among other responsibilities, the local authorities were expected to supply pre-schooling and child care services not only for children of the ages 1-12 whose parents are working or studying but also for children with special needs. A place should be offered without unreasonable delay (within 3-4 months) after application and as close to the child's home as possible. Individual child's needs should be central whenever child care services are organized. In addition, children requiring specific support should be given the appropriate support according to their special needs.

Political changes of recent years have been generally characterized by the abolition of state controls, norms and restrictions in favour of greater decentralization. Special state grants for child care services have been superseded by general grants for all municipal activities. The role of the NBHW has changed from that

of controlling and inspecting child care services to the follow-up and evaluation of activities. The municipal share of child care expenditure has grown in recent years and the percentage covered by state grants has diminished.

Virtually all child care services used to be municipal. But today child care services can also be provided, with municipal funding support, by cooperatives, foundations, limited companies and other bodies. This change has been spurred by the political principle of allowing people greater liberty to choose their own child care arrangements. The proportion of private child care, the commonest form of which is parental cooperative, has grown steadily since the late 1980s, and the parental share of expenditure has increased.

Consequently, the organisation and design of child care services today are subject to great local variations. Generally speaking, municipal spending cuts have tended to result in larger groups and lower staffing ratios. The pertinent issues are to uphold standards and promote quality of activities for children and young persons during the process of decentralization.

In 1997 child care services were under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Science [*Utbildningsdepartementet*], from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs [*Socialdepartementet*]. From 1998 onwards the National Agency for Education [*Skolverket*] has been responsible for child care. Since 1 January 1998 the municipalities have been responsible for offering 6-year-olds a place in pre-school classes, even if their parents are not working or studying. But pre-school classes, which are to comprise at least 525 hours per year, are voluntary for children. Children are also entitled to start compulsory education at six if their parents so desire. From autumn 1998 onwards, the pre-schools have had their own curriculum in the form of a directive [*Lpfö-98*].

Children with Special Needs or in Hospital

Figure 2-1 shows the children's rights and welfare/education services for children in Sweden.

Child care services have a special responsibility towards children who require special support for their development. The law guarantees these children priority of access to child care services.

In most cases, these children join ordinary groups in regular child care. They should be offered pre-school services from less than one year old if their needs cannot be met in other ways. There are also special groups which are mostly smaller and their staffs have had special training or experience of children with special needs, e.g. for children with delayed language development or psychosocial difficulties, so as to provide them with expert developmental support. Especially for children with hearing impairments, there are separate special groups, staffed by persons with a knowledge of sign language.

In 1994 Sweden acquired a new law, the Act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments [*Lag om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade, LSS*]. This guarantees special rights for children with severe functional impairments to a personal assistant both in child care and in the home.

Most municipalities have laid down special guidelines for offering children the support they need in child care services. There are various forms of support. Sometimes the regular experienced staff will suffice, with backing from experts on a particular disability or with the consulting services of psychologists. Many municipalities also have educational facilitators, most of them experienced pre-school teachers who have undergone further training as remedial teachers or in-service training for the teaching of children with special

Figure 2-1 Children's Rights and Welfare/Education Services for Children in Sweden

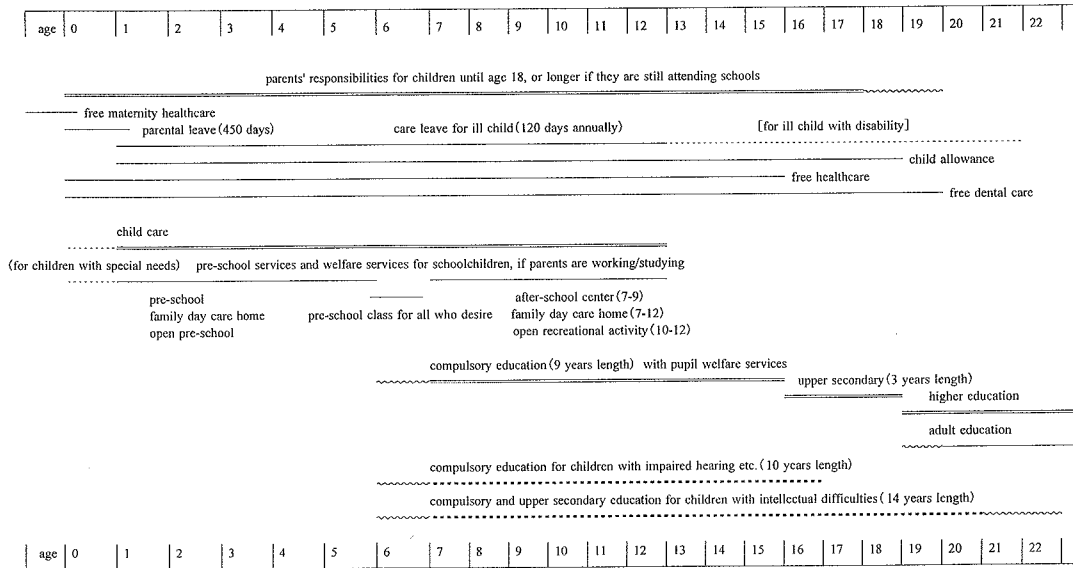


Figure 2-2 New Principles of School, "Management by Goals and Results" (Offered by the National Agency for Education)

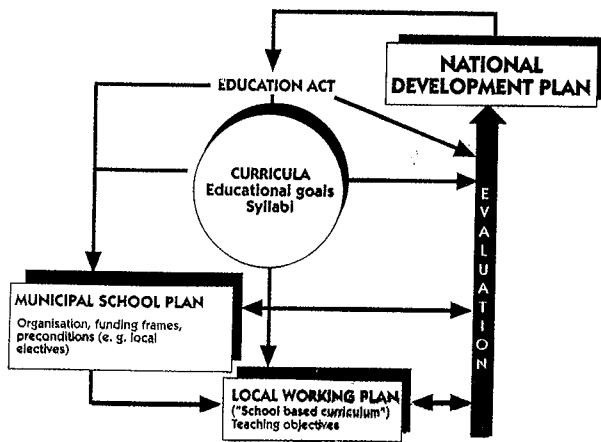
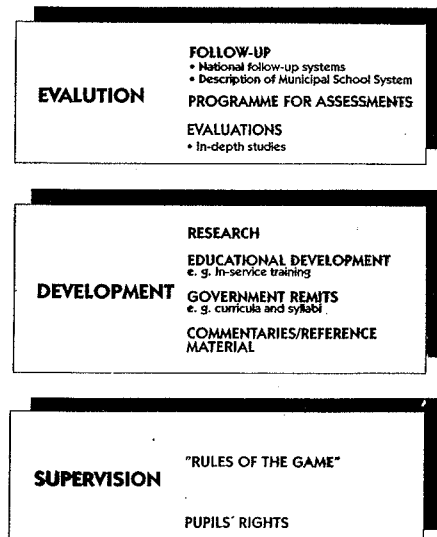


Figure 2-3 Tasks of the National Agency for Education (Offered by the National Agency for Education)



needs. These facilitators work in various ways, but most often they have the task of supporting and guiding the permanent staff with reference to children in need of special support.

Children in hospital are also entitled to educational activities and schooling, e.g. play therapy, pre-school education and leisure time center activities in hospital. Under this type of arrangement, staff with teaching qualifications provide the children with developmental stimulus and support, prepare them for various kinds of medical examination and treatment, explain what is happening to them, and give the children an opportunity to process their experiences through play and creative activity. Play therapy is available in all paediatric departments of Swedish hospitals as from 1994.

2-2) Compulsory and Upper Secondary Education

As part of a general trend in Swedish society towards decentralization of responsibility and decision-making powers, the education system has undergone fundamental changes in recent years. In 1991, Parliament laid down new principles for educational institutions, namely "management by goals and results" (Fig.2-2), with fewer regulations and clearer goals.

The main principle of the division of responsibilities and functions within the Swedish education system today is that Parliament and the Government should control educational activities by defining national goals and guidelines for education. Rules are set out in the Swedish Education Act, curricula and various regulations. The central and local education authorities, together with the different organizers, are responsible for ensuring that the education system is organized in accordance with national goals. Within the framework and guidelines laid down by Parliament and the Government, the organizers have considerable freedom to determine how activities are to be implemented and resources distributed and used. It is important for the central and local authorities, as well as individual schools, to systematically follow up and evaluate educational activities in relation to goals and conditions applying to them.

The National Agency for Education, which was formed in 1991 coinciding with a change in responsibility for school systems, is the central administrative authority for the school sector. As such it is tasked with monitoring and evaluating the school system, supervising educational activities, and proposing and taking part in educational development measures (Fig.2-3). The Agency also arranges training programmes for head teachers and in-service training (INSET) for teachers and other school staff, as well as distributing scholarships for the individual teacher. The Agency includes a field organisation of eleven regional offices, Göteborg, Karlstad, Linköping, Luleå, Lund, Skövde, Stockholm, Sundsvall, Umeå, Uppsala and Växjö (Fig.2-4).

The municipalities acquired full responsibility for organizing and implementing school activities in 1991, when state regulation of teaching appointments and headships was abolished. They have the responsibilities of an employer towards school staff, as well as responsibility for INSET. Every municipality must have a school plan, adopted by the municipal council and showing how the municipal school system is to be structured and developed. In particular, the plan must indicate the measures to which the municipality pledges itself in pursuit of the national goals for the school sector.

The 1991 Local Government Act gives municipalities and county councils the option of designing their own organizational structures with different committees having different areas of responsibility. At present it is quite common for the compulsory school to be the responsibility of a child and youth committee, which is

Figure 2-4 11 Regional Offices of the National Agency for Education and the District Boundaries of the Göteborg Office (Offered by the National Agency for Education)

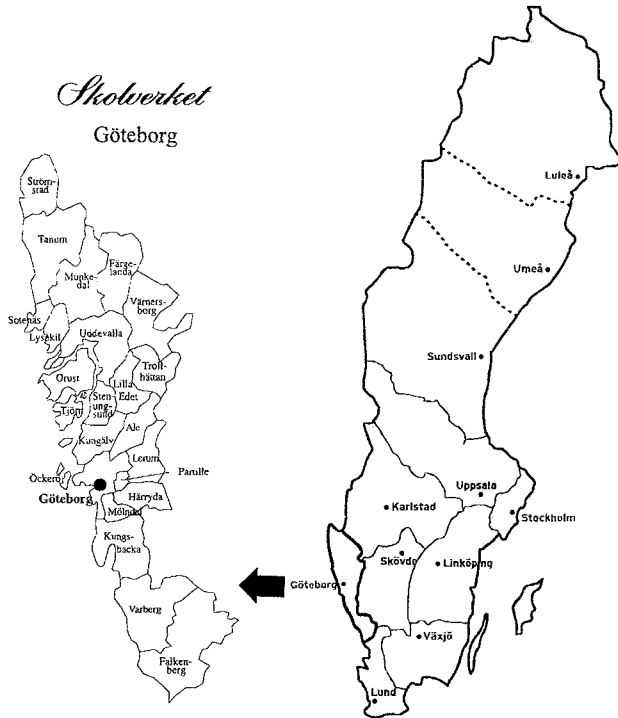


Table 2-1 Minimum of Teaching Time (9 years) of Compulsory Schools

Subject	Hours*(%)
Basic skills	
Swedish	1 490(22)
English	480(7)
Mathematics	900(14)
Practical/aesthetic subjects	
Art education	230(3)
Domestic science	118(2)
Physical and health education	
Music	230(3)
Crafts	330(5)
Social science subjects	
Geography	
History	
Religion	
Civics	
Natural science subjects	
Biology	
Physics	
Chemistry	
Technology	
Foreign language	320(5)
Pupil's option	382(6)
Total	6 665(100)
whereof school's own choice	600(+)

* unit of 60 minutes

Table 2-2 16 National Programs of Upper Secondary Schools

Name of program	Branches
Primarily vocationally oriented(14)	
Arts program	Art and design, Dance and theater, Music
Business and administration program	Not subdivided (commerce and administration in private business and public administration)
Construction program	Constructional metalwork, Painting, Building and construction
Child recreation program	Not subdivided (childcare, after-school and recreational activities, sports and libraries)
Electrical engineering program	Automation, Electronics, Installation
Energy program	Energy, Marine engineering, Heating, ventilation and sanitation
Food program	Bakery and confectionery, Fresh and cured meats
Handicraft program	Various crafts
Health care program	Health care, Dental nursing
Hotel, restaurant and catering program	Hotel, Restaurant, Mass catering
Industry program	Industry, Process industries, Woodwork, Textile and clothing manufacturing
Media program	Information and advertising, Graphic media
Natural resource use program	Not subdivided (agriculture, forestry, horticulture and animal husbandry)
Vehicle engineering program	Aircraft engineering, Coachwork, Vehicle engineering, Transport
Preparing primarily for university studies(2)	
Natural science program	Scientific, Technical
Social science program	Economics, Liberal Arts, Social science

Source: Upper Secondary School(Skolverket, 1998)

also responsible for child care programs. Upper secondary school and adult education usually come under an education and culture committee.

The individual school indicates in a local working plan how the goals are to be achieved and how activities are to be designed and organized. Teaching objectives are established by teacher and pupils together. Working methods are decided on the basis of these objectives and the pupils' varying needs and aptitudes. There has to be a head teacher in charge of educational activity in a school. The principal must be closely familiar with the everyday working of the school and must in particular endeavour to promote educational development.

Another guiding principle of the education policy has been to create scope for diversity within the education system, and freedom for individual pupils/parents and students to choose between different types of schools, as well as between study routes.

The present curriculum for compulsory schools [*Lpo-94*], including schools for the intellectually handicapped, came into force in 1994 (Table 2-1). As from the autumn of 1998, it also includes pre-school classes and after-school centers. The new curriculum lays down the goals which must have been achieved by the end of the 5th and 9th years of school. The goals of the new curriculum have to be amenable to the national evaluation. The national tests at the end of 9th grade (Swedish, mathematics and English) are compulsory, while those at the 5th grade are voluntary and municipalities decide whether or not to use them. In addition, the National Agency for Education offers diagnostic materials at the 2nd (Swedish, mathematics) and 7th (Swedish, mathematics, English) grade.

The new curriculum for upper secondary schools [*Lpf-94*], including upper secondary schools for the intellectually handicapped and adult education, came into force in 1994, too (Table 2-2). It presents the basic values of upper secondary schooling, together with its basic goals and guidelines.

2-3) Special Needs Education

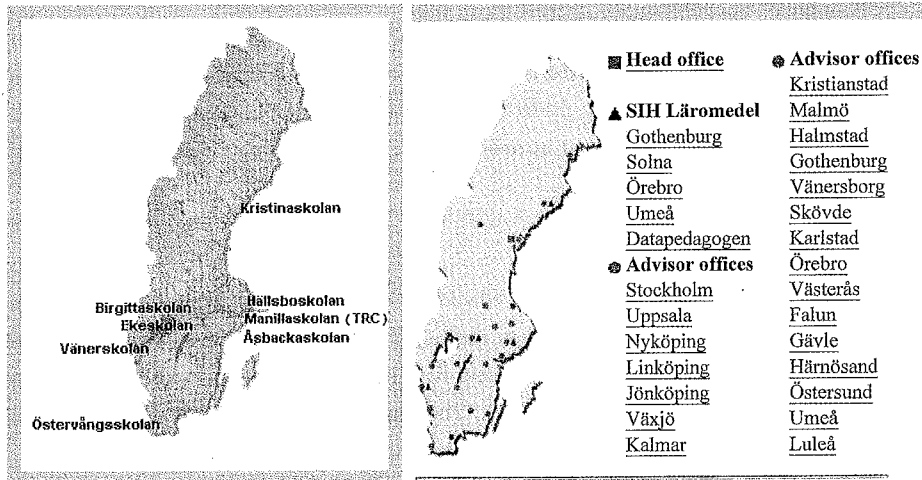
Locally Integrated Schools for the Intellectually Handicapped

Compulsory schools for the intellectually handicapped [*särskola*] are locally integrated with ordinary compulsory schools. They are divided into basic school [*grundsärskola*] and training school [*träningsskola*]. The former is for pupils who are considered capable of learning to read and write, and the latter is for those considered unable to assimilate instruction in "*grundsärskola*". Around 1% of the Swedish school population attended "*särskola*" in 1996.

Schooling for the intellectually handicapped is compulsory for 9 years between the ages of 7 and 16. In addition, they are entitled to a 10th optional school year to supplement their education. Pre-school classes must be offered from the year of the child's 6th birthday.

As from 1996, "*särskola*" comes under municipal mandatorship from county councils'. The municipalities are also obliged, in accordance with the School Act, to provide upper secondary education for young people with intellectual difficulties who are unable to attend an ordinary upper secondary school. This education is four years in duration and may be started at anytime before the age of 20. Therefore persons with intellectual handicaps can continue their upper secondary schooling up to the age of 23. For persons who start over 20, there are similar educational programs of adult education [*särvux*] within the services of municipal adult education [*komvux*] for all.

Figure 2-5 Maps of Special Compulsory Schools, Tomtebod Resource Center and 22 Advisor Offices of the National Institute for Handicap-Issues in Schools (Offered by SIH)



Upper secondary schools for the intellectually handicapped [*yrkessärskola*] are divided into three types as follows: vocational education [*yrkesutbildning*], vocational training [*yrkesträning*] and occupational training [*verksamhetsträning*].

Special Schools run by the State

Responsibility for separated special schools is vested in the National Institute for Handicap-Issues in Schools [*Statens institut för handikappfrågor i skolan, SIH*]. For children prevented by deafness, hearing/speech impairment and vision impairment from attending ordinary compulsory school, special schooling is compulsory for 10 years. It comprises five regional schools (Lund, Vänersborg, Örebro, Stockholm and Härnösand) and three national schools for pupils from all over Sweden (Örebro, Gnesta and Sigtuna) (Fig.2-5). The State pays all the pupils' expenses, including boarding house accommodation and travel. The municipality provides compensation at a rate fixed by the Government.

SIH also has the responsibility of providing instructional support to municipal schools and pre-schools for children with functional impairments. Special advisory teams are based at SIH's 22 advisory offices and there is also Tomtebod Resource Center in Solna.

Most young persons with various functional impairments attend ordinary upper secondary school classes. But there are also special national upper secondary schools for the deaf, the hard of hearing (Örebro) and for the physically disabled (Umeå, Stockholm, Göteborg, Kristianstad).

Additional Special Needs Education

Pupils who experience difficulties in their school work are entitled to support in school. Sometimes a special programme of measures is necessary. This is designed by school staff in consultation with the pupils and their guardians. There can be a variety of supportive arrangements, e.g. various technical aids, pupil assistants for pupils with physical disabilities or vision impairment, specially trained teachers for pupils with

hearing/vision impairment or physical disabilities, and remedial teaching. Under legislation passed in 1988 for a new scheme of teacher education, all compulsory school teachers must complete the equivalent of half a term's studies of special pedagogy. According to circumstances, a special teacher can sometimes support and assist the pupil in the classroom or teach the pupil in a special group away from the class.

These special supports might be recognized as a part of special needs education. In addition, a pupil who is ill for a considerable time or is frequently absent from school on account of illness is entitled to be taught in hospital or at home. Teaching of this kind is only possible with a doctor's permission. It must as far as possible correspond to ordinary teaching.

Immigrant and Refugee Pupils

In 1985 the Swedish parliament resolved that education should adopt an intercultural approach. Around 12% of all pupils in compulsory school were born abroad, or to foreign parents in Sweden. Both immigrant and refugee children are entitled to tuition in their first language, as well as to the same standard of compulsory basic education as their Swedish peers. The municipalities have an obligation to provide first language tuition, but participation is voluntary for the children. The first language tuition is variously organized in different municipalities, e.g. in the time scheduled for pupils' options, as a further language in addition to Swedish and English, or completely outside the usual schedule. More than 100 different first languages are represented in Swedish schools. And some municipalities also have preparatory classes for immigrant and refugee pupils.

2-4) Higher Education

In Sweden almost all higher education institutions, except for the University of Agricultural Sciences which is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science. Most of the institutions are thus run by the central government. The employees at these universities [*universitet*] and university colleges [*högskola*] are national civil servants.

Swedish post-secondary education contained a strong element of national planning and regulation; the aims and length as well as the location and financing of most study programmes were laid down by Parliament. Until 1989 the central government also established the curricula for all the general study programmes.

In 1991 a major reform was initiated, aiming at a deregulation of the higher education system, greater autonomy for each institution and a wider scope of individual choice for students. The reform was adopted by Parliament in 1992, and in 1993 a new Higher Education Act came into effect. The highest body in each higher education institution is the governing board, which has the overall responsibility for all operations within the institution, e.g. financial administration and planning, personnel matters and the like. The Government has established its guidelines to decide the structure of various decision-making bodies within the universities and university colleges.

The National Agency for Higher Education [*Högskoleverket*] is a central government authority dealing with questions concerning Swedish universities and university colleges. Its duties include follow-up, evaluation and supervision of university and university college operations, the analysis of trends important to higher education and the promotion of innovations and improvements in quality and teaching methods. The

Agency oversees the right of institutions to award degrees. Information concerning study programmes, various international issues in the higher education field and the assessment of university-level programmes in other countries, are among the Agency's responsibilities. The Agency also administers the national university aptitude test. In addition, it is responsible for maintaining statistics concerning higher education and coordinates the Swedish university computer network, SUNET.

Within a generally formulated framework, each institution of higher education decides what selection criteria shall be used for admission and whether the admissions procedures shall be carried out locally or by using the central service function provided by the National Admissions Office to Higher Education [*Verket för högskoleservice, VHS*].

As of 1 January 1999 there are eleven universities, two specialized institutions of higher education and research, about 20 smaller and medium-sized university colleges, and three private/independent institutions of higher education. There are also about ten colleges of health sciences.

3. FIVE CASE STUDIES IN WESTERN SWEDEN

3-1) Objectives of Case Studies and Selection of Municipalities

Objectives of Case Studies

This paper studies four major changes made to the Swedish education system in the 1990s, in connection with the theme of decentralization. As the responsibility of policy-making or decision-making moved from the State to the individual municipality, or from the municipality to the individual school, public education has to become more familiar with residents and parents. The following four questions were asked by interview or mail in English.

- i) It is said that there was a big shift in administration system from centralization to decentralization by the 1991 Local Government Act. In fact, what practical changes were there in your municipalities and schools?
- ii) It is said that there was a fundamental change of the educational system into "management by goals and results", and follow-up and evaluation became more important due to the 1991 Local Government Act and the 1994 curricula [*Lpo-94, Lpf-94*]. In truth, what changes were there in your municipalities and schools?
- iii) It is said that there was a remarkable move towards integration between education and child care in 1998, when the new curriculum for pre-school [*Lpfö-98*] and the pre-school class came into force. As a matter of fact, what changes were there in your municipalities and pre-schools or schools?
- iv) It is said that parental choice was widened and parental participation became more important in the 1990s. What characteristic activities were developed in your municipalities and schools?

Decentralization means that the unit of policy-making or decision-making becomes smaller and smaller. It is also said that big differences and large variation among municipalities or schools occurred, and the rich municipalities/schools benefit while the poor are lose out. Decentralization should not be equivalent to inequality among municipalities or schools. The network-system among municipalities/schools should be kept on, too. For that reason special needs education or upper secondary education are suitable areas in which to examine the quality of cooperation and collaboration among municipalities, while the services of regular

pre-schools and compulsory schools can be provided in each municipality. The following two questions were also asked by interview or mail.

v) What cooperative system do you have with your neighbour municipalities on upper secondary education? Where and how do young people in your municipality receive their upper secondary education?

vi) What cooperative system do you have with your neighbour municipalities on special needs education? Where and how do children with special needs in your municipality have their special needs education?

In 1996, a large change occurred in special needs education. Formerly, the county councils were responsible for schools and adult education for children and people with intellectual handicaps, but the municipalities have been gradually taking over. Since 1 January 1996 all schools of this type have been under municipal control. This does not mean, however, that collaboration among municipalities has no longer been necessary from that time on. This reform into decentralization in special needs education is worthy of note to examine whether decentralization in Sweden really is a cooperative experiment, or more of a competitive trial among municipalities.

Selection of Municipalities

To select characteristic municipalities for case studies, a table of statistical facts on area and population (Table 3-1) was made.

Göteborg has the largest population of the 49 municipalities in Västra Götaland, with 456 611 residents at the end of 1997 (31% of region's population). The least populated municipality is Dals-Ed, with only 5 133 residents. The number of municipalities by population except Göteborg is ten of 1-9 999, twenty of 10 000-19 999, five of 20 000-29 999, eight of 30 000-39 999, two of 40 000-49 999, two of 50 000-59 999 (Mölndal, Trollhättan) and one of 90 000-100 000 (Borås).

By population density, the first is Göteborg (1 018 persons per km²), the second is Partille (572), the third is Öckerö (458), and the fourth is Mölndal (373). There is a shift in population to Göteborg and its suburbs. In 14 municipalities surrounding Göteborg the population increased in 1997, while in other municipalities it decreased.

By age, in 11 municipalities more than 20% of population are senior citizens (65- years old). Sötenäs is the municipality with the highest count (25,0%), whilst Härryda and Lerum have the lowest (11,5%).

The following five municipalities in Västra Götaland were selected: Göteborg as a large independent city, Mölndal as one of the suburbs of Göteborg, Öckerö as a municipality of small islands much like some Japanese municipalities, Sötenäs as the municipality with the highest rate of senior citizens in the Region, and Dals-Ed as the smallest rural municipality in the Region.

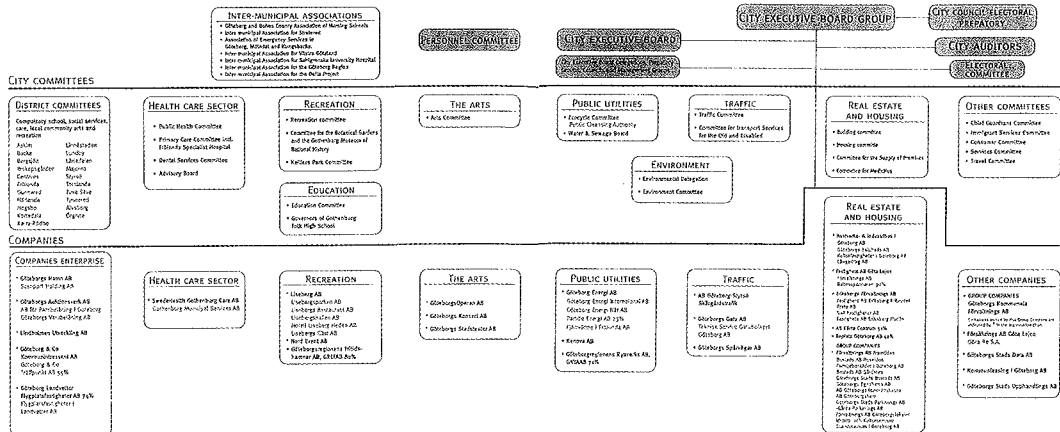
By the way, the Statistics Sweden [*Statistiska centralbyrån*] adopts the concept of nine groups of municipalities: i) Large cities (with more than 200 000 residents; 3 municipalities, including Göteborg), ii) Suburban municipalities (the suburbs of large cities; 36 municipalities, including Mölndal and Öckerö), iii) Larger cities (with more than 50 000 residents; 25 municipalities), iv) Medium-sized municipalities (with 20 000- 50 000 residents; 39 municipalities), v) Industry municipalities (the percentage of industry workers is more than 40%; 53 municipalities), vi) Rural/Countryside municipalities (the percentage of primary industry workers is more than 8,7%; 39 municipalities, including Dals-Ed), vii) Sparsely-populated rural

Table 3-1 Area and population of 49 municipalities in Västra Götalandsregionen (December 31, 1997)

Table with 14 columns: Code, Municipality, Land area (km²), Population, P/A (per km²), % by age (0-19, 65+), Increase of population, % by industrial distribution (primary, secondary, tertiary). Rows include 49 municipalities and Västra Götaland, plus a total for Sweden.

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Sweden 1999; Table 34/63. Statistical yearbook of administrative districts of Sweden 1998; Table 31.

Figure 3-1 Organization of Göteborg City (1997)



Source: City of Göteborg Yearbook 1997 (1998)

municipalities(the population is less than 20 000 and population density is less than 5 per km²; 31 municipalities), viii) Bigger municipalities among the residual(with 15 000-50 000 residents; 27 municipalities), ix) Smaller municipalities among the residual(with less than 15 000 residents; 35 municipalities, including Sotenäs).

3-2) Case Study 1; Göteborg, as a large independent city

General Facts on Göteborg

As mentioned above, Göteborg is the second largest city in Sweden. It used to be one of special municipalities such as the county councils, but now the Region includes it. In addition, 21 City District Committees were introduced in 1990 in order to decentralize political decisions. Göteborg has risen to the challenge not only of inter-municipal cooperation but also of divisional decentralization.

The City Council is the supreme decision making body of the municipality. It consists of 81 members and at present 30 deputies(replacements), who are elected by the citizens. It meets approximately once a month. Most of its members are part-time politicians. The City Council takes the broad decisions on the city's finances, major investments, city planning, etc.

The City Executive Board is the executive management, the city's "government" if you like. It consists of 15 regular members and 6 deputies, who are fulltime and professional politicians. It is appointed by the City Council after negotiations among the parties represented on the Council. The City Executive Board prepares the items on which the City Council is to take decisions and delivers its opinion on all issues before they are resolved by the City Council.

The City Council also decides who is to represent the various parties on the municipal committees and boards. The 21 City District Committees, approximately 30 specialized committees and some 25 city-owned companies were responsible for their respective activities within the frameworks allotted them by the City Council in 1997(Fig.3-1; it is reorganized now).

The City District Committees have the responsibility for child care, compulsory education, elder care, financial and other aid to individuals and families. They also provide support and services for people with functional impairments. The specialized Committees of the City deal with the overall physical planning of the city, water and sewage treatment systems, garbage collection and street cleaning, upper secondary and adult education, etc.

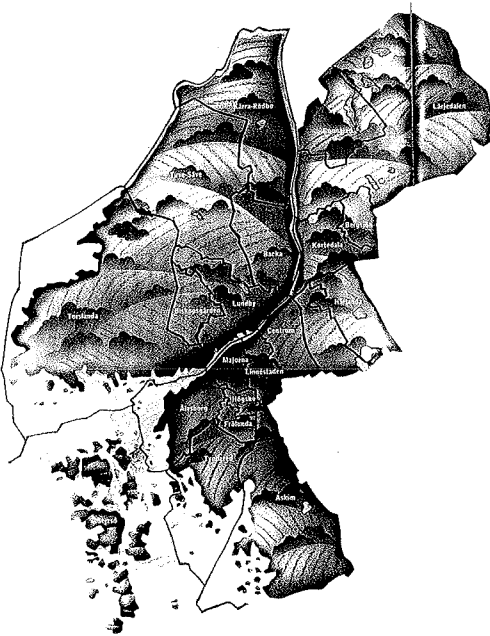
City District Committees

In 1987 the City Council decided to implement City District Committees, and in 1988 the City Council formulated their fields of responsibility. Big and specialized administrations were to be replaced by smaller and general administrations. The City of Göteborg is still one municipality. The coordination of the City District Committees' activities is carried out by the Delegation of City District Committees.

Since 1990 Göteborg has been divided into 21 different geographical areas(Fig.3-2). Each one of them is governed by a City District Committee. Each committee has 11 regular members and 6 deputies, who are all local politicians. They are elected by the City Council. The number of members from each political party is proportional to the party's representation in the City Council.

Within their boundaries the City District Committees are responsible for child care, compulsory school,

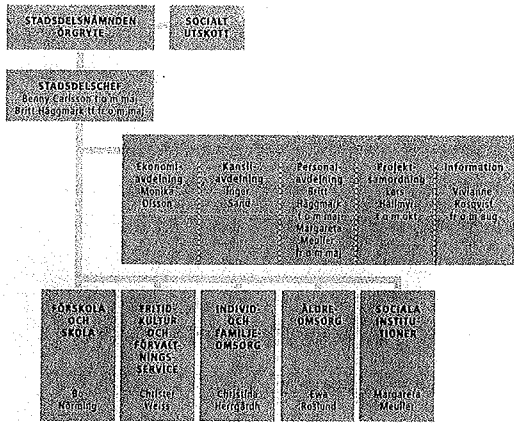
Figure 3-2 Map of 21 Districts



Source: Stadsdelsnämnderna i Göteborg (1997)

Figure 3-3 Organization of Örgryte District (1998)

STADSDELSNÄMNDENS ORGANISATION 1998



Source: Stadsdelsnämnden Örgryte Årsredovisning 1998

Table 3-2 General Facts on 21 Districts of Göteborg

No.	District	population	0-15 year	pensioner	1) foreigner	2) career	3) social allow.	4) job seeker	5) employment	6) wage	7) income	8) personnel	9) school	10) child care	11) social allow.	12)
		persons	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	SEK	KSEK	persons	KSEK	KSEK	KSEK	KSEK
1	Gunnared	19 359	25,9	8,8	51,1	14,7	8,0	11,4	51,4	15 942	109,3	1 760	126 232	82 670	161 139	
2	Lärjedalen	20 938	27,7	8,7	54,5	16,8	41,8	10,6	49,3	15 942	106,8	1 458	124 572	60 034	152 704	
3	Kortedala	25 409	16,1	20,1	33,7	20,3	21,5	9,6	57,8	15 942	125,0	1 213	75 940	69 057	105 427	
4	Bergsjön	13 013	23,1	11,8	57,2	15,6	52,8	14,2	38,9	15 942	93,0	1 089	72 555	45 631	136 296	
5	Härlanda	19 404	16,0	24,1	13,5	41,8	10,0	5,5	70,6	15 942	141,9	1 344	60 857	49 343	34 072	
6	Örgryte	32 771	13,3	21,5	13,4	44,8	7,5	6,1	69,9	15 942	153,5	2 372	76 504	61 921	39 986	
7	Centrum	50 107	7,8	18,9	15,7	49,5	8,1	6,4	63,2	15 942	144,6	1 841	61 098	63 470	90 825	
8	Linnéstaden	30 480	14,1	13,6	15,3	49,6	10,4	7,6	67,2	15 942	148,7	1 886	78 727	62 491	57 683	
9	Majorna	28 233	15,3	16,3	14,4	42,4	14,3	9,0	64,9	15 942	132,5	2 114	97 600	72 839	65 834	
10	Högsbo	16 270	12,8	29,9	14,9	27,1	13,7	6,8	66,2	15 942	130,5	1 495	61 480	32 567	42 687	
11	Älvsborg	18 360	23,0	14,9	8,1	48,9	1,6	3,4	80,6	15 942	195,9	0 887	95 629	50 804	4 528	
12	Frölunda	12 331	12,7	31,4	21,2	21,3	18,9	7,3	60,9	15 942	124,8	0 239	39 562	27 570	39 410	
13	Åskim	21 199	23,7	12,3	8,6	46,9	4,3	3,6	78,7	15 942	195,2	1 128	114 371	53 388	11 728	
14	Tynnered	27 141	23,0	14,3	17,0	29,1	11,6	5,7	72,0	15 942	153,3	1 910	149 209	89 694	45 418	
15	Styröd	4 401	23,2	17,4	3,5	31,7	3,0	5,0	79,2	15 942	140,4	0 390	27 885	13 704	1 515	
16	Torslanda	16 467	25,9	10,8	8,2	27,1	3,5	2,9	82,7	15 942	176,0	0 952	89 261	45 168	8 641	
17	Biskopsgården	24 446	19,3	17,3	44,7	14,0	26,8	11,1	51,6	15 942	118,6	1 498	111 252	52 616	119 947	
18	Lundby	31 082	13,4	19,4	25,1	22,8	18,0	8,9	62,5	15 942	133,8	1 496	89 257	54 429	114 156	
19	Tuva-Silve	10 948	22,0	13,8	20,9	23,2	10,3	5,2	75,5	15 942	154,8	0 669	55 194	28 999	13 452	
20	Backa	22 713	18,8	17,8	26,5	19,8	13,2	7,5	68,9	15 942	141,5	1 036	105 875	57 159	51 706	
21	Kårra-Rådbo	9 282	22,6	13,9	20,9	16,8	7,1	4,5	79,0	15 942	155,6	0 669	49 943	26 766	7 855	

1) % of pensioners over 65 years
 2) % of persons with foreign background = foreign citizens and former foreign citizens
 3) % of persons with higher education (20-64 year) 1996
 4) % of persons with social allowance
 5) % of job seekers
 6) % of gainful employment (20-64 year) 1995
 7) average wage for full-time employment 1997
 8) average income (over 16 year) 1995
 9) number of employed in civic administration December 1997
 10) net cost of compulsory school 1997
 11) net cost of child care 1997
 12) net cost of social allowance 1997

Source: City of Göteborg; Yearbook 1997(1998)

culture and leisure activities, and so forth. Under each City District Committee, many administrative offices also have the task of providing services in a number of specialized fields(Fig. 3-3).

The City District Committees have the responsibility of carrying out their tasks by a continuing development and consolidation of activities in a local perspective, and with a holistic approach to public services for the individual. The purpose of establishing City District Committees is not only to be able to relate resolutions to the local needs of inhabitants, thereby increasing their involvement in the political process, but also to save money by means of the coordination of different activities. Coordination of different activities, above all in schools and child care, is important. This can, for example, mean using facilities more efficiently or coordinating the activities themselves.

With a view to strengthening local civic participation, development and experimentation have been continued by establishing open-house activities, debate evenings, information in free-sheet publications, local school bodies, local pensioners' boards, local public health boards, etc. These are all examples of activities which are being tried as a means of involving residents in questions relating to municipal services in their locality.

Large Differences among Districts

An interview with one of the planning-leaders of Göteborg City was carried out in English.

She said, "The target for City District Committees is to promote democracy and influence a holistic approach and collaboration, efficiency and top-class services, decentralization and good solutions. Göteborg was the first city to introduce the City District Committees in Sweden. This was partly due to the large difficulties and area problems experienced in such a large city as Göteborg."

Table 3-2 shows the general facts on 21 districts of Göteborg from "City of Göteborg Yearbook 1997". As a matter of course, there are large differences among 21 districts with the exception of an average wage for full-time employment.

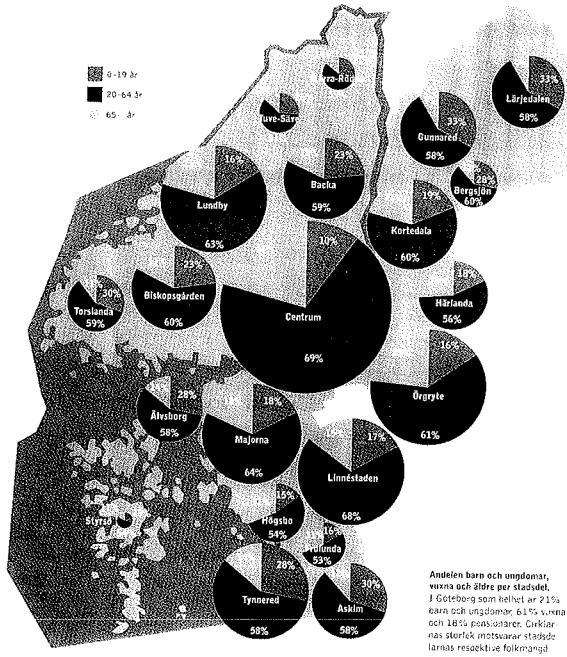
She indicated other figures(Fig.3-4 and Fig.3-5) and commented, "As for population, Centrum District has the highest, whilst Styrso District has the lowest. In Göteborg as a whole, 21% of the population are children and young people, 61% are adults and 18% are pensioners. But the percentage of children and young people (10-33%), adults (53-69%) and elderly people (9-31%) varies among districts. While some districts have sizeable problems of care services for the aged, other districts shows problems in child care and school education. In addition, there are large graphical differences of the percentage of people with higher education, of adults with jobs, of foreign citizens, of average income and so on. It is more reasonable and efficient that each district deals with its problems by itself than that the big City of Göteborg provides uniformed and inflexible services."

"As there are large differences among districts, a few of the richer districts would like to be independent municipalities. But it is important to collaborate between richer districts and not so rich districts. This is a difficult problem," she mentioned.

The Case of Örgryte District

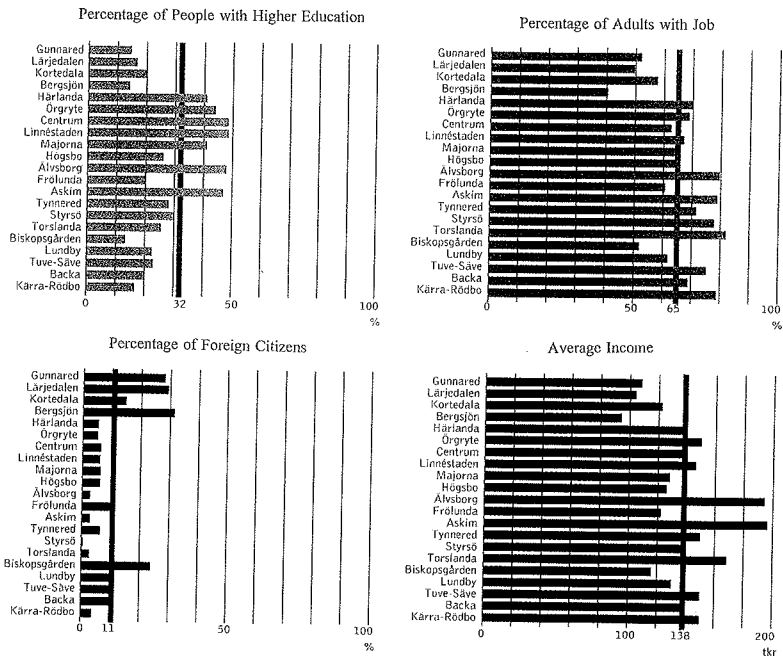
Interviews were held with one of politicians of Örgryte City District Committee and a chief of the Child Care and School Office of Örgryte District.

Figure 3-4 Residents of 21 Districts by Age



Source: Stadsdelsnämnderna i Göteborg (1997)

Figure 3-5 Several Facts on 21 Districts



Source: Stadsdelsnämnderna i Göteborg (1997)

The politician said, "Our City District Committee has 11 regular members and 6 deputies. We are elected by the City Council. We have our meeting twice a month and decide how to use our money for child care, compulsory education, elderly care services and so on. But the City has the responsibility for upper secondary education, not the City District Committee."

She showed some figures(Fig.3-6) and explained, "In Örgryte the percentage of care services for senior persons is top in our district, and is higher than the average of the City. Second in our district is that of child care and compulsory education, despite it being lower than the average of the City. Our residents have a strong interest in education. One school has its school governing body and others have each advisory body with representatives of parents. And there are many free (independent) schools. We have had pre-school classes[*barnskola*] since 1993/94. As a matter of course we also run the management on a goal and result [*mål-resultat*] basis."

The chief said, "After the introduction of City District Committees we became more independent of the City. The City gives us a box of money and we decide how to use it in accordance with residents' needs. There are large variations in our district, as there are in the City of Göteborg as a whole. In the north and south of our district there are many apartment houses, while in the middle there are many private owned by the richer people(Fig.3-7). We are just like a smaller version of the City and experience the same problems."

He continued, "There are 6 municipal schools(Fig.3-8). In addition we have 4 old free schools, a Montessori school, a Waldorf school, a catholic school and another. As the number of children is increasing, new free schools are going to be opened. Parents have a right to choose their child's school. And we publish a free pamphlet listing all the available school-options. But the residents have the priority for their residential school. We allow parents to choose or change schools at the beginning of 1st, 4th or 7th grade. The percentage of parental choice is around 25% in our district and this may be considered a high level."

He added, "We have an unique activity. In the 1980s, the school advisory body / school council [*Skolaråd*] was started in our district. It is comprised of one principal, 2-3 teachers, 4-5 parents, 3-4 pupils and one politician. Under the new Law, each school must have communication with its customers. Since January 1998 '*Bagaregårdsskolan*' has had its school governing body, i.e. a local school council with a parents' majority[*Lokal Skolstyrelse med Föräldramajoritet*], with one principal, two teachers and four parents. The school decides how to spend its money under the guidance of the parents."

"However, we have a big problem. In the 1990s the budget has been decreased around 1,5% every year, while the needs and demands are increasing. We do our best to save our money, but it is a difficult problem to tackle," he finished.

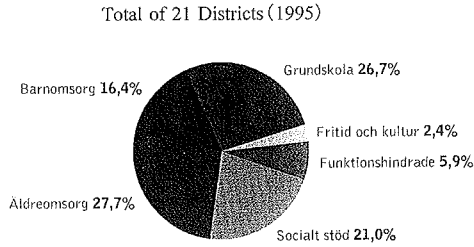
3-3) Case Study 2; Mölndal, as one of the suburbs of Göteborg

General Facts on Mölndal

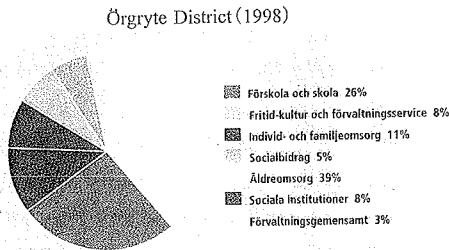
Mölndal Municipality is located on the south of Göteborg. The name of Mölndal is derived from "In the valley of the millers", waterfalls and fertile land initiated construction of the first mills over 1 000 years ago. Water power paved the way for the Industrial Revolution. Over the years, manufacturers of hygiene products, pharmaceuticals, electronics and other high-tech products and services have established themselves in this municipality.

The population of Mölndal is over 50 thousand, 54 743 in 1997. And its population density is the fourth

Figure 3-6 Budget of Districts

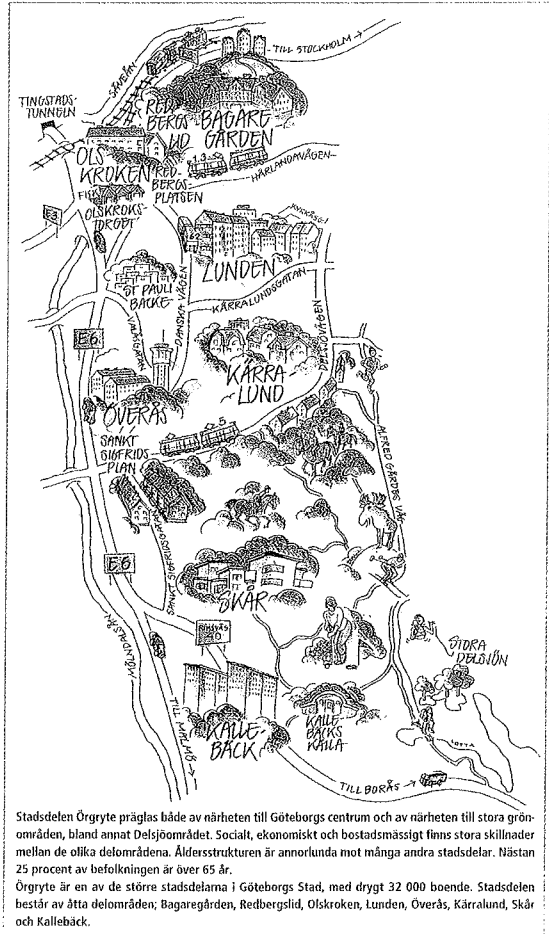


Source: Stadsdelsnämnderna i Göteborg (1997)



Source: Stadsdelsnämnden Örgryte Årsredovisning 1998

Figure 3-7 Map of Örgryte District



Source: Stadsdelsnämnden Örgryte Årsredovisning 1998

Figure 3-8 Schools in Örgryte Stadsdelsförvaltning(Göteborg) (1998)

age grade	division of class	no. of pupils	Compulsory Education												Upper Secondary Education		
			Grundskola												Gymnasieskola		
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3					
	pre-school	Low class(no. of classes)			Middle class(no. of classes)			High class(no. of classes)			Särskola	10	1	2			
Örgryte Stadsdelsförvaltning	2018																
Bagaregårdsskolan	182			L(8)													
Gamla Lundensskolan	453			L(12)			M(6)										
				L(2)			M(1)										
Kärralundsskolan	115				LM(2)												
Nya Lundensskolan	517											H(18)					
Skårsskolan	435				L(11)			M(7)									
Änåsskolan	318				L(5)			M(7)									

Source: Årsbok för skolan 98-99(1998)

highest in the Region, 373/km² in 1997. Mölndal Municipality includes the three old communities of Mölndal, Källered and Lindome(Fig. 3-9).

Mölndal Municipality not only has 23 compulsory schools but also 3 upper secondary schools, 5 special schools for the intellectually handicapped and 3 support schools in 1998(Fig.3-10; the school in hospital [*Sjukhuskolan*] is not managed by Mölndal).

Educational Changes in the 1990s

An interview was conducted with one of administrators, a chief of school section of the Child Care and Education Office.

He said, "The greatest change instituted by the Local Government Act of 1991 was the movement of a substantial number of responsibilities from the State to municipalities. Municipalities have also had the responsibility for teacher employment. That is to say, local freedom has been widened."

Indicating the figure of organization of Mölndal Municipality in 1999(Fig.3-11), he explained, "Since 1998 we have had an integrated office between child care and compulsory education, the Child Care and Education Office [*Barnomsorgs-och utbildningsnämnd*]. Almost all schools have pre-school classes now. The Upper Secondary Education Office [*Gymnasienämnd*] has the responsibility for upper secondary education and adult education."

Then he showed two pamphlets and explained, "In connection with 'management by goals and results', we published a pamphlet named 'Child Care and School Plan[*Barnomsorgs-och skolplan*]' for parents. We also compiled a list and information on all compulsory schools in Mölndal, titled 'Choice of School 1999'. The latter is the fourth edition, the first of which was published in 1995. In the same year a school advisory body with representatives of parents started at several schools. Now each school has one, but we have no school governing body."

He continued, "In Mölndal the percentage of parental choice is around 5%. This could be considered low. Most parents are satisfied with their residential schools, since they have the opportunity to share their hopes and opinions through each school advisory body."

He mentioned finally, "Well, we have a difficult problem now. While the number of children has increased, our resources are limited. The economy is not too bad in Mölndal. Though we predict that in 2000 the pupil/teacher ratio will be bad(Table 3-3) due to the budget cut-off. We unified two school districts into one[*Område Nordvästra Mölndal*, Fig. 3-10] to save money in 1998. In addition, the demands of special care for children with special needs and pre-school services have also increased. While we have a plan to build up three new schools, independent schools(only two in 1999) will also be increased in Mölndal to supply the lack of municipal schools' capacity."

Special Needs Education

An interview was held with one of the administrators of the special school sector, along with a research visit to two special schools, one support school and one regular school with special needs education.

The system of Mölndal Municipality has its own specific characteristics. Its special needs education is made up of four parts, i.e. special schools for the intellectually handicapped, support schools for children with social or emotional difficulties, preparatory classes for immigrant pupils and additional special needs

Figure 3-9 Map of Mölndal Municipality



Table 3-3 Pupil/Teacher Ratio in Mölndal

year	a)no. of pupils	b)no. of teachers	a÷b
1996	5 780	440	13,1
1997	5 989	455	13,2
1998	6 210	465	13,4
1999	6 390	484	13,2
2000	6 490	450	14,4

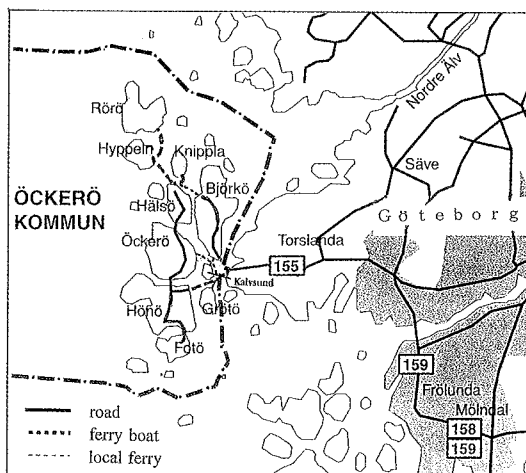
Source: Mölndals grundskola(1999)

Table 3-4 Facts on Öckerö Municipality

island	population	land area (km ²)
Hönö	4 640	6
Öckerö	3 150	4
Björkö	1 310	6
Hälsö	640	2
Fotö	510	1
Källö-Knippla	450	1
Rörö	290	2
Hyppeln	210	1
Kalvsund	210	0,5
Grötö	90	1

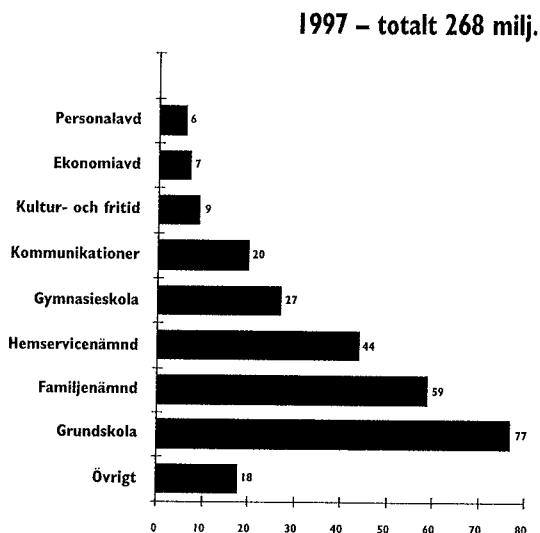
Source: Ö-sommar (1998)

Figure 3-13 Map of Öckerö Municipality



Source: Ö-sommar (1998)

Figure 3-15 Budget of Öckerö (1997)



Source: Öckerö Kommunkalendar (1997)

Figure 3-10 Schools in Mölndal (1998)

age	grade	division of class	no. of pupils	Compulsory Education											Upper Secondary Education				
				Grundskola											Gymnasieskola				
				6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4						
				pre-school	Low class(no. of classes)	Middle class(no. of classes)	High class(no. of classes)	Särskola(1)											
Område Nordvästra Mölndal																			
			250		L(6)		M(5)												
			249							H(9)									
			213	förb-kl	L(5)		M(5)												
			210		L(5)		M(3)												
			220					förb-kl	6-9(8)	Grundskola 7-9(9)									
			15										Verksamhetsutbildning(1)						
			300		L(6)		M(5)												
Område Östra Mölndal																			
			426				M(4)			H(12)									
			306		L(8)		M(8)												
			10			Specialklass(4)													
			81		L(4)														
			371		L(7)		M(8)												
					Grundskola L(1)														
			35			tal- och språkklass: 3k4-6(1)				3k7-9(1)									
						Träningskola: 3k1-6(1)				3k7-9(1)									
Centrala Rektorsområdet																			
			269		L(6)		M(4)												
			178	förb-kl	L(8)														
			74		L(3)														
			388			förb-kl	M(8)			H(9)									
Område Källered																			
			262		L(3)		M(7)												
			368																
			15																
			263		L(6)					Grundskola(2)									
			127		L(6)		M(6)												
Område Lindome																			
			672				M(7)			H(18)									
			510	6-8sg(4)	L(12)		M(9)												
			322		L(8)		M(6)												
			191		L(9)														
			53		L(3)														
Rektorsområde för Stödresurser																			
			8							H(?)									
			10																
			8																
			(?)																
			1400																
			(?)																
			100																
			350																

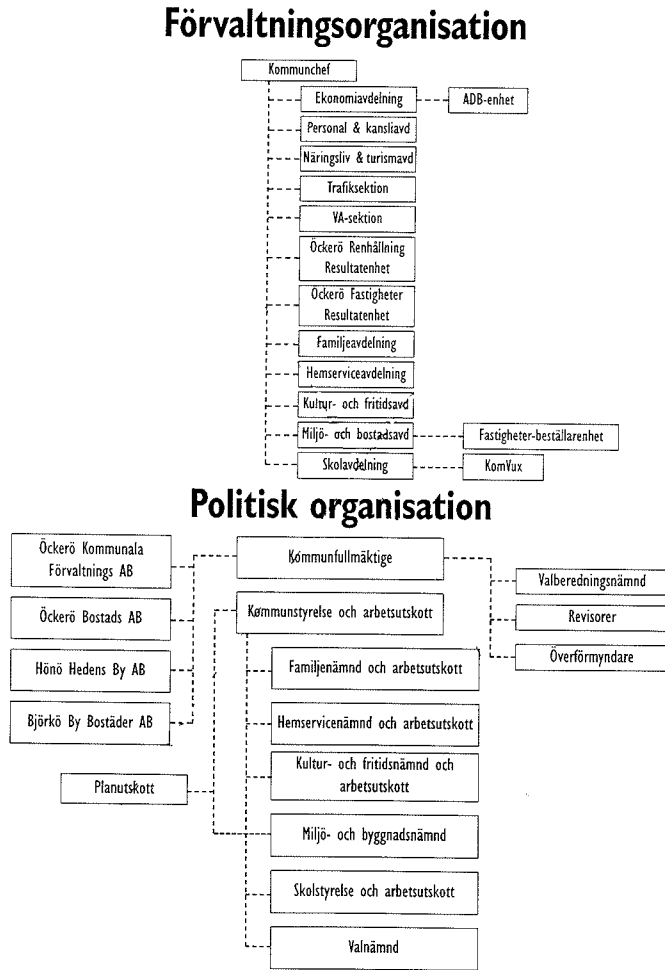
Source: Årsbok för skolan 98-99(1998)

Figure 3-12 Special Education in Mölndal (1998)

age	grade	division of class	no. of pupils	Compulsory Education											Upper Secondary Education				
				Grundskola											Gymnasieskola				
				6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4						
				pre-school	Low class(no. of classes)	Middle class(no. of classes)	High class(no. of classes)	Särskola(1)											
Område Nordvästra Mölndal																			
			15																
			10			Specialklass(4)													
					Grundskola L(1)		M(1)												
			35			tal- och språkklass: 3k4-6(1)				3k7-9(1)									
						Träningskola: 3k1-6(1)				3k7-9(1)									
Område Källered																			
			15																
			(?)																
			(?)																
			8																
			10			M(3)				H(?)									
			8			M(3)													
			8 schools																

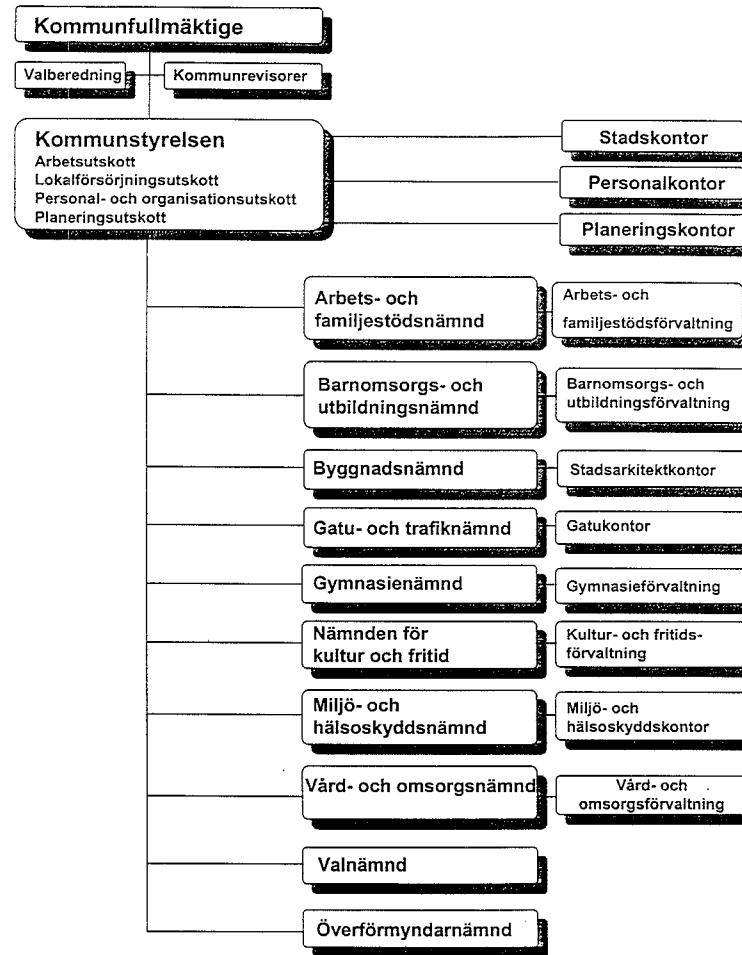
Source: Årsbok för skolan 98-99(1998)

Figure 3-14 Organization of Öckerö Municipality



Source: Öckerö Kommunkalender (1997)

Figure 3-11 Organization of Möndal Municipality (Offered by Möndal Municipality)



education in regular schools(Fig.3-12).

At present there are five special schools, four of which are integrated with compulsory schools and one connected with an upper secondary school. "*Lackarebäcksskolan*" has special classes for autistic children, and "*Rävekärrsskolan*" has special classes for children with speech and language difficulties. After compulsory schooling, three kinds of courses for upper secondary education [*yrkesutbildning, yrkesträning, verksamhetsträning*] are provided in "*Fässbergsgymnasiet*" and "*Lindhagaskolan*". The latter is a school for the comparatively severe/multi-handicapped.

Support schools for children with social or emotional difficulties are very small. They have tried to create a home-like atmosphere. "*Hagäkersskolan*" has 10 pupils with three teachers, one recreation teacher, one child welfare person and 0,5 psychologist. While at present the pupils could not adjust themselves to a larger regular class, in a few years they will be able to return to their regular classes.

Preparatory classes for immigrants have around 10 pupils with one teacher. There are currently eight schools with this type of class.

Another style of special needs education provides individual support and care for children with special educational needs by special teachers, psychologists and other support staffs.

Children whose special needs are not full-filled in Mölndal shall have adequate services through the network-system among neighbour municipalities, advisory offices of SIH, and so forth.

3-4) Case Study 3; Öckerö, as a municipality of small islands

General Facts on Öckerö

Öckerö Municipality is not only one of the suburbs of Göteborg but also a small islands municipality like some Japanese municipalities. It has 10 inhabited small islands on the west of Göteborg(Fig. 3-13).Its land area is 25,5 km² and its population is 11 659(Table 3-4). In its islands there are many opportunities for sunbathing and people can enjoy boat-sailing, fishing and so on. It takes half an hour drive from central Göteborg to Lilla Varholmen, at the west end of Göteborg, where a big ferry (free of charge) takes people to Hönö or Björkö in about ten minutes. Fotö, Hönö, Öckerö and Hälsö are connected by bridges and there are also ferries (local ferries, not free) to other islands from early morning to late at night. Drinking water was pipe-lined from Göteborg and many people commute to work in Göteborg everyday, e.g. Volvo and so forth.

Most of the public sector is located on Öckerö island, the third largest in Öckerö Municipality. The community office, insurance bureau, employment bureau, doctor, dentists and pharmacy are found here.

In 1997 Öckerö Municipality had both a Family Office[*Familjeavdelning*], including child care, and a School Office[*Skolavdelning*] for compulsory school (Fig.3-14). The majority of its budget(Fig.3-15) was allocated for compulsory schools(77 million SEK, 29%), second was for family services including child care(59 million SEK, 22%), followed by upper secondary schools(27 million SEK, 10%).

In the spring term of 1998, there were 17 compulsory schools(including only one high-class school) and two "*särskola*"(Fig.3-16). But there was no upper secondary school on the islands.

Educational Changes in the 1990s

An interview was held with a chief of the School Office. He said, "There were several changes in our municipality, which I have learned of in detail since arriving at my post in 1995". As special state grants were

Figure 3-16 Schools in Öckerö (1998)

age grade division of class	no. of pupils	island	Compulsory Education Grundskola												Upper Secondary Education Gymnasieskola				
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	1	2	3	
			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	1	1	2	
Område Nord	249																		
Hyppelns skola	14	Hyppeln					LM(1)												
Knippels skola	33	Knippeln			LM(1)					M(1)									
Rörö skola	30	Rörö					LM(1)												
Kalvsunds skola	11	Kalvsund			L(1)														
Västergårdsskolan	58	Björkö			L(3)														
Skarvskolan	102	Björkö								M(5)									
Område Mitt	822																		
Hällö skola	64	Hällö			L(1)					M(2)									
Ankaret	108	Öckerö								LM(2)									
Kompassen	91	Öckerö								LM(2)									
Mimmessten	87	Öckerö								LM(2)									
Brattebysskolan	492	Öckerö																	
*Brattebycken	2	Öckerö								M(3)									
Område Syd	464																		
Fotö skola	60	Fotö	Förskola		L(1)					M(1)									
Gårds skola	41	Hönö	Förskola		L(2)														
Kaprifolen	54	Hönö	Förskola		L(2)														
Sandlyckan	59	Hönö	Förskola		L(2)														
Träskolan	49	Hönö	Förskola		L(2)														
Stenskolan	205	Hönö																	
*Stenskolan(Bergagårdsskolan)	6	Hönö																	

Source: Årsbok för skolan 98-99(1998)

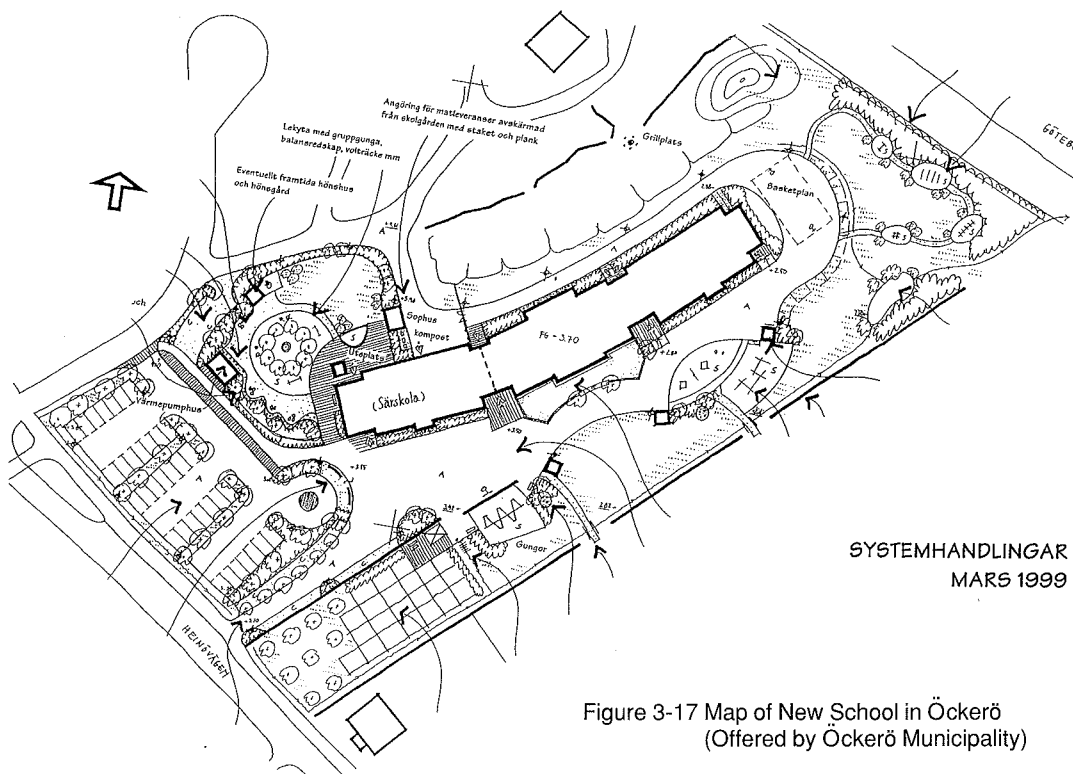


Figure 3-17 Map of New School in Öckerö (Offered by Öckerö Municipality)

superseded by general grants for all municipal activities, Öckerö Municipality or residents can decide how to use its/their money by itself/themselves. A new school including "särskola", costing 33million SEK, is going to open in the summer of 1999. In addition, a plan to rebuild a high-class school is going ahead.

He continued, "We haven't considered unification between Öckerö and Göteborg. Big Göteborg has several difficult problems. Small is better, we think. Our politicians can do their decision-making on Öckerö. We can make real decisions on how to use our money with more flexibility."

Öckerö has another unique plan to build a new sail training vessel, while there are two school ships. The upper secondary school students will spend one-third of each school year aboard the T/S GUNILLA, a new training ship, and complete the tour from Sweden through the western parts of Europe, South America, the US east coast and then back to Sweden again. She will set sail in August 1999.

There was a big change on the organization of the municipality. As of 1998 a new board, Children and Education Office [*Barn-och utbildningsnämnd*], has been set up in place of both the Family Office and the School Office. There were four family boards with each headmaster for child care from the ages 1-5 and three school boards with each headmaster for services from the ages 6-16. Now there are nine integrated boards for services from the ages 1-16, which shall be more familiar with each small community.

"One unique trial of parental participation started in 1997," he mentioned. While in other schools there are advisory committee with representatives of parents, "Ankaret" School's governing body is made up of a majority of parents. The school governing body is able to decide school policy as well as talk together about education.

He explained, "Well, it is true that parental choice has become wide. But each school has its capacity, e.g. school size, number of class rooms, teachers and so on. Residents of each school area have the priority and then other residents will be permitted to chose. The percentage of parents to have chosen is less than 10%."

Special Needs Education

In Öckerö Municipality there were two "särskola" in the school year of 1998/99. Visiting research of two schools could be done in order to have an interview with a headmaster of these two special schools and their several teachers.

The headmaster said, "Our municipality took the responsibility for 'särskola' in 1991/92 from the county council, while other municipalities in the western part of Sweden only did so after 1996."

"Bergagårdsskolan", which is located inside "Stenskolan" in Hönö island, has three "grundssärskola" classes. The first class has 7 pupils with one teacher and two assistants, the second has 6 pupils with one teacher and one assistant, and the last has one wheel-chair bound pupil with one teacher. "Brattelykan", which is located in a small pre-school center with seven pre-school children and one pre-school teacher in Öckerö island, has one class of "träningsskola". There are only two pupils with one teacher.

These two "särskola" are going to move into the two-storeyed school building in the summer of 1999. The new locally integrated school will have a "särskola" section of the building, the west one-third of the first floor, as well as the rest of regular school one, as shown in the map of school (Fig. 3-17).

In addition, there is a small house in Öckerö for children with social or emotional difficulties to try to educate them through sailing/boating.

Figure 3-18 Organization of Sotenäs Municipality (Offered by Sotenäs Municipality)

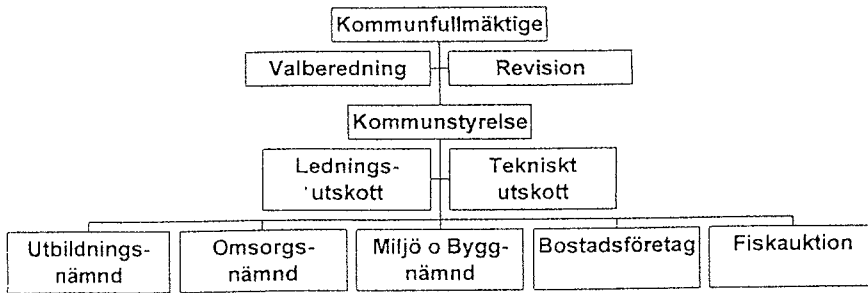


Figure 3-19 Schools in Sotenäs (1993)

age grade	division of class	no. of pupils	Compulsory Education Grundskola											Upper Secondary Education Gymnasieskola					
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18				
			pre-school	Low class(no. of classes)			Middle class(no. of classes)			High class(no. of classes)			Särskola	10	11	12			
Sotenäs No																			
Hunnebostrands skola					L(4)				M(3)										
Todderöds skola					L(2)				M(2)										
Tossene skola					L(2)				M(2)										
Sotenäs So																			
Kungshamns skola					L(3)				M(7)										
Smögens skola					L(3)				M(3)										
Tånges skola					L(3)														
Sotenässkolan																			H(16)

Source: Årsbok for skolan 93-94(1993)

Figure 3-20 Schools in Sotenäs (1998)

age grade	division of class	no. of pupils	Compulsory Education Grundskola											Upper Secondary Education Gymnasieskola					
			6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18				
			pre-school	Low class(no. of classes)			Middle class(no. of classes)			High class(no. of classes)			Särskola	10	11	12			
Hunnebostrands Ro																			
Hunnebostrands skola	199	F			L(?)				M(?)										
Bovallstrand/Tossene/Todderöd Ro																			
Bovallstrands skola	42																		
Tossene skola	30								M(?)										
Todderöds skola	61	F			L(?)				M(?)										
Kungshamns Ro																			
Kungshamns skola	251	F			L(?)				M(?)										
Tånges skola	82	F			L(?)														
Smögens Ro																			
Smögens skola	130	F			L(?)				M(?)										
Sotenässkolans Ro																			
Sotenässkolan	319																		H(?)
Heldagskolan	?								LMH										
Särskolan	11				L(?)				M(?)										
Gymnasieskola Lyskil-Sotenäs																			

Source: Årsbok for skolan 98-99(1998)

Some pupils with special needs on other small islands are integrated into regular classes.

But these services are only for compulsory school children with special needs. Therefore before or after compulsory schooling they will go on to any big hospitals, pre-school special centers or upper secondary schools for the intellectually handicapped in Göteborg. In the morning and evening several buses run directly from Hålsö island to the center of Göteborg for upper secondary students and so on. Öckerö Municipality has to pay a fee to Göteborg for upper secondary students, including those with disabilities.

3-5) Case Study 4; Sotenäs, as the municipality with the highest rate of senior citizen in the Region

General Facts on Sotenäs

Sotenäs Municipality is located to the north of Göteborg (about 90km distance). Its population was less than 10 thousand, 9 655 in 1997. The percentage of senior citizens is the highest in the Region, 25,0% in 1997. But during the summer its population more than triples. Its main cities are usually thought of in conjunction with sun, beaches and recreation. This small coastal municipality also has some industry.

Educational Changes in the 1990s

A secretary of the Education Office replied to a questionnaire by mail.

The organization of Sotenäs Municipality is simple (Fig.3-18). She said, "In 1992 committees and offices were reorganized in our municipality. The Education Office was established to be responsible for the following areas: child care, education, leisure and culture. The new municipal administration involves rationalization and more far-reaching delegation. The governing principle is to maintain a strong political influence over the outcome of the municipal activities. Sotenäs Municipality decides its own goal document, including the school plan, in accordance with the framework of 'Lpo-94'. The goal document is periodically revised. The committee also decides upon a plan to follow-up and evaluate the set-up goals."

She explained, "The integration between pre-school and compulsory school has been carried out with the exception of one school unit, where the integration is going to take place in the turn of the school year 1999/2000 with the opening of a new school."

Sotenäs Municipality has changed its compulsory school districts from two of 1993 (Fig.3-19) to five of 1998 (Fig.3-20). In addition, the number of schools is increasing. The municipality should provide indispensable education services as well as care services for the elderly.

"Parental choice is respected and taken into consideration. Parents are also given the opportunities to participate in preparations and discussions about how to improve the school activities," she continued.

Upper Secondary Education and Special Needs Education

A few years ago Sotenäs Municipality and its neighbour municipality, Lysekil, began sharing the same Upper Secondary School Office. She mentioned, "Students of Sotenäs shall at first enroll at the common secondary school [*Gymnasieskola Lysekil/Sotenäs*]. If some students want an upper secondary school program that our school does not have, they have the possibility of enrolling at Uddevalla or elsewhere."

"We have our own 'särskola'. It is for young children (a low-class and a middle-class) as well as children who can be integrated in the compulsory schools. So the municipality buys 'special school seats' from the municipalities in the vicinity such as Lysekil, Munkedal and Uddevalla," she finished.

Figure 3-21 Organization of Dals-Ed Municipality (Offered by Dals-Ed Municipality)

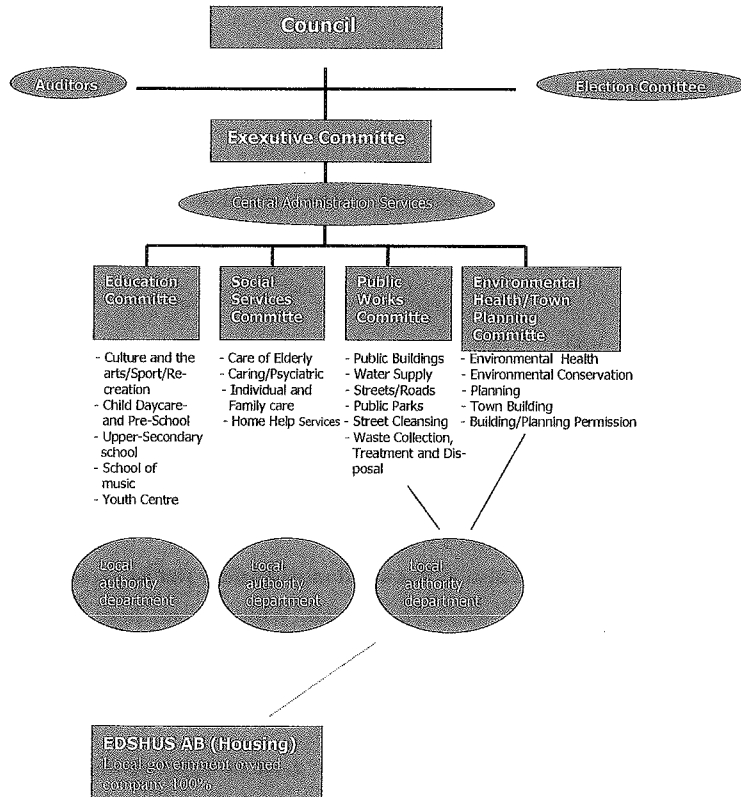


Figure 3-22 Schools in Dals-Ed (1993)

	age grade	Compulsory Education Grundskola										Upper Secondary Education Gymnasieskola				
		6 0	7 1	8 2	9 3	10 4	11 5	12 6	13 7	14 8	15 9	16 1	17 2	18 3		
division of class		pre-school	Low class(no. of classes)			Middle class(no. of classes)			High class(no. of classes)			Särskola1	10	11	12	
Ro 1	no. of pupils															
Hagaskolan																
Ro 2																
Hagaskolan																
Nössemarks skola																
Snörrumskolan																
Ökna skola																
Töftedals skola																

Source: Årsbok for skolan 93-94(1993)

Figure 3-23 Schools in Dals-Ed (1998)

	age grade	Compulsory Education Grundskola										Upper Secondary Education Gymnasieskola				
		6 0	7 1	8 2	9 3	10 4	11 5	12 6	13 7	14 8	15 9	16 1	17 2	18 3		
division of class		pre-school	Low class(no. of classes)			Middle class(no. of classes)			High class(no. of classes)			Särskola1	10	11	12	
Hagaskolan	no. of pupils															
Hagaskolan	470															
Snörrumskolan	228	F														
Ökna skola																
utsikten,Dals-Eds Gymnasium	69															

Source: Årsbok for skolan 98-99(1998)

3-6) Case Study 5; Dals-Ed, as the smallest rural municipality in the Region

General Facts on Dals-Ed

Dals-Ed Municipality is located in the north of Västra Götaland, and borders Norway. It has both the least population in the Region, 5 133 in 1997, and the least population density, 7/km² in 1997. Senior citizens comprise more than 20% of its total population.

The organization of Dals-Ed Municipality is very simple(Fig.3-21). Under the Executive Committee there are only four committees and three departments. The Education Committee manages culture and arts/sport/recreation, child care and pre-school, upper secondary school, the school of music, and youth centers.

Educational Changes in the 1990s

A head of the local authority department replied to a questionnaire by mail.

He said, "Responsibility and economy has been decentralized into each division. Each division has a bigger responsibility for its result. And the local government school committee[*Fokusnämnden*] has got a new plan of school activities written in a way that makes it easy to evaluate the goals. The municipality of Dals-Ed is going to have a school, which is managed by objectives."

Fundamental changes are recognized also in this small municipality. But he explained, "We are not totally integrated between education and child welfare/pre-school. While parents have bigger freedom of choice now, they don't take advantage of it."

Upper Secondary Education and Special Needs Education

He continued, "The municipality of Dals-Ed has got a small upper-secondary school with national admission, for about 100 pupils. Most of our young people have their upper-secondary education in our neighbour municipality Åmål. It is about 50km distance and a 2 hours round-trip. A few students are living temporarily in Åmål."

"Pupils with special needs are integrated in the ordinary nine-year compulsory school or go to a school for educationally sub-normal children in our neighbour municipality Bengtsfors(about 25km distance)," he replied.

A few years ago Dals-Ed Municipality unified five schools into two units(Fig.3-22 and Fig.3-23). He said, "The main reason was economical. We could not afford to run five schools."

Finally he emphasized, "The problem we experience is that 'rich municipalities' can give their children a better schooling than 'less rich municipalities'. All children in Sweden ought to have the same education quality no matter where they grow up."

4. DISCUSSION

4-1) Educational Reforms and Special Needs Education

Educational Reforms

Since educational reforms from centralization to decentralization will be started in Japan from now on, we Japanese sometimes understand Swedish educational reforms only from the viewpoint of decentralization, e.g. what areas/responsibilities were decentralized, how much power was given to municipalities, and so forth. But decentralization in Sweden does not aim to build up small closed/ competitive authorities.

In fact, it is difficult to assert that the tendency to small closed/competitive municipalities will never occur. A few richer districts in Göteborg hope to be independent, one of rural municipalities (Dals-Ed) complained inequality among municipalities, for example. On the other hand, one of the administrators in Göteborg emphasized that it is most important to collaborate between richer districts and not so rich districts. An administrator of Öckerö said that regionally useful and free transportation (boats and buses) means that people do not feel their municipality to be inconvenient islands. We should not dismiss Swedish efforts for intermunicipal/interregional cooperation and collaboration.

First of all, reform into decentralization by the 1991 Local Government Act in Sweden must be understood totally. Municipalities have the basic responsibility for the well-being of the people, e.g. for schools, housing, child care, care of the elderly, etc. The major responsibility of county councils is within health and medical care, intermunicipal transportation and regional development. The State is responsible, among other things, for higher education, social insurance and more general welfare planning and redistribution policies, for example in labor market and housing policies. The Swedish decentralized system is organized by efficient division and a balanced combination of/with municipalities, county councils and the state. Educational reform is a part of these Swedish general reforms.

In addition, the Swedish decentralized system is expected to promote residential participation and democracy. As one of the administrators in Göteborg mentioned, "The target for City District Committees is to promote democracy and influence a holistic approach and collaboration, efficiency and top-class services, and decentralization and good solutions." Her comment is very suggestive for us to understand the Swedish trial. Swedish educational reforms should also be examined in connection with participation and democracy. From this viewpoint, the activity of school advisory bodies and school governing bodies is noteworthy for us, as well as school choice. The question is whether or not Swedish decentralized participation and democracy, which usually means decision-making by the majority, will be able to take care of the issues of minorities, including special needs education.

The fundamental change of the educational administration by the 1991 Local Government Act was for municipalities to be able to decide for themselves how to use their money. This change was generally well received by the municipalities. It is not only democratic but also reasonable and efficient that essential services for residents' daily life, including child care and education, are dealt with by the closest local authority. An administrator of Örgryte District in Göteborg said, "We face several problems to solve, in fact, but we don't consider reverting to the pre-1990s system."

Secondly, Swedish educational reforms can also be understood from the perspective of organizational restructure. Thanks to the 1991 Local Government Act, municipalities now enjoy more freedom to decide their own organizational models and programs. It has been said that there are three main models for organizing the participation of elected representatives in municipal administration: i.e. the sectorial model, the territorial model and the functional model(Häggroth, et al., 1996).

The sectorial model is the traditional one and representatives are grouped into committees, each

responsible for a particular field of operations, e.g. education committee(compulsory and upper secondary schools, adult education, music schools), social services committee(recreation centers, child care, care of the elderly and disabled, home help services, immigrant and refugee matters, etc.) and so forth.

The territorial model was introduced by some municipalities during the 1980s. In this case, operations were grouped into committees and administrations, each responsible for a limited geographic portion of the municipality. The City District Committees of Göteborg is one such example.

In recent years it has also become increasingly common to introduce the functional model. This means that the purchaser function is handled by a special purchasing committee within the politicians' sphere of responsibility. Recognized as an example of this model is the integration of child care into compulsory education. In 1998 most municipalities introduced the new integrated organization of services for the purchaser, for the ages 0/1-16. In the reform to unify child care and compulsory education, we discover that good welfare provides a basis for development and learning, just as it entails an element of education.

The functional model as well as the territorial model is interesting to us, since the sectorial model is still common in Japan. It is impressive that in Sweden both indirect democratic system (representative system) and direct democratic system (citizen's participation) have been improved with flexibility for ideal goals.

Special Needs Education

The reform on special needs education in Sweden has to be understood as a inclusive part of democratic decentralization and efficient intermunicipal/interregional collaboration.

As mentioned above, since 1 January 1996 schools and adult education for children and people with intellectual disabilities have been under the municipal responsibility, not the county councils'. Every municipality has to fulfill certain educational conditions to provide adequate services for them. Öckerö Municipality has had its own "*särskola*" since the early 1990s and a new school including "*särskola*" will be opened in the summer of 1999. Mölndal Municipality has had its own "*yrkessärskola*" located in an ordinary upper secondary school since 1996, which was formerly run by a county council and situated in a rural forest. This change was well received by the persons concerned, to build a more inclusive school and society.

But with limited resources some municipality cannot satisfy their residents' special educational needs. Dals-Ed Municipality does not have its own "*särskola*" or "*yrkessärskola*", Sotenäs Municipality has its own "*särskola*" only for the grades 1-6, and Öckerö Municipality does not have its own "*yrkessärskola*". Therefore they have to buy the necessary number of 'special school seats' from their neighbour municipalities. In addition, health and medical care including that for children with disabilities is provided by county councils, not by municipalities.

We can find several levels of collaboration within the system to support all children with difficulties: i.e. inter-class level/school level(e.g. special educators, special assistants), inter-school level/ municipality level(e.g. support team with doctors, psychologists and social workers), intermunicipal level/county council or region level(e.g. advisory offices of SIH) and interregional level/nation-wide level (e.g. Tomtebodas Resource Center).

Traditionally, rehabilitation services have been provided mainly by special institutions or centers, in Sweden as well as in Japan. As a matter of course, Community-Based Rehabilitation(CBR) should be implemented through the appropriate health, education, vocational and social services(Jönsson, 1994). One of

the challenges faced in Sweden is that every municipality should be made suitable for a high-qualitative community through the provision of CBR.

It must be said, the other change of 'management by goals and results' by the new school curricula and syllabi was not examined in any depth in this paper. Someone fear that the circumstances and atmosphere of schools or classes in Sweden are going to be made more competitive by such national goals and evaluation. If the national goals to reach are set too high for children, many more pupils/students could fail and become new targets of special needs education. While school failure has been generally understood as an individual problem, it has to be understood as a complex phenomenon within society, institutions, schools and individuals(Persson, 1996). This is one of the tasks for further studies.

4-2) The Right of Children with Special Educational Needs to Equality and Justice

A comparative study of different countries is not an easy task to carry out. Difficulties occur in translation which can lead to misunderstandings. It is also important to recognise cultural, historical and traditional differences. We must be very careful then, when drawing conclusions from comparisons(Emanuelsson, 1996).

This study will, however, dare to discuss the right of children with special educational needs to equality and justice in Sweden in order to get any suggestions for us Japanese.

Firstly, the principle of integration has obtained larger approval in Sweden than in Japan. This principle has to be understood as a part of 'comprehensive school for all' in Sweden. In 1940, a governmental report suggested an eight-year comprehensive schooling for all. It was followed by the 1946 School Commission which in 1948 published a report on 'the unified school'. It, in turn, suggested a nine-year common and compulsory education for all. In 1962, the Swedish Parliament passed the nine-year comprehensive '*Grundskolereform*' with ten-year-moratorium. In 1972 the reform was implemented in all parts of the country.

At present, public sector schooling comes under the Education Act, in the first chapter of which the overriding national objectives of comprehensive schooling are defined.

【Equal access to public sector education】 : All children and young persons, regardless of sex, residential locality and social and economic circumstances, shall have equal access to education in the public sector school system.

【Equivalent education】 : Equivalent education shall be provided in every type of school, everywhere in the country.

In special education, there was a major development of a range of special provisions(special schools, special classes and coordinated special education) in the 1960s and 1970s. The shift towards integration was supported in the curriculum for the comprehensive school of 1969, where the section on special education began: "A guideline for the education of pupils with school difficulties is that these pupils as far as possible should stay in the regular classroom."(Rosenqvist, 1993)

The reform of 'comprehensive school for all' has been continued. The three-year comprehensive upper secondary school system was introduced in 1992 and completed in 1995. All Swedish public schools have the same curricula of *Lpo-94/Lpf-94*. As from 1 July 1997, the municipalities are required to provide school placement for all six-year-olds. The *Lpfö-98* and the unification between child care and compulsory education

in 1998 meant that comprehensive pre-schools are going to be constructed. Transfer of the responsibility of schools and adult education for the intellectually disabled from county councils to municipalities, in order to promote the principle of integration, could be recognized as a part of the reform of 'comprehensive school for all'. The problem of a few separated special schools run by the State is also under discussion.

Secondly, in Sweden the concept of 'equality' may not mean 'uniformity' or 'similarity'. While Japanese children with disabilities have the right to nine-year compulsory education, the same as those without disabilities, some Swedish children with disabilities have the right to ten-year compulsory education/nine-year compulsory and one-year optional education. It is one year longer than others. In addition, upper secondary education for some people with disabilities is four-years-long, which is also one year longer than for regular upper secondary education. Whereas in regular Swedish classrooms a number (about 20-30%) of pupils can receive adequate supports (special needs education), in Japan most children with difficulties in regular classes receive no special support and are treated the same as their peers.

On the assumption that everyone is different, for the person who hopes for additional care or support it will be provided as an equal security of human rights. The right to longer-length education is not a privilege for children and people with disabilities. In Sweden everyone has the right to adult (life-long) education as far as long as it is necessary. The Swedish concepts of 'equality' or 'justice' may be closely connected with the idea of social solidarity or redistribution of social wealth. This is another of the tasks for further studies.

Finally, Sweden should be recognized as a society fighting for equality and justice. While Swedish reforms are felt by Japan to be a little bit rapid, surely we can recognize that Swedish people are simply doing their best to try to look ahead to their future. Also on integration and inclusive education, the following sentences are suggestive for us all.

"The real meanings of integration and inclusion are best understood as goals or aims based on the ideology of democracy, if you include in democracy issues such as everyone being of equal value, everyone having the right to partake in common activities in a society, and so forth." (Emanuelsson, 1998)

"Inclusive education, as well as other kinds of integration goals, must instead be understood in terms of continuing processes, in a perspective that there will always be new territories to conquer." (Emanuelsson, chapter 9; Haug, et al., 1998)

Full equality or inclusive education is not yet established even in Sweden. In spite of this, we should try to extract as many useful suggestions as possible from the challenges faced in Sweden, for Japanese trials.

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