

**Agreement on cooperation
between Region Skåne and
the third sector in Skåne**

2010 – 2014



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Background

In accordance with the Regional Executive Committee's decision of 06-04-2009 a cooperation process has been initiated to develop forms of cooperation between Region Skåne and the third sector.

As a result of this the present proposal for agreement has been devised between Region Skåne and the third sector in Skåne. The agreement is based on the national agreement entered into between the government and non-profit organisations.

"The third sector" is a collective term for organisations that promote a value, a goal or an idea that supports public or member interests but are not profit-driven or a part of the State or a local authority. It may involve, for example, non-profit associations, communities or foundations.

About the parties

The parties are Region Skåne and the third sector, which has been represented in the development of this agreement by Nätverket Social Ekonomi Skåne.

Nätverket Social Ekonomi Skåne consists of a number of regional non-profit organisations or local non profit organisations aiming to become a regional organisation.

It is up to each individual organisation in Skåne to decide whether to support and sign the agreement in its entirety or not. It will also be possible for other regional non-profit organisations, which are not part of Nätverket Social Ekonomi Skåne, to be covered by the agreement.

Both parties are responsible for circulating the content of the agreement to organisations that did not participate in its development.

The parties to this agreement see a particular value specifically in the non-profit-distributing types of activities represented by the non-profit organisations. The agreement between the parties thus does not entail helping to reduce costs and thereby save money. The agreement should instead contribute to opening up possibilities for ventures leading to increased participation and reduced isolation.

The fundamental values for the regional agreement are based on the six principles of the national agreement:

- Autonomy and independence
- Dialogue
- Quality
- Continuity
- Transparency
- Diversity

The non-profit organisations in Skåne represent a unique and indispensable part of the democracy and therefore constitute an important element of the political process. Parties gather together people based on how they view various political alternatives, who then create majorities in assemblies. Organisations gather people together on grounds other than purely political alternatives. True pluralism can be created between the differing outlooks and ways of thinking of the political parties and the non-profit organisations. In other words, the non-profit organisations do not supersede the parties' role in the system, but instead contribute to enhancing democracy.

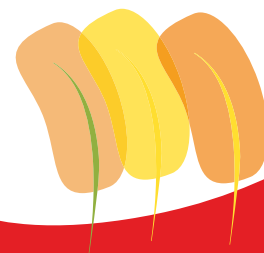
The voluntary work performed in Skåne contributes to public health, well-being and development. Such voluntary work is a part of the welfare that citizens can choose to share in and can therefore be seen as an enhancement and development of welfare. However, voluntary work should not be used as a way to cut back on the public welfare commitment. When changes are made to the public welfare commitment, an analysis must therefore always be undertaken to determine what the change will entail for voluntary work.

Non-profit organisations can, if they perform such an assessment themselves, constitute important players for welfare development in Skåne in the sense of broadening the range of suppliers and the range of services via their non-profit commitment. The parties to this agreement see a particular value specifically in the non-profit-distributing types of activities represented by the non-profit organisations. Region Skåne is working to publicise in various ways the significance of the third sector's role in society, first of all with regard to public health, welfare, employment and community development.

It is of central value for the non-profit organisations to have reasonable support for coordination and development work relating to this agreement. Region Skåne undertakes during the period 2011–2014 to take the agreement into account in the coming budget process.

Vision

The third sector in Skåne constitutes a natural and powerful player that on equal terms, together with society's other players, contributes to welfare development in a vigorous Skåne, characterised by growth, power of attraction, buoyancy and balance.



The purpose of the agreement is to create a long-term, sustainable Skåne by strengthening the interaction between the public sector and third sector. This will strengthen democracy, increase participation and reduce isolation.

The aim of the agreement is:

- to publicise and strengthen the third sector's independent and autonomous role as vocal representative and opinion-former, and
- to develop the scope for the third sector to constitute an important player within welfare development.

Follow-up

- The agreement is being developed based on the parties' own and common commitments and actions, by a specially appointed joint action group. The number of participants in the joint action group will be a maximum of 10 (five from the third sector and five from Region Skåne). The joint action group will meet at least twice every 6 months. Annual auditing by political representatives takes place.
- The agreement will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised every four years.

Commitments

- Within the framework of the agreement the parties make various commitments, some of which may be shared. These commitments are followed up and revised annually.

Actions

- In order to fulfil the commitments a number of actions are implemented. The actions each party undertakes are reported at an annual conference.
- The chairmanship should rotate annually, with the vice chairman being appointed from the other cooperating party.
- Region Skåne is responsible for administrative support.
- The composition of the joint action group may change over time, depending on which other non profit organisations sign the agreement.

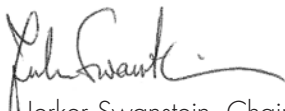
Planned actions 2010-2014

- To develop forms to support the municipalities and the third sector at local level with regard to local agreements. Cooperation with Skåne's Association of Local Authorities.
- Together with government authorities at national and regional level, municipalities, the third sector and the business community, to audit , analyse and initiate development initiatives relating to social enterprise and thus increase participation and reduce isolation.
- To develop support structures for community entrepreneurship in Skåne.
- To develop forms of voluntary work in Skåne under the auspices of the third sector and in Region Skåne's activities.
- To increase knowledge regarding procurement procedure and thereby improve the potential for the third sector to contribute to diversity and alternative implementation of services.
- Together with the third sector, to develop a model for strengthened teamwork and early consultation within preparatory work and physical planning work, for example.
- Together with regional and municipal community players, to develop cooperation with the third sector for establishment and integration of newly-arrived "refugees" in Skåne, but also integration of people of foreign extraction.
- To support knowledge development regarding the third sector's role in community development by actively promoting cooperation between different players and by promoting the training and research available in Skåne in this field.
- To develop an annual regional forum, where the third sector's role as an important community player is emphasised together with other players.

Kristianstad, 29-06-2010

Region Skåne

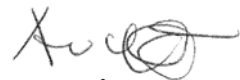
The third sector in Skåne



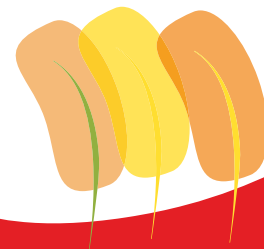
Jerker Swanstein, Chairman,
Regional Executive Committee



Eva Hall, Chairman,
Nätverket Social Ekonomi Skåne



Anders Åkesson, Governor/Chairman,
Committee on Health and Medical Services



APPENDIX

BACKGROUND

Region Skåne and the third sector

In accordance with the Regional Executive Committee's decision of 06-04-2009 a cooperation process has been initiated to develop forms of cooperation between Region Skåne and the third sector.

A working group consisting of representatives of Region Skåne and representatives of the third sector have held a number of meetings.

ACCEPTANCE PROCESS

The ESF-funded national project SOUL (Sociala ekonomins Organisationer i Utveckling och Lärande) has facilitated broader acceptance of the ongoing process.

Around 40 organisations from the third sector, half of which fall outside Nätverket Social Ekonomi Skåne's member organisations, have been invited to take part in a parallel process, enabling more in-depth discussions. The process has also contributed to an increased boost to knowledge and acceptance, with contributions from several organisations.

CONCEPT DEFINITION

The third sector constitutes the collective concept and covers the various concepts used, e.g. social economy, organisations within civil society, non-profit sector, association activities, etc.

FUNDAMENTAL VALUES

The third sector is characterised by a strong conviction of its important role in society – in the past, now and in the future. The third sector constitutes both a prerequisite and an expression of any open, democratic and successful society and is an indispensable part of Skåne democracy.

When people in Skåne choose to assemble on the basis of an idea in order to jointly create development and solve problems that individuals cannot solve alone, this is of huge value to Skåne.

The fundamental value is that people in union are and feel like subjects in their own lives. They decide for themselves, in their own way, how they want to be. This generates self-confidence, self-esteem, pleasure and purpose.

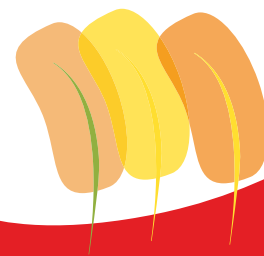
In this context people become subjects in that the initiative for their association comes from themselves. No one other than the people in the association defines what their association is about, how it defines its reason for being and what it will do.

This value can quite easily be limited by the various structures that surround associations in real life, e.g. structures of economy and regulations. The purpose of the agreement in Skåne is to adapt the structures around the associations in order to give them as much self determination as possible. This purpose is commonly embraced by all parties to the agreement in order to provide the best preconditions for the associations to play their democratic, but also more practical, roles.

Although the basis for the agreement is respect for the fundamental values of the associations, this respect has its limits.

One common responsibility is to actively affirm human dignity and tolerance. The third sector supported by democratic values is based on respect for people's equal worth. Respect for the fundamental values may not be used as an argument to shirk reasonable scrutiny and evaluation.

The agreement is based on the idea that it is principally regions/local authorities and municipalities that are responsible for jointly funded welfare. The parties share a common starting point in the conviction that good interaction between the public sector and civil society is central to good community development. The Swedish combination of well-founded confidence in social institutions and a vigorous civil society has been and continues to be a success factor for social cohesion and economic development.



COOPERATION

Cooperation between Region Skåne and the third sector should be characterised by respect for the non-profit organisations' important role in society – in the past, now and in the future. The third sector helps to give people knowledge, self confidence and power to influence society and their own lives. Good interaction between the public sector and the third sector is central to good community development.

The third sector constitutes both a prerequisite and an expression of any open, democratic and successful society. The history of non-profit organisations is also the history of Swedish democracy. The importance of a healthy non-profit sector and association activities must therefore also take its starting point in our shared history. A forward-looking perspective, with development and assurance of democratic principles at the top of our common agenda. One essential basis for cooperation with the third sector is for democratically-organised association activities and the third sector to be highly important to our democracy. The third sector formulates its mission in society based on its fundamental values and is also independent in its interaction with other players. The third sector is also an arena and meeting place for strengthening the individual citizen's power. By enabling people to jointly develop and express their opinions, influence society and their own situation, association activities are also the place where members are trained in democratic forms of work.

Examples where cooperation between the public sector and the third sector can contribute to community development include:

- The importance of listening to the views of the third sector in preparatory work, for example, and gathering views from the non-profit sector in relevant terms of reference.
- Developing information exchange in dialogue with the third sector in order to generate better rooted decisions and
- The third sector's role as vocal representative and opinion-former, especially for isolated individuals

EACH PARTY'S OBJECTIVES FROM THE OVERALL AGREEMENT

Region Skåne's objectives

- To develop relations and forms of cooperation with the third sector
- To generate added value and increased diversity in their own activities

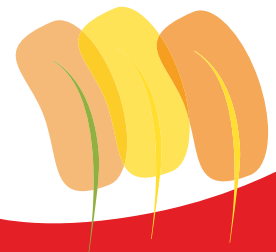
- To identify areas as particularly important: social enterprise, voluntary work (including hospitals), culture linked to the culture portfolio, etc., the environment linked to nature areas, among other things, but also natural disasters, etc., and integration into society of people with a foreign background
- To open up possibilities for other forms of operation through changed procurement procedure
- To open up possibilities for volunteering and voluntary work, channelled through the third sector
- To open up possibilities for knowledge development through research and development, conferences, etc.

The third sector's objectives

- To publicise the sector's significance to community development
- Important process, including clarifying the various parties' roles
- To encompass as large a portion of the sector as possible
- Individuality and shared view
- To identify and clarify issues that affect the whole sector – shared issues
- Knowledge development, internally and externally
- Voluntary work organised within the sector as far as possible
- Continuity
- To facilitate communal agreements

COMMON ANALYSIS OF IMPORTANT AREAS OF ACTIVITY

During the process the participants in the working group agreed on defining their views on a number of important areas. One individual from the third sector and one employee from the Region have looked at an area each and jointly prepared an analysis that the whole group then supported.



The areas are:

- Growth and entrepreneurship
- Welfare development
- Public health
- Culture
- Knowledge development

GROWTH AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

We should be better at utilising the third sector's commitment to social development and growth!

The term growth, to the majority, means improved financial development. A more modern concept is sustainable growth, which usually also incorporates the environmental and social aspects of such growth. This looks more at the long-term development forces and the link between the surrounding community and the companies/organisations. Both these concepts have links between the increased growth and the third sector.

All the third sector's various organisations represent a large proportion of the leisure and culture offering available in any particular locality and thus contribute to the locality/region's power of attraction.

Growth does not happen in a vacuum but in a physical location and is dependent on its environment. The geographical appeal, for example, is important, but so too is a good and open social climate. A good social climate provides power of attraction for companies, while a poor social climate, on the other hand, yields no incentive for establishment of companies, etc. The companies/organisations that contribute with their economic activity are present in towns or regions where those working at the companies/organisations live.

Strong association activities increase the social capital, which contributes to increased interaction between different companies, for example, and increases the scope for these to grow.

Associations are a meeting place outside the workplace and the home. New points of contact are created between people from different occupational sectors and areas of responsibility. This is often called social capital, i.e. a type of trust capital that exists between people in a locality. Social capital has proven important for economic growth, as trust between people increases scope for cooperation and, sometimes, risk-taking.

Association activities are becoming an increasingly important player for creating a socially sustainable society.

The social and voluntary sector forms one element of the third sector. These organisations and people make major social contributions to a society. A society that is socially sustainable with widespread social acceptance of responsibility is better for growth than a society with limited social acceptance of responsibility.

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship largely involves spotting needs in society/your environment, having ideas about how these needs can be satisfied, but then also actually being able to implement the changes needed. Such entrepreneurship is present within all sectors and within many people, but sometimes the conditions to enable development are lacking. By contributing to liberating individuals' driving force and capabilities, entrepreneurship can also help less favoured groups to escape their isolation.

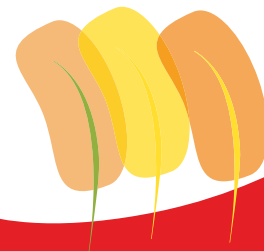
Within the third sector there are islands of well-established entrepreneurship, and the third sector also fulfils an important function in giving people employment and work and also assists in stimulating entrepreneurship and creativity.

The Swedish welfare society is dependent to a large degree on the work of the third sector, and many functions in society require commitment from individual people and organisations of various kinds. It is therefore essential to view community development from an overall perspective, with all three sectors (society, the business sector and the third sector) being given the chance to contribute to development and growth.

The term Triple Helix is often used within research and development, with academia, society and the private sector cooperating to bring about development and growth. In order for all beneficial forces to be utilised and for everyone to be given chance to contribute it is perhaps necessary to introduce the Penta Helix concept so that, in addition to society (in the form of the political system), academia and the business sector (both private and public), it also covers the third sector and individual social entrepreneurs.

Social enterprises

Social enterprise is a relatively new concept in Sweden together with concepts such as CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) and community and social entrepreneurship. However, all have in common greater social acceptance of responsibility on their agenda.



Most social enterprises are run as economic or non-profit associations, but you also find foundations and limited companies. Social enterprises reinvest their profits in their own activities.

Social enterprises can help in developing operations and methods that create opportunities for more people to gain employment, by offering employment adapted to people's differing needs. In this way social enterprises can provide a gateway to the ordinary labour market for individuals who, for various reasons, have trouble getting established. It is therefore important for social enterprises not to be regarded as an isolated phenomenon in society but as a resource, which, in cooperation with both the public sector and private companies, can help to develop new forms and means of supporting business development and growth of new companies. With their capacity to help individuals subject to various forms of work obstacles go from being dependent on social welfare to employment and supporting themselves, social enterprises are also contributing to welfare development and benefiting the national economy.

WELFARE DEVELOPMENT

The third sector with its voluntary work contributes in a perceptible way to welfare development. Historically, the sector has pointed out needs and launched activities not catered for by public society.

The Swedish Public Dental Service, the Mobility Service (Färdtjänsten), BVC, SFI, libraries, day nurseries are examples of activities that for a long time have obviously been for the good of all Swedes, but were all launched and delivered by the third sector. Consequently, the list of activities within Swedish welfare that originated in the third sector is long.

Social entrepreneurs within the third sector currently contribute strongly to regional welfare development. Associations and cooperatives within the third sector are not bound by political rules and decisions, and are not essentially responsible for welfare. However, they take great responsibility for welfare and through their personal commitment and organisational freedom can find new paths for participation and social responsibility.

The sector also has an important role as vocal representative for pointing out shortcomings and serving as the voice of groups that otherwise may have difficulty asserting their needs and rights.

Added value

Voluntary efforts create added value for welfare, for the volunteers, for users of welfare services and for providers of welfare services.

There is added value in the third sector organising people (volunteers) in different forms of community work. The importance of the interaction and meetings that occur between people is emphasised. The meetings are one way of transferring knowledge between different groups in society and, when it works best, lead to mutual understanding and respect between people. The meetings can also be seen as training in applying democratic rules for everyone involved.

Volunteering

Working as a volunteer is always a voluntary undertaking where the individual wants to give of their time, their commitment and their knowledge. Voluntary work provides great potential for conveying strength in commitment from the third sector to both groups and individuals. Committed fellow men who make no demand for their own financial gain can help generate hope and belief in the future.

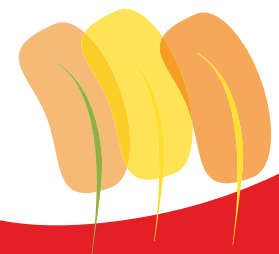
However, it needs to be pointed out that voluntary work is not free, since resources are needed to organise, train and support volunteers in their work.

Opinion-forming – vocal representative

One important function and also the basis for independent association activities is self-reliance. By being separate, third-sector activities can point to shortcomings in society, serve as the vocal representative for weaker groups and function as opinion-former for social change. This function demands self-reliance and integrity from the sector. This self-reliance need not constitute any obstacle to cooperation and dialogue.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The agreement between Region Skåne and the third sector publicises the social economy as the bearer of the meaningful values, confidence and vitality that give people hope in a sometimes quite tough society. Participation and influence in society are one of the most fundamental requirements for public health. Lack of influence and potential to affect your own life situation has a strong connection with ill health. Consequently, there are clear connections between good public health and a society characterised by financial and social security, equality in living conditions, gender equality and justice. In order to achieve the overall national and regional public health objective, special emphasis must be placed on strengthening the capability and possibility for social and cultural participation for financially and socially vulnerable persons and on opportunities for influence and participation in society for children, young people and the elderly.



Skåne is a county in development. However, the composition of the population, and with it the health, differs not only between the Skåne municipalities but also within the municipalities. Socio-economic differences affect people's state of health.

One important challenge is to provide opportunities for increased participation and increased influence and thus reduce the risk of isolation. Cooperation between and with the third sector therefore needs to be developed.

CULTURE

Region Skåne's cultural policy objectives are based, among other things, on the concept of developed, locally-established, cross-boundary external cooperation with clear civic focus. The third sector here constitutes a large, self-evident and vital element of Skåne's cultural life.

The third sector plays an essential role when it comes to contributing to cultural pluralism and public participation. People's commitment and creative ability are the basis for a rich cultural life. Single individuals and third-sector organisations put a great deal of effort into developing cultural activities and thus help to make culture a positive force in society and in the development of democracy.

A rich cultural life contributes to our ability to understand, critically examine, reflect both the past and present, and create social coherence and meaning in existence. Such efforts are important and are often based on cross-boundary work between institutions, adult education and other cultural players. The non-profit organisations involve and include cultural creators, both professional and amateur. They act separately or jointly, depending on context, and are not in opposition to one another. On the contrary, they often create opportunities for one another, and both constitute necessary elements of a rich cultural life.

The non-profit organisations also build more informal networks and connections where cooperation among people takes place outside strict formalities. Many talk about these forms of cooperation increasing in importance and that they are relationships that are neither possible nor even desirable to exhaustively map and define. Quite the reverse, freedom, flexibility and diversity constitute the central values.

The cultural players in the third sector have a fundamental role to play in the work towards a society characterised by open communities that are accessible to everyone, where all are given the opportunity to freely develop their creative capabilities. Non-profit organisations within the cultural field are supported by and collaborate with several political fields.

There is every reason to continue to stimulate increased interaction between third-sector players and the cultural field's other interested parties. The third sector is of great importance to both active cultural life and the cultural heritage field and contributes in a crucial way, through its activities, to achieving national cultural policy objectives.

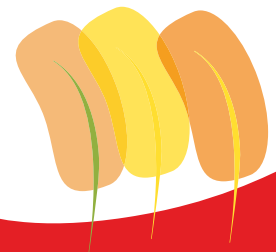
KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

There is great need for knowledge development within this field. Sweden has a different tradition – with its strong public sector – from many other European countries. Education and research at universities and colleges is essential for knowledge development. Research relating to the civil society is conducted nationally, primarily at Ersta Sköndal University College, and in Skåne, education and research in this field take place principally at Malmö University, but also at Lund University. The focus of research and development in Skåne is the fields of entrepreneurship (community/public/social), and the work in Malmö primarily covers the fields of sports science, sustainable change processes, health and society, art, culture and communication, international migration and ethnic relations and new media. Research and development within the fields of leisure sciences and urban studies takes place here. Research and development in Lund is at the university's School of Social Work, among other locations, and within sociology and forensic sociology. From 2010, the government intends to establish a 10-year research programme on civil society, which will receive annual funding of around SEK 22 million.

SUPPORT STRUCTURES

For the sake of continuity and constancy, a support structure is needed for the regional agreement. Support structures may involve:

- Developing forms of cooperation and early consultation between the third sector and other regional and local community players
- Clarifying needs for both personal and financial support for the third sector.
- Opening up means of funding for implementation of the intentions of the regional agreement.
- Giving follow-on assignments, provisionally to the current working group, to continue further development of the regional agreement.
- Clarifying needs for competence development, training, recruitment, etc.



For further information:

www.overenskommelsenskane.se

Social Ekonomi Skåne

