GÖTEBORG
AND THE METROPOLITAN INITIATIVE

inclusion work education language growth diversity housing security dialogue trust involvement

SUMMARY 2005
GÖTEBORG
AND THE METROPOLITAN INITIATIVE
GÖTEBORG – THE METROPOLITAN INITIATIVE

Produced at the request of the City of Göteborg, city office, city development, by E. Gustafsson Information AB

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The aim of the Metropolitan Initiative was to improve the conditions for people living in deprived city areas. In the Metropolitan Initiative areas of Bergsjön, Gårdsten, Hjällbo and Norra Biskopsgården such improvements have in fact been achieved. These areas are now safer and better to live in, more people have obtained employment and a number of measures have been successfully implemented to improve the education of children and young people. Such measures have often been realised through broad-based collaboration between various municipal and state bodies. Now that the Metropolitan Initiative has come to an end in its present form I am pleased to report that almost forty per cent of the 180 measures will continue in some way within the regular municipal framework.

The process has also involved learning, where people with different experience, skills and perspectives work together to achieve a common goal. An extensive evaluation has been made by Göteborg University and Chalmers University of Technology, resulting in more in-depth knowledge that is of benefit not only to the four special needs areas in Göteborg but also to the development of the whole city. The Metropolitan Initiative is now continuing in other forms and we will make use of the knowledge and the experience, both positive and negative, that have been gained.

If we are to transform Göteborg into a sustainable community it is vital that everyone assumes mutual responsibility for contributing to such a development. This presupposes that collaboration continues on different levels between the city’s administrations and companies and between the municipality and government bodies.

This document summarises the work of the Metropolitan Initiative during the period 2000-2004. My hope is that the contents will inspire an exchange of experience and greater contact between various bodies to ensure that the joint work that was done through the Metropolitan Initiative will continue and develop.

Pelle Berglund (s)
Chairman
City Executive Board, Metropolitan Initiative Group
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The Metropolitan Initiative in Göteborg

The Metropolitan Initiative is part of the national metropolitan policy adopted by the Swedish Parliament in 1998. The basis for the decision was Government Bill 1997/98:165, Development and Equity – a Policy for Metropolitan Regions in the 21st Century. The Swedish Parliament adopted two overall objectives for the metropolitan policy:

- To provide the metropolitan regions with suitable conditions for long-term, sustainable growth, enabling them to contribute to the creation of new employment opportunities in the metropolitan regions and in other parts of the country.
- To break down social, ethnic and discriminatory segregation in metropolitan regions and to work to bring about equal conditions for people living in the cities.

As part of the metropolitan policy the government has signed local development agreements, often called the Metropolitan Initiative, with seven municipalities: Göteborg, Malmö, Stockholm, Botkyrka, Haninge, Huddinge and Södertälje. In total, 24 residential areas in these municipalities are affected.

Göteborg’s local agreement was signed for the first time on February 2, 2001. It has been revised each year and the most recent agreement will remain in force until 2005.

Within the framework of these agreements, work is being done to increase the level of employment, reduce social welfare dependency and raise the level of education. The prerequisites for this work are the involvement of the people living in the area and collaboration between various bodies and enterprises on the local and central level. This work will be characterised by long-term thinking and will be evaluated in order to obtain an overall picture of whether the measures taken have produced results.

In Göteborg, the Gårdsten, Hjällbo, Bergsjön and Norra Biskopsgården areas are included in the Metropolitan Initiative. Development was already taking place in various forms in these areas and this could be continued and supported through the Metropolitan Initiative.
Organisation

Göteborg is the second largest city in Sweden with just over 480,000 inhabitants. The municipality’s supreme decision-making body is the City Council. The City Executive Board is responsible for the day-to-day political leadership. The City Office works with overall planning and follow-up to support the political leadership.

Activities in various sectors – pre-school, school, after-school, care for the elderly, individual and family care and the functionally disabled – are handled by 21 geographically arranged district committees. These are responsible for a number of specialist administrations, such as high school education, parks and gardens, city planning and traffic planning. Certain municipal activities are run as companies. This is the case, for example, for housing, where the municipal housing companies are gathered under the parent company, Förvaltnings AB Framtiden, and development of and support for business and industry takes place through Business Region Göteborg, BRG.

The City Council has overall, co-ordinated responsibility for the Metropolitan Initiative. A Metropolitan Initiative group appointed by the City Council has monitored the work that has been done. The Metropolitan Initiative group also includes politicians from the district committees concerned. In the local development agreement the municipality is responsible for disseminating experience on an ongoing basis and informing about the work being done within the Metropolitan Initiative. Among other things, a number of joint municipal conferences and seminars have been arranged, sometimes with other bodies. Follow-up and evaluation of the achievement of objectives have also been the responsibility of the municipal authority on a central level.

The district committees have been responsible for establishing local objectives, running various activities and carrying out local follow-ups. The city districts have organised the work individually based on local conditions, which has resulted in variations. There has also been intensive work to find different ways of involving residents in the Metropolitan Initiative work and the development of the districts.

The district committees responsible are

- Gårdsten
- Hjällbo
- Bergsjön
- Norra Biskopsgården
- Gunnared District Committee
- Lärjedalen District Committee
- Bergsjön District Committee
- Biskopsgården District Committee

THE METROPOLITAN INITIATIV
Interaction
In the city districts work has taken place through broad-based collaboration with a range of different bodies, mainly local associations and housing companies but also the employment offices, the police force, the primary care sector, the social insurance offices and local business and industry. The employment offices, the police and the social insurance offices are local parts of national boards whilst primary care is part of the regional health care organisation. Other municipal administrations, such as the Highways Department, the City Planning Office and the Parks and Gardens Department, have also been included in a number of projects.

Throughout the whole of the Metropolitan Initiative the different centralised municipal networks have met on a regular basis. These networks have been made up of representatives from the City Office, the district concerned, the adult education sector, the employment offices, Business Region Göteborg (BRG), Förvaltnings AB Framtiden and others.

Evaluation
Göteborg University and Chalmers University of Technology have been charged with the task of evaluating the local development work. These evaluations have, among other things, resulted in a citizens’ survey, run in 2003, as well as six reports published in 2004. Networks have also been established around the evaluations with representatives from the districts and other operating areas within the city, together with Göteborg University and Chalmers University of Technology. These meetings have been of major significance in a mutual, ongoing exchange of knowledge and experience.

Over the years follow-up has also taken place internally through self-evaluations for each activity, status reports for each housing area and a joint status report for the Metropolitan Initiative in Göteborg.

Financing
State support in the form of Metropolitan Initiative funding for Göteborg totalled SEK 345 million (€ 37.1 million) for the period 2000-2005. The Metropolitan Initiative funding has been divided between the different housing areas, based mainly on the number of residents. Bergsjön has received a total of SEK 132.9 million (€ 14.3 million), Gårdsten SEK 63.3 million (€ 6.8 million), Norra Biskopsgården SEK 47.3 million (€ 5.1 million) and Hjällbo SEK 75.8 million
（€ 8.2 million). The remainder has been used to finance joint municipal measures within the high school and adult education sectors, support through BRG for local industrial associations in the areas concerned as well as evaluation, coordination and information.

State funding will be matched by at least the same level of municipal funding. In effect, Göteborg’s funding will exceed the state figure considerably. Part of the investment that has been financed within the normal budget has been included, although the majority of the joint funding is in the form of the municipal housing companies’ expanded work in the areas. In total, the City of Göteborg co-funding is estimated at around SEK 1.2 billion (€ 129 million) during the period 2000-2005.

The four basic methods/strategies

Influence and dialogue with the residents
The residents’ involvement, influence and participation are central elements in the metropolitan work. Increased democratic involvement is both an objective and a means of realising the city policy.

Objectives and evaluation
The control of objectives is the basis for follow-up and evaluation, from the national level to the local level. Evaluation has been an integral part of the Metropolitan Initiative from the very outset and includes working methods and processes as well as results.

Collaboration
Collaboration between different bodies has been seen as a prerequisite for achievement of the objectives within the Metropolitan Initiative. In the local development agreements both the state and the city have borne responsibility for collaboration.

Long-term thinking
The aim of the Metropolitan Initiative is to promote long-term sustainable growth. Different ideas and working methods have been tested and it should be possible for the efforts that have proved successful to live on in one form or another.
The four areas of the Metropolitan Initiative

The four housing areas covered by the Metropolitan Initiative in Göteborg all belong to the “Million Programme” era. It was during the 1960s and 1970s that Parliament decided to eliminate the housing shortage by rapidly constructing one million new homes. Virtually all the properties are multi-family dwellings and many of them are owned by public housing companies.

In these areas there have been long periods with a high number of empty apartments and a very high turnover of tenants. Nowadays there are considerably fewer movements and virtually no vacant apartments.

Compared with Göteborg on average the population in the Metropolitan
Initiative areas is relatively young, with many families with children. The number of large apartments is insufficient, which has led to overcrowding. The number of people with a non-Swedish background is higher than the average in Göteborg. Many recently arrived refugees have settled in these areas but here there are also a large number of labour immigrants who arrived earlier. This has resulted in people of many different nationalities living in the same area. In total, there are 160 different nationalities represented in the population of Göteborg.

Long before the Metropolitan Initiative commenced the need for special measures in these residential areas was highlighted. Work proceeded in different forms, including improving the environment and increasing the residents’ involvement in the development of the area. The Metropolitan Initiative has become a continuation of this work and a source of support.

**Bergsjön**

Bergsjön, which is located in north-east Göteborg, is archetypal 1960s planning. The residential area is surrounded by a ring road and virtually all the buildings are located within the ring. There are car parks and large garages on the outskirts. There are no roads in the area, only footpaths and cycle paths. The distance to the city centre is approximately eight kilometres and it takes about 25 minutes by express tram.

In Bergsjön, there are mostly rental apartments but also a number of cooperative owned apartments, townhouses and detached dwellings. Just over 40 per cent of all dwellings are owned by the municipal housing company Familjebostäder. There are also a large number of private property owners in the area. South of and outside the ring road there is Bergsjön’s townhouse and detached house area. Around 14,700 people live in Bergsjön.

In autumn 1977, the district committee took the initiative for an enquiry project entitled The Future of Bergsjön. Work on The Future of Bergsjön led to a series of parties interacting – the residents, associations, district administration operating units, private and public housing companies and many others.

The area had previously focused on acquiring an environmental profile. An Agenda 21 office was opened in 1999. Here the district committee’s information focused on the development of democracy, social planning and environmental improvement. The work of the office later became part of the Metropolitan Initiative.
Gårdsten

Gårdsten, with approximately 6,900 inhabitants, is part of the Gunnared district committee in north-east Göteborg. Gårdsten was built between 1969 and 1971 and has 3,000 apartments in multi-family dwellings. During the 1980s, construction was supplemented with the addition of single-family dwellings, a secondary school and a sports hall. Gårdsten is separated from the other areas in Gunnared with an elevated location and surrounded by forest, hills and meadows. Road traffic is channelled in a ring around the area, which is divided into an eastern and a western part with a valley in between. Travelling to the city centre by public transport involves changing from a bus to a tram and the journey takes approximately 40 minutes. There is now also an express bus at rush hour, which operates directly between Gårdsten and the Central Station and takes approximately 25 minutes.

For many years considerable difficulty was encountered renting out apartments in Gårdsten. The turnover of tenants was high and parts of east Gårdsten, with its long, high buildings, have been considered a daunting example of the structural design of the Million Programme. Today the buildings have been reconstructed and a number have been transformed into terraces. In 1995 and 1996, an enquiry took place which was to form the basis for an extensive renewal programme in Gårdsten. The enquiry was initiated and run by Förvaltnings AB Framtiden. The result was a new local public housing company, Gårdstensbostäder AB, founded in 1997 and charged with the task of developing and renewing Gårdsten.

The development process came to be known as the Gårdsten Project and has taken place through collaboration between the district committee and Gårdstensbostäder. In 1998, Gårdsten was named as a national development area by the government. The Metropolitan Initiative became a continuation of this work.

Hjällbo

The approximately 2,300 apartments in Hjällbo were constructed in the 1960s and became one of the first areas within the Million Programme in Göteborg. Today around 7,200 people live in Hjällbo.

The area is relatively flat with a distinct centre with tram and bus stops, shops on a recently reconstructed square, a secondary school, a library, a church and other facilities. It takes approximately 15 minutes by tram into central Göteborg. The tramline divides the area into two parts, which are linked by two footbridges.
Initially, the movement of residents into Hjällbo was good but this trend was broken after just a couple of years. People began moving out of the area and the turnover of tenants was high for a long time. Hjällbo is part of the Lärjedalen district committee, which attempted at an early stage to find a means of breaking the negative trend. The enquiry, The Future of Hjällbo, commenced in 1997 and was the foundation for extensive development work in the area. Even here there was collaboration between the district committee and Förvaltnings AB Framtiden, which owned 95 per cent of all the homes in Hjällbo through its subsidiaries Poseidon and Bostadsbolaget. In 1998, Hjällbo was also named as a national development area by the government and the year after the newly founded AB HjällboBostaden took over the properties, which were largely in very poor condition. The company also had an expanded assignment, which included getting more people into employment.

The Metropolitan Initiative sought to build on this approach and the structure created within The Future of Hjällbo project.

**Norra Biskopsgården**

Norra Biskopsgården on Hisingen is the Metropolitan Initiative’s smallest area with approximately 4,800 inhabitants. The housing units are dominated by three or four-storey buildings built in the 1950s with almost 1,700 apartments and a square. It takes 15-20 minutes by tram into the city centre. More than 85 per cent of all the homes are owned by public housing companies. In the 1990s, Poseidon demolished a large number of apartment blocks. The land was sold and the buildings replaced by townhouses for rent. In 1993, collaboration commenced between the district committee, the city planning office and the property owners and was known as the Bo Bra process, which at the time focused on Södra Biskopsgården. The office is now located in Norra Biskopsgården.
Activities within the Metropolitan Initiative

In Göteborg, around 180 Metropolitan Initiative projects have been in progress over varying periods of time. The range is considerable in terms of duration, number of people involved and the activities embarked upon.

The activities are divided into the following areas:

• Language and school
• Work and education
• Democratic empowerment
• Security and well-being

Almost half of the initiatives are continuing within the regular operational framework, albeit with fewer resources. In a further 25 per cent of the initiatives, methods and experience are taken on board. Just over one-sixth of the initiatives have been concluded. Each target area has been evaluated, both internally and externally.

The following is a brief presentation of what has been achieved and what is still being done.
Language and school

The curricula for pre-schools and primary/middle schools state clearly that all children shall be given an equal opportunity to achieve academic success. In the areas covered by the Metropolitan Initiative there are many children with a native language other than Swedish and within the same group there can be considerable variation with regard to how much Swedish the children have managed to learn. Special approaches are therefore required to provide multilingual students with the same schooling.

Within the target area of language and school the focus has been primarily on linguistic development, where competence development of staff has played a very important part along with reading projects and collaboration with parents and associations. The majority of these efforts have been directed at children at pre-school and primary/middle school up to year 6. The secondary schools also focused on more secure study environments, the teaching of Swedish, English and mathematics in smaller groups and in the native language, help with homework, more leisure activities and increased contact with the home.

In summary, the results of the work are:

- The language and knowledge of children and young people have improved.
- There has been a tangible improvement in reading ability among children.
- Co-operation between school and associations has been reinforced.
- All city areas have a strategy for supporting the children’s linguistic development.
- Approximately 650 pre-school and primary/secondary school staff have attended a competence development programme.

More knowledge regarding linguistic development

All city areas in the Metropolitan Initiative have a strategy for how a child’s linguistic development should be supported at pre-school and primary/secondary school. One of the basic notions in linguistic development is not to view multilingualism as a problem but as an asset.

In order to support multilingual children correctly, specialist knowledge is required which teachers do not receive as part of their basic training. Teaching staff at schools and pre-schools were therefore offered a five-credit university course on the development of multilingual children. The course covered both...
theory and research into bilingualism as well as methods and ways of working with children to support and reinforce them in their linguistic development, both in their native language and in Swedish. Almost all the teaching staff attended the programme.

Linguistic analyses at pre-school are another part of linguistic development work. The children are recorded on tape and everything is analysed – from vocabulary and grammar to how the children react in order to make themselves understood. At the pre-schools in Hjällbo staff work a great deal with music, song and dance to develop the children’s language. The staff also had the opportunity to take a five-credit course in cross-cultural communication, where attitudes and values are key elements.

**Reading project resulted in improved reading levels**

The reading projects have been based on systematically encouraging children’s reading of books. This has resulted in an expansion of the children’s vocabulary as well as the desire to read and write. The children’s self-esteem has been reinforced and the borrowing of books has increased markedly. The schools have purchased a great deal of fiction and developed a range of activities at their libraries.

In Bergsjön, for example, the reading and writing project Listiga Räven...
(Cunning Fox) is used to stimulate reading in all forms. Fiction is fundamental in almost all activities at the school. The first thing to be done was to arrange reading corners in each classroom to encourage reading – a quiet area where the children could sit and relax with a book. Each term the children worked with a theme. The first theme was Astrid Lindgren, who in her books intertwines Swedish culture with exciting experiences. The children read all the books, watched a number of films and even created their own books about Pippi Longstocking or Astrid herself.

The teachers’ assessment is that the children read more and that it feels natural for them to read. At the end of each term every child received a book.

Another important element has been a study workshop run in the school library. The pupils could go there after school to read or do their homework. The study workshop has been manned by multilingual personnel, which has also been an excellent resource in contact with parents.

Native language teaching
In the areas covered by the Metropolitan Initiative the proportion of students at school with a native language other than Swedish is high. In each class there are students with different backgrounds and their knowledge of Swedish varies
depending on how long they have been in Sweden. For many students this means that it could be difficult to keep up with the teaching.

The International School in Gården, ISG, realised this early on and they wanted to find new teaching methods to help children to benefit from the teaching and to prevent language from becoming a barrier. The result was that certain groups of students receive subject teaching in their native language. There are permanently employed teachers who teach in the students’ native language and offer subject teaching in the five major languages: Arabic, Somali, Sorani, Serbo-Croat and Cantonese.

Several studies also show that learning several languages at the same time can be a problem and that the conditions and the setting are crucial. The school’s way of organising the teaching and the opportunity for the student to receive instruction in his/her own first language whilst the second language is being learnt is of vital significance.

**Open school also for adults**

All city areas have worked to reinforce collaboration between schools and the community. The most obvious example is the Open School, where associations have had the opportunity to run activities on the school premises. Sport, music, dance, computers and help with homework have been the most common activities. Many people, particularly children and teenagers, have taken part in the activities. Adults have also been able to use the school premises for parties, weddings and various other events.

An important element throughout has been to achieve a calmer school environment, which has also proved successful. There has been a reduction in vandalism, the atmosphere and sense of satisfaction in the school have improved and the students have acquired greater fortitude when dealing with the environment in what can be a tough area.

Parental involvement is included in all Open School projects and there are several examples of successful involvement by parents and other adults although there are also schools that have been very ambitious in their attempt to improve contact with parents and local associations and yet still failed. As in other city areas parental involvement decreases as the children become older.
Work and education

Compared with people in Göteborg on average there is a lower proportion of immigrants in the Metropolitan Initiative areas who are in higher education or employment. The focus on work and education is therefore important for these people and the development of the areas.

Around 40 projects have involved work and education. The measures taken have often comprised a combination of education and personal support to find work, to make contact with employers and to offer encouragement and guidance. In many cases the target group has been people who have been unemployed for a long time. A number have started their own companies.

In summery, the results of the work are:
- Approximately 1,500 people have secured jobs for a shorter or longer period or have begun to study.
- Around 100 people have taken part in work experience.
- Some 40 companies have been established.
- Methodology development has taken place when working with people who are well outside the labour market.
- Co-operation between the employment office, the adult education sector and the social services has been reinforced.
- Industrial associations have received increased support.

Concrete help for self-support

One of the efforts within work and education is the Hjällboforum office, which has become the way into employment for more than 500 of the residents in this part of the city. With many years’ experience and contacts from industry three persons have worked to start education programmes and arrange work experience and jobs, mainly within the property sector.

In the municipal housing companies in particular there was a demand for janitors and a training programme was started which had even guaranteed employment. The janitor programme continued for 18 months. The Hjällboforum office was involved in supporting the students with everything from ensuring that they got up in the morning to helping them in their contact with the authorities. Theory was interspersed with occupational training, which mostly took
place at HjällboBostaden, the municipal housing company in Hjällbo. After the programme they were employed by one of the municipal housing companies or in property administration. Of the 18 people who completed the programme in December 2002, 15 were still in employment in autumn 2003.

The Hjällboforum office continued with yet another janitor training programme as well as programmes for property technicians and garden technicians. Another training programme has led to work in geriatric care and medical care.

There has also been support in various forms for people who are interested in starting their own company. Contact with the Hjällboforum office has led to the setting up of 42 companies, just over half of which are outside Hjällbo. For many it has been a long process but none of the companies that have received help have gone into bankruptcy. The majority of companies have started within the retail sector although a hairdressing salon and a travel agency have also been started.

Coaching gives the unemployed jobs
The Metropolitan Initiative has led to greater co-operation between operating units within the municipality and other authorities to find jobs for the unemployed. Co-operation has been a prerequisite for achieving results.

Coaching leads to work for the unemployed.
A four-week work experience placement led to a permanent job for Omar Abubaker, pictured here with job coach Salah Ibrahim.
One example of this is the siv project in Norra Biskopsgården. Siv stands for Socialtjänst, Idépunkten och Vuxenutbildningen (Social Services, the Idea Point and Adult Education) although the employment office has also been involved in the project. The working approach has mainly involved so-called job coaching, where support is available for the unemployed as well as contact with employers to find jobs.

The individual job coaches’ involvement and contribution have been of vital significance to the success of the project. They have worked in different ways although personal contact and commitment are the common denominators. Over time the project has built up a relatively large network of employers and a good reputation. Through their approach they have succeeded in creating good relationships with employers and building up mutual trust.

This is been proved to them when employers contact siv when they need employees. Siv then mediates contact with a number of suitable candidates and hopefully one or more of them secures a job.

An important success factor for the siv project has been from the very outset to set clear, quantifiable objectives which have largely been achieved. The aim by the end of 2004 was that 200 people would have had the opportunity to increase their level of self-support through work and education. According to siv’s statistics they have succeeded in helping 191 people to find various forms of employment and six people have chosen to study. Of these, 115 were men and 82 were women.

**Folk high school reaches new groups**

Folk high schools are a form of college for adults, supported by public financing but often run by non-governmental organisations. Education at a folk high school is free of charge and varies in length and orientation although many direct their efforts primarily at adults with a low level of education. For the Biskopsgården and Bergsjön city areas co-operation with folk high schools has been a way of raising the residents’ level of education and making the areas more attractive.

In Biskopsgården the Gothenburg Folk High School has, with Metropolitan Initiative funding, been able to increase the quality of its operations. Among other things they have acquired a library, a computer room and a cafe.

The majority of the students have a native language other than Swedish and
are women aged 30-35. They begin with a course aimed at preparing for their future studies. The content of the course is governed by the needs of the participants and it is not necessary to speak good Swedish to attend the course.

In Bergsjön the folk high schools have also received support from the Metropolitan Initiative and attempts have been made to establish a permanent folk high school in the area. Initially, an attempt was made to reach the inhabitants in Bergsjön via the local associations. Both the Women’s Folk High School and the Gothenburg Folk High School have been able to offer a broad level of general education, leading to high school qualifications. The programme is full-time and the length depends on previous studies and knowledge of Swedish. The Bergsjön branch of the Women’s Folk High School is directed exclusively at female immigrants. At most there have been 50 students but now there are around 40 studying full-time. Those who apply have an overwhelming desire for knowledge and a social context.

For the Women’s Folk High School the Metropolitan Initiative meant that they have decided to focus on remaining in Bergsjön in the long term. The courses are also strongly oriented towards the local community.
**Local business important**

By supporting the industrial associations in Angered, Bergsjön and Biskopsgården the municipal company Business Region Göteborg, BRG, has worked to reinforce the local business community. An industrial association is a group of companies in a geographically delimited area.

Co-operation with local industrial associations is nothing new for BRG. A powerful entrepreneurial spirit in an area ensures that people use the services and shops. It could also attract more companies.

There was a variation in the needs of associations in the areas covered by the Metropolitan Initiative. BRG wanted to focus on what the associations required and which could eventually produce results. This involved, for example, greater contact between companies in the area and an improvement in the marketing. An important element was employing a resource person who, among other things, helped the associations to start websites and to link up a B2B (business to business) data network. Meetings of different kinds were also arranged.

In Biskopsgården there is no doubt that the support the associations have received from BRG has produced results. They now have a website and all the 60 members are in the B2B data network. They have also received help with signs in the area, something which they have talked about for 20 years.

One of the results of the initiatives taken in the three city areas has been that the number of members and the level of activity have increased in all the associations.
Local development work

The local development work includes the two target areas of democratic empowerment and safety and well-being. Work has focused on developing various forms of influence for the residents in the city areas, both with regard to the Metropolitan Initiative and the content of the efforts that have been made. The aim of the work done on the physical environment has been to enhance the area’s attractiveness and the residents’ well-being. Changes in the physical environment have at times been intended to promote safety although a number of other measures have also been taken, such as the setting up of “safety in the community” groups.

In summery, the results of the work are:

- Broader contact interfaces between residents, associations, the district administration and the housing companies.
- More residents are involved in associations.
- The association movement has been reinforced.
- The level of well-being has increased.
- There has been a decrease in vandalism.

Democratic empowerment

On the whole, dialogue has been expanded through broader contact between the district administrations and the residents but also between other local bodies and the residents. Different routes have been examined to improve dialogue and increase the democratic involvement of the residents, including:

- Expansion in social guidance/meeting points.
- Support for local associations.
- Working groups, theme meetings and reference groups.
- Dissemination of information through newspapers and local radio.

The Agenda 21 office in Bergsjön, the Health Desk in Gårdsten and Idea Point in Norra Biskopsgården are examples of meeting points that have had different profiles even if community guidance has been common to all of them. These meeting points have proved to be relatively successful. An important feature of the work has been the personal contacts, language skills, established networks and flexibility of the staff.
During the course of the Metropolitan Initiative, Idea Point has been developed into a meeting place with a multitude of functions. Whilst it has the form of a “citizens’ office” it could also be described as a meeting point. It is open each afternoon and has a number of computers that adults can use to access the Internet. The most common uses are finding jobs, reading news from home and sending e-mails. There is also the opportunity to obtain advice. Some people go there to ask how to go about looking for a job. It is also quite common that people bring along letters they have received from one of the authorities. They might understand the text but not what it actually means.

Many pop in to Idea Point to collect a newspaper, *Metro* or *Vi i Biskopsgården*. The latter is a local newspaper started with Metropolitan Initiative funding.

**Support for local associations**
Support for local associations is a means of bringing people together and inducing more people to become involved in community life. In the areas covered by the Metropolitan Initiative this type of work has taken place in different ways to encourage an active association movement that arranges sports and cultural activities and other events. This has led to an increase in the number of people becoming involved in associations. In Bergsjön, for example, the number of association members has increased by approximately 2,500 since 2000.

In Gårdsten, an association council has been set up, the Gårdsten International Association Council, which is an umbrella organisation for associations in the area. The associations keep the school open during the evening and at weekends for different activities. Based on the residents’ wishes they have been able to offer courses in computers, driving licence theory, English and other subjects as well as discussions dealing with issues such as conflict management and honour-related violence.

The adults in the associations have also arranged activities for children and young people, including discos and sports events. They have also collaborated with the school to offer help with homework and native language teaching.

As the school’s premises are used by the associations, collaboration with the school takes place naturally. The school parents’ association is also represented on the Association Council. Another positive effect is that the widespread vandalism that the school was exposed to previously has now almost ceased. The
school has instead become an object of preservation. Most weekends the school’s dining room is transformed into a venue for parties, weddings and funerals. Up to now the premises have been available free of charge.

**Different forms of influence**

Different resident groups and networks have been used to increase the involvement and participation of the local population in the Metropolitan Initiative work. There are also several examples of processes that have been started to involve people in the renewal of the physical environment. One example is Hjällboforum, which offers an opportunity for dialogue and influence. Although the residents have been in the majority, politicians and local civil servants have also been involved. Experience is mixed and certain difficulties have been encountered along the way. Hjällboforum has now been concluded in its present form.

The question of how empowerment should be transformed into formalised influence by the residents needs to be highlighted even further. The evaluation of Hjällboforum shows that there are major weaknesses in implementation and acceptance but this does not mean that the method and ambition need to be rejected. It is more the case that the prerequisites have been established for discussing how a functioning dialogue can be achieved.

The evaluators state that the extent of the dialogue has been limited. Often an inner circle of persons is created. These enthusiasts are important but at the same time it means that a great deal of the work is done by a small number of people, making the structures and networks that have been created more vulnerable. Successful dialogue is about creating opportunities to meet where everyone is more or less on a par and about who sets the agenda. In the final analysis it is often the civil servants who are the driving force and the ones who set the agenda. This is not necessarily wrong but it could mean that the work is far too dependent on certain individuals.

**Ongoing information important**

The residents’ access to information and the opportunity to follow the progress of the Metropolitan Initiative is an important part of the democratic process. There have been quite a number of shortcomings, particularly in the beginning. The evaluators cite shortcomings in language availability and a tendency towards
standardisation of the perspectives in the Metropolitan Initiative work that have been highlighted.

Newspapers and local radio broadcasts to disseminate information and increase involvement have been tested in several city areas. In Norra Biskopsgården the newspaper Vi i Biskopsgården is still going whilst the magazine Mångfald Hjällbo ceased publication in spring 2005.

**Security and well-being**
The refurbishment of the housing, green areas and squares has been of crucial significance to the satisfaction of local residents. The physical environment has been improved considerably over the past five years – in Bergsjön, Hjällbo and Gårdsten in particular and to a certain extent in Norra Biskopsgården. This includes the residential areas, the tram stops and the public areas. Göteborg, through its housing companies, is the municipality that has invested most in the refurbishment and development of the housing areas during the period covered by the Metropolitan Initiative.

Although it is primarily the municipal housing companies that are responsible for the renewal a number of private property companies have also been involved. Public sector housing has an ownership assignment, which means that the housing companies, apart from normal property management, are obliged to work to develop the housing areas. According to one of the evaluators no change over the past decade has meant more to the areas than this expanded undertaking.

**City planning – the starting point for empowerment**
The 1960s’ ideal of how housing areas should be planned is a basic problem in the areas covered by the Metropolitan Initiative. Contact between street and building is totally lacking, the buildings are spread out and none or few entrances open up onto footpaths or streets. There are too many open areas. According to the evaluators they can easily become deserted. In their opinion there are several good examples of improvements in the physical environment to open up contact and dialogue with the residents. By creating involvement in the housing and the urban environment, where changes are actually seen to be taking place, the realisation emerges that it is possible to exert an influence.

One example of this is Komettorget in Bergsjön. When Bergsjön was new the housing area at Komettorget had a high status, During the 1990s, however,
something happened. Lack of maintenance became increasingly obvious and the area gradually deteriorated. When the time came for the tram stop to be rebuilt this was also the starting point for doing something with the square.

A network was set up to work with the renewal of Komettorget. This included property owners, the district administration, the residents and associations in southern Bergsjön, Backegård School, the parks and gardens department, the highways department and a number of other bodies. The residents were involved in discussions regarding the rebuilding of the tram stop and they initiated safety patrols, which resulted in better lighting and the clearing of bushes and so on around the footpaths.

The majority of children who live in the area attend Backegård School, which is located above Komettorget. To involve them in the immediate environment the pupils made concrete flagstones decorated with mosaics, which were then laid on the square.

“The children were incredibly pleased to be involved. They are proud of their square and the fact that their flagstones are there is extremely important to them,” says the principal of Backegård School. She states that the involvement
in the square shows both children and parents that the school cares about their immediate environment.

The “new” square was inaugurated with a party. The “Komet Day” proved to be so successful that everyone in the network, particularly the associations and local businessmen, wanted to make it a regular event. To date the Komet Day has been run twice.

Safety in the community groups have created a more secure area

Work aimed at well-being and safety has taken place through broad-based collaboration with community guidance offices, property owners, the police and social services. Metropolitan Initiative funding has been a key element in the development of this interaction. It has, among other things, been used for activities such as courtyard meetings, door-to-door campaigns and conferences on the future. Bergsjön and Norra Biskopsgården have focused on safety in the community patrols, Hjällbo and Gårdsten on safety in the community groups. Safety in the community groups have contributed to a greater feeling of safety among the residents, among other things in the fact that more adults can be seen in the areas concerned. One example is the safety in the community repre-
sentatives in Hjällbo, who in their yellow jackets can be seen in the area at times and places that are felt to be less safe. They create a sense of security and at the same function as role models. Safety in the community representatives must live in Hjällbo. The group is made up in such a way that many different cultures and language groups are represented. When the safety in the community group was at its biggest it comprised 7-9 people, who together commanded more than ten languages.

Those who work in the safety in the community group have received training in areas such as conflict management and there is good collaboration with the police. A common policy describes when the safety in the community representatives should bring in the police. They also co-operate with the security companies, the social services office and the school.

The safety in the community representatives often work evenings and nights and for their own safety they work at least in pairs. They often encounter a tough reality in their own housing area and have been confronted with assaults on both women and children. There are also structures involving deep-seated conflicts. At times incidents has even involved the representatives’ own relatives.

The perceived sense of safety has increased considerably in Hjällbo and the crime statistics show that the work has had an impact. The municipal housing companies’ quality surveys have for a number of years shown that the tenants’ perception of safety in the Metropolitan Initiative areas has increased most in Hjällbo and Gårdsten.
Five views on the Metropolitan Initiative

Getting the residents involved in the Metropolitan Initiative has been both an overall objective and a means of carrying out the work. Individuals and representatives from associations have taken part to a varying degree in the projects, reference groups and similar arrangements. Everyone has their own idea about how the work has proceeded and what the Metropolitan Initiative has meant for their housing area in particular.

Below are the impressions of five individuals about the Metropolitan Initiative.

One step – but many remain
The Metropolitan Initiative is a step along the way but there is a great deal that remains to be done. The significance of the Initiative to the areas’ inhabitants varies, even among those who have been involved in different projects and groups. Sometimes results have been achieved and sometimes not.

“For us young people in Gårdsten it has meant a great deal that the youth group has been started. There is more for young people to do and the school has improved,” says Anna-Maria Paic.

She is one of many residents who in one way or another have been involved in the Metropolitan Initiative. Apart from the youth group in Gårdsten, Anna-Maria is a member of the reference group, which deals with any questions relating to the Metropolitan Initiative before they are passed on to the politicians on the district committee for a decision. The reference group comprises some 20 persons and the majority are residents.

Another is Sten Danielsson, who represents the association Sesamfröet, which covers an area of single-family dwellings on Malörtsgatan.

“It has been interesting even if I have become more and more disillusioned
about the potential for the residents to exert an influence. Whilst we have had a certain degree of influence and the district committee has followed our recommendations I still feel that it is better to focus on the day-to-day activities,” says Sten.

In Hjällbo there is a group of residents and other people involved in the area who have addressed matters relating to the Metropolitan Initiative. The group, known as Hjällboforum, has reached decisions regarding support for different efforts. The experience of Hjällboforum is mixed and there remains a great deal of discussion and acceptance work before it seen to be a functioning forum where the involvement of the residents can be utilised fruitfully.

Madlin Krabit has been a representative for the residents at Skolspåret in Hjällbo but she has not been able to attend many meetings. Her four children and four grandchildren must take priority.

**Long-term involvement in associations**

Jilla Faraji, who is active in the Kurdish Women’s Association in Bergsjön, has for many years devoted all her spare time to association work and to developing
her area together with the residents, keeping a full-time job down at the same
time. During 2004, she was employed part-time by the association and worked
hard with various activities in southern Bergsjön and her association: Christmas
parties, inaugurations, cultural events, meetings with politicians and a whole
host of other activities.

“The residents did not trust the authorities. It was therefore important to
work through the associations to reach the residents of Bergsjön,” states Jilla.

In Bergsjön there has not been any formalised group, although the Association
Council is a forum where the residents can make their views known. Even so,
Jilla wishes that the Council would function better than it does. The Agenda 21
office has also been an important meeting point.

Norra Biskopsgården has not had any special Metropolitan Initiative resi-
dents’ group either. The Idea Point has been the meeting place where residents
have been able to come along and have their questions answered, receive help in
their contact with the authorities or have a bureaucratic letter explained to them.

**Local news most interesting**

Apart from local radio broadcasts in nine languages, a newspaper, *Vi i Biskopsgården*, was started with Metropolitan Initiative funding and will con-tinue to be published.

“It is a good source of information. I do not always read the whole of
Göteborgs-Posten but I read everything in *Vi i Biskopsgården*,” says Reza Rahimi,
who is active in the Scorpion Studio Media Association, which broadcasts Radio
Tanin in Persian.

In the run-up to the EU election in June 2004, Reza and his wife worked toget-
her with Idea Point to disseminate information about the election over a two-
month period. They made folders and posters, arranged meetings with politi-
cians and broadcast on local radio. There was interest among certain people but
many had no idea that an election was coming up.

As Jilla, Madlin, Reza, Sten and Anna-Carin speak about their impressions
and thoughts regarding the Metropolitan Initiative certain things crop up re-
peatedly:

“Of course extra money is good but it ought to go to the school and other
day-to-day activities.”

“It would have been better if the Metropolitan Initiative funding had been
available over a longer period.”
“You must focus on young people – more activities are needed for them.”
“What has been achieved through the Metropolitan Initiative is a small step along the way but a great deal still remains to be done.”

There is noticeable scepticism towards the project. Sten describes it as “blowing up big, beautiful balloons”. Jilla states that projects could be a good way of getting something going – but then you need at least five years to show the results.

**Worries about the future of the areas**
Both Jilla and Madlin are worried about the development of their areas and talk a great deal about unemployment and segregation. They maintain that pre-school and school must be the first priority. Children and young people are the future of these areas and of Göteborg as a whole.

They are impressed when Anna-Maria explains enthusiastically about what the youth group in Gårdsten has achieved. They have arranged courses in hip-hop and breakdance and the youth centre now has a studio with a computer and instruments. At the school the students have had the opportunity to decide how the premises are to be refurbished.

“The result is a decrease in vandalism at the school. You don’t destroy what you and your friends have created,” says Anna-Maria, who adds that nowadays the youth centre is open on Sundays thanks to the youth group.

Sten can also see other efforts that have had a permanent effect on the area and mentions “The school in the heart of the community” and the language development programme.

Gårdsten’s International Association Council, which has around 30 associations, will also continue.

“The chairman of the Association Council, Meharite Okbustion, has made an incredible contribution,” says Sten with a great deal of admiration in his voice.

Many people have worked voluntarily. The Iranian Media Association premises in Norra Biskopsgården have been painted and equipped by the members. Jilla and her friends in the Kurdish Women’s Association have cooked many meals for different events. On one occasion they estimated they would have 300 guests and 500 turned up. But there was still enough to go round.

Madlin has lived in Hjällbo since 1993 and she is the only one in the group who wants to move from “her” area despite the fact that she also works there.

“This is not Sweden,” she says.
Jilla understands her view. You can lose hope when you shout yourself hoarse and no one listens but personally she does not want to move from Bergsjön, where she works as an auxiliary nurse.

Reza is currently training to be a media technician and wants to remain in Norra Biskopsgården, which he feels is one of the best areas of Göteborg to live in. It is small, everyone knows everyone and Friskvåderstorget is a good centre. According to Reza, what needs to be looked at primarily are the buildings, which are owned by the public housing companies Poseidon and Bostadsbolaget. “Then it will be really good here.”

Anna-Maria states categorically that she would never move from Gårdsten. This is where she belongs even if she now attends high school in the centre of Göteborg. And Sten, now retired, does not intend to abandon Gårdsten. He and his family moved here 16 years ago when the area was new and he has no regrets whatsoever. They moved from Skåne in the south of Sweden and travelled around looking at different areas of the city and the surrounding municipalities before deciding on Gårdsten. This was something that greatly surprised friends and acquaintances, who told them that they couldn't possibly move to Gårdsten.

“The location is so beautiful and it is easy to get into town. In ten years it will be the most attractive area in Göteborg,” states Sten resolutely.
Results of the Metropolitan Initiative

Viewed in terms of the individual efforts, the Metropolitan Initiative has been positive for those concerned. Many of the measures that have been taken have been good. Co-operation has been reinforced and methods have been developed. This is also the collective assessment of the evaluation.

In summary, the Metropolitan Initiative has resulted in:

- the language and knowledge development of children and young people has been improved
- all the areas involved have a strategy for language development
- teaching staff in the pre-school and schools have received extensive competence development training
- employment measures have resulted in work or education for people in the area
- local business activity has received greater support
- more residents are taking part in association activities
- association life has been developed
- the level of enjoyment has increased
- vandalism has decreased
- contact between residents, associations, urban district administrations and housing companies has been broadened
- structures for local co-operation have been reinforced
- knowledge of segregation processes, urban development and social marginalisation has increased.

The employment measures have not only led to work. Within the projects various methods have also been developed that will be possible to use in the future. Language development in schools is at the same time methodology development that will generate effects later on. Although the long-term impact of the Metropolitan Initiative is difficult to assess the majority of the evaluators believe in a delayed positive effect.
Distinguish between segregation and the effects of segregation
Even if the efforts made have produced good results for many of those involved the overall national objective – to break down the social, ethnic and discriminatory segregation in the deprived residential areas of the city – have not been achieved in Göteborg or in other city municipalities in Sweden.

It is, however, important to distinguish between segregation and the effects of segregation, states one of the evaluators. Segregation cannot be tackled through an initiative like the one that has been run over the past four or five years. It comes down more to fundamental structures, such as the housing and labour markets and distribution of income.

However, it is important to discuss in what way economic and geographical segregation leads to poorer schools, reduced service, fewer shops and so on. Efforts such as the Metropolitan Initiative could perhaps mitigate the effects of segregation for a while and make the areas better places to live.

Long-term learning process
Time is a perspective that is highlighted by the evaluators. Three years is a short time. Even if the period was extended it is the planning horizon that has governed the work of the Metropolitan Initiative. It is difficult to reconcile demands for rapid results and long-term thinking. Work which deals with social processes and which affects new forms of collaboration, security and greater democracy and influence must be viewed in the long term. It takes time to build up structures and solutions that are sustainable even after the Municipal Initiative funding has ceased. Nor can it be run with large injections of money. Less money over a long period is more preferable.

The Metropolitan Initiative can also be seen as an opportunity to experiment and learn as these are not processes that are easy to plan, implement and evaluate. Instead it will be a learning process where people with different experience, expertise and perspectives work together and over a period learn what they want to achieve. Overall objectives and results are needed to mark out the path and to legitimise or call into question what is being done.

A matter for the whole municipality
According to the evaluators, discussions regarding the Metropolitan Initiative have gradually led to a more ordered discussion regarding city issues. The aim of the internal discussions has thus been to deepen, consolidate and generate inter-
nal involvement in order to achieve joint responsibility in the municipality. It is the municipal authority’s responsibility to continue to take the initiative and discuss the experience gained from the Metropolitan Initiative. It comes down to creating a process where common issues are developed. During the period the Metropolitan Initiative has been running several important steps have been taken that have resulted in the deprived city areas’ situation being seen as a matter of concern for the whole municipality. Among other things, experience from the Metropolitan Initiative has been an important element in a number of working seminars on growth and social development attended by all heads of departments and companies.
Development in the residential areas covered by the Metropolitan Initiative

More people in work, less vandalism, improved security and increased electoral participation are some of the quantifiable changes that can be seen in the four areas covered by the Metropolitan Initiative over the past four or five years. Even if the Metropolitan Initiative has made an overall contribution to this positive trend it is often difficult to link these general changes directly to individual measures within the Metropolitan Initiative. The general trends in society, such as changes in the economy and movements in and out of the areas, have a major role to play, as have directed efforts within the framework of normal municipal operations.

A great deal has improved in the areas since the Metropolitan Initiative came into being but it is still too early to say whether a break in the trend has occurred. There are still considerable differences compared with the rest of Göteborg and geographical and socio-economic segregation remains. The following is a picture of how the areas have developed since the commencement of the Metropolitan Initiative.

**Number of inhabitants and outward movement**
The number of inhabitants in the areas included in the Metropolitan Initiative was just under 33,500 in December 2004. Since 1999, the population in these areas has increased by 11 per cent compared with four per cent for Göteborg as a whole. The highest percentage increase in population during the period was in Norra Biskopsgården. The housing market in Göteborg has been characterised for a number of years by a high demand for apartments. This means that movements within Göteborg have generally fallen, particularly in the areas covered by the Metropolitan Initiative.

The fact that stability in the areas has improved is positive, above all for social networks, schools and associations. At the same time, some individuals could perceive this as negative as there is less potential for moving to a better or larger apartment. It has also become difficult for young people to leave home.

**Employment and self-support**
An important factor in an area’s development is the manner in which the residents support themselves. The number of the population of Göteborg in the age
range 20-64 who are in employment increased by a couple of per cent each year during the latter half of the 1990s but since 2000 the figure has stabilised at around 70 per cent. In the areas covered by the Metropolitan Initiative the level of employment has increased considerably, even in the new century. Most noticeable is the change in Hjällbo and Norra Biskopsgården, where the proportion of people in employment increased from below 30 per cent in 1998 to 44 and 46 per cent respectively in 2003. Nevertheless, it is still a long way from the average for Göteborg.

The number of people unemployed or involved in labour market programmes has fallen more in the Metropolitan Initiative areas than in Göteborg as a whole. The number, however, is considerably higher than in the rest of Göteborg, 13-16 per cent in August 2004 compared with seven per cent in the rest of Göteborg.

As a result of the fact that more people have secured jobs the proportion who are dependent on support has fallen markedly since 1997 in all the Metropolitan Initiative areas and most of all in Hjällbo and Norra Biskopsgården. However, there is still a considerable difference compared with the average for Göteborg.

Security and crime

The feeling of security and crime levels an area are linked but perhaps not as directly as one might expect. A fall in crime, measured in terms of the number of crimes reported, and increased security do not always go hand in hand.

People’s perceived security can be described based on the results of a tenant survey run by the municipal housing companies, which includes a question
about whether the person feels that they can be outdoors in the area in which they live without any risk of being threatened or attacked in some way. The higher the level of perceived security the higher the so-called security index. In Hjällbo and Gårdsten the security index increased markedly at the beginning of this century. Bergsjön is also perceived as being slightly more secure although in Norra Biskopsgården the security index has remained on generally the same level.

Security index, taken from tenant surveys run within the Framtiden Group

In conjunction with the 2004 survey, the security index fell considerably in all areas, except Bergsjön, to reach a plateau in 2005. The tendency is the same for the average security index for tenants throughout the whole of Göteborg.

Theft, burglary, vandalism, assault and unlawful threats are assumed to be crimes that directly affect perceived security although in all Metropolitan Initiative areas fewer reports regarding this type of crime were received in 2003 compared with 2000.

Voting levels and involvement
One way of measuring democratic development and involvement is to see how many people exercise their right to vote. Information about electoral participation shows that the proportion of residents in the Metropolitan Initiative areas who chose to exercise their voting right in a municipal election in 2002 varied between 46 and 55 per cent compared with an average of 74 per cent for Göteborg. However, the increase in electoral participation in the Metropolitan
Initiative areas is higher than the average for Göteborg. Low electoral participation does not mean that the willingness to be involved in the community and politics differs. Surveys show that the willingness to undertake a political assignment is just as great in Metropolitan Initiative areas as in Göteborg as a whole. Approximately one-quarter of those asked could envisage taking on a political assignment.

Follow-up and evaluation

Follow-up and evaluation have taken place as a common theme throughout the whole of the Metropolitan Initiative. They have been an integral part of the work and have involved working methods, processes and results. The basis for the ongoing follow-up has been self-assessment and status reports. The external evaluation was made by Göteborg University and Chalmers University of Technology.

Internal evaluation and follow-up

Those who have been active in the efforts made have completed self-assessments and the city areas have produced status reports on the area level. A joint municipal status report was submitted to the government each year.

A standard template has been used for the self-assessment. This comprises three parts:

a) A description of objectives and fulfilment of objectives
b) A description of the organisation and working methods as well as collaboration and local consolidation
c) An overall assessment of the measures taken

The self-assessments have functioned both as a working tool and as a basis for the status reports. An examination of self-assessment as a method was made at the beginning of 2004. This showed that self-assessment produces excellent knowledge of the working process and the opportunity for reflection and exchange of experience. It also means that the current work is documented alt-
though it requires a great deal of time and produces a diversity of results which need to be processed further. At the same time, many of those who are responsible for the measures taken feel that the self-assessment has been an important part of their work.

**External evaluation**

The external evaluation has been made by representatives from six departments at Göteborg University and one department at Chalmers University of Technology. The evaluations were made mainly during the period 2002-2004. During this period, four central municipal evaluation networks met. The evaluators, the heads of the city districts, people working on different levels in the city districts as well as local partners took part. The discussion dealt with ongoing evaluation and also about segregation processes, urban development and social marginalisation in a broader sense. The discussions were important in building up common knowledge and both operational representatives and evaluators feel that they benefited from this approach.

It has, however, not been possible to satisfy entirely the need for a dialogue through the central networks. Those responsible for the measures in the Metropolitan Initiative areas in particular have wanted more. This could to a certain extent be an expression of a general need for method support in their work.

In addition to the external evaluations, a citizens’ survey was carried out among residents in the areas covered by the Metropolitan Initiative. The survey was completed in December 2003. The final reports from the external evaluators were presented in June 2004. A summing up analysis of all the evaluations was published in March 2005.
Children are borrowing and reading more books. People who were well outside the labour market have obtained employment and residential areas have become safer. The results of the 180 or so activities that have taken place within the Metropolitan Initiative in Göteborg are obvious. Many of the individual activities have been of considerable benefit to the people involved.

This book includes the experiences of those who have been involved in the Metropolitan Initiative and their views on the approach, methods and results. There is also a general presentation of the background and results of the Metropolitan Initiative in Göteborg.