



The Expo Foundation

Exit Motala – Case Study

An example of how to use integration into the society as a process of healing for different groups of people living in the margin

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Executive summary

During the past few years the development of racism and xenophobia in many European countries may be seen as alarming. Sweden is no exception. A major sign was the result of 2002's general election, where the xenophobic party Sweden Democrats (SD) strengthened its political position, in particular in southern Sweden. The SD increased from eight seats in local municipalities to 50 seats all over the country, 30 of which are located in the southern Skane district alone. In addition the SD splinter group, the National Democrats (ND) won four seats in local municipalities in the Stockholm area. The total vote for an anti-immigration agenda increased from 53 000 in the 1998 election to 83 000 in the 2002 election.

The situation as regards to the increase of the influence of racist organisations in Sweden may thus look rather dark. There are however gleams of hope. There are a number of small-scaled projects that effectively combat racism and xenophobia. These projects are often led by fiery spirits who have devoted their lives for this purpose. One such local project is Exit Motala in a city called Motala, situated between Stockholm and Gothenburg.

This case study is an effort to illuminate the work of Exit Motala in its combat against racism and xenophobia, and also how they use integration as a method to fight segregation and marginalisation. The aim is to show how a small-scaled project with rather few means can change a community on several levels and for different groups of people.

Exit Motala started in 1999 by school welfare officer Ms Anita Bjärgvide and local police officer Mr Lennart Lindquist. They had noticed an increase of violence in the area they were working in. There was an ongoing conflict between two gangs, one with connections to a Nazi organisation and the other consisting of boys of immigrant background. Ms Bjärgvide and Mr Lindquist were convinced that something had to be done to stop the violence.

In the beginning a major part of their work focused on the conflict between the two gangs. Thus, in 2001 they initiated cooperation with the Exit project in Stockholm. Exit Stockholm had since their start in 1998 been helping boys and men defecting from Nazi and racist organisations. In Motala the work was not only focusing on defectors but also the boys of immigrant background that were involved in gang criminality. Many underlying factors and the problems of being involved in both kinds of organisations are similar.

The cooperation between the Exit Motala and Exit Stockholm continued during 2001, but came to an end during the winter of 2001. Since January 2002 Exit Motala is a freestanding project and has been granted governmental means for their own activities.

This case study brings up several perspectives of the Exit Motala project. First, it presents a description of their work with defectors and boys of immigrant background involved in gang criminality, as well as it describes their work to help girls in racist organisations and asylum seekers.

An interesting aspect of their working methods is that they apply the same methods on all groups. Many of their activities also deal with integrating all groups to become one. Ms Bjärgvide emphasizes the meeting as an important method against prejudice, racism and xenophobia. However several known therapeutic methods are used as well both on group and individual level and these are described in the report.

Exit Motala also can offer sheltered accommodation for individuals that are experiencing threats. The sheltered accommodation consists of eight places and can be used in emergency situations. This accommodation can be offered to all participants in the different parts of the project.

A defector contributes his view on the project in a part of the report. He describes how Exit Motala has helped him in his previous life situation from the defection to present day and how he actively has participated in the different activities of the project from the start.

Secondly, the case study will deal with the work Exit Motala is carrying out on a local basis. Although they have clients from the whole country, their ambition to establish the project locally may be of major importance for the outcome. Today the activities of Exit Motala is concentrated to three cities; Motala in mid-Sweden, and Karlskrona and Helsingborg in south Sweden.

Their work with establishing local contacts can so far be seen as very successful in Motala. One example of this is their establishment of an executive group, where people from the school, the police, the municipal and the social authorities are sitting. This may be seen as an effort to integrate their activities into the community and also to strengthen the bonds between different local actors in the work with helping young people with destructive life-styles to choose new ways of living.

The Exit Motala team is currently establishing similar local contacts in Karlskrona and Helsingborg, as they have noticed an increase of people contacting them from southern Sweden. Another factor is the deteriorating situation regarding racism and xenophobia in this part of Sweden. The racist and xenophobic organisations there are also often in liaisons with motor cycle gangs; a factor that scares many people who want to counteract these tendencies in society.

A part of the case study deals with explaining the separation between Exit Motala and Exit Stockholm. This »split« has attracted a certain amount of attention in media, since Exit Stockholm was being accused of fraud after the presentation of their revision report for 2001. When in 2002 Exit Motala decided to separate from Exit Stockholm they chose to establish their organisation as a non-governmental organisation in contrast to the fact that Exit Stockholm has an organisational structure as a foundation; a factor that may imply less insight in the activities and economy of the organisation.

A future perspective of Exit Motala will also be presented. Due to the increased demand, they experience that they cannot help all the young people who are contacting them. That would require more resources, primarily spent on expanding their activities to Karlskrona and Helsingborg, but also on increasing the number of staff working with all parts of the project. Today many are working for them on a voluntary basis. There is also a wish to be able to offer these people some kind of compensation for their work

The report is mainly based on interviews with several of the Exit employees, made in Motala. Other sources are media, such as newspaper articles and TV-programs, and governmental reports.

The case study of presenting the activities of Exit Motala as a good practice in combating racism and xenophobia on a local basis is mainly focusing on three concepts; integration,

segregation and democracy. These three concepts can be seen as the main aspects of the work done. Exit Motala work for democracy not only by using democratic methods, but also as an ideology, in their work to integrate people from several groups in society; defectors, boys of immigrant background, girls and asylum seekers, into society as a fight against the increasing segregation and marginalisation in Sweden of today. To break this tendency may be a successful way to combat racism and xenophobia.

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1. Introduction

Sweden 2002: a country characterised by decades of immigration but also a country where the xenophobic parties to a great extent have expanded. The last general election in September 2002 is only one example of this development. From only a few seats in the municipal councils the seats won in the last election the Sweden Democrats have doubled their seats four times in the municipal councils. The SD increased from eight seats in local municipalities to 50 seats all over the country, 30 of which are located in the southern Skåne district alone. In addition the SD splinter group, the National Democrats (ND) won four seats in local municipalities in the Stockholm area. The total vote for an anti-immigration agenda increased from 53 000 in the 1998 election to 83 000 in the 2002 election.

Although this is not a dramatic increase of the total xenophobic vote, it is certainly a minor breakthrough for the SD party itself, which increased from 20 000 to 76 000 votes. Something has to be done to stop this up going trend of xenophobic activities or it will continue.

In particular several xenophobic parties, not only the Sweden Democrats have been extremely successful in the counties of southern Sweden, such as Skåne and Blekinge. In the city Karlskrona in the Blekinge County the Nazi organisation National Socialist Front (NSF) won 200 votes, which wasn't too far from one seat in the municipality. If they had succeeded, they would have been the first organisation openly expressing Nazi ideas to sit in a Swedish municipal council.

Specifically, the situation in southern Sweden is alarming, as many of the xenophobic parties there have connections to criminal motorcycle gangs, such as Hells Angels. This connection may imply that they are characterised as more violent and can thus be experienced as more threatening to society as a whole.

Small-scaled activities of integration in different places in the country may be of major importance in combating racism and xenophobia and also in the fight against structural discrimination. With fairly small measures such activities can integrate different people that can be characterised as segregated and living in the margins of society.

The Exit project in Motala is one such project. They work with several groups that can be characterised as marginalised; defectors from the most militant racist organisations, young immigrant boys from criminal gangs, subject girls from the racist organisations and asylum seekers, and they use the same methods in their work with all groups.

Exit Motala is not only active within the county of Östergötland, where Motala is situated. Defectors and girls from other parts of the country come to them for help to sort out their lives. The main activities of the organisation is however concentrated to three cities; Motala, Karlskrona in the county of Blekinge and Helsingborg in the county of Skåne.

The aim of this case study is to show how a small-scale project, like Exit Motala, with rather small means can change a community in many ways and for several groups of people.

This report is mainly based on interviews with people involved with Exit in Motala; e. g. the social worker Ms Anita Bjärgvide, the project administrator and contact person Ms Hanna Otterhall, the police man Mr Lennart Lindquist and the Municipal Commissioner Ms Susanne Järnefjord and a defector. It is also based on governmental reports, news paper articles and TV-programs. The interviews took place in Motala on the 29th and 30th of October 2002.

2. Background

Everything started in 1999 when school welfare officer Ms Anita Bjärgvide and local police officer Mr Lennart Lindquist were working in a secondary school in Motala. Motala is a small city that today has 42 000 inhabitants and is situated on the way between Stockholm and Gothenburg. Motala has five secondary schools and two colleges. Both Ms Bjärgvide and Mr Lindquist had one of the secondary schools as their workplace. The school was situated in one of the more subject areas of Motala. They saw the increasing violence taking place in their environment. This made them feel a sense of frustration. Therefore they agreed to try to do something to stop this evil circle of violence. This was how the organisation URIS (Young's "revenge" in society¹) was initiated.

The situation in Motala may not have been exceptional in any way. But the emergence of violence was a sign that something may have failed. The adult world, e. g. the school, the social workers, the police and not even the parents were reacting. In addition, there was no coordination between the different societal institutions working with the young people of Motala, which led to not recognising young people that were subject in one way or another. In addition, this lack of coordination implied that it took a long time before the help from the social protective netting could reach the young person in trouble. Simultaneously, it was due to this gap between social institutions working for the young, difficult to catch this group in time.

2.1 Two gangs

At this time two major gangs consisting of youngsters were causing problems in the streets of Motala. One of them consisted of youngsters sympathising with Nazi organisations. The other gang, their opponents, consisting of young boys of immigrant background. The violence between these two gangs was a fact and it was brutal. One of the immigrant boys was attacked and so severely beaten by the boys of the Nazi organisation that he almost lost his life.

In the beginning, the small organisation working for the benefit of the young people living in Motala was only consisting of four to five people meeting once a week to discuss actions and activities to combat racism and xenophobia and to help young marginalised people that the adult world in some way had failed to notice.

Anita Bjärgvide heard about the Exit project in Stockholm and, as Motala had problems with racist organisations, their next step towards establishment was to turn to Exit in Stockholm in order to try to start a similar project in Motala. In their initial contacts with Exit Stockholm they found out that the name Exit was not protected by patent. Therefore, they also chose to call their own organisation Exit.

There was a great response from local media when they filed for their application to start the local organisation in Motala. Many young defectors started to contact them. They were in many ways not prepared for this response. The situation became somewhat chaotic before aims and ideas were formulated and settled.

¹ In Swedish the word revenge has a meaning beyond "vengeance"; it also refers to someone getting "a second chance" or "making a comeback".

2.2 Working for Exit Stockholm

On the other hand, Exit Stockholm wanted to hire staff from the Motala organisation. As they did not have someone with the competence of a social worker, the first person they employed in January 2001 from the Motala team was Anita Bjärgvide. After a few months Exit Stockholm also employed Hanna Otterhall from Motala, and Anders Högström, a defector and former party leader of the Nazi organisation National Socialist Front (NSF). Both of them were already working for Exit Motala.

However, Anders Högström did not work long for the Exit project in Stockholm. After only a few months he had to go. Anita Bjärgvide on the contrary continued working for Exit Stockholm, and was working both in Motala, Stockholm and Helsingborg, where Exit had a third office with two employees.

In January 2001 the Swedish Government commissioned the National Council for Crime Prevention to carry out a formal evaluation of the Exit project. During this period Anita Bjärgvide was interviewed a number of times and according to her the finalised report² was mostly about the work and methods used in the Exit Motala project and not corresponding with the activities of the Exit Stockholm project. This report was later to be the basis for the work of the government. Large parts of the report were later used, which resulted in a governmental suggestion to continue the financial support of the Exit project.³

Since the beginning of 2002 Exit Motala is separated from the Exit project in Stockholm. In Motala they launched the projects as a non-governmental organisation. They have thus been granted means, amounting to 1,1 million SEK, only for their local project in Motala. Exit Motala, does not, however, only have activities in their county, Östergötland. Defectors and other young people in crisis from the whole country turn to them for help. The majority of activities of Exit Motala are today concentrated to three cities; Motala, Karlskrona and Helsingborg. People are hired for Exit Motala in Motala and Karlskrona. Those who are hired are working towards their local communities.

For the year 2003 they have applied for funding for the activities in Helsingborg. If they will be granted they can employ one person there. They already have eleven defectors from Helsingborg as clients in the project.

² The National Council for Crime Prevention (BRÅ), Exit. A follow-up and evaluation of the organisation Exit for defectors during the years 1998-2001, BRÅ-Rapport 2001:8

³ Ds 2001:70

3. The different parts of the Exit project

The Exit project in Motala consists of three parts but involve the same methods in all the work. The three projects are titled “Exit”, “Amir” and “Dellen”.⁴ The main aim of all the work is to find new ways for living one’s life, to help the young people in the project to get away from criminality, gang mentality and destructive behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse. The majority of the young people that turn to Exit for help come from families, socially marginalised, e. g. due to alcohol or other kinds of abuse. Other comes from sound families, with supportive parents, but who cannot on their own help their children.

In addition the practical work with the young men and women takes place on three levels; the individual, e. g. therapeutic talks; on a societal level, e. g. involving the school; and a political level, as the majority of the clients have been involved with racist and xenophobic organisations.

3.1 The organisation

According to Ms Anita Bjärgvide the aim of the structure of the organisation is to ensure that everyone involved with Exit Motala has as good view of the activities and work of Exit Motala as possible. This is also an underlying reason for choosing the organisational form of an NGO and not a foundation. This view not only regards the top section of the organisation. Most importantly the participants involved, e. g. defectors and the girls, have representatives on every meeting. The participants are also the ones who decide on the majority of the project’s activities. The ideas are discussed among the participants before being settled with the rest of the organisation.

The organisation of Exit Motala consists of several levels. First, there is an executive group, consisting of people representing the local authorities, the police, the social welfare office, the school, and local politicians. Decisions are not taken here; the function of this body is rather of a counselling and supportive nature. Another idea with the executive group, is that the members can bring the information they receive about the Exit project back to their own organisations.

Secondly, there is a board consisting of four persons. Decisions on finances and practical matters are taken at this level.

The result of this structure is according to Anita Bjärgvide very successful, as everyone is participating in every step of the work, from deciding on activities to deciding on finances. Part of the success of the project is that the young people come with their own suggestions on what to do and how to develop the project. Being a part in this process also is a way to teach the participants how democracy is working or may work.

At present three persons are full-time employees; one social worker, one defector and one running the administration and economy of the office. Another three persons are part-time employees for the different activities run in the project. For one of these persons the job is part of a training program. According to Ms Bjärgvide it is an important aspect of Exit Motala

⁴ This chapter is based on interviews with Anita Bjärgvide, Hanna Otterhall and a defector and the authors’ own reflections when participating in a few activities organised by the Exit Motala team.

to be able to offer their clients work, in their integration into society and a normal life with work and studies. A number of persons are participating and helping out with the activities on a voluntary basis.

3.2 Exit

In the Exit part they work with former members from the most militant racist organisations, e.g. “neo-Nazi” organisations. In this work the defector and former National Socialist Front party leader, Anders Högström has a major role. He is mainly working in Karlskrona, the city where the NSF have established its headquarters. The Exit part of the project also works with defectors from Helsingborg in the county of Skane.

3.3 Amir

This part of the project is called Amir after one of the young men in the staff. In this part of the Exit Motala project they are working with young Swedish men of immigrant background who are involved in gang related criminality.

Amir, who lent his name to the project, is functioning as a contact person when approaching these young men and their parents. In this part of the project the same methods are used as for the defectors. The great difference is however that it is not as common with threats and persecution as it is for defecting Nazis, but the hatred and the social marginalisation is the same for both groups.

This part of the project has been further developed during the year 2002 to include activities for asylum seekers and people recently granted residence permits living in Motala. The help the Exit staff mainly can offer these people is practical and supportive, together with other local NGO's such as the Red Cross, in contrast to authorities like the Migration Board and the social welfare office. For instance, Exit Motala is offering activities for young asylum seeking women with children, together with the girls participating in the Dellen part of the project.

Through the education in Swedish for migrants (SFI) Exit Motala has been able to invite the asylum seekers to different activities.

3.4 Dellen

Dellen is the part of the project involving the work with subject girls that have been either members or hangarounds in racist organisations. Exit Motala is the only organisation in Sweden that can offer girls in racist organisations help. Exit Stockholm mainly focuses on male defectors and has no specific activities for the girls that have been part of the racist and Nazi organisations.

The girls participating in Dellen are somewhat separated from the rest of the activities of the Exit project. Only a couple of them participate in the more social activities including the participants in the other parts of the Exit project.

The girls come from the whole country. The geographic distance implies many journeys, both for the contact person and the girls involved in the project. This aspect regards the project as a whole, as also many of the defectors come from other parts of the country. The Dellen girls

can not be seen as a homogenous group, which means that the methods used to help the girls are adjusted to each participating girl's specific needs.

Every girl has a individual contact person. A large part of the work of the girls involves meeting them on a personal basis one by one. According to Hanna Otterhall, the member of the staff that is mostly involved in Dellen, a great amount of time in the work with these girls is spent on simply talking about everyday life with them.

A majority of the girls being part of racist organisations have a very low self-esteem. In addition, women have no prominent positions in these organisations. These girls have thus built their self-esteem on having a boyfriend, and through them they have become connected to the racist organisations. With some exceptions, they have very rarely been active in the organisations. Due to this aspect a great part of the work is focusing on building up their self-esteem without having a boyfriend.

Significant for these girls is also that the majority have been very lonely, both at home and at school. Many of the girls have been badly treated or subjected to forms of abuse in the racist organisations, which may have resulted in psychological problems. It is not unusual that the girls are suffering from eating disorders or that they are carving their arms. The people working with the Dellen girls have thus found the importance for these girls to have time of their own. Therefore activities are carried out only for the girls, where the boys do not participate.

Another problem related to being a part of racist organisation is alcohol and drug abuse. Many of these girls have at a very early age become addicted to alcohol. They also often come from instable and somewhat dysfunctional homes. In many cases, the whole family of the young person has social problems.

3.5 The Wednesday evenings

Every Wednesday evening Exit is organising activities in a youth centre in central Motala, which offers rooms for a multitude of activities, such as meeting and talking, drinking coffee, playing table tennis or pool etc.

Some evenings during the summer as many as 40–70 people came to visit the youth centre. The majority of the visitors were asylum seekers living in Motala. The young people participating in the other Exit activities, defectors, girls and boys of immigrant background, are also taking part in the Wednesdays'.

The Exit team hope that they will be able to use this youth centre all the time. That would imply that they not only have these gatherings on Wednesdays but also during the rest of the week. It would also imply a few jobs where the participants in the different parts of the project could work.

3.6 Other activities

All of the activities carried out within the project have been suggested by the participants in the project.

In 2002 following activities have been carried out:

- Twice a week they have gatherings. The Wednesday gathering is when people from all three parts of the project meet.
- Girl get-togethers, cooking
- Playing theatre
- Training sports – with a theme of changing eating habits
- Go-cart
- A visit at the Swedish Parliament
- A visit at the Jewish Museum in Stockholm
- Easter feast
- Theatre visits
- The garage project where interested can restore old cars
- A democracy course with mixed participants, boys and girls from the project and asylum seekers

They have also carried out educational activities. Exit Motala once a week has an exercise called the “Choice of path”. They also have held seminars for the participants. For teachers and other professional groups they have held supervision.

An important part of the work at Exit Motala is the lecturing about their work with defectors and their combat against racism and xenophobia. During 2002 the Exit team has mainly visited schools, universities, folk high schools, municipalities, local Red Cross organisations, the Church of Sweden, a regional public prosecution office and the Police in totally 19 places.

3.6 Sheltered accommodation and support families

Exit Motala can offer the defectors and the girls a sheltered accommodation. They have two places for emergency accommodations in the office, one of which has been in use almost every day since September 2001. Another emergency accommodation consisting of two flats with a total of eight places has been used by 16 persons during the year 2002. Five children in the ages 1 – 12 years old have together with their parents been offered support, practical help and a flat by the Exit team. There is a great demand for the emergency accommodation places, but according to Exit Motala, the municipalities are not willing to take on the financial responsibility for the young people in need of the accommodation. In 2002 people living in municipalities in the counties Skåne, Blekinge, Östergötland and Bohuslän have been using the sheltered accommodation.

Exit Motala also can offer support families in the country, where the young person can stay for a period. Eight families can at short notice receive both boys and girls in emergency need for a sheltered living. At present these families do not receive any financial support for their work.

3.7 Results up to now

This statistics is involving the clients⁵ participating in the Exit and Dellen part of the project. The clients of the Amir part are excluded from these statistics.

Exit Motala has clients spread out all over the country, with a concentration to Motala, the county of Östergötland, and two cities in south of Sweden; Karlskrona and Helsingborg.⁶

Karlskrona	Motala	Helsingborg
Boys: 15	Boys: 16	Boys: 11
7 are between: 15 – 18 yrs	9 are between: 18 – 26 yrs	7 of them are: 17 – 20 yrs
8 of them are: 18 – 24 år	6 are between: 15 – 18 yrs	4 are between: 20 – 24 yrs
	1 is: 32 yrs	
	Girls: 5	
	Ages: 17 – 25 yrs	

The rest of the country:

<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
A total amount of 21	A total amount of 5
Jönköping (1)	Uddevalla (1)
Strömstad (1)	Norrköping (1)
Katrineholm (2)	Stockholm (1)
Stockholm (4)	Arboga (1)
Malmö (1)	Trelleborg (1)
Göteborg (1)	
Söderköping (2)	
Linköping (1)	
Vittsjö (1)	
Vellinge (2)	
Osby (2)	
Norrköping (2)	
Uddevalla (1)	

In 2002, in the Amir part of the project approximately 15 boys mainly from the Motala region have been participating in activities and therapeutic sessions.

⁵ The word client refers to a person who has had a long-term contact with the Exit project, not less than five therapy sessions.

⁶ This section is based on statistics and figures provided by the Exit team in Motala.

As the project has not even run for a year, it is difficult to compile statistics on how many that has left the White Power world and other criminal gangs and organisations with the explicit help of Exit Motala. The process of leaving an organisation is long and may not be simple.

3.8 A story of a defector

One of the participants in the Exit Motala project is a defector from one of the vilest racist organisations in Sweden.⁷ He will hereafter in the text be named “Peter”. At the time of the interview he has only been in the project for a few months. He is however well integrated in all parts of the Exit Motala project.

Peter comes from a very small village in southern Sweden. A place, which he says scarcely, had any immigrants. Nonetheless he grew up in an environment surrounded by xenophobic and racist attitudes, even in his own family.

At a very early age Peter came in touch with the xenophobic organisations at his home district and became increasingly more involved in the organisation. It may have started as a boyish prank, putting up xenophobic posters in the place where he lived but as the time passed he grew older and more engaged in the activities of the organisation.

He was in an evil circle of violent crimes, working fulltime for the organisation by exercising criminal acts, to earn money. In the surrounding environment everyone knew who he was and what he did for a living. In the interview he said that he felt that he was disliked and opposed by the teachers when he studied.

3.8.1 The break up

Finally he decided to make a break with the life he was living. As he felt threatened for his decision to leave the organisation he called the police. They could not however help him. He then turned to Exit, as he had heard about it from media. First, he phoned the project in Stockholm, who could not help him at such a short notice. They advised him to contact the project in southern Sweden, where he was advised to contact Exit Motala. Within a week Exit Motala could help him with sheltered accommodation and protected identity.⁸

Since the first day Peter arrived to join the project he has been actively participating in all events that has taken place. The first Wednesday after his arrival he went to the gathering where mainly the asylum seekers go – and thus found himself in a situation he only a few weeks previously would have considered unimaginable.

In the interview he states that this was not a place he would have chosen to go to before and that it felt very strange. However, he soon realised it was not dangerous, as he puts it, as he himself chose to participate. Now he is one of the people that always participate on Wednesdays.

⁷ This is based on an interview with a defector. The name is a pseudonym.

⁸ Protected identity is a measure where personal data such as address etc, is hidden in official and public ally available records.

Peter says that through the Wednesday gatherings he has learned to accept other people, which was something he did not do before he joined the Exit project, as he always been against immigrants. At the gatherings, he finds it interesting to hear about the other participants' lives, which gives a perspective to his life. He says that leaving one's home country is a major break up compared to his, when he had to escape his home city to flee from the criminal and Nazi organisation he once was a part of.

On the question what Exit Motala meant for him; he says that they have helped him very much with practical things, e. g. with a new flat and protected identity. The project has also meant a great deal socially, as Exit Motala is for him a great comfort. He always has someone to talk to. It is extremely important for him as he has broken up from his past and moved on. He has even cut the ties with his family for their own safety. Nevertheless they have been threatened.

4. Methods used in the project

Several methods are used in the work with the defectors and girls in the project.⁹ However, Anita Bjärgvide says that what she calls “a meeting” is one of the most important components. Although the methods used have proven to be successful, she says that a meeting without methods is superior to using the wrong methods.

The meeting is of major importance when working with the young people, as it is crucial for re-evaluating one’s prejudices. Ms Bjärgvide states that it is an easy way to combat racism. The personal meeting has almost disappeared in our society due to e. g. increasing usage of mobile-telephones and the Internet. This development has also proven to be effective for racist organisations in their recruiting of new activists and spreading of information. Also when people do not meet prejudice against others increase.

Another key to success, according Ms Bjärgvide, is the young peoples’ active involvement in the different parts of the project. The ideas on what activities should be in the project always come from them, the participants. This active involvement is very important. Everyone chooses where to participate. In addition this successful method is free. However, Ms Bjärgvide emphasizes the importance of the various methods used in her work with young people.

4.1 Three main components

In addition, there are three main components that are important in a successful work with the defectors; a social worker, a person working with administration and the defector himself. The social worker is needed for leading therapeutic talks and methods. The defector is working with lecturing and as a contact person, which is important as he or she shares the same experiences. The administrative person is needed for running the office’s administration and economy.

Another aspect of great relevance is, according to Ms Bjärgvide, the possibility to be able to contact someone of the staff anytime during day and night. There should always be someone there when a client needs to talk.

Although many of the parts in the project are directed towards the defectors and boys of immigrant background, Ms Bjärgvide has one aim; that is to integrate all parts to become one integrated project. So far she has succeeded; the only part that is freestanding is Dellen, the girl part of the project.

This view is also true for the usage of different methods. They are used either in combination or on their own depending on the individual’s needs.

4.2 The five steps

The way out from a destructive life, e. g. leaving a Nazi or racist organisation or a criminal gang, can according to the Exit team in Motala; be seen as a five step process.

⁹ This chapter is based on an interview with Anita Bjärgvide, and material on the project provided by her.

The first phase, *the motivation phase*, is when the young person has not entirely left the destructive life, but has started to doubt. In this phase they often taken contact with the Exit team with questions like how can Exit help them and what would happen if I defected.

The second phase, *the defector phase*, is when the young person has decided to leave the organisation. Some of the defectors first get in touch with Exit in this phase; others need practical help with the defection. Threats are rather common when defecting from Nazi and racist organisations, while they are not characteristic for the boys of immigrant background leaving criminal gangs. The young person leaving an organisation also loses his or her entire social network. Thus this phase can be experienced as chaotic. Therefore they need someone to talk to, someone who understands their current situation. They may also need practical help, e. g. with moving to another place due to threats, and often also financial help. In this phase they need to meet people outside the world they previously lived in.

The third phase, *the establishment phase*, is when the defection can be seen as completed. The defector's financial situation is under control. Some of them study or have another kind of occupation. In this phase very few of them have regular jobs. Their contacts with people from their previous lives are cut. Therefore they are in a social "no man's land", as ties with old friends are cut, also their relations with their families are bad after the time being in a racist organisation. In addition they usually have few or no other social contacts. Emotionally they may in this phase have feelings of emptiness. Simultaneously many are scared and stay home all the time, as they do not dare to venture outside their home.

In the fourth phase, *the reflection phase*, the defectors start to become aware of what they have done during their time in the racist organisation. They get anxious, are depressed or suffer from sleep disorders. Also some of them have problems with alcohol abuse. In this phase the defector may need to talk about experiences and thoughts, as many of them have either themselves participated in acts of violence or in other ways experienced threats and violence. They also need help to manage their impulses, their lack of trust in others and others' lack of trust in them.

Finally, the fifth phase, *the settling phase*, is characterised by the defectors lives start to turn normal. They work, study and sometimes have families. They are avoiding alcohol or other drugs. In this phase they realise what they have done and have chosen another path, away from hate, violence, criminality and abuse. Many fear that their old lives will ruin their new lives. Every contact with a new person is actualising this fear. Their feelings of guilt and shame will stay within them for a long time.

4.2 The choice of path (Vägvalet)

The Choice of path is a program designated for young people about criminal lifestyles. The program is based on a folder consisting of several question parts with ethical and moral standpoints and also exercises on value judgements. This folder can be used either in groups or individually. The theory is that discussing these matters will raise new thoughts and insights. Some of the questions are very personal, but every participant decides to what extent he or she wants to participate.

A therapist is hired to be a group leader for this program. During the spring of 2002 a group of both defectors from racist organisations and boys of immigrant background participated in the Choice of path program. Some of the problems are formulated around questions such as

what would I like to do with my life, the criminal carrier, criminal thoughts, who is the victim of criminality, who am I, history of life etc.

4.3 ART

Another method used in the work with the young is Aggressive Replacement Training, ART. This method was developed in 1987 as an effort to see aggressive behaviour from a wider perspective, as a behavioural, cognitive and emotional phenomenon. One of the basic theses for this method is that all aggressive behaviour is learned behaviour; that the individual learn by observation, imitation, direct experience and exercise.

ART is based on three components; social skill training, anger control training and training in moral reasoning. In the social skill training they are working with the ability to listen, the ability to be excused, to understand other people's feelings and to avoid fights. In the anger control training they work with cause, action and consequence. In the moral reasoning training they work with developing of the moral judgement.

4.4 Individual therapy

One of the main methods used at Exit Motala is the individual talks they offer the young people who participate. They are not following the classical psychoanalytical model but there are elements within this tradition that they are using. The individual therapy is a major component in the work with the five steps program.

4.5 MOD

Diversity and Dialogue (MOD) is a method using evaluation and physical exercises involving acting, so called Forum theatre and other kinds of role-play. With this method they can create problems like social marginalisation.

Since it is rather common for the participants to have problems with drug and alcohol abuse, there are methods used to work with this behaviour.

5. The Exit project in a local perspective

A major part of the project has during 2002 focused on building up regional networks within the communities of Karlskrona, Helsingborg and Motala.¹⁰

In Motala the work with building up a regional network has proceeded well. The Municipal Commissioner, Susanne Järnefjord is closely involved in the work of Exit Motala, as she is a member of its Executive board.

She says in the interview that Exit Motala has meant very much for the community, first of all because it is a symbol of status for the municipality. There are many advantages with the project for the community. If people know that there is an Exit project in the community that may indirectly lead to that the community as a whole is learning more about what is needed to combat racism and xenophobia. This is also a beneficial for teachers and pupils in the schools in Motala.

5.1 Integration

Regarding integration, the Amir part of the project is only a beginning, according to Ms Järnefjord. Exit has another role than for example the municipality's institutions working with asylum seekers, as they are using the integrating process, which is not only a success between Swedes and immigrants but also between the people of different nationalities among the asylum seekers. It is in this way a forum for different people to approach each other.

Ms Järnefjord also says that in the area in Motala where Exit has its office, the tension between Swedes and immigrants have decreased after the start of the Wednesday gatherings. This is an opportunity for people to re-evaluate their prejudices towards each other.

When Exit started their activities in the beginning of 2000, there were two major gangs fighting each other, one consisting of boys influenced by Nazi ideas and the other gang was consisting of boys of immigrant background. These two gangs are today dissolved, although the Nazis are still there but not as a gang. However, the situation for the Nazis has changed, as they today do not fight against immigrants but rather against militant leftwing groups, as e. g. Anti Fascist Action (AFA) and similar organisation.

Anita Bjärgvide worked actively to solve this fight between these two gangs. In 2002 she organised a weekend where she together with local police officer Lennart Lindquist invited the worst fighters in the two gangs. They for instance organised confrontations between victims, boys of immigrant background, and attackers, defectors from the Nazi gang.

The project's influence in the community is according to Ms Järnefjord also of major importance since it in the school can offer support and supervision on how to counteract racism and xenophobia. The school is in this way a very good platform as you can reach both pupils and their parents. Sometimes through conversations with the parents, their own racist attitudes show. There are also growing tensions between Swedes and immigrants and an increase of xenophobia when there is a recession economically for the municipality.

¹⁰ Based on interviews with Susanne Järnefjord, Municipal Commissioner for Motala Municipality and Anita Bjärgvide.

In addition, the municipality can according to Ms Järnefjord, be of great help for the project. They can offer the participants in the Exit project trainee jobs with supervision within their institutions. They can also support Exit Motala through their networks, through e. g. the Swedish Association for Local Authorities¹¹, in their contacts with other municipalities using Exit's services, such as the protected accommodation.

They can also offer jobs in the municipality to clients participating in the project who need practical job training.

5.2 Course in democracy

This year Susanne Järnefjord will hold a course in issues relating to the concept of democracy. This course will be open for everyone who has an interest in these issues, the asylum seekers, and defectors and hopefully also the girls in Dellen. As knowledge is power, the participants will in a practical way have use for this kind of knowledge.

Anita Bjärgvide emphasizes the importance of holding courses like these. Democracy has during recent years become a major issue in the project. Ms Bjärgvide says that this is due to the fact that many young people lack this knowledge. Neither parents nor the school have educated the children in democracy. This implies that they even do not understand the connotation of the word or how to be able to influence our society democratically, which may lead to social marginalisation. The values of democracy have according to Ms Bjärgvide been made more graspable to the defectors and put in comparison with e. g. the anti-democratic values that Nazi and racist organisations express in their propaganda.

Another important aspect of the cooperation between the Exit Motala and Motala municipality is that the collaboration between different local authorities, e. g. the school, the recreation area and social authorities has increased, which has implied that the views and attitudes regarding the young have become more similar. Nevertheless, Ms Järnefjord is not completely satisfied with the collaboration but it may be seen as a start. However, they have developed several resource teams consisting of staff from different authorities to work with the young of Motala.

¹¹ Svenska Kommunförbundet

6. Exit Motala's connections with Exit Stockholm

Since the beginning of 2002 Exit Motala is a freestanding project and has been granted its own means from the State. The Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications has been the project's sole financier during 2002.¹²

The relationship between the two Exit groups, Motala and Stockholm, has been strained and came to a termination by the end of 2001.

Exit Motala's cooperation with Exit Stockholm started in the beginning 2001 when Anita Bjärgvide was hired to work for them, as they needed a social worker in the project. After a few months two other persons from the Exit Motala were employed; Hanna Otterhall and Anders Högström. Shortly after he was employed, Högström was however forbidden to lecture on behalf Exit Stockholm. This was a somewhat surprising turn of events since Högström is by no comparison the most well-known and highest ranking Nazi activist to defect. Ms Bjärgvide believes the attitude towards him had to do with competition; that the leaders of Exit Stockholm were frightened that he would "outshine" them. The one who was sent to make the evaluation of Anders Högström was Anita Bjärgvide. The result was that he had to leave the project.

There were two people employed for Exit Stockholm in Helsingborg. Ms Bjärgvide was asked to see clients there. Simultaneously she was organising the project in Motala. During the spring of 2001 the government commissioned the Council for Crime Prevention (BRA) to evaluate the activities of Exit as a whole. Anita Bjärgvide says that she had many contacts with the Council regarding the activities of Exit Motala. She informed them how the project was edified locally in Motala and what kinds of activities and methods they used. This was later brought up in the completed BRA-report.

At the office of Exit Stockholm Anita Bjärgvide soon noticed features that she considered strange in a project purporting to combat racism and xenophobia. Words and language used was harsh, racist jokes were frequently used and on several occasions White Power music was played at the Stockholm office. Anita Bjärgvide thought that this was part of the process of being a defector; that should take some time to overcome.

6.1 Antagonism among the staff at Exit Stockholm

The office in Stockholm was characterised by antagonism among the staff and Anita Bjärgvide was the one who was commissioned to deal with the staff. She says that she at this time became a messenger that had to convey unpleasant messages to the staff. This implied that she became unpopular among the staff.

She thinks if it would not be for the report that the Council for Crime Prevention was working on she would probably also had been one of the people that would have to leave Exit Stockholm. According to Ms Bjärgvide, the Exit Stockholm team feared being criticised for their high staff turnover. Nevertheless, this became an issue in the completed report.

¹² This section of the report is completely based on an interview with Anita Bjärgvide and materials, such as letters, news paper articles and invoices provided by her.

In the summer of 2001 a number of girls hanging around Nazi and racist organisations, started to contact Exit Motala. They did not however turn to Exit Stockholm. This was the beginning of the Dellen part of Exit Motala.

During the whole time the Council of Crime Prevention was working on their report on the Exit project the founder of Exit Stockholm, Kent Lindahl was absent. According to Ms Bjärgvide he did not even turn up at the planned interviews by the Council. He was also absent when the report was presented in August of 2001.

6.2 Purchases of computer equipment

During the autumn of 2001 Anita Bjärgvide at the Exit office in Stockholm saw invoices regarding purchases of computers and other equipment to the office in Exit Motala. However, Anita Bjärgvide and the other people working in Motala, had not seen this equipment. They had already bought their own computer.

The revision report regarding Exit Stockholm that came to the Swedish Government in January 2002 showed that there had been a computer purchase for 106 000 SEK, while at an inventory at the office in Stockholm was recorded missing goods worth 60 000 SEK from this very purchase.¹³

Another staff member of Exit expresses the same disbelief over Exit Stockholm, Tobias Weikel. He states in the article in Dagens Nyheter dated 25th of February 2002 that all the time the finances of Exit Stockholm were in a mess. Also Anders Högström, now working for Exit Motala, in the article agreed with the criticism of Exit Stockholm. He says that Exit Stockholm employees were absent at meetings, which hurt the credibility of the Exit organisation in the eyes of youngsters on their way to defect. He is also questioning whether the number of defectors Exit Stockholm claim they have helped, 190 defectors according to Exit Stockholm, is true.

The revision of Exit Motala was also brought up to discussion in a TV-program, Uppdrag Granskning on Swedish Public Television, broadcasted on 16th of April 2002.

6.3 Exit Motala apply for their own financing

According to Ms Bjärgvide the project leader Kent Lindahl in the end of 2001 told her in a telephone conversation that Exit Stockholm was to close down. They then decided that Exit Motala was to be a non-governmental organisation, as opposed to Exit Stockholm that is a foundation. This was due to the previous criticism towards Exit Stockholm for lack of outside insight in activities and economy; a non-governmental organisation has an organisation that allows more insight. In addition, a decision was made that Exit Motala was to apply for their own funding. When the director for Fryshuset, Anders Carlberg, found out that Exit Motala had applied for their own funding to the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications he began to phone Anita Bjärgvide a great number of times every day. According to her he was shouting in the other end of the telephone and claims that Mr Carlberg began a campaign of slander against her, telephoning everyone including personal friends.

¹³ Caspar Opitz, Dagens Nyheter 25th of February 2002.

Ms Bjärgvide says in the interview that she did not know what to do, but to her advantage was that they had started the leading group of Exit Motala, which supported her in this turmoil.

In February 2002 the Government decided to grant both Exit Stockholm and Exit Motala funding for their activities. Exit Stockholm was granted 1,6 million SEK and Exit Motala 1,1 million SEK. According to a newspaper article the responsible at the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, Mr Göran Lindquist, is aware of the criticism against Exit Stockholm regarding the revision report, but that they have decided to nevertheless grant the project additional funding in order not to let down the youngsters dependent upon them.¹⁴

6.4 Letter to the editor

This alleged campaign of slander against Ms Bjärgvide continued when in February 2002 the director of Fryshuset, Mr Anders Carlberg wrote a letter- to-the editor in the local Motala Tidning on the inconsistencies between Exit Stockholm and Exit Motala after an article in Motala Tidning had been published.

In the letter- to- the editor he writes about claimed inconsistencies from the Motala team that he is not aware of has taken place. In the end he also directly accuses Ms Bjärgvide of lying about the facts regarding invoices, the continuation of cooperation and disagreement on issues regarding insight of information. The Exit Motala team wrote an answer published in the same newspaper. There they state why they applied themselves, as according to the project leader Mr Lindahl Exit Stockholm would not apply at all. Exit Motala were on the other hand during the autumn of 2001 hoping to continue the collaboration with Exit Stockholm.

Anita Bjärgvide says in the interview that the only thing they had questioned regarding Exit Stockholm was frauds; e. g. invoices sent to them from Exit Stockholm for train trips made by the Motala team when they still were employed by the office in Stockholm.

This article in the newspaper led to new telephone calls by Carlberg to Ms Bjärgvide's friends. He also tried – as several participants puts it – “to buy” defectors from Exit Motala, e.g. to ask them to defect from Exit Motala and join Exit Stockholm. All of them declined the offer and stayed with the Motala office.

In 2002 Exit Stockholm invited everyone to a large promotion event in Stockholm. Only a few working for the Motala team went. This event attracted a great amount of attention in media. People from the government were invited. According to Ms Bjärgvide this event was a major show-off, but as far as she knows this is the only activity that the Exit Stockholm carried out so far.

¹⁴ Caspar Opitz, Dagens Nyheter, 25th of February 2002.

7. Exit Motala in the future

Exit Motala has during 2002 been undergoing a number of developments, from being a small local NGO to incorporating the whole city in their activities. They have also expanded their activities during the year to involve girls from Nazi organisation and asylum seekers.

In Motala the cooperation between Exit Motala and several local authorities, such as the school, the police, the politicians and the social authorities have been very successful. Exit Motala has also received a lot of media attention as something positive for the community. In that way the situation in Motala is under control. The situation regarding racist organisations have also improved, although individual Nazis still exists much of the gang structure has been dissolved.

On the other hand Exit Motala has many defectors as clients coming from the southern counties, e. g. Blekinge and Skane. The situation regarding Nazi and racist organisations in these counties is alarming. According to Ms Anita Bjärgvide many in southern Sweden fear to become involved due to the connections between Nazi and racist organisations and violent Motorcycle gangs. Many of the defectors are also using the protected accommodation that Exit Motala can offer. However the local authorities do not pay for this activity.

Anita Bjärgvide would like to expand the project's cooperation with the local authorities in southern Sweden. First since many of the defectors are from this area and the demand from southern Sweden is increasing. Second, since the racist organisations are very active in this part of Sweden. Exit Motala has already began to discuss regional involvement with local authorities in Karlskrona, where Anders Högström is stationed, and Helsingborg, where they work with Tobias Weikel.

7.1 The importance to start the work early

During the interview Ms Anita Bjärgvide recurrently emphasizes the importance to start the work with the young people early, before they are caught in destructive organisations. Therefore, it is of major importance to coordinate the society's different activities aiming at young people, both at a structural and organisational level and in the practical everyday work.

Ms Bjärgvide believes that no new action plans are needed for this development work, that the UN's Human Rights Convention and the School Act are good tools.

7.2 What is in future needed for leading successful activities?

The Exit Motala team would like to have the ability to help more young people than they can do today. Therefore, they would need more staff.

Regarding the Dellen project they would like to employ more women. The participating girls need role model women to meet and be strengthened by in their identities. Also if a girl urgently needs someone to talk to there must be possibility for that. At Dellen they would need at least five employed to make up a girl team. One has to be a social worker; the rest of the employed could, according to Ms Bjärgvide, have different educational backgrounds as they would function as contact persons.

At Exit Motala they also want to offer a homelike environment for the young to feel safe and comfortable. They also would like to be able to compensate to the eight support families that receive young people from Exit Motala, which today is not possible. These families are important in the work to build up a social network around the young person, to make him or her able to eventually live their own life.

Regarding the work of the defectors and since they have noticed an increase of demand from southern Sweden, they would need a full-time employed social worker and a few good lecturers, former defectors, three contact persons, one in every city, and an employed working with administration.

Regarding the Amir part of the project, they would need two full-time employed. A great amount of the work with young Swedish boys of immigrant background has involved negotiating in fights, many private conversations both with the children and their parents.

Exit Motala also want to educate their own staff. However, courses on the majority of methods used in the project are expensive and professional training in the method Aggressive Replacement Training, ART, is very expensive. Everyone in the staff has this year had the possibility to get a chance to be educated in MOD, Diversity and Dialogue, which 2002 was financed by the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications.

Anita Bjärgvide also would like to offer education in Swedish to asylum seeking women with children less than one year, since the state do not offer this group education.

She also would like to expand the meeting place at the youth club to the whole week. A few days before this report's deadline, it is decided by Motala municipality that Exit Motala will take over the youth club, where the Wednesday gathering takes place. This decision implies that the activities of the project can expand further, e. g. the youth club can be open for participants and visitors everyday, and they will move their office there.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

2002 is the first year for Exit Motala after its break from Exit Stockholm. Therefore, it may be difficult to evaluate their activities, since there are no statistics showing on how many who have left the White Power World, criminal gangs or destructive life styles in general.

However, even though they still are in a phase of building up and expanding their activities to involve girls and asylum seekers, they seem to have a support from the local district, e. g. local authorities and the local media. They have also attracted attention from media due to their schism with Exit Stockholm, and the latter's problems with the revision.

The work of Exit Motala also differs greatly from the work of Exit Stockholm. First, since they not only focus on male defectors from the White Power World, but also on young men of immigrant background, the girls and the asylum seekers. Secondly, since Motala is a smaller city than Stockholm and therefore the work may be better rooted and it may to a greater extent permeate the local society. Third, even though Exit Stockholm also use social workers in their work, the social aspect seem to be of greater importance in the work as e g meetings between people is emphasized. For Exit Stockholm a main part of the work involves lecturing. At Exit Motala they also lecture, but the important work I have wanted to emphasize in my report is their work in their community and their efforts to the combat racism and xenophobia on a local scale.

8.1 Integration is central

The concept of integration is central in the work of Exit Motala, as they are working with people marginalised within the Swedish society; the defectors, young Swedish boys with immigrant background from criminal gangs, the girls and the asylum seekers.

For a young person living a life in terms of being a part of criminal and racist groups and in many cases suffering from alcohol or drug abuse is being marginalised in society. This marginalisation is a sign of today's segregation and the victims are not only the immigrants, also Swedes can experience this. This is where the racist organisations are choosing their victims; their younger members. It is also from the segregated suburbs, the criminal gangs are picking out boys of immigrant background to carry out criminal acts. Therefore, the work of Exit Motala not only can be seen as a combat against racism and xenophobia but also a way to fight the segregation in society.

One of their main purposes is thus their work to integrate all these people into the society, something that the social authorities and other institutions in society may have failed to do. Exit Motala help their clients start to live "normal" lives with work and studies, and eventually family life. Another aspect of integration used as a working method of Exit Motala, is the activities carried out for all participants in all parts of the project, e. g. the democracy course and the Wednesday gathering. Creating meeting situations for different people is a rather simple way and may be effective in combating prejudices in society. Defectors meet the boys with immigrant background and asylum seekers and the other way around. This may imply that instead of hatred towards each other they learn to respect and understand each other.

Another aspect of integration is the way they work in the surrounding communities, by involving the school, the police, the social authorities and politicians in their work. The work to combat racism and xenophobia has to start early and the cooperation between different has to become improved.

Exit Motala is also a good example that shows that small-scaled projects working within their own communities can work effectively with rather small means to combat racism and xenophobia. The work is however tiresome as there are mainly only a few fiery spirits involved in the activities. They are carrying the main part of the workload. A major part of the work is on a voluntary basis. The social aspect of the work implies being available day and night. As the project have turned out to be successful there are many defectors and other young people turning to them, but they have no possibilities to receive all of them.

There is no mistaking the support of the youngsters participating in the Exit Motala. During a full day seminar in Motala in November 2002, in which various features of the projects was analysed and discussed by local politician, students, researchers and police, Mr Stieg Larsson, a director of Expo Foundation in Stockholm, spoke with a number of Nazi defectors, immigrant youngsters and girls in the project, who were all beaming with pride of the mutual accomplishments. Several youngsters expressed their sentiment that Exit Motala had made all the difference to their life, and that they now had opportunities they could not imagine one year ago.

Also the situation in Sweden regarding the expansion of racist and xenophobic organisations and also the increasing housing segregation, implies the need of projects like Exit Motala, in particular in southern Sweden, where the situation after the general election has proven to be seriously threatening to the democratic values of society.

8.2 Segregation and marginalisation

However you cannot stop these organisations' expansion, if you do not analyse who are most subject to the propaganda of the racist and xenophobic organisations. That the young people already marginalised in society, without friends and support from parents, who in one way or the other are drawn into the racist organisations. This also regards the boys of immigrant background and girls that through their boyfriends join racist organisations.

In a segregated society where people of different social classes and different background rarely meet prejudice against each other increase. People already in the margins have difficulties in becoming involved in society due to prejudice. This is also an aspect of great importance when working with young marginalised people. For instance when people meet young persons with racist thoughts they tend to forget that behind there is a human being even if one dislikes his or her attitudes one has to show them respect. This distancing may imply that the person with racist thoughts or being involved in criminal gangs becomes more marginalised instead of gaining insight that this may be the wrong path. Thus, they may choose to go deeper into the marginalisation since no one understands them.

This segregation has to be broken, and that work has to start in an early phase of a young person's life, when he or she is at school. Young people that are in a danger zone have to be noticed at an early stage. The staff at Exit Motala has great knowledge of this, as the founders have been working in the schools. They know that it is here that more resources are needed to catch up young people heading towards destructive life styles. They also know that they alone

cannot carry that load, these ideas and work methods have to be integrated in e.g. schools and other major actors involved in young people's lives. Exit Motala can thus also function as guidance and an advisory body.

8.3 Democracy

The ideas of the human right convention have to be implemented in the school's activities more effectively than it is today. The children have to learn how to become a part of our democratic society. Thus they learn both the fundamental rights and also the obligations that follow.

Democracy is another central concept of the activities. First, because of the main aim to work with clients who have been politically involved in organisations against the fundamental democratic values in society. But also since the democratic process is imbued in all activities and work of Exit Motala. Everyone involved has full insight in the work and activities of the project. The participants also receive training in democracy through participating in every step of the project, since there are also participants as representatives at the meetings. The course in democracy that soon will start is another aspect.

8.4 Recommendations

It is very difficult to find any recommendations within this area. However, it is important to emphasize the good work such a small-scaled project can result in within their local community in combating racism and xenophobia. The work against these phenomena has to be imbued in society. Therefore, it is important to work on a local basis instead of a national.

Since their work not only imply the fight against racism but also the fight against segregation and marginalisation, their efforts to cooperate with important local actors is of major importance.

The recommendation could thus be that the government should more effectively give support to small-scaled activities out in the country; activities that involve local authorities and institutions, such as the school, the police and the social authorities. And also it is important to emphasize the possibility for each project to develop individually. Exit Motala is good example on how a project can expand, from focusing on only one group to involve different groups in their activities to combat racism, xenophobia and segregation in society and to fight for democratic values in society.

A main part of the Swedish authorities' system of granting different projects funding, means that the project should write applications according to the authorities requirements on what is needed. This may imply that many projects may already have fixed ideas on what they want to accomplish and how the work should be developed, but since the authorities are focusing on certain activities, the projects have to write applications according to the required activities and aims to be granted.

- The recommendation is thus to revise the system of granting projects means.
- Another recommendation is that the financiers should appoint a revision group to evaluate the granted projects in a more practical and thorough way than is done today. This evaluation group could make surprise visits in order to study the result.

A fundamental problem for many groups working in this area is that the actual work being carried out is not funded or appreciated in any way. As a result, many NGO:s with sound local ideas and functioning methods more or less has to “invent” project ideas in order to obtain funding. This leads to insecurities for the people involved in activities; funding may be cut off from one year to another, and long time planning may even be impossible.

- One recommendation is that funds to a larger extent should tend to go to groups and organisations with proven consistent work and methods that have proved to be functional – not to sudden campaigns.

8.5 Concluding comment

It is like Anita Bjärgvide says in the interview that the concept of Exit Motala is fairly simple and also cost-effective, as it does not have to imply expensive activities. The thing needed is a fiery spirit such as Ms Bjärgvide, someone who has understood the importance of meetings in our society and dedicates her life for this purpose.

Our society has become a society where people very rarely meet. This lack of human contact causes problems with the next generation, our children. We have to realise this before it is too late.

In addition the political winds in Europe have changed. The extreme-right parties are expanding and recruiting all over Europe and people who feel marginalised and outside the democratic process are easy targets for the extreme-right wing’s propaganda. They have become victims and this is their protest against the establishment. Thus it is important to involve everyone, everyone has to get a chance to participate and to feel included, not excluded.

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