

## **NORDIC - BALTIC MEETING IN REYKJAVIK, ICELAND**

**3TH - 4TH APRIL 2014 - SWEDEN**

### **Sweden – Country report, Nordic Baltic meeting 2014**

#### **New bill from the Government**

In March the Government presented a bill for the “folkbildning” in Sweden. There were no surprises. It focuses on evaluation of the work of folk high schools and study associations. The Swedish Agency for Public Management will be the authority responsible for the evaluations.

It's clear that the Government want the evaluations to show if the work that is done, is in correspondence with the national intentions for the “folkbildning”.

We do recon the bill, as a way for the minister that only been in office for a year and the Government, that's been in office for almost eight years, and done nothing in this field, to show some interest and get some good will from the sector.

#### **Changes of the Swedish National Council of Adult Education**

The three member organizations of the Council (SAEA and two folk high school organizations) engaged an independent investigator to analyze the future roll of the Council, and possible need for changes. The report was presented in January last year and then discussed among the member organizations. A new board for the council was elected and new statues valid from 2014, was decided in October. The study associations also agreed among themselves to ask the Council to do an attempt to present a new system for the government grant to the study associations.

#### **No more cut downs in municipalities**

The state in Sweden has provided financial support to study associations since 1912. It is generally agreed that the study associations should be run separately from the state, but financed by public funds. The importance of our work to Swedish society is generally recognized by all political parties. Still the grants from the municipalities and regions have lessened; the municipalities have lessened with around 50% during the last 20 years. SAEA is working on a project with the study associations, to communicate more and better with local politicians about future challenges, and to prevent further cut downs. During last year we produced a new booklet to use and held workshops around the country to inspire the study associations to intense there contacts with local politicians.



#### **Folkbildning and study associations are very popular in Sweden**

Last year we conducted two polls about the publics and the politicians' attitudes to folkbildning, study associations and the activities that they provide. The result is almost too

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good. 97 percent of the politicians are positive or quite positive to “folkbildning”. 88 percent of the public thinks that study associations are important in society.

### Digidel 2013

The campaign Digidel 2013 was launched in December 2010 to get at least another 500 000 people in Sweden start using the Internet before the end of 2013. It has been a successful work. The amount of people not using the Internet have lessened from 1, 5 million adults in 2010 to about 1 million this year.

The campaign is over, but the partners have decided to continue working together. “Get Online Week,” will be arranged, and study associations and libraries will continue to work together,

The study associations are involved in the work with regional digital agendas around the country.

### Working group on validation

Validation of non-formal adult education is a goal for the study associations. The SAEA working group for validation worked to inspire and spread information about validation during last year. They also developed a model for validation of general competences and skills and did put the model into practice by validating the general competences and skills of a test group. The test group then validated persons in there study associations. Since we now have a model that works, we will continue test the model in a larger scale and establish a certification.

### Code of conduct for the study associations

One of the main priorities for SEAE is quality and ethics within and between the study associations. In order to strengthen the work, the study associations’ agreed on a “code of conduct”.

### Almedalen 2013



SEAE held, what we called, “bildningsdueller” last year. There were two persons in each duel, and we had three of them after each other. Among the participants were politicians, people from study associations, other organizations and scientist. It was a successful concept so will do the same thing this year.

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### Focus in our advocacy

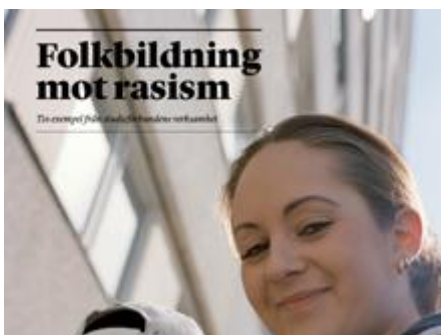


Most of the study associations work, in some way or another, with unemployed youth. The youth unemployment is a big issue in the political debate in Sweden, so we're trying to position the study associations as a part of the solution. <http://www.studieforbunden.se/var-verksamhet/fokus/fokus-unga-utan-arbete/>



As there are elections both to the European Parliament and general elections in Sweden in 2014, we've started the work with highlighting the study associations' efforts to make people vote. <http://www.studieforbunden.se/var-verksamhet/fokus/fokus-aktivtval2014/>

We also produced booklets with examples of work against racism and presenting initiatives for mentally disabled persons:



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### Pod radio

Together with a couple of the study associations we publish pod radio programs on different folkbildning-matters. We like to create a forum for those who are deeply involved in folkbildning.

