

Social innovations to combat inequality

9 January 2018

Wien

Mikael Stigendal

Malmö University, Sweden



Cities
Societal perspective
Cohesion/integration
Interactive research

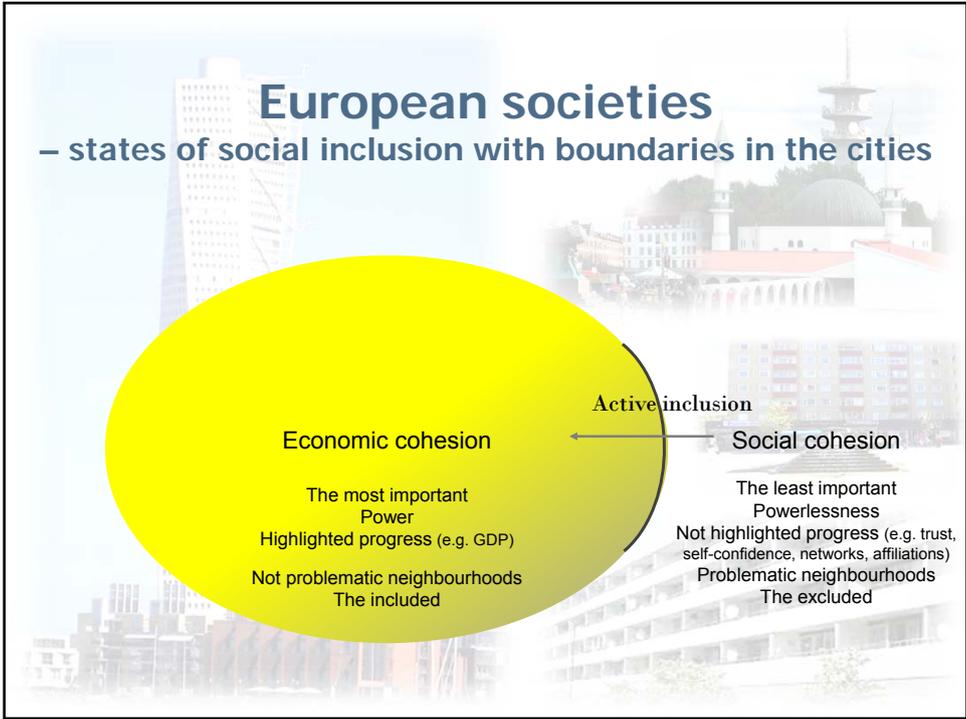
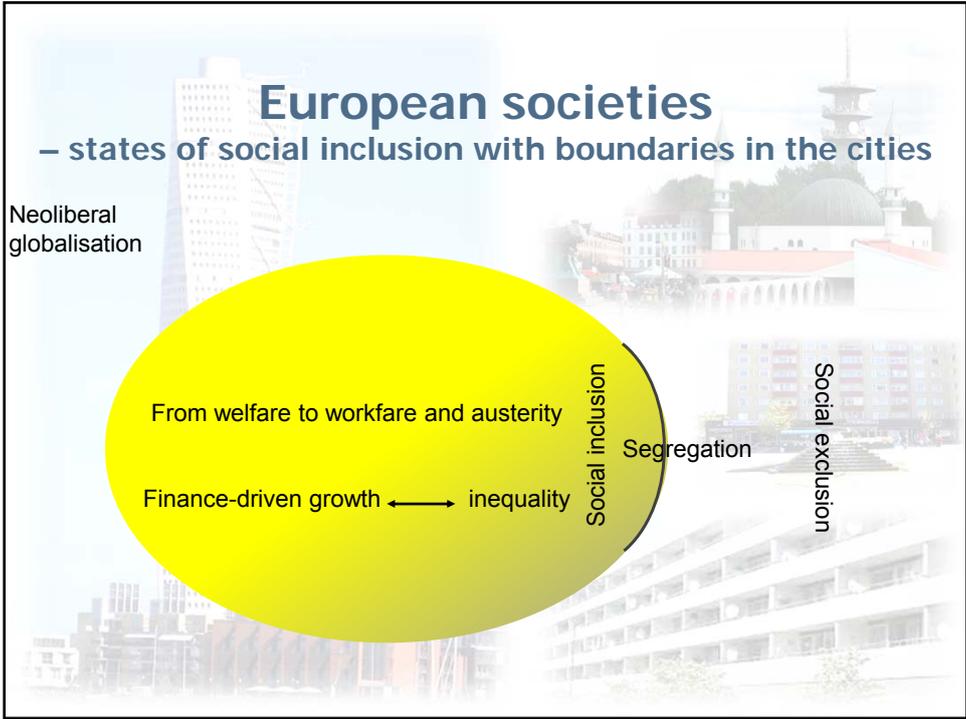


Commissioner in Malmö Commission
Thematic expert in URBACT

Professor in Sociology
Urban Studies, Malmö University
www.mikaelstigendal.se

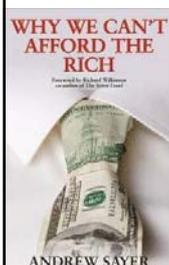


1986-94 1995-98 1998-99 2002-03 2000-04 2004-06 2006-07 2006-08 2008-10 2010-18



The current situation

- Poverty and social exclusion is growing in cities in the EU-15
- Study finds 58% of London's residents in poverty are living in working households compared with 28% two decades ago
- Higher income tax rates for the rich would help reduce inequality without having an adverse impact on growth



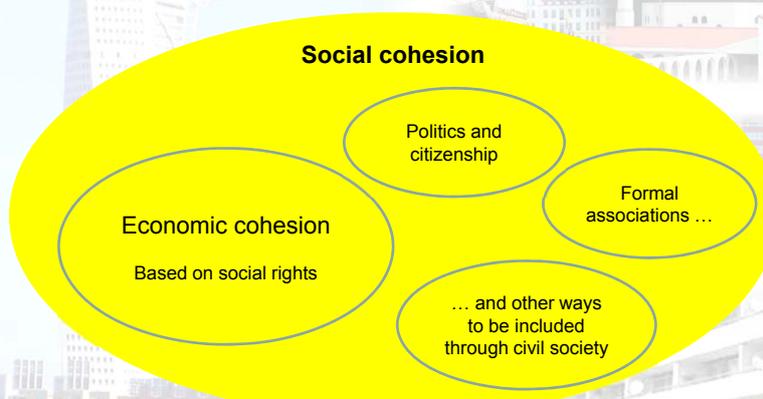
"what thoughtful rich people call the problem of poverty, thoughtful poor people call with equal justice a problem of riches".

(R.H Tawney)



Social rights for all

What role can cities take to promote a more social Europe and ensure equal access to social rights?



"Change the economic model to include spending for social policies and social services as an investment and not a cost. Economic policies (fiscal and budgetary) should support social policies, replacing austerity programmes with social investment measures." (Eurocities, page 2)

CITISPYCE



Combating Inequalities through Innovative Social Practices of and for Young People in Cities across Europe

- Funding: FP7 Research and Development
- 13 partners from 10 cities in 10 countries
- Leadership: Aston University, Birmingham
- Time: 2013-2015



Key question: In the rapidly redrawn landscape of deprivation and inequalities across Europe, how might policymakers (at local, national and EU levels) be assisted in their objectives to tackle inequalities through learning from innovative strategies developed for and by young people?



Workpackages



- WP2. Identifying societal causes (Malmö): 10 reports & 1 comparative.
- WP3. Studying neighbourhoods (Hamburg): 10 reports & 1 comparative.
- WP4. Interviewing young people (Aston): 10 reports & 1 comparative.
- WP5. Drawing up a typology of social innovations (Barcelona): 1 report.
- WP6. Pilot projects (Rotterdam): 10 reports & 1 comparative.
- WP7. Case studies (Brno): 20 reports & 1 comparative.
- WP8: Final report (Aston)



Problems emerged

- What is inequality? Symptoms and causes of it? How?
- How do causes appear and operate in neighbourhoods?
- How do you talk to young people about causes?
- What should make a practice innovative?
- Result: A split into subprojects
 - Causes – but without any practices combatting them
 - Inequality in the neighbourhoods
 - Young people's perceptions and ideas
 - Innovative practices – but combatting symptoms and not causes
- How did we make it hang together?

We didn't!

Transformative social innovations: Five criteria



1. Potential-oriented perspective

2. Knowledge alliances



3. Learning to be critical



4. Working in discretionary learning

5. Collective empowerment



1. Potential-oriented perspective

1. Potential-oriented perspective
2. Knowledge alliances
3. Learning to be critical
4. Working in discretionary learning
5. Collective empowerment

- Positive potential: Young people
- Negative potential: Focus on causes, not only symptoms
- Social innovations: Combatting the causes that exclude people

BRIGHTFUL

Brightful wants to enable young people to reach their full potential in a world where everyone meets whatever background, regardless of where they live or want with their future. We do this by organizing inspirational meetings, educational programs and collaborating with other actors in Malmö who want the same as us.

2. Knowledge alliances

1. Potential-oriented perspective
2. Knowledge alliances
3. Learning to be critical
4. Working in discretionary learning
5. Collective empowerment

- Joint development of knowledge in equal collaborations between representatives of different experience and knowledge
- Involving civil society, local authorities, citizens, business, researchers
- Participation based on experience and knowledge



Founded on an approach to knowledge that enables us to recognize and take advantage of also informal knowledge!

3. Learning to be critical

1. Potential-oriented perspective
2. Knowledge alliances
3. Learning to be critical
4. Working in discretionary learning
5. Collective empowerment

- Not only symptoms, but understanding what they express
- Making knowledge your own
- Problem should be defined and not taken for granted
- Statistics, numbers and facts are not enough

“Educational Demos’ is a resource, a tool to build a critical society, to create critical young people and they make it through music, but they could be doing it through video, theatre, etc. [...] We transmit a message through the lenses of young people because often, these are not taken into account when seeking solutions to social problems.”



4. Working in discretionary learning

1. Potential-oriented perspective
2. Knowledge alliances
3. Learning to be critical
4. Working in discretionary learning
5. Collective empowerment

- Work makes us the ones we are
- Four different forms of work organisation: Discretionary learning, lean production, taylorist and traditional.

“... the countries with the highest degree of income inequality (the UK and Portugal) are amongst those that are most unequal in terms of access to discretionary learning and that those countries (Denmark and the Netherlands) that have the most equal income distribution also offer the most egalitarian access to jobs with discretionary learning.”
(Bengt-Ake Lundvall & Edward Lorenz, 2012)



The stated mission is to “develop people and spaces through creativity and create a better world through more equipped, engaged, empowered young people able to apply their creativity to affect personal and social change”.

5. Collective empowerment

1. Potential-oriented perspective
2. Knowledge alliances
3. Learning to be critical
4. Working in discretionary learning
5. Collective empowerment

Solidarity

- Normative solidarity: The rich should help the poor who in their turn should acknowledge the rich
- Solidarity as reciprocity
 - Durkheim
 - Collectivist (Marx)



Nourishing critical thinking, encouraging active political participation and citizen-ship, promoting the collective reflection of social issues and how to deal with them as a group through theatre.

