

Creative presentation

SWEDEN

Homelessness and housing rights in times of crisis

Is having a roof enough to feel at home in the EU of 2012?

11th European Meeting of People Experiencing Poverty

Sweden

Sweden's delegation comes from Gothenburg in the south-west of Sweden and Karlstad close to the border with Norway.



Let us introduce you to Poseidon



Gothenburg is a old harbour city where fishing, large wharfs and Volvo has been the big employers. Times change however.

The nearby ocean is a central part throughout the city. The statue of Poseidon is quite famous and he stands at the top of our boulevard "Kungsportsavenyn".

Feskekôrka



Next to it is a marketplace where women sell sex.

This is Feskekôrka. The best place to buy fish and seafood, but not the cheapest. It is an old church which has been re-modelled into a market.

Gothia Towers Hotel

In the central part of
Gothenburg lies this
luxury hotel with two
towers. Next to it lies
Liseberg,
Gothenburgs
amusement park.



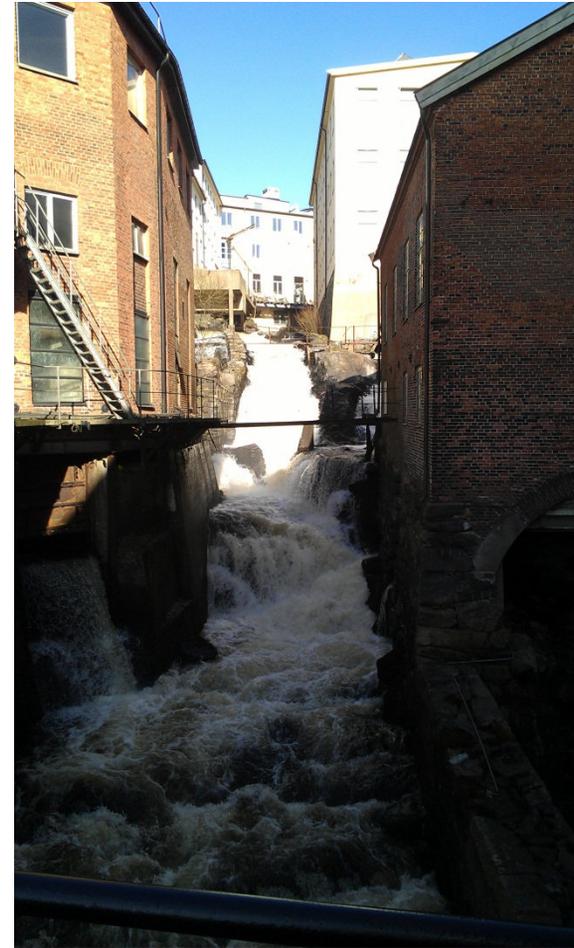


The old military school and Kviberg regiment.

Kvarnbyn in Molndal



An old industrial part of town where mills and agricultural industries have been essential.



The Parkway which runs between the Central station and Järntorget.

The area around Järntorget was once upon a time the poor man's area. The flats were cheap and didn't have the same standard as other parts of town.

Prostitution, sex shops and narcotics. It was the housing area where the working class lived and struggled. Sadly, the working class area is still known by the same stigma, now as then.



Haga

Haga, next to Järntorget

During the 60's, due to all its problems, it was easy to get a flat here. No standard at all, and apartments that were worn out. Just pick one.

But it has changed a lot since then. Today Haga is almost the most wanted living area in Gothenburg.

Old, expensive, restored flats with a population of upper middle class.





Most of the sex shops are gone, and the prostitution has moved to other parts of town (next to Feskekôrka and other places). New improved houses have also been built to meet the demands of more flats in Haga. And the working class is long gone, and have moved to other parts of Gothenburg.

One million apartments in ten years

Sweden had, during the 60's, a large shortage of flats. Therefore Sweden took the decision to build one million apartments during ten years.

It was a great idea at the time, but 40 years later, without almost any investment, the buildings will soon start to fall apart.

The original idea was that some of your rent would be invested in the building and the flat, but today, most of the landlords run companies with interested in earning money instead of spending it (and getting happy tenants).

In the beginning they were top-modern with electricity, water indoors and fully equipped bathrooms. Not luxury but the most needed things were there, and the flats were bigger and more practical than before.

Few people choose to live here today. People do it, of course, but often it can be the only place you have a shot at.

In these areas, its often people who experience poverty living there. Immigrants, unemployed, people who get benefits from the state and people who can't choose where to live.

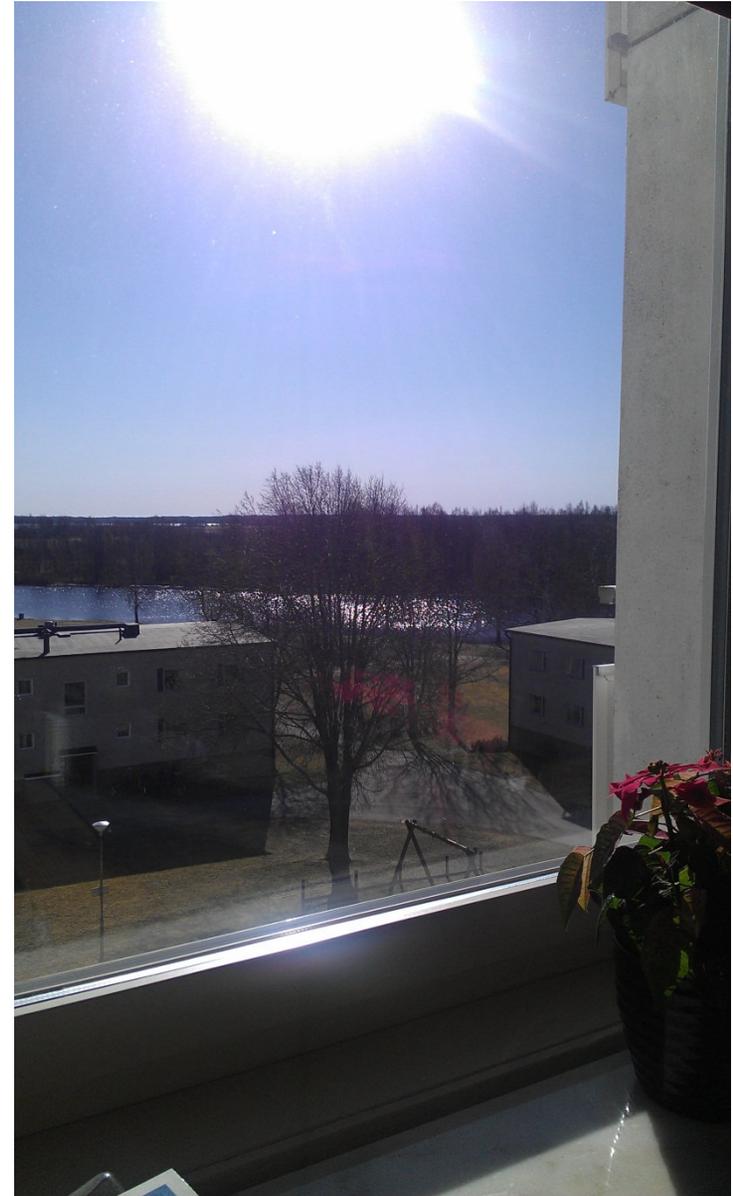
There is often a variety of sizes of the flats. The smaller is one room and you can find apartments up to eight rooms for really big families. The rent is quite cheap depending on its size and standard.

The lowest standard is a bathroom/shower, a stove and a refrigerator. In the larger flats you often have a freezer as well.

The happy part then?

In a few cities they lie in the middle of town, like in Malmö, but the most common is that they are placed a bit outside of town. In Gothenburg we almost have a necklace of areas around town.

The buildings are not so beautiful or designed by some really nice design architect (like today). They are very practical however and often have very beautiful surroundings. They are often close to nature. In some you can have a view over the ocean, and in some you have a large forest just a few minutes away. Or you just see another house.



The view from a kitchen window over the lake Vänern in Karlstad.

This is Rannebergen, Angered, Gothenburg







Today, the standard is a lot higher and more expensive.



And they are designed by architects who love for example large windows and the latest interior design.

Karlstad today:
Design and luxury

Molndal in the 40's and 50's:
Basic and practical



And those who don't have a home at all?



This is Åby Camping. A place where homeless people can hire a cabin during winter. When spring comes, they lose their cabin. Out of respect for those who live here, we have just taken photos of the entrance and the surroundings.

NGOs

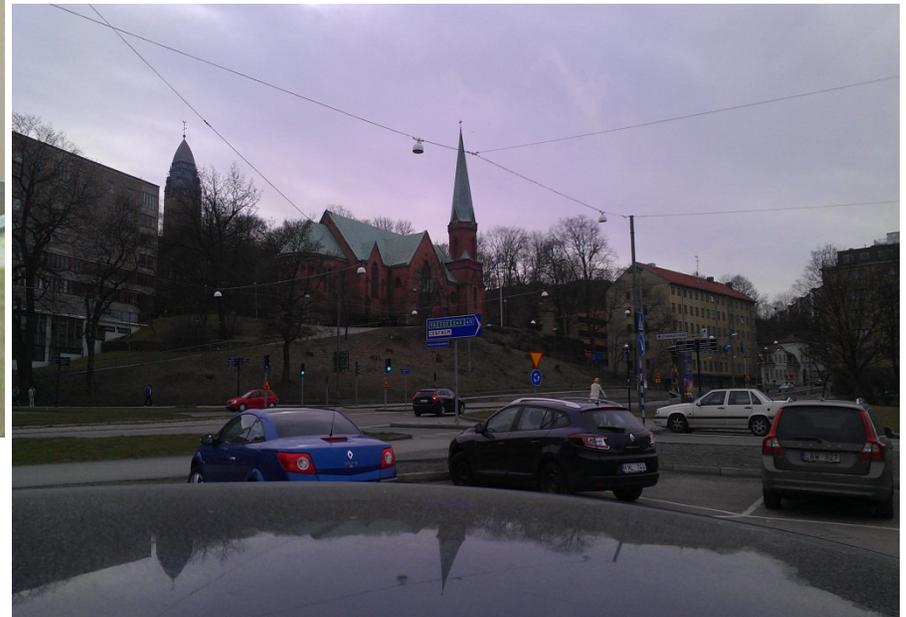
RIA, MoIndal Swedish church:

A soup kitchen: Where people can get food, clean clothes and coffee during the daytime.



Stadsmissionen, Swedish Church:

They have numerous activities in many areas like shelter during the night-time, a soup kitchen and they work with homelessness on a daily basis. The church is theirs.



Thank you!



Artist Emelie Edvardsson