



Public Libraries in Greater Stockholm

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WHAT IS COMMONLY TERMED Greater Stockholm consists of the city of Stockholm and twenty-eight other municipalities which, as far as urban development and industrial geography are concerned, are in all respects closely bound to the capital city. Six of the neighboring municipalities are cities; some of the others are mainly rural but several have attained a high degree of urbanization. The population within the area is rapidly increasing. In 1940 Greater Stockholm had a population of 770,000 inhabitants. Now the population of the area is 1,210,000 inhabitants, about 16 per cent of Sweden's total population. About 800,000 people are living within the boundaries of the city of Stockholm alone. In twenty years the population of Greater Stockholm is expected to grow to over 1.5 million, with most of the increase in the neighboring communities.

Greater Stockholm is not an administrative unit. Each municipality within the area is independent and has its own local government, and the smallest municipality within the area has a population of about 2,000 inhabitants. Recently, however, a plan has been approved by the Swedish Government which undertakes the consolidation of the smallest units into communities with at least 8,000 inhabitants each. All the neighboring municipalities outside Stockholm are in Stockholm County and benefit from the central city, particularly with respect to medical services. The city of Stockholm does not belong to Stockholm County but is, in most respects, regarded as a separate county itself.

The development of Greater Stockholm has brought about far reaching intermunicipal collaboration. This is, however, attained wholly on a voluntary basis through various joint bodies or through legal agreements, without infringing upon the independence of the different municipalities. Proposals aiming at making Greater Stockholm a single administrative unit have been presented, but so far no alternative to the present system has been accepted.

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In 1960 the Government approved a regional plan for the Greater Stockholm area. The plan draws up basic principles for land use, and includes proposals for the main highways, airfields, built-up areas, and recreational facilities as well as for the provision of water and sewage. In order to carry out the regional plan, the Greater Stockholm municipalities have appointed a special planning committee. The most important task at present is the provision of housing. Agreements have been made in this regard and also in connection with secondary school teaching, medical services, traffic control, water supply, and other matters.

Higher education has a long tradition in Sweden. The first university of the country, Uppsala University, was founded in 1477, and in 1668 the University of Lund came into existence. Preparatory education was provided by the monastery schools, and after the Reformation the first *gymnasia* were founded in the 1620's. During that century, provision was made for the elementary education of all children. The 1686 law of the Lutheran Church of Sweden gave the clergy control of the elementary teaching of reading and writing. During the following centuries, elementary education was improved through private schools, and since 1842 all Swedish children have been educated in a compulsory school system. The period of compulsory education was for a long time fixed at six years; but in 1936 it was extended to seven years, and local authorities were empowered to make a further extension to eight or nine years. In 1950, the Swedish *Riksdag* decided to adopt nine-year compulsory unified schooling, and the final legislation for this was passed in 1962. The nine-year school will be divided into three stages, each of which comprises three years. The compulsory school will teach basic subjects, e.g., language, mathematics, history, nature, culture, technology, and social science. The teaching of English begins in the fourth year. This compulsory nine-year school will be organized all over the Greater Stockholm region.

Having passed the compulsory school, the pupils receive further voluntary education in a continuation school system. The secondary school system consisted until now of the *realskola* and *gymnasium*. It will be replaced by the upper stage of the compulsory school and of a new continuation school system. Those who are most gifted for theoretical studies enter into a three-year *gymnasium* which prepares students for the universities. Within the *gymnasium*, the pupils will have to choose between five curricula: general, commercial, social-economic, natural science, and technical. The length of the technical

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course will be four years. Side by side with the *gymnasia* there will be two-year voluntary continuation schools with social, commercial, and technical curricula. The earlier secondary school system is established in the cities and some other places within the Greater Stockholm region. In a few years, however, the new system of continuation schools probably will be established all over the region except in purely rural districts. Both the primary schools and the continuation school system will be financed by the municipalities with special grants from the State.

The number of pupils who receive secondary school education will increase rapidly within the next few years. The existing *gymnasia* now receive about 25 per cent of the 17 year-olds. It is estimated that in 1970 the new continuation school system will educate about 50 per cent of those in school, and by 1975 this figure is expected to be 60 per cent.

University education within Greater Stockholm is concentrated in the city of Stockholm. The Stockholm University is divided into three main faculties: humanities, natural sciences, and law. In Stockholm there are also many institutes for professional education on a university level, e.g., medicine, technical studies, commercial studies, and so on. About 22,000 university students are studying at the different educational institutes in Stockholm at present. All these institutes are operated by the State.

Swedish adult education, in the modern sense, began in the early part of the nineteenth century. By the middle of the century there were established more than 1,000 parish libraries throughout the country. A unique technique of Swedish adult education called the *bildnings-cirklar* (education study circles) began in 1845. The Danish influence in adult education was felt in Sweden in 1868 with the establishment of the first Swedish people's high school. Workers' institutes and lecturing centers followed in 1880. Modern adult education in Sweden is in many respects connected with the gradual increase of power assumed by the masses of the Swedish people. As more people began to take an active part in the protection of their social and political interests, more attention was paid to programs of adult education.

As a rule, adult education in Sweden is not provided by the government as such, with the exception of some of the people's high schools. The bulk of that education is carried on by associations of private citizens. In recent years, however, the state and municipal authorities have given substantial financial support to adult education.

Many citizens' organizations arose from what is known as popular movements. These organizations, which were essentially protective societies, developed associations to promote educational programs. The labor movement organized the great Workers' Educational Association. The agricultural organizations cooperated to found and to maintain the Swedish Rural Educational Association. The Central Organization of Salaried Employees carries on its educational activities through the Salaried Employees' Educational Association. Many educational associations, however, are connected with idealistic movements of various kinds, e.g., the Church of Sweden, the Order of the Good Templars, and so on. A unique adult education organization called the People's University was founded in 1942; it arranges programs in the university towns of Sweden, and provides a means whereby university students can take an active part in adult education.

All of the associations mentioned sponsor a great number of courses and lectures in a variety of subjects. There are also special organizations known as "lecturing associations," which arrange lectures for adults; they are united into the National Federation of Lecturing Associations. The system of residential people's high schools is a special development in the field of adult education. Their purpose is to impart general and civic education to young people. Young adults from a wide variety of social groups and vocations live and study together in the people's high schools. The emphasis is on learning to work together cooperatively. About half the people's high schools are run by private organizations, and the other half by regional governmental authorities.

Adult education in Sweden thus has a century-long tradition. A high percentage of the population now takes part in such activities. In Greater Stockholm all forms of adult education are carried on intensively. It is estimated that about 100,000 people annually take part in the different adult education activities within the area.

Public library service is available to all residents within the Greater Stockholm area. However, there are great differences in the resources as well as the use of the libraries, as shown by Table 1. The libraries contain on an average 1.5 volumes per capita. The highest figure, almost four volumes, is to be found in Djursholm, a small city with an essentially well-to-do population. Huddinge, with less than one volume per capita, is a rapidly expanding municipality near the city of Stockholm, and its library resources have not been increased very quickly. The municipalities of Märsta (1.14), Nacka (1.27), and Järfälla (1.27) are in a similar situation. Some essentially rural municipal-

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ities, Tyresö and Västerhaninge, show remarkably low per capita figures, 1.01 and 1.25, respectively. As to the figure of the Stockholm Public Library (1.37 per capita), it should be observed that a great number of research and special libraries are situated within the city of Stockholm.

TABLE I
The Public Library Resources of Greater Stockholm

<i>Municipality</i>	<i>Population</i> (1963)	<i>Book Stock</i> (1963)	<i>Book Circulation</i> (1963)	<i>Cost</i> (Swedish Crowns) <i>Per Capita</i> (1964)
Stockholm, City	798,443	1,096,444	3,834,507	11.97
Sundbyberg, City	27,393	61,537	121,876	23.65
Solna, City	54,281	98,850	301,507	29.82
Stocksund	4,936	14,432	22,262	18.77
Danderyd	13,794	20,211	41,392	15.31
Djursholm, City	7,544	28,474	39,711	10.72
Lidingö, City	32,956	57,986	172,907	16.79
Järfälla	30,745	39,011	161,034	15.64
Sollentuna	31,060	49,574	158,490	14.68
Täby	26,121	34,383	135,726	17.93
Upplands-Väsby	11,690	16,921	41,040	4.72
Märsta	10,457	11,928	42,123	17.27
Boo	7,318	10,919	17,834	8.76
Nacka, City	23,026	29,179	66,620	14.52
Saltsjöbaden	5,994	13,288	24,057	9.96
Tyresö	11,514	11,694	25,973	6.97
Österhaninge	12,894	21,753	70,618	11.72
Huddinge	37,731	37,128	125,192	12.13
Botkyrka	14,664	27,318	75,179	10.17
Vallentuna	6,386	15,710	32,538	11.56
Österåker	7,335	11,554	35,448	6.28
Vaxholm, City	4,094	7,287	13,681	9.31
Värmdö	2,205	4,043	8,923	6.64
Gustavsberg	5,780	9,616	10,795	6.10
Västerhaninge	8,884	11,112	18,870	5.76
Grödinge	2,142	5,400	11,918	10.18
Salem	2,616	4,557	8,883	6.64
Ekerö	4,194	9,121	5,457	5.20
Färingsö	3,214	8,620	8,629	7.51
Total	1,209,411	1,768,050	5,633,190	11.95

Obviously the resources of the libraries are closely connected with the size of municipal and state grants. In Sweden, the state contribution to each public library is limited to 10,000 Sw. crowns. Thus the state grant is of vital importance only for the small libraries. The medium-sized and large libraries have to rely on local grants for the

major part of their budget. On the average the public libraries within Greater Stockholm receive annually about 11.95 Sw. crowns per capita. A particularly high municipal grant was given in 1964 to the Solna Public Library, where a new main library is being constructed. For the same reason, the Sundbyberg Public Library has received a higher grant than normally. Regularly the small rural municipalities give low grants per capita to their libraries. As far as the municipal grant to the Stockholm Public Library is concerned, it should be kept in mind that the city of Stockholm supports a great many other cultural activities to a higher degree than the smaller municipalities.

Residents of Greater Stockholm borrow on an average nearly five volumes annually per capita from public libraries. The highest figures are to be found in rapidly expanding cities and communities near Stockholm, for instance Solna (5.55), Lidingö (5.25), Järfälla (5.24), and Täby (5.20). In the purely rural districts there are great differences; usually the libraries of these municipalities are run by part-time librarians with little library education. As mentioned earlier, the smallest municipalities will be united into larger units within the next few years. The small public libraries will then be replaced by larger, more efficient libraries, well-equipped and run by fully trained personnel.

In every Swedish county, one large library has to assist the small libraries within the county by supplying them with books which they do not have and by providing technical advice. The Lidingö Public Library functions in this way as the "central library" for Stockholm County. For this purpose, it maintains a collection of about 28,200 volumes not included in the 57,986 book stock as reported for 1963. About 45,000 volumes are lent annually to libraries and borrowers in other municipalities. The central library organizes bookmobile services in the rural districts and carries on a library boat service to the islands of the Stockholm archipelago. The Lidingö Library receives a special annual state grant for these services.

The largest public library, however, within Greater Stockholm is the Stockholm Public Library. Its main library contains a book stock of 333,000 volumes and in 1963 had a circulation of 650,000 volumes. About half of the users at the main library are university and secondary school students. There are thirty branches for adult borrowers and thirty-eight for children and young people throughout the Stockholm city area both in downtown and suburban districts. Bookmobile service is organized for districts with a scattered population. The Library has

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fifteen branches in hospitals, and organizes deposits in about two hundred homes for aged people and in other institutions. A special shut-in service is provided old and sick persons who live in their own homes. About 20 per cent of the urban population are registered as active borrowers at the Stockholm Public Library.

All service from the Stockholm Public Library is free to the residents of the city of Stockholm and for all students and pupils at educational institutions in Stockholm. Other residents in the municipalities outside Stockholm have to pay a fee of 3 Sw. crowns a year for loans from the Stockholm Public Library. About 3,000 persons are at present paying that fee. The Library does not, however, participate in intermunicipal library cooperation arrangements, and residents outside Stockholm must borrow their books directly from the Stockholm Public Library.

It has been a source of regret for some time that the municipal libraries within Greater Stockholm are not able to borrow from the Stockholm Public Library. A committee has been appointed, headed by the chief librarian of the Stockholm Public Library, to make proposals concerning increased intermunicipal library cooperation within Greater Stockholm. At present, the committee has to rely on voluntary cooperation. It is possible, however, that an entirely new organization of Stockholm County will be agreed upon within a few years. Such a municipal reform will produce a new framework for library cooperation in the county. It has also been proposed that the Stockholm Public Library should function as the central public library for all of Middle Sweden and receive a special state grant for that purpose. In that case, the question of library cooperation within Greater Stockholm would be solved automatically.

General References

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