

# Getting Youths Outside Society Back In

Youth In (Unga in) was a Swedish project running in different forms from 2009 to 2014. The aim of the project was to reach out to youths aged 16-24 who neither studied, had a job or were registered jobseekers. Most participants had experienced difficulties in school. Many have psychiatric and neuropsychiatric disorders, sometimes in combination with addiction.

Young people within this demographic rarely perceive the contact with the Employment Service as satisfactory. They feel like they are being passed around between agencies without getting the support they need.

Youth In has a relaxed environment, the lounge, which is different from the school environment and conventional authority environments. In the lounge, the young people may chill out on the sofa and have important conversations about the future. This is a way to defuse the meetings and increase the prospects for talks on the terms of the youths.

The project was initiated in order to highlight the group of young people who are the most difficult to get into jobs, and to prevent them from falling into long-term unemployment.

The method was mainly individual interviews based on the participants' formal and informal knowledge. Parallel to this, Youth In offered a series of activities for participants to get closer to the labour market, such as short-term jobs, mentoring, internships and workplace visits.

*I now feel that I have a person who is cheering on me, rather than swinging a whip.*

Participant after joining Youth In

## Helping a Marginalized Group

The final evaluation of the project shows that Young In helped overcome exclusion of many young people. The project has managed to establish contact to and gain the trust of young people who had largely remained outside both social and working life. Approximately 60% of the young people who participated moved on to either work or study.