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The Swedish music and art school in change

Di Lorenzo Tillborg, Adriana

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LUND UNIVERSITY

PO Box 117
221 00 Lund
+46 46-222 00 00



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Adriana Di Lorenzo Tillborg | PhD student in music education | Malmö Academy of Music
adriana.di_lorenzo_tillborg@mhm.lu.se

Background

Despite the fact that Swedish music and art schools are present in about 97 % of Sweden's municipalities reaching many children and adolescents both in the activities outside and within the compulsory school context, such schools have no national policy documents. The municipalities can therefore decide whether they want to finance such a school or not and the schools themselves are responsible for elaborating policy documents. Recently, however, the Swedish government has commissioned an investigation to suggest a national strategy. As music and art schools are responsible for the musical development of many Swedish children and adolescents they are important to investigate within the field of music education research.



Photo: Charlotte Carlberg Bärng

Aim

The aim of my PhD thesis is to investigate the process of change that the Swedish music and art school is going through as a consequence of the governmental plans for a national strategy. The research concentrates particularly on how music and art schools are constructed within their leaders' discursive practice, e.g., with regard to their views on a national strategy and on possible mechanisms of exclusion.

Methodology

A constructionist approach is embraced with discourse analysis as an analytical tool.

Mixed methods:

- a national survey including school leaders at music and art schools
- focus group conversations with school leaders at music and art schools.