



ENGLISH VERSION



THE SWEDISH NATIONAL BOARD FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS  
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# YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ATTITUDE

THE SWEDISH NATIONAL BOARD FOR YOUTH AFFAIRS – ATTITUDE AND VALUE SURVEY 2007

## SUMMARY

# Preface

On behalf of the Swedish government, and as part of the follow-up of youth policies, Sweden's National Board for Youth Affairs [Ungdomsstyrelsen] undertakes regular attitude and value surveys. Both young and older people reply to questions on attitudes to becoming an adult, leisure, work, politics, diversity issues, gender equality, health etc.

*"Young People with Attitude" [Unga med attityd]* is the 2007 survey which was presented to the Swedish Minister for youth, Nyamko Sabuni, on 31st October 2007.

Reports on the attitudes and values of young people frequently arouse great interest. There is an idea that young people as a group enter the future before other generations and that youth is more open to influence and inclined to change. In order to find out how things are at present we have now carried out the fourth study into attitudes and values since 1993.

The National Board for Youth Affairs has included an older comparison group in the survey in order to obtain an idea as to whether the attitudes and values which young people express are specific to young people as a group. Besides making comparisons between generations, we have attempted to illuminate the differences within the youth population and over a period of time. We attempt to capture structures and patterns in order to use these to interpret attitudes and values of young people today.

The survey has focused on 6 000 persons in the age-range of 16–29 years and 1 500 in the age-range of 35–74 years. The purpose of the survey is to acquire increased knowledge about young peoples' outlook on their life situation. The number of young people will be increasing in Sweden in the next few years; this makes it especially urgent to take a close look at the attitudes and values of young people. How do they view the society in which they live, their own situation and the future? These and many other questions we attempt to answer in the report *Young People with Attitude*.

The field study has been carried out by Statistics Sweden [SCB]. The National Board for Youth Affairs has also collaborated with a number of researchers.<sup>1</sup>

The National Board for Youth Affairs wishes to thank everyone who has contributed to bringing this report to fruition.

Per Nilsson  
Director-General, Ungdomsstyrelsen  
October 2007 Stockholm

# An attitude survey covering several generations

The reason for the survey being carried out within the age category of 16–74 years is *inter alia* to see whether the attitudes of young persons differentiate themselves from those of older persons. There is much evidence that young people have different attitudes than older people. Those who are young, at present, have grown up under different circumstances and in another social environment than their parents and grandparents. Research into values has shown that this is of relevance for which values different generations share. But young people are also at a bewildering stage of life in which they conclude their education, establish themselves in the labour and housing markets and form a family. How and when this takes place has undergone great changes in recent decades. Last but not least, studies of values in different generations are able to offer an indication of those values that will be more common in society in the future, given that the values one has when young are stable throughout life.

Since the survey was carried out for the fourth time in 2007 - the earlier surveys were realised in 1993, 1997 and 2002 - there is an opportunity to compare changes in the attitudes of different groups over time. A few of the questions have longer measurement intervals. The selection of young people has been larger than for older people in all years so as to enable comparisons between different groups of young people.

The study is based on 7 500 questionnaires that were sent out to 6 000 young people in the age group 16–29 years (young) on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to 1 500 of the age group 35–74 years (older). The national youth policy is focused on the age group of 13–25 years. The response frequency was 53 per cent and data collection was concluded at the end of January 2007. The material has been calibrated and weighted in order to be representative of the population.

## To be adult takes time

In a longer-term perspective, which clearly captures how the different phases of life have changed, the importance of leisure has grown in weight. In a survey from 1955 a fixed job and economic security then children were the most important factors, to have spare time and enjoy it was ranked in third place. At the current time, these three different components are given the same weight in the age group 16–29 years. During this period settling down has been postponed within most areas, for example many young people are not established in the labour market before they have reached the age of 30<sup>2</sup> and a significantly larger share of young people are studying, the average length of the individual's education rose from 11 to 15 years between the years of 1974 and 2000.<sup>3</sup> The formation of a family has also been delayed, the average age for a first-time mother was 29 years and for a first-time father 31 years in 2006, in 1975, on the other hand, they were 24 and 27 years old respectively.<sup>4</sup>

In parallel, the view of becoming an adult as held by people has changed. Traditionally, it has been regarded as a *transition between different phases of life* - such as becoming a parent or leaving home, reaching legal age etc. On the basis of this definition, in Sweden one becomes adult at the age of 30. The results in the survey show, instead, that dimensions that take account of an *individual's development* - knowing what one wants to do with one's life, finding one's identity or accepting responsibility for one's decisions - appear to play an ever greater role. What characterises these of course is that they cannot be tied to a special age. A comparison over time shows that a greater proportion of young people emphasise the individual development and that the importance of different transitions for becoming adult appear to have declined.

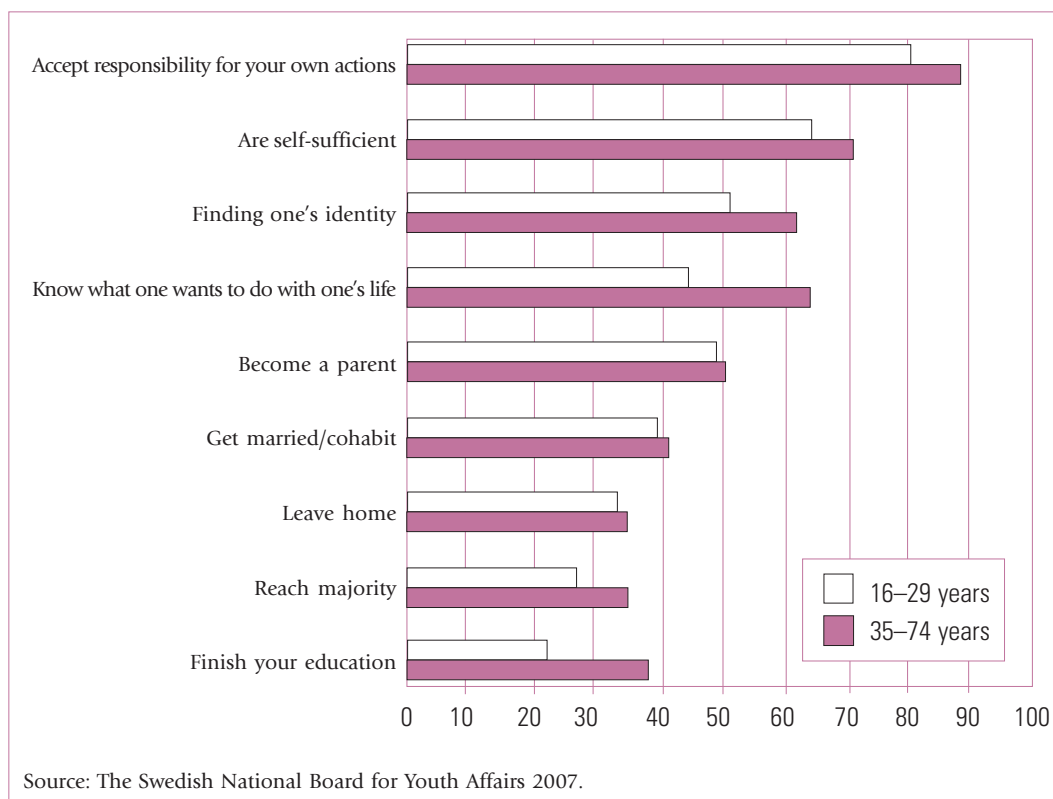
Many respondents still emphasise different role transitions and that these are given great significance in advance, but after they have passed or been achieved they lose weight. For example, young people who are just below the age of majority give this transition a greater importance than young people who have passed this age.

The majority specify the properties that may be said to describe a linear process of settling down when they state what they view as *important at the age of 35* - work, housing, family and children. Much of this is also *important for young people at present* - but in addition spare time is important, equally important as work and family.

Three dimensions of what is important at the age of 35 may be identified. Most important are *traditional goals* (family, children, work and housing), subsequently *material goals* (good position in society, own company and high standard of living) and finally *post-material goals* (high standard of living, self-realisation, travel and leisure time). Even if Sweden ends up high in the post-materialism index in the large international surveys<sup>5</sup> the majority of the young

nevertheless have concrete material values. This is seen also when we enquire, for example, about important properties in a job - where the list is topped by friendly colleagues at work, a good work environment and good manager - whereas properties such as international contacts, flexible working hours, own responsibility etc. come long down the list. Furthermore, the top three remains the same for the older participants in the survey.

Not unexpectedly, a clear majority or 80 per cent of the young people look *optimistically on their future*. Moreover, a majority consider that family and friends are what *give life most meaning*. Of the young people who believe in a God that one can have a personal relation to (15 per cent of the young), every fifth young person believes that belief is what gives life most meaning. International surveys have shown that Sweden is an extremely secularised country; in actual fact religion is given the lowest importance in Sweden in comparison with the 66 countries that have been surveyed.<sup>6</sup>



**Fig 2.1 Share that agrees to the proposition: You are an adult when you... 16-74 years, 2007. Per cent.**

# Tolerance and equal opportunities

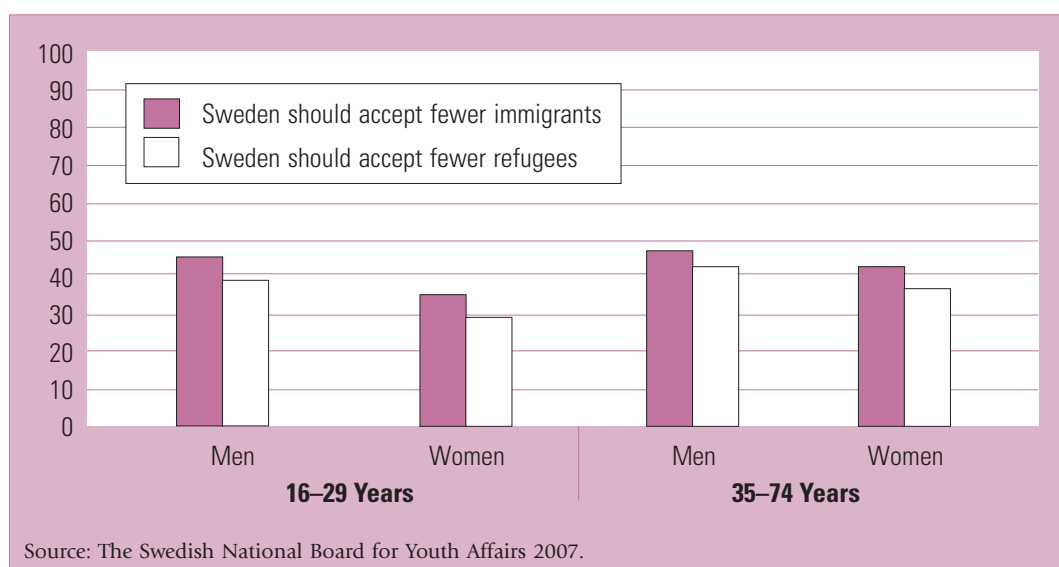
## Diversity

Sweden today is a country where 12.8 per cent of the total population was born outside Sweden and 14.4 per cent in the population between 16 and 29.<sup>7</sup> This is on a level with USA and Germany and a higher share than in Great Britain or France.<sup>8</sup> During just over fifty years, 1865–1925, Sweden was a land of emigration. Since the end of the Second World War, Sweden has been a land of immigration with immigration of labour during the 1950s and 1960s and refugee and family immigration since the 1980s. Presently the issue is immigration, above all from Asia and Africa, whereas formerly the refugee streams were from the Balkans, among others, while prior to this the influx of labour came from e.g. the former Yugoslavia and from neighbouring countries in the Nordic region.

In the National Board for Youth Affairs survey there have been questions on attitudes to immigrants and refugees since 1993 and we can see that opinions towards immigrants and refugees have become more permissive since then. In 1993 70 per cent in the age group 16–29 years considered that *Sweden should accept fewer refugees* - now the figure is 40 per cent. Nine out of ten young persons born abroad have

some or many friends with another ethnic background than themselves, amongst Swedish-born young people the proportion is 80 per cent. Amongst the older people 67 per cent have some or many friends with another ethnic background than themselves.

Possibly the increased tolerance and the reduced negative attitudes depend on an increased proportion of foreign-born people in the population which, in its turn, leads to more having friends of another ethnic background than themselves. In the group of young people, moreover, 70 per cent say that it is important to manage to travel and look around before reaching the age of 35 and an equally large proportion state that they would like to move from Sweden and live in another country for at least 6 months. Of the young people 84 per cent have been abroad without their parents, 30 per cent have been abroad at least six times. Young people in Sweden may therefore be assumed to have a certain experience of meeting other cultures – as immigrant or as traveller. There is a clear link between having many friends with a different ethnic background and greater tolerance.



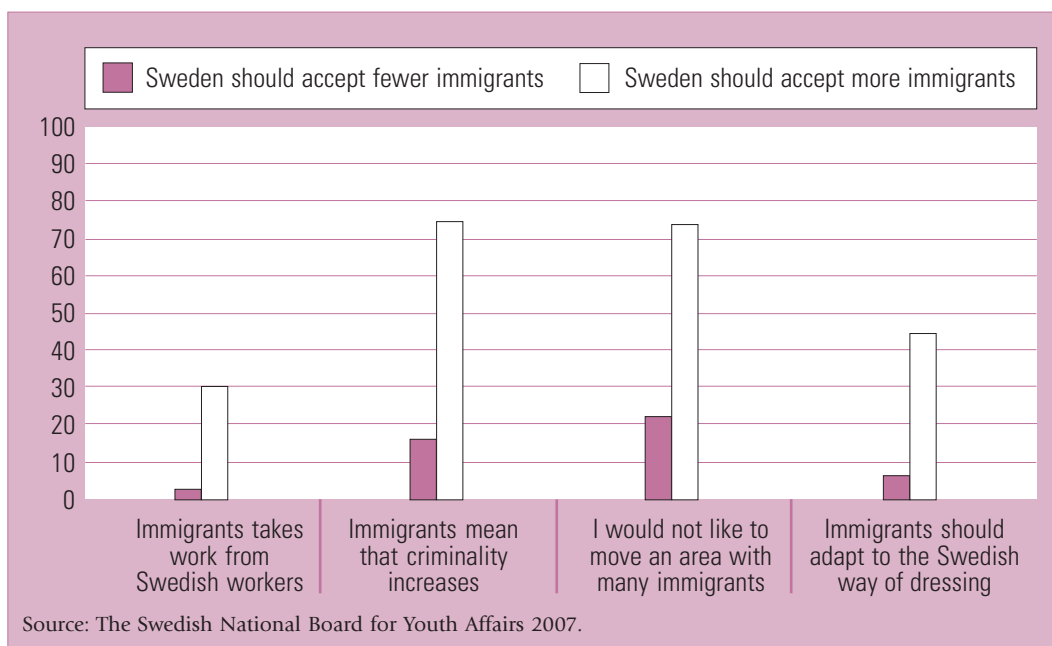
**Fig 4.2** Share that agrees to the propositions above, 16–74 years, 2007. Per cent.

The demands that are placed on immigrants to adapt in Sweden apply above all to language and looking after children, and not to the same extent to customs and clothing - only 23 per cent of the young agree with the proposition that *immigrants should adapt to the Swedish way of dressing*. In this case Sweden is markedly different from many other countries in northern Europe where indeed the choice of clothing is frequently perceived as problematic.

But there still remain negative attitudes. Between 40 and 50 per cent of both young and older people consider, for example, that *immigrants mean that criminality increases* and would *not like to move to an area with many immigrants*. However, an equally large share, 40 to 50 per cent of both young and older people consider that *immigrants make a contribution to Sweden's population and culture*.

One half or 50 per cent of both young and older respondents agree with the proposition that *there are many racists amongst Swedes*, and 15 per cent of young and older agree that *Sweden is a racist society*. A possible interpretation of these results is that while only a minority believes that there is structural racism in Sweden many more believe that many Swedes are prejudiced.

It is consequently not so remarkable that only 20 per cent of the age group 16–29 agree with the statement that *immigrants have as great opportunities as Swedes to succeed in society* whereas 68 per cent of the young people in the survey who are born abroad and 58 per cent of the young people who are born in Sweden consider that the statement does not tally.



**Fig 4.4 Share that agrees to the proposition: Sweden should accept fewer/more immigrants. 16–74 years, 2007. Per cent..**

## Sexual equality

The image that exists of Sweden as a land of sexual equality is both confirmed and denied in the survey. It is confirmed to the extent that all statements in the survey that relate to the twin breadwinner norm, i.e. equal distribution of work in the home and shared parental leave from work has great impact at all ages and most amongst young people. What speaks against this policy of equality is, on the one hand, the statement *things have gone too far with gender equality in this country* with which 30 per cent are in agreement while 22 per cent of the young men and 36 per cent of the young women agree that *their possibilities of career and salary development are negatively affected by having children*.

## Sexual identity

Even if two out of three children and young people in Sweden live with both their biological parents, younger people question the nuclear family norm to a greater extent than older people. The statement that *a child needs both a mummy and daddy to grow up happily* is agreed with by 40 per cent of younger people and 60 per cent of older people. Previous reports have made connections to the fact that a large proportion of young people are growing up with a single parent. Now we also see clear connections to the view of same-sex relationships - those who do not agree with the fact that children need both a mother and father agree to a greater extent that homosexual couples have equally good prerequisites for being good parents as heterosexual couples.

**Tab 4.4 Share that agrees to the propositions below, 16–74 years, 2007. Per cent**

	Age group	Men	Woman	Total
It doesn't matter who earns the most in a household	16–29 yrs	82	84	83
	35–74 yrs	87	84	85
All fathers should take paternal leave	16–29 yrs	63	63	63
	35–74 yrs	51	54	53
Career and salary are negatively affected by having children	16–29 yrs	22	36	30
	35–74 yrs	19	26	23
To be a housewife are as satisfying as a career	16–29 yrs	13	17	15
	35–74 yrs	22	27	25
In a family the woman should have responsibility for the children	16–29 yrs	8	4	6
	35–74 yrs	13	6	9
Women have bigger responsibility than men for the housework	16–29 yrs	8	4	6
	35–74 yrs	6	5	6

Source: The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs 2007.

**Tab 4.7 Share that agrees to the following propositions, 16–29 years if nothing else is mentioned, 2007. Per cent**

	16–29 years	35–74 years	Man	Woman	Born in Sweden	Born abroad	Rural area	Urban area	Blue collar backgr.	White collar backgr.
Homosexuals should have equal right to marry as heterosexuals	71	54	61	82	73	58	67	74	65	78
Homosexual couples have as good prerequisites as heterosexual ones to be good parents	63	44	51	76	65	53	58	67	58	67
Homosexuals shall have the right to adopt on equal terms as heterosexuals	46	29	33	61	48	32	40	50	40	53

Source: The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs 2007.

With the statement that *homosexual couples have as good prerequisites as heterosexual ones to be good parents* agree 50 per cent of the young and 30 per cent of the older people. A higher proportion agree that *homosexuals shall have equal rights to marry* (71 and 54 per cent respectively), whereas a lower proportion agree with the statement *homosexuals shall have the right to adopt on equal terms as heterosexuals* (46 and 29 per cent respectively). The majority of young people have positive attitudes to homosexuals whereas this does not apply to older people. A greater proportion of young women are also positive than amongst young men.

### Tolerance - generation and gender

In this year's survey it emerges that even if young people in Sweden are more tolerant than older people to the rights of homosexuals, the rights of immigrants and, in general terms, are in favour of gender equality young men deviate from this pattern and show a lower tolerance than young women. Why this is so is unclear.

In other studies too, the results show that a significantly larger proportion of young women are very tolerant than the proportion of young men, whether this applies to foreign background, ethnicity or sexual identity. A particularly high proportion of young women are tolerant towards homosexuals whereas the young men are more tolerant towards immigrants than towards homosexuals.<sup>9</sup> What does not appear in other reports is that there are great differences between the generations in attitudes towards immigrants and homosexuals but also even now towards equal rights for women and men.

What, however, appears with all clarity in all the reports is that these attitudes, whether or not one is tolerant, are interconnected. Efforts to increase tolerance and change attitudes may therefore, with advantage, include different grounds of discrimination.

### Political interest and participation

The perception in Sweden is that young people show little interest in politics and participate to a small extent. Nevertheless, an international enquiry, the European Social Survey 2003 which was conducted in 21 countries, shows that young people in Sweden are comparably very interested in politics (they came in second place) and involved (in this case young people in Sweden took first place) (Fahmy 2006).

Participation in elections lies between 75 and 85 per cent for most groups in society with the exception of those born abroad with the right to vote, of these just 60 per cent vote.

The interest in politics appears to increase with age, 27 per cent of the young are *interested in politics in general* whereas 36 per cent of older people are. Of the young people 38 per cent are also interested in *community or society issues* compared with 51 per cent of older people. The political interest is unchanged since 2002, but lower than in 1993. The interest is highest amongst the oldest, namely 55–74 year-olds. About 4 per cent of the young and 6–7 per cent of the older respondents are members of political parties.

The most important political issues for young people are, according to the answers in the survey, *Young People with Attitude*, work, school, health care and the environment. For older people it is health care, school, work and care of the elderly.

The majority, 83 per cent, of both younger and older respondents do not agree with the statement *most political decisions are so complicated that it is best that only experts decide* but neither agrees to any great extent, 42 per cent of the young and 55 per cent of the older, with *each citizen should get to know how decisions are made and how the country is governed*. Younger people agree to a lesser extent than older people with the statement that the gap between established politicians and ordinary citizens has become greater, 53 per cent compared with 74 per cent.



Only 5 per cent, amongst both younger and older people, consider they are able to *influence political decisions*. On the other hand 57 per cent of younger people believe they can *influence the choice of their education* and 26 per cent that they can *influence their housing situation*. Amongst older people, 58 per cent deemed that they can influence their housing.

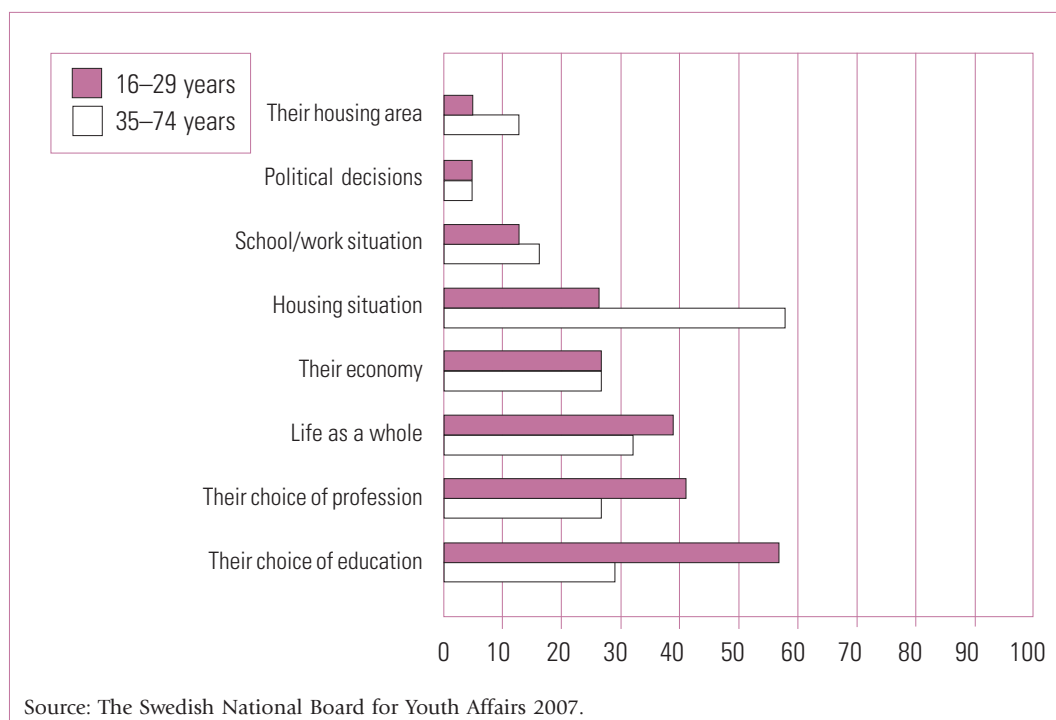
Individuals with a higher educational qualification and who are interested in politics believe to the greatest extent that *their voice is heard in the community*.

Amongst the young, 44 per cent can envisage being a *member of a political party* and 8 per cent answer that they are, or have been, members. Young people *debate politics on the Internet* to a greater extent than older people. They are also prepared to a greater extent to *participate in different protest actions* whereas older people tend to choose more traditional activities within the representative democracy.

**Tab 6.2 Share that agrees to the following propositions, 16–29 years if nothing else is mentioned, 2007. Per cent**

	16–29 years	35–74 years	Born in Sweden	Born abroad	Studying	Working	Unemployed	Rural area	Urban area
One should get involved in politics, support what's right and protest against what's wrong	56	61	55	59	59	52	57	52	58
The gap between established politicians and common citizens have grown	53	74	53	53	49	56	62	54	51
Each citizen should get to know how decisions are made and how the country is governed	42	55	43	40	47	43	34	33	49
Most political decisions are so complicated that it is best that only experts decide	17	17	16	23	18	15	14	15	17

Source: The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs 2007.



Source: The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs 2007.

**Fig 6.14 Share that agrees that they can influence... 16–74 years, 2007. Per cent.**

# Young persons' health and life quality

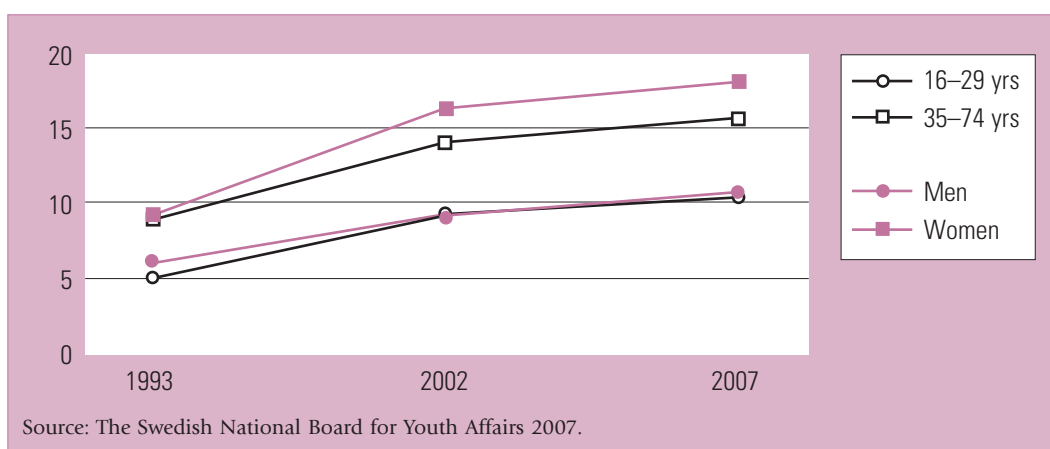
Young people in Sweden feel well in an international comparison. But young people have felt better than they do at present. Despite young people consuming less alcohol, tobacco and drugs at present than they did in the 1980's, the proportion frequently *anxious about their health* has actually risen (Ungdomsstyrelsen 2007). Psychosomatic symptoms - e.g. stomach ache, headaches and sleeplessness - have also steadily grown and in this case, above all, amongst young women. The proportion that is wholly satisfied with their health is at the same level as 1997 amongst the young, whereas it has increased in the older group. Least satisfied with their health are the young unemployed. The proportion that considers that *life meets their expectations* has declined. There are clear indications of an increased polarisation in the group of young people.

Within the young persons' group, the 16–19 year-olds are most pessimistic about *their future*, 6 per cent of them are fairly or very pessimistic about their future compared with 2 per cent in the age group 25–29 years. The equivalent pattern has existed since 1997 when the question was first asked. In the age-groups of young people between 5 and 11 per cent are dissatisfied with *their life* at present and 75 per cent are satisfied. Of those who are satisfied, between 23 and 30 per cent are completely

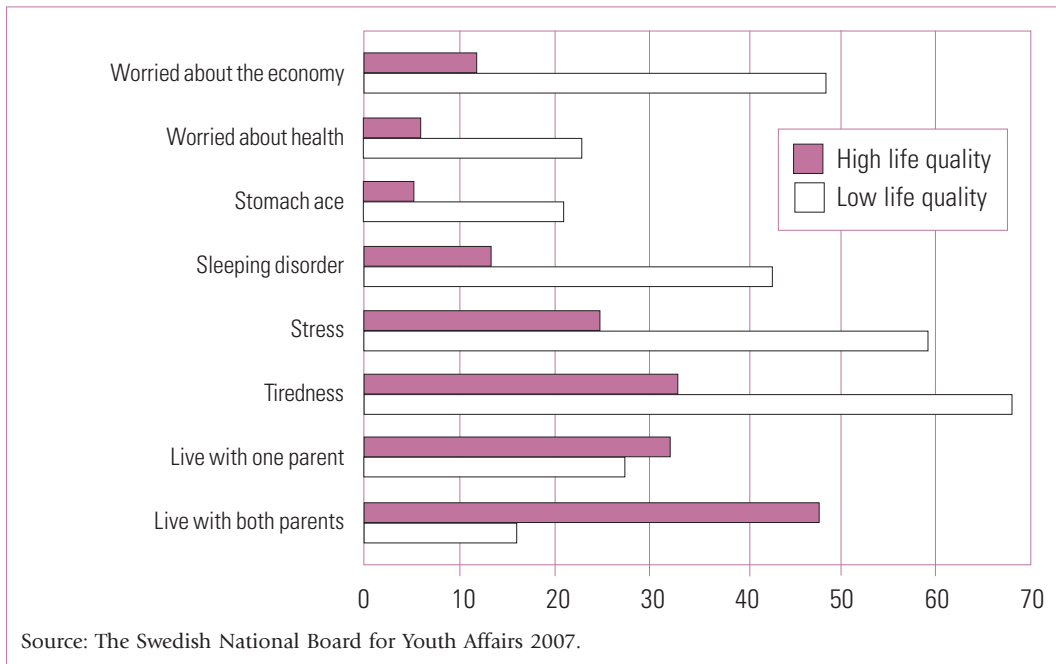
satisfied with their life at present. Most satisfied are the age-group 55–74 where a majority, 53 per cent, reply that they are very satisfied.

A slightly smaller share of young people (46 per cent) than older people (55 per cent) consider that *life meets their expectations*. Amongst young people who are unemployed or in labour market programmes only 22 per cent agree that life corresponds to their expectations while 49 per cent believe that it does not. There is a strong link between the extent that one's life corresponds to expectations and how one looks on the future. In the same way there is a link between how satisfied one is with life and how one views the future. Those who are satisfied view the future optimistically, whereas every third young person who is dissatisfied with their life view the future with pessimism, but the majority is still optimistic.

It is the age-group 55–74 years who, to the greatest extent, has a high *quality of life*. In the group of young people 7 per cent state they have a low quality of life, but 64 per cent of them report that they view the future optimistically. Nine out of ten, 93 per cent, have a high quality of life and, of them, almost all, 99 per cent, have an optimistic view of the future. The youth category that, to the greatest extent, has a low quality of life is those young people who are unemployed. Those who answer that they have



**Fig. 8.2 Share that are often anxious about their health. 16–74 years. 1993, 2002 and 2007. Per cent.**



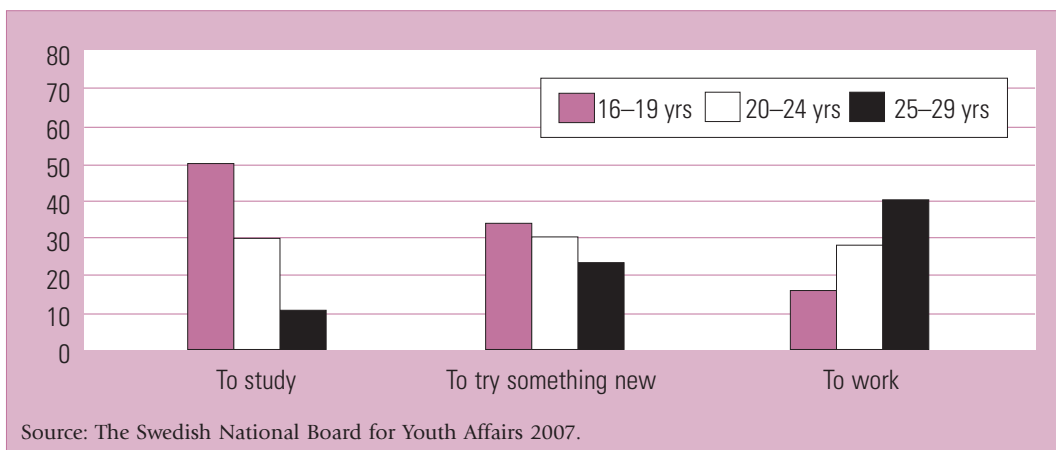
**Fig 8.11 Shares with low and high quality of life that often or everyday has the following problems/symptoms, or live with one or both of their parents. 16–29 years, 2007. Per cent.**

a low life quality are, to a greater extent, in a difficult financial situation and, to a lesser extent, are satisfied with their relationship with their parents, friends and partners than young people who have a high quality of life.

### Mobility and housing

The average age when young people move from the parental home is relatively low in Sweden, around 20–21 years. Young women move earlier than young men. But over the last ten years the difference has decreased between young women and young men. The average age has also risen slightly. On the one hand, because young

people study for longer at present and those who study frequently remain living with their parents and, on the other hand, because there is a shortage of smaller and cheaper housing - primarily in the larger cities. Young people in the age group 19–30 years move, on average, five times across the municipal border and mainly in connection with studies or change of work (SOU 2007:35). Moves that are longer than 100 km are made primarily in this age group. The number of those that move has risen continuously, both within Sweden and abroad. The numbers who emigrate has also risen steadily in the last fifty years. It is principally



**Fig 9.1 Why they think they will move from their hometown. 16–29 years, 2007. Per cent.**

young people who emigrate; the average age for those who emigrate is 25 years for women and 27 years for men (SCB 2004).

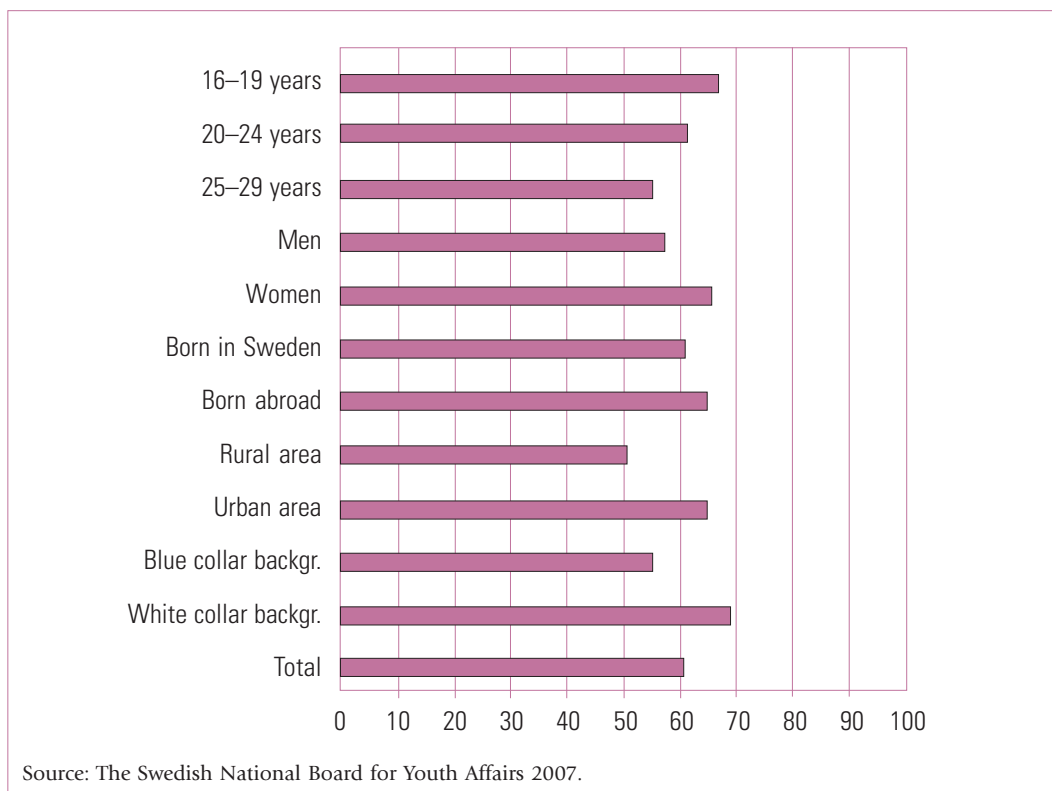
Every third young person, 36 per cent, envisages moving from their place of residence within the next few years while 39 per cent believe they will remain. A greater proportion believe that they will stay put in their place of residence in 2007 compared with 1997 when it was 35 per cent and the proportion approaches the results from 1993 (42 per cent). Those who believe that they will move state as reasons their studies, to try out something new or work as the three foremost reasons.

The majority agree that it is important to have managed to travel before they are 35 years. There is a larger proportion of 16–19 year-olds than 25–29 year-olds who agree that managing to travel is important. To travel and look around is however adjudged as important by a majority in the youth category as a whole and this has not altered since 1997. However, a lower proportion of young people in 2007 compared with 2002 state they wish to live abroad during at least six months, 70 per cent compared with 80 per cent. At the same time, the proportion that has never been abroad increased slightly and the proportion that has been abroad a great deal

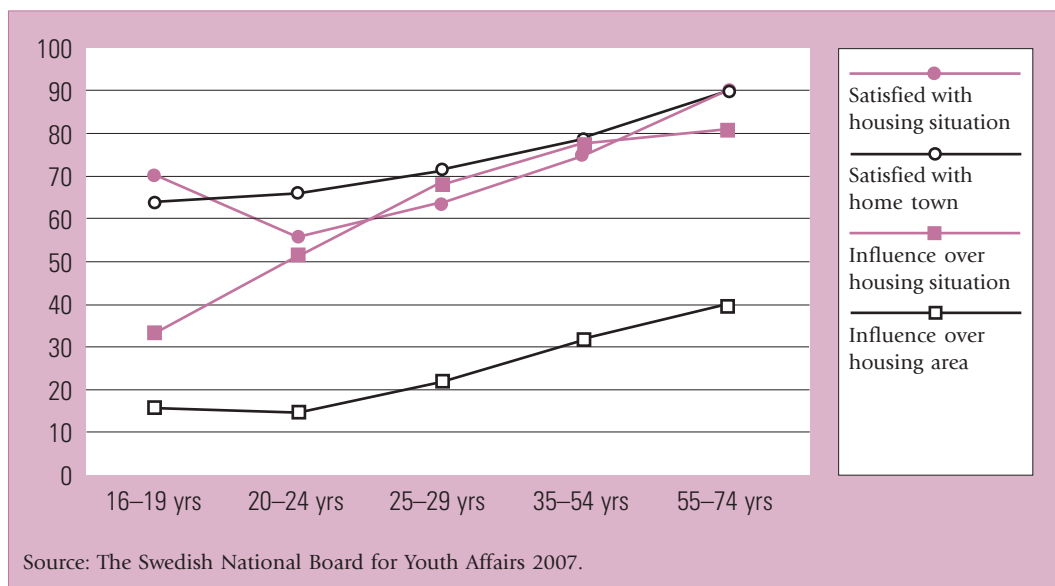
declined or in any case did not increase. This marks a break in the trend compared with earlier when the figures showed unequivocally an increase in mobility.

The share who are satisfied with their housing declines between the age group 16–19 years, when young people live with their parents and 70 per cent are satisfied, and 20–24 year-olds, when young people initiate the process of getting established in the housing market and 56 per cent are satisfied. Then the share that agrees with the above increases gradually with the age groups and amongst the oldest, namely 55–74 years, is also to be found the largest proportion of satisfied respondents, 90 per cent.

The youngest, those who live with their parents, agree least that they have influence over their housing situation, 33 per cent, and then the influence increases gradually in the different age groups to 81 per cent in the age group 55–74 years. Also amongst young people who are unemployed or are students, a low proportion perceives they have influence over their housing situation, 41–42 per cent. Whereas the proportion that deem they have influence over their housing is greatest amongst the young who live in rural areas, 62 per cent, and young people who are working, 65 per cent.



**Fig 9.2 Share that thinks it is important to travel before the age of 35 in different groups. 16–29 years, 2007. Per cent.**



**Fig 9.5 Satisfied with housing situation and hometown, and share that have influence over their housing situation and over their housing area. 16–74 years, 2007. Per cent.**

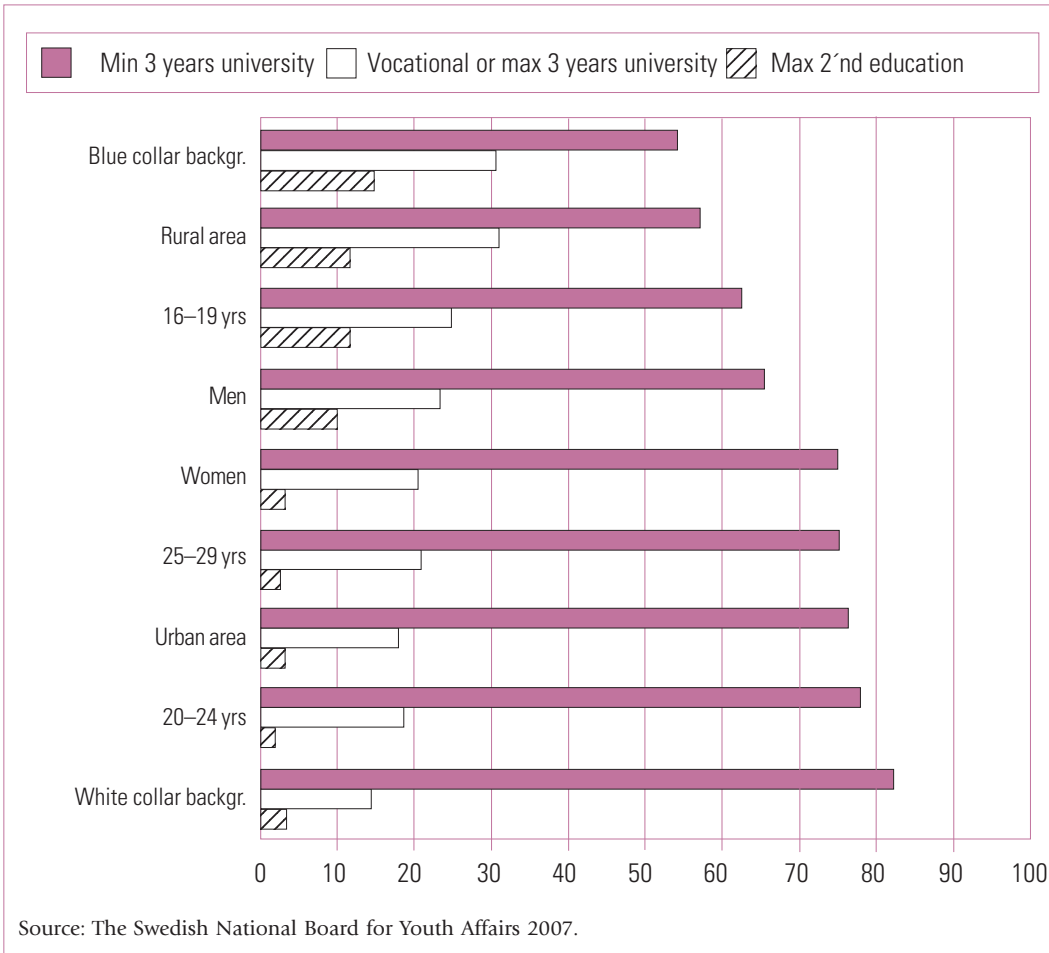
### Views of young people on education

In Sweden today the great majority of young people undergo, besides 9-year compulsory school [grundskolan], a secondary education, [gymnasiet], and roughly 50 per cent then study at the university level before they are 30 years. About 5 per cent leave 9-year compulsory school and 15 per cent are unable to cope with secondary education [gymnasiet] (Skolverket/National Agency for Education 2007). Between 20 per cent (25–29 years) and 80 per cent (16–19 years) study in the respective group of young persons. Of those who are studying, 70 per cent state that they *plan at least a three-year education at university level*. In the question concerning planned education no differences are visible between young women and young men or between young persons who are born abroad and young people born in Sweden. A tangible difference exists between those who have parents who are workers, of these just over 50 per cent plan a longer education, and those who have parents who are higher non-manual employees, of them over 80 per cent do so.

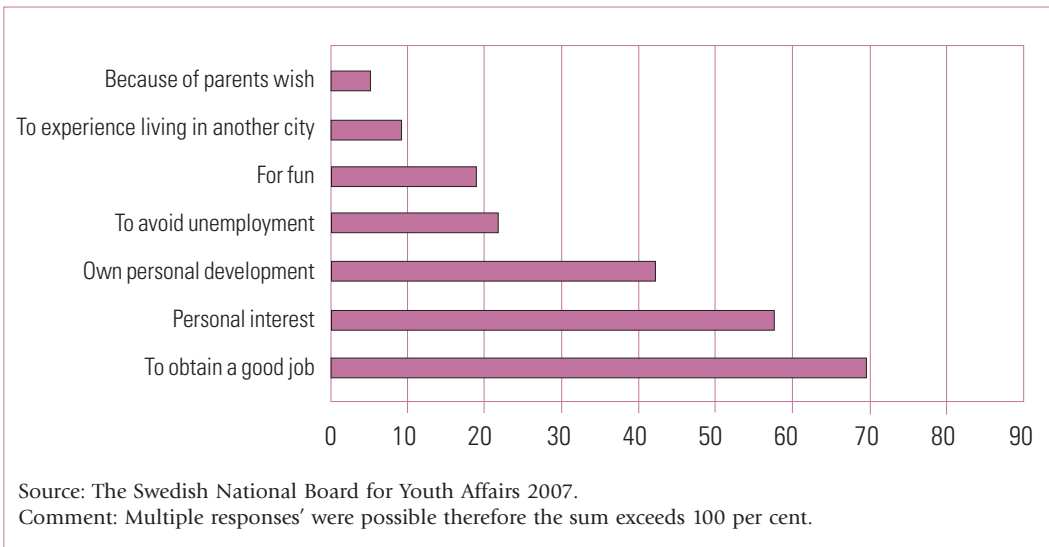
The principal reasons stated for higher education studies is the *possibility of obtaining a good job* (70 per cent), then comes the possibility of working with something one is really interested in (57 per cent) and one's own personal

development (42 per cent). One out of five, 22 per cent, reply that they can envisage studying to avoid being unemployed.

Sixty per cent of the young people and fifty per cent of the older respondents agree with the assertion that they have had great *influence over their level of education*. A lower proportion of those young people who are unemployed and young Swedes born abroad agree with the assertion that they have had the opportunity of influencing their education choice (less than 50 per cent think this). In the age group 16–19 years, 40 per cent are completely *satisfied with their education*; in the age range 20–24 years 25 per cent are wholly satisfied while in the age range 25–29 years, 30 per cent are wholly satisfied. Young people with a longer education agree to a greater extent that they are satisfied. Young people who are studying at present, at the secondary or higher levels of education, also agree to a greater extent that they are wholly satisfied. Only 15 per cent of the unemployed are satisfied with their education, compared with 25 per cent of those who work and 38 per cent of those who study. The largest proportion of those completely satisfied with their education, over 50 per cent, are to be found in the age range 55–74 years. Those who report that they have had great influence in the choice of their education also state, to a larger extent, that they are satisfied with their education.



**Fig 10.1 Different youth categories and their planned highest education level, 16–29 years, 2007. Per cent.**



**Fig 10.4 Why do you study/do you want to study at the university? 16–29 years, 2007. Per cent.**

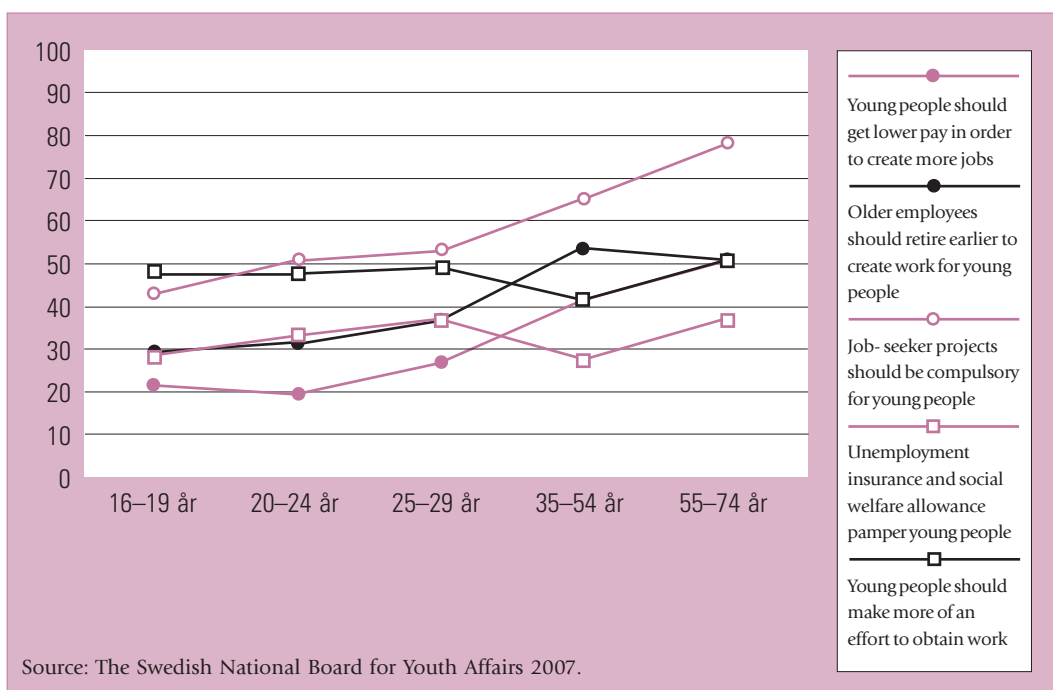
# A labour market for all

It takes a long time for many young people in Sweden to find a position in the labour market. Depending on how one calculates, the average age varies. If, as the age for getting established, we count the age when 75 per cent of a cohort have employment *of some sat in* 2007 we end up at about the age of 26–27 years. If by established we mean that one has not been unemployed during at least 2 of 3 years, we then end up at almost the age of 40 (Socialstyrelsen/National Board of Health and Welfare 2006). In the survey for 2007 the proportion working has declined from 50 to 40 per cent since the study of 2002. At the same time the share that is studying (50 per cent) and the share unemployed (10 per cent) have increased.

Those who work are, on the other hand, satisfied to a greater extent than in 2002. They believe to a greater extent that their work *corresponds to the qualifications* they possess and that it gives them *personal satisfaction* and not only an income. Young people prefer to work within the private sector. Culture/media/design is high up on the request list and the military as well as security/transport down near the bottom.

The *properties at work* that were the top five in 2002 remain – pleasant fellow workers, good manager, good working environment, permanent employment and good salary. The clearest change amongst young people is that the importance of a permanent position has increased since 2002. A corresponding increase is not to be found amongst the older group. Permanent work is of extra importance for those with experience of unemployment which is half of those in the group of young people.

Young people agree to a lesser extent (20 per cent) than older people (50 per cent) that *young people should get lower pay in order to create more jobs*. Older people also agree to a higher extent that *they should retire earlier to create work for young people*, 50 per cent of the older agree with this compared with 30 per cent of the younger. The older respondents accept also to a greater extent (80 per cent in the age range 55–74 years) that *job-seeker projects should be compulsory for young people* than do young people (40 per cent in the age group 16–19 years). With the statement that *unemployment insurance and social welfare allowance pamper young people*, 30–35 per cent are in agreement in all age categories,



**Fig 11.13 Share that agrees to following statements, 16–74 years, 2007. Per cent.**

whereas 40 per cent do not agree. With the statement that *young people should make more of an effort to obtain work* 40–45 per cent in all age groups agree whereas 20 per cent disagree.

Six out of ten young people (60 per cent) can conceive of themselves becoming *self-employed*, but only 10 per cent see it as important to have achieved this by the age of 35. The principal structural reasons why young people hesitate to start their own business is financial insecurity, lack of know-how and complicated regulations/administration. A reason linked to the individual, stated by young people, is that they lack a business idea.

Around 51 per cent of the young people have experience of unemployment, which is higher than in the older group where the figure is 44 per cent – and they have had longer time on their side. Of these, 61 per cent of the young people and 50 per cent of the older group have actually *experienced unemployment as troublesome and have been depressed or anxious*. Amongst young women 60 per cent (amongst young men 50 per cent) consider unemployment to have been troubling, amongst those born outside Sweden 74 per cent believe this and amongst those born in Sweden 60 per cent.

### Reasons not to be self-employed, 16–29 years, 2007. Per cent

	16–19 yrs	20–24 yrs	25–29 yrs	Men	Women	Born in Sweden	Born abroad	Total
Financial insecurity	54	64	64	54	66	61	60	61
Lack of know-how	59	61	51	50	62	57	55	57
Lack a business idea	40	44	40	38	44	42	38	42
To much work/no free time	35	38	40	32	42	38	41	38
To complicated regulations/admin.	29	38	37	34	36	35	37	35
Hard to get a business loan	27	30	24	26	28	26	41	26
To lonely	20	20	23	16	25	20	25	21

Source: The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs 2007.

## Role of leisure time

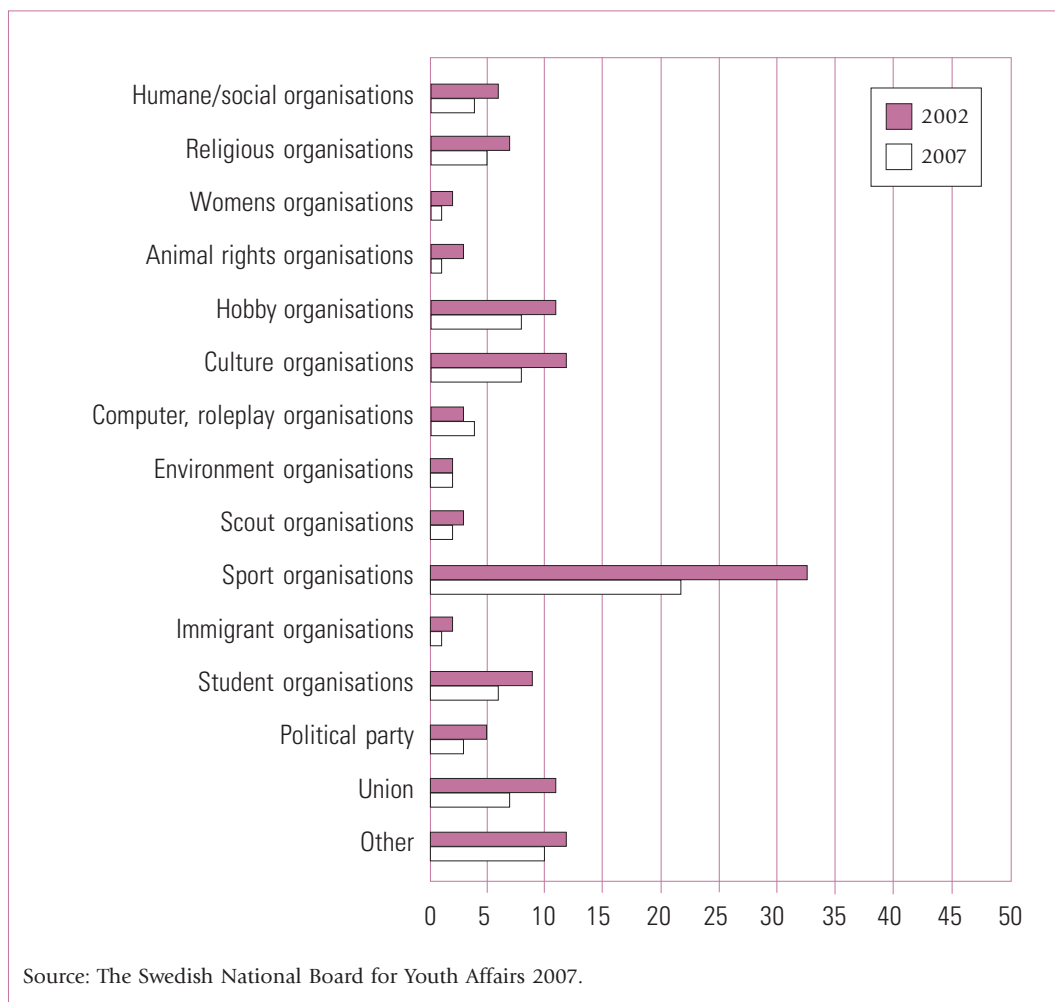
A majority of the young people believe they have neither too much nor too little free time. Half are members of some club or association in 2007 – primarily sports clubs – which is a large proportion in international terms but nevertheless a reduction from 2002 when 6 out of 10 stated they were members of some organisation.

To have so much leisure time that one does not know what to do with one's time or to have so little leisure time that one does not know how to fit in what one wants to, are both undesirable states. Amongst 16–19 year-olds a larger proportion than in the older age-groups state they are satisfied with the spare time they have, a larger proportion of young people born in Sweden also state they are satisfied with the

leisure time they have than young people who are born abroad.

Young people who have a low quality of life are more likely to be dissatisfied with their leisure time than young people who have a high quality of life. A comparison with earlier studies shows that the share who are dissatisfied with their leisure time appear to have increased in the group that have a low quality of life. Amongst the 17 per cent of young people who have a low quality of life there is a larger share who state they have too much leisure time than amongst the majority with a high quality of life, in the group who have a low quality of life there is also a large share who report having too little leisure time.





**Fig 13.9 Share that participates in different associations and clubs activities, 16–29 years, 2002 and 2007. Per cent.**

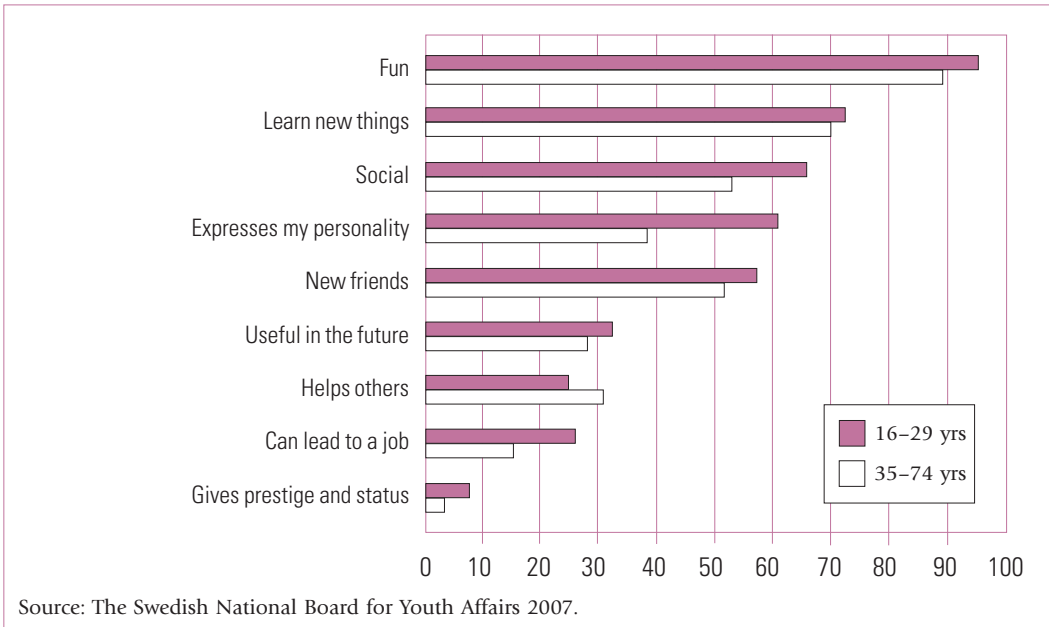
The proportion of young people who consider that it is *important to have leisure time at present* has risen since 2002, at the same time as the share who consider that it is *important to have leisure time at the age of 35* has declined. The largest share replying they are satisfied with their leisure time is found in the group of 16–19 year-olds. The importance attributed to leisure time does not appear to depend on gender, place of residence, education or employment.

What we do during leisure time may fulfil different functions. Free time occupations may, for example, be *utilitarian* (offering status, prestige, leading to work or being useful in spare time) or *self-realising* (spending time with others with the same interests, expressing one's individuality, learning new things, getting new friends or having fun). Foreign-born Swedes and 16–19 year-olds emphasise both utility and self-realisation which mean that a larger share

of them value these qualities than Swedish-born and young persons aged 20–29 years. Young men and young people living in rural areas value utility/practicality, above all, while young women and students primarily value self-realisation.

The leisure time function that the largest proportion of young people and older people consider to be important is, like in 2002, to have a good time or to have fun.

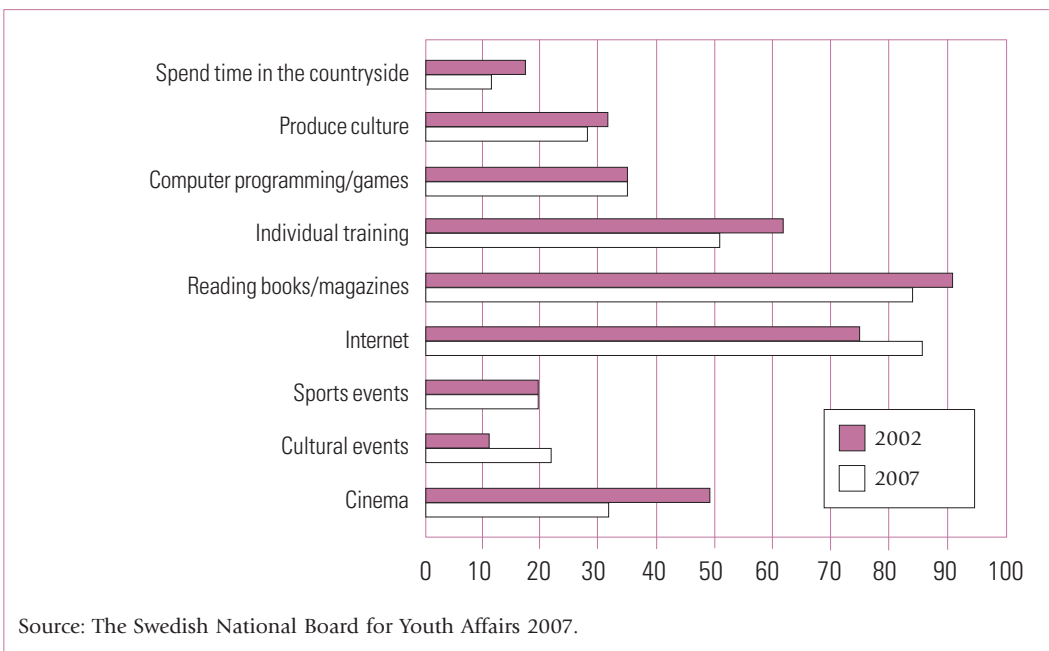
There is also the fact that one learns new things and one is able to socialise with others sharing ones interests. The proportion that practice sports, spend time in the countryside, go to cinema or read newspapers and books has declined since 2002. The proportion of young people who are surfing on the Internet and visiting cultural events, on the other hand, has increased.



**Share that says that the following qualities are important for what they do in their leisure time, 16-74 years, 2007. Per cent.**

A typical result in the survey on young persons' attitudes, compared with older persons, is that the differences are frequently larger between different groups of young people than between the generations. Above all, there are differences between the sexes and between young people born abroad or in Sweden. It may be discussed if the reason that these groups answer so differently is that their experiences mean that they interpret the same question

differently, i.e. the differences are an effect of gender or foreign background as qualitative variable. That the preconditions and possibilities tied to the expectations they have for themselves are the origin of women and those born outside Sweden replying that many statements e.g. relating to the characteristics of the workplace are very important, compared with male respondents and those born within Sweden.



**Leisure time activities, share that participates at least every week or month, 16-29 years, 2002 and 2007. Per cent.**

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# Noter

<sup>1</sup> Ph.d. Daniel Wohlgemuth, Ph.d. Thomas Johansson, Ph.d. Elisabeth Abiri, Ph.d. Lena Schröder.

<sup>2</sup> Socialstyrelsen [National Board of Health & Welfare] 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Thålin, M. 2004.

<sup>4</sup> SCB 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Pettersson, T & Ezmer, Y. 2007, Inglehart R. & Welzel, C. 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Pettersson T. & Ezmer, Y. 2006.

<sup>7</sup> SCB 2006.

<sup>8</sup> Integrationsverket 2006.

<sup>9</sup> BRÅ 2004

# YOUNG PEOPLE WITH ATTITUDE

## SUMMARY



THE SWEDISH NATIONAL BOARD FOR YOUTH  
AFFAIRS – ATTITUDE AND VALUE SURVEY 2007

*Young People with Attitude [Unga med attityd]* is the 2007 survey which was presented to the Swedish Minister for youth, Nyamko Sabuni, on 31st October 2007.

Reports on the attitudes and values of young people frequently arouse great interest. There is an idea that young people as a group enter the future before other generations and that youth is more open to influence and inclined to change. In order to find out how things are at present we have now carried out the fourth study into attitudes and values since 1993.



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