

# A Different Take on the High School

The Swedish Folk High School (Folkhögskola) is a government initiative in Sweden. Young people who have completed neither primary nor secondary school get the opportunity to attend a three-month preparatory course at the Folk High School. The goal is that 25-30 percent of the participants will be motivated to continue their studies.

Young people get the opportunity to try an alternative form of study for upper secondary school. The students are given greater freedom, responsibility and the ability to self-govern their education in comparison with the ordinary secondary schools. The education is based on the students' needs, previous knowledge and experience.

*I applied for the course because I felt I was not in control of my life. I wanted to become more independent, and a teacher told me about the course. It's great here. If you are not sure what you want to do with your life, I think you should try a Folk High School.*

Ann-Marie, student with Asperger's syndrome

The Folk High Schools accept people aged 16-24 years who have neither basic eligibility for higher education nor a high school diploma and who are enrolled at the Employment Service. From 2013, even young long-term unemployed aged 25+ who participate in the work and development guarantee have been allowed to enrol at the Folk High Schools.

*I got motivated to go to college; it was the absolute best thing about it all.*

Christian Pettersson, student

## Turned out well

The Employment Service's follow-up shows that four out of ten participants have moved on to study (23 percent) or work (17 percent). According to the Employment Service, over 2,250 youths attended in 2011. No official evaluation is yet complete, but the Swedish government has expanded and extended the project as it is considered to have turned out well.

Basic information on the Folk High Schools in English is available at: <http://www.folkhogskola.nu/Otherlanguages/English-engelska-2/>