

# Collaboration on sustainable urban development in Mistra Urban Futures



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## WHAT IS MISTRA URBAN FUTURES?

Mistra Urban Futures is an international research and knowledge centre for sustainable urban development. We develop and apply knowledge to promote accessible, green and fair cities. Co-production – jointly defining, developing and applying knowledge across different disciplines and subject areas from both research and practice – is our way of working. The centre was founded in and is managed from Gothenburg, but also has platforms in Skåne (southern Sweden), Stockholm, Sheffield-Manchester (United Kingdom), Kisumu (Kenya), and Cape Town (South Africa). [www.mistraurbanfutures.org](http://www.mistraurbanfutures.org)



The Gothenburg Region (GR) consists of 13 municipalities who have chosen to work together. We run development projects, have government assignments, conduct research, organize courses and we are the voice of the metropolitan region in western Sweden. In our networks, politicians and officials meet to exchange experiences and ideas, and to decide on joint ventures. Our goal is for the region's one million inhabitants to have as good a life as possible.

The Gothenburg Region 2019.

The report has been compiled by Sarah Johnstone, GR's coordinator for Mistra Urban Futures, and Gunnel Rydberg, Communications Officer for GR's work with Mistra Urban Futures.

Layout: Tony Dahl, the Gothenburg Region.

# The Gothenburg Region wants to contribute where research and practice meet



Helena Söderbäck,  
Executive Director of the  
Gothenburg Region (GR)

An important task for the Gothenburg Region (GR) is to build knowledge for the future, together with and on the initiative of our member municipalities and partners. At the Gothenburg Region, research and practice meet. The development of skills, knowledge and activities go hand in hand. This is why the municipalities in the Gothenburg region have for the past ten years been one of the partners in Mistra Urban Futures—an international research center aimed at promoting sustainable urban development in collaboration between academia and practice. Researchers and practitioners from different disciplines work together in projects using a co-productive approach, developing new and necessary insights. This enables the Center to be part of making a real difference to the environment and people's lives in the metropolitan area.

In 2017, the Gothenburg Region grew to more than one million inhabitants. We have grown by about 150,000 since 2000, which corresponds to a whole Linköping—Sweden's fifth largest city. The year 2018 has continued to be characterized by strong growth, which offers both opportunities and challenges for our metropolitan area. Sustainable urban development, across all three sustainability dimensions, is a complex field with many actors and many different types of issues, which are also linked to several conflicting goals. The need for new and innovative ways to approach future choices is obvious. The challenges must be met from the combined experience of the public sector and academia, as well as businesses and civil society.

The Gothenburg Region's strategy document 'Sustainable Growth' is a starting point for GR's work and our development of social sustainability perspectives. This is well in line with what Mistra Urban Futures has formulated, where one of the most important challenges is: How can we achieve sustainable urban development so that we stay within what our planet can withstand? Accessible, green and fair cities are central concepts that guide the Center in highlighting what constitutes sustainable urban development.

The report that you hold in your hand has been published annually since 2011 to provide a picture of the Gothenburg Region's work on sustainable urban development within Mistra Urban Futures. The report is based on the collaboration and knowledge-building that takes place in GR's network for Mistra Urban Futures—where all 13 member municipalities participate to a greater or lesser extent. The report also outlines which projects and activities the Gothenburg Region has been involved in throughout the year.

The work being undertaken in GR's municipalities within the framework of Mistra Urban Futures is urgently required, and I am happy to once again be able to submit our annual report to readers.

*Helena Söderbäck*  
Executive Director of the Gothenburg Region (GR)



# Highlights from the Gothenburg Region's Mistra Urban Futures Network 2018

The Gothenburg Region (GR) has a network of municipal representatives linked to Mistra Urban Futures, tasked with:

- Initiating, monitoring, and disseminating joint research and development projects that benefit the entire region and individual member municipalities.
- Ensuring that the process results in useful tools and methods for the sustainable development of the metropolitan area.
- Contributing to employee development through creating a shared arena.

Both researchers and municipal representatives attend the network meetings to discuss current initiatives and research results. Below are some highlights from the network meetings in 2018.

## An inclusive cultural heritage

Cultural heritage is something used to build community, but there is also a risk of exclusion. This means there is a need for approaches to make cultural heritage more inclusive. Ale Municipality has some good examples. "Planners can look at cultural heritage as something that enables diverse groups of people to meet each other, similar to green areas," says Andreas Antelid, archaeologist and cultural coordinator at Ale Municipality.

He shows how cultural heritage can be used to build an inclusive and socially sustainable society. A good example is the project 'Whose History?' where recently immigrated youth conducted an excavation of an old torp in Ale. The excavation and archaeological finds resulted in an exhibition. The project gave the participants knowledge and a story to tell about the place that not even the local history association knew about, and the young people felt an ownership of the story.

## From 17 global goals to a strategic plan for Härryda municipality

When Härryda Municipality began developing its strategic plan, they took Agenda 2030 as a starting point. The process has been conducted through broad dialogues and in partnership with managers, employees, the business community, associations and civil society actors.

The initial step was to map what the municipality was already doing in relation to the global goals, such as urban agriculture, creating more green spaces and reducing food waste. The municipality then held cross-sectoral workshops and meetings with locals to discuss where the municipality could make the biggest difference in relation to Agenda 2030. "Based on these dialogues, we chose three goals to focus on: 'Good health and well-being', 'Responsible consumption and production', and 'Sustainable cities and communities'. These are the key areas where we want to see a difference," explained Härryda's speaker, Frida Barrett.



GR's coordinator for Mistra Urban Futures, Sarah Johnstone (standing), at a meeting with GR's Mistra Urban Futures network in November 2018.

## How do we make better and more sustainable use of maritime transport?

Öckerö Municipality consists of ten islands, and water-based mobility poses both challenges and opportunities. The municipality is now striving to get more people to use public transport, cycling and maritime transport, but also to make the boats themselves more sustainable. Petter Leyman, planning architect at Öckerö Municipality, explained at the network meeting that “more boat connections between the islands could link up the municipality better. Travelling by boat offers more flexibility, as you’re not locked into certain routes by existing infrastructure. But boat traffic also has a negative environmental and climate impact.”

“The municipality is now investing in sustainable maritime transport—to switch the ferries that operate in Öckerö municipality over to more energy-efficient versions so that emissions are reduced,” said Håkan Samuelsson, unit manager for maritime transport, and Tanja Barrett, environmental strategist and energy-and-climate advisor. Öckerö’s own municipal ferry has been modernized and made more energy-efficient. New engine technology tested in the ferries running the Björkö route has seen a 75 percent reduction in nitrogen emissions.

## Profession + politics = TRUE

Variety, water, and structure. These are some of the factors that have been highlighted in the dialogue between officials and politicians around the recent planning program for Stenungsund’s center. Head of Planning Åsa Lindborg described how the planning program “builds on existing structures as well as cooperation with local businesses in the area. From this base we want to create a more varied and small-scale built environment with consideration for competition, greenery and the center’s closeness to the ocean.”

Through a dialogue between officials and politicians, the municipality has worked out a common vision of ten targets. Among other things, walking routes will be



developed to connect to ones already in place. The beach, docks and quay will be integrated with help from activities and public decoration. The built environment will harmonise with both business and infrastructure. Closeness to the ocean poses both a risk and an opportunity.

## Co-producing planning with young people

The municipality of Lilla Edet is growing fast and wants to use urban development in the community of Lödöse to establish good housing and living environments. The municipality sees young people’s influence as an important part of the planning process. Ilir Musa, planning architect in Lilla Edet, commented that “we’ve noticed that we don’t reach youth in our usual civic dialogues, and we want to test new methods for helping young people to play a more active role in democratic processes. This test is part of the Gothenburg Region’s project ‘Social innovation in planning’.”

Gathering a cross-sectoral working group has led to new perspectives and frames of reference. However, there is a risk that the project won’t be able to attract enough youth participants. Interest may disappear over the course of the project, as municipal processes can take a long time.

### NETWORK FOR MISTRA URBAN FUTURES

During 2018 the network met five times, and discussed the following topics:

- The Mixed City—host Stenungsund Municipality
- Social sustainability—host Lilla Edet Municipality
- Mobility/accessibility—host Öckerö Municipality
- Agenda 2030—host Härryda Municipality
- Culture in Urban Development—host Ale municipality

On each occasion the network has invited colleagues who could benefit from and contribute to discussions on the topic concerned. After each meeting a newsletter was sent out, which the network members are responsible for disseminating in their own organization.

#### Network members in 2018:

- Ale Municipality—Annika Friberg, Environmental planner
- Alingsås Municipality—vacant
- Gothenburg City—Pia Borg, Planning Manager, and Sara Petersson, Planning Manager
- Härryda Municipality—vacant
- Kungsbacka Municipality—Jenny Olsson, Manager Planning Department
- Kungälv Municipality—Anna Ulvehed, Urban Planner
- Lerum Municipality—Jonas Edin, Operations Developer
- Lilla Edet Municipality—Ilir Musa, Planning Architect
- Möndal City—Elisabeth Börlin, Municipal Structure Planner
- Partille Municipality—Maria Gunnarsson, Planning Manager
- Stenungsund Municipality—Åsa Lindborg, Head of Planning and City Architect, and Anders Dahlgren, Planning Architect
- Tjörn Municipality—Tinna Harling, Process Manager, and Daniel Rutgersson, Planning Architect
- Öckerö Municipality—Petter Leyman, Planning Architect

# Urban Station Communities

## Expanding horizons to include Halland, South Africa and Kenya

It has been an eventful year for Urban Station Communities. Hosted by the municipality of Varberg, the process managers held workshops on the development of a new station in Väröbacka, focussing on density and local identity. Urban density was also the theme of a workshop for Mölnlycke Centre in the municipality of Härryda.

A new step taken in 2018 was testing the co-production processes in an international setting, as part of the project Transport and Sustainable Urban Development. It is one of several comparative Mistra Urban Futures projects underway in 2018, with the aim of facilitating mutual learning around common challenges. In May, a delegation from Cape Town (South Africa) and Kisumu (Kenya) visited Gothenburg for the first joint workshop, and the second took place in Cape Town in November.

“You get new perspectives and inputs,” says Anna Gustafsson, regional planner at the Gothenburg Region and process manager for Urban Station Communities. “Although the conditions are different in the different city regions, the goal is the same. Everyone wants to create accessible and efficient transport infrastructure.”

The project participants discovered several similarities; the attractiveness of land, for example, was found to be an important issue for everyone. Some differences did not prove to be as great as could have been believed.

“We also noticed that our international partners had a

preconception that Sweden has come further in terms of planning practices, that planning processes are faster and less difficult here,” reflects Anna Gustafsson. “But when we got together and compared the different countries, we found that planning timeframes were quite similar, despite the different systems.”

Urban Station Communities has had Landvetter Södra in Härryda as a Swedish case in the comparative project. “It is a fairly unique case as it is a blank slate, it is being developed entirely from scratch. It doesn’t happen every day that you build up a community from zero, which means the case offers some interesting research angles,” explains Anna Gustafsson.

**WHAT:** Urban Station Communities—the path to resource-efficient travel. A knowledge process aimed at increasing knowledge about the complexities of planning close to stations and creating conditions for the development of station communities.

**WHEN:** 2012–2019

**PARTICIPANTS:** The Gothenburg Region and, among others, the municipalities of Ale, Borås, Gothenburg, Halmstad, Härryda, Kungälv, Lerum, Partille, Stenungsund, Trollhättan and Varberg.

**READ MORE:** <https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/project/urban-station-communities>



Station area in Cape Town. Photo: Anna Gustafsson.



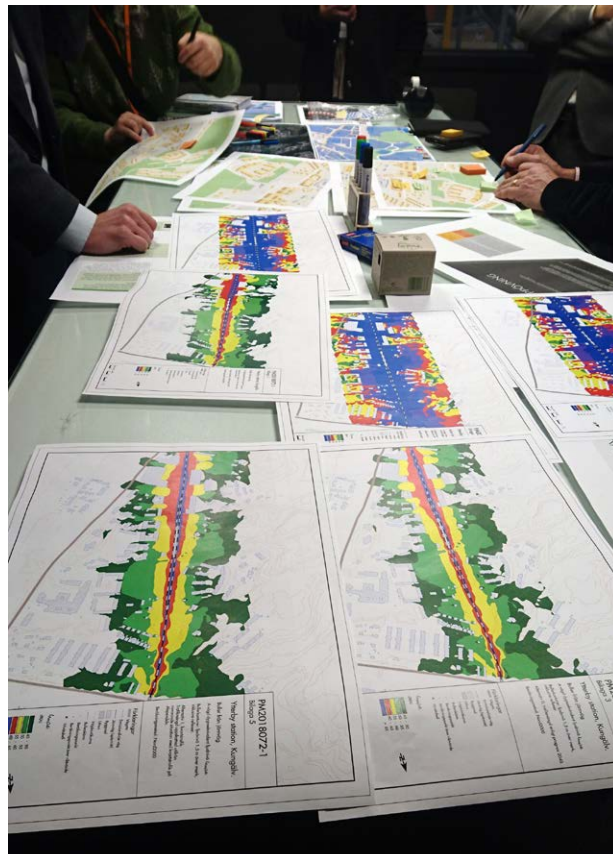
## Sound Environment in Station Communities

Noise reduction measures are an important piece of the puzzle in achieving climate-neutral and transport-efficient communities close to public transport nodes. Noise pollution is often an obstacle to densification, which means that noise reduction solutions can lead to other positive effects, such as making land near public transport nodes more attractive and valuable.

Noise reduction measures are the focus of the RISE-led project Sound Environment in Station Communities, part of the Urban Station Communities portfolio. The unique thing about the project is that it makes it possible to test virtually the effects of various noise reduction measures near railways, such as noise barriers or dampers. In 2018, a prototype of this digital toolbox has been developed and tested with users. In an audio lab, workshop participants were given the opportunity to play audio and visual recordings from Ytterby station and choose from a list of different noise reduction measures to experience the impact they had on sound levels.

Anna Gustafsson attended the workshop. “Visiting the sound lab was a cool experience, and it was important for the project that planning practitioners got the chance to make suggestions, as they are the intended users. We could identify potential uses for the toolbox in our own organisations. The user-testing also suggested a need for vehicle-oriented measures, since we noticed that some noise remained unaffected by any of the listed reduction measures,” says Anna Gustafsson.

The digital toolbox is also intended to help with calculation of socio-economic costs and benefits associated with various noise reduction measures.



Workshop at RISE's sound lab. Photo: Anna Gustafsson.

**WHAT:** The project Sound Environment in Station Communities aims to produce a digital toolbox for innovative noise measures.

**WHEN:** 2017–2019

**PARTICIPANTS:** RISE, Chalmers, Mistra Urban Futures

**READ MORE:** <https://www.ri.se/en/what-we-do/projects/sound-environment-station-communities-digital-tool-noise-measures>

## Sustainability Tool

The year 2018 saw a new project approved within the Urban Station Communities portfolio. The project is led by the Gothenburg Region and focuses on the further development of an online GIS-tool that is already available in a beta-version. The current version calculates the expected climate impact and energy use of new residential developments depending on their location. The tool provides data which can argue in favour of building homes closer to existing public transport nodes.

The new project focuses on developing the tool to improve user friendliness and incorporate travel data and new calculation models, as well as more sustainability indicators. Here, collaboration with researchers plays an important role. IVL (Swedish Environmental Research

Institute) is a partner in the project, which provides credibility for the database and the calculations behind it. The practitioners' perspectives safeguard user-friendliness, and municipal officials are welcome to participate in user-testing and in the further development of the tool. Interested parties can test the beta-version already by contacting Anna Gustafsson at GR.

**WHAT:** Development of a GIS-based tool for calculating sustainability effects in planning.

**WHEN:** 2018–2021

**PARTICIPANTS:** The Gothenburg Region, IVL

**READ MORE:** <https://goteborgsregionen.se/hallbarhetsverktyget>

# Thematic Networks within Mistra Urban Futures

In addition to projects and events, Mistra Urban Futures is also a platform for thematic networks focusing on sustainable urban development. The networks provide a forum for representatives from academia, the public sector, businesses and civil society to meet and mobilise around specific themes.

Read more: <https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/gothenburg/networks>

## THEMATIC NETWORKS WITHIN MISTRA URBAN FUTURES:

- Urban food. Focuses on food supply issues and urban resilience.
- GoCreate. Network for co-productive process leaders.
- Sustainable Urban Mobility. Connects researchers and practitioners on issues of mobility and planning.
- Climate Friendly Vacationing. 2018 saw the launch of a tool to calculate the climate impact of individual holidays: [klimatsmartsemester.se](http://klimatsmartsemester.se)
- Network for Learning about Sustainable Cities and Regions (Lär-SUD) (read more below).
- Social Sustainability in Transport Planning (read more below).

## Network for Learning about Sustainable Cities and Regions (Lär-SUD)

The network is run by the Gothenburg Region, the University of Gothenburg and the Gothenburg Center for Sustainable Development. The purpose of the network is to contribute to closer contact between teachers, educators and researchers, as well as strengthening research and tuition about sustainable urban development.

In 2018, the network met four times, focussing on the following themes:

- The role of schools in dealing with and preventing segregation
- The role of principals and school organizations in sustainable development education
- How primary schools can tackle issues of climate change in collaboration with climate researchers
- Sustainable meals—how education can help to reduce food waste both in the school kitchen and at home.

The Gothenburg Region's Jonas Franzén, who was part of starting up Lär-SUD, sees the value of the network as a support for teachers in a role that can feel isolating out in the schools. The network has also helped to establish contacts between teachers and those who work with school development, as well as providing a channel for accessing the latest research. Andréa Kihl, who has taken over the network leader role at the Gothenburg Region, agrees. "The networking itself is very important for the participants, they are very active at the meetings," she says.

According to Jonas Franzén, sustainable development education is a key enabling factor for municipalities to achieve their sustainable development and climate change goals.



The participants are very active at the meetings.





## Social sustainability in transport planning

A new Mistra Urban Futures network started in 2018, this one with a focus on social sustainability and transport planning. The network's leaders are Lisa Ström, a regional planner at the Gothenburg Region, and Ana Gil Solá, a researcher at the University of Gothenburg's Department of Cultural Geography. Mistra Urban Futures, Region Västra Götaland and the Swedish Transport Administration also participate in the network's organisation.

The network leaders explain the reason for starting a network focusing specifically on social sustainability and transport planning thus: "Transport planning is a bit more engineering-focussed; social issues haven't had as much of an impact as they have in other planning fields. There is a greater need for a social sustainability perspective in transport planning," says Ana Gil Solá.

The network gathers researchers and practitioners from different fields with the goal of helping everyone to understand each other better. "Transport planning" is broadly interpreted to include all social planning that affects human transportation, including physical planning, environmental administration and public health. The network wants to achieve a better overall understanding of the field.

"It is a fairly unique mix of actors who have signed up so far," says Lisa Ström. "The Swedish Transport Administration is involved, and municipalities, regions and researchers from all over the country. There are few transport planning networks that have managed to gather such a broad membership. In our experience, expertise is scattered throughout the country and with our network we want to bring that expertise together."

The network meetings aren't only about exchanging experiences—there is also an interest in developing new projects together and in creating contacts. Researchers can find municipal partners and consultants can find

specific competencies. "The idea is that the network can bring members into closer and more direct contact. As a practitioner, you don't have to start by familiarizing yourself with everything that's happening in research; instead, you can just ring up the researcher that you met at the network meeting", adds Lisa Ström.

From a researcher's point of view, it's also about finding a context for their research. Ana Gil Solá reflects that "in research, there are many discussions taking place internationally, but I don't have forums to get feedback directly and up close. With this network, I can see how my research is received. I get a direct response instead of waiting two years for publication."

The network has had one meeting in 2018, and the network leaders are looking forward to the meetings scheduled for 2019. It is the network members themselves who decide which issues are relevant to focus on, and thus far three themes have been chosen: methods and operational approaches; data and analytics; and organization, governance and processes.

The topics are however open to change based on participants' needs. "These themes will pervade each meeting, but perhaps with a particular focus. We base our meetings on inviting inspirational speakers and discussions between members. Many members hold a wealth of expertise and experience, and we want to consolidate and channel this," says Lisa Ström. She adds that it is an open network and new participants are welcome, no prior knowledge required.



Lisa Ström, GR



Ana Gil Solá, GU

# Ongoing Projects

## The Impact of Participation

### What has happened this year?

The project investigates how municipalities facilitate citizen participation in planning processes and what impact this has. Does citizen participation contribute to better decision-making, and to democratic and just cities? Or is it simply a way to legitimize policy goals that are already set out by decision-makers?

In 2018, the research group and municipal officials from Sweden's three largest metropolitan regions completed an empirical survey, and attended a workshop to discuss the preliminary results. The project has prompted the development of new ways of understanding and reflecting on citizen participation. These reflections were published in a policy brief. The project ends in 2019.

**WHAT:** The Impact of Participation—mapping and developing the scope, forms and impacts of the communicative turn in urban planning.

**WHEN:** 2016–2019

**PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE:** The University of Gothenburg, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, the Swedish Transport Administration, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL), the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, the Gothenburg region, the City of Gothenburg, Alingsås Municipality, Tjörn Municipality, Lerum Municipality, and municipalities in the Malmö and Stockholm regions.

**READ MORE:** <https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/project/impact-participation-0>

## DIABAHS – Sustainable Housing for Seniors

### What has happened this year?

The project has continued its series of study visits to the different cases the project is following, this time an extra-care housing project in Mölndal. Another highlight was a conference held at the Gothenburg Region on the topic of housing for tomorrow's seniors. The conference was inspired by questions that were raised in the project's expert reference group—how do we plan housing for seniors that will last for fifty or a hundred years into the future? What needs, wants and lifestyles will future seniors have?

During 2018, the project has produced some preliminary results. Representatives from the project have presented these at international conferences in Toronto and Uppsala, as well as at an 'Urban Lunchtime' event organized by Mistra Urban Futures in Gothenburg.

The project is currently working on compiling all the results in time for the final conference on the 15th of May 2019. In addition to presenting the results, the final conference will also see the launch of a website with inspiration and information on planning housing for seniors. The website is intended for use by architects, owners of building developments, and all others who plan or build housing for seniors.

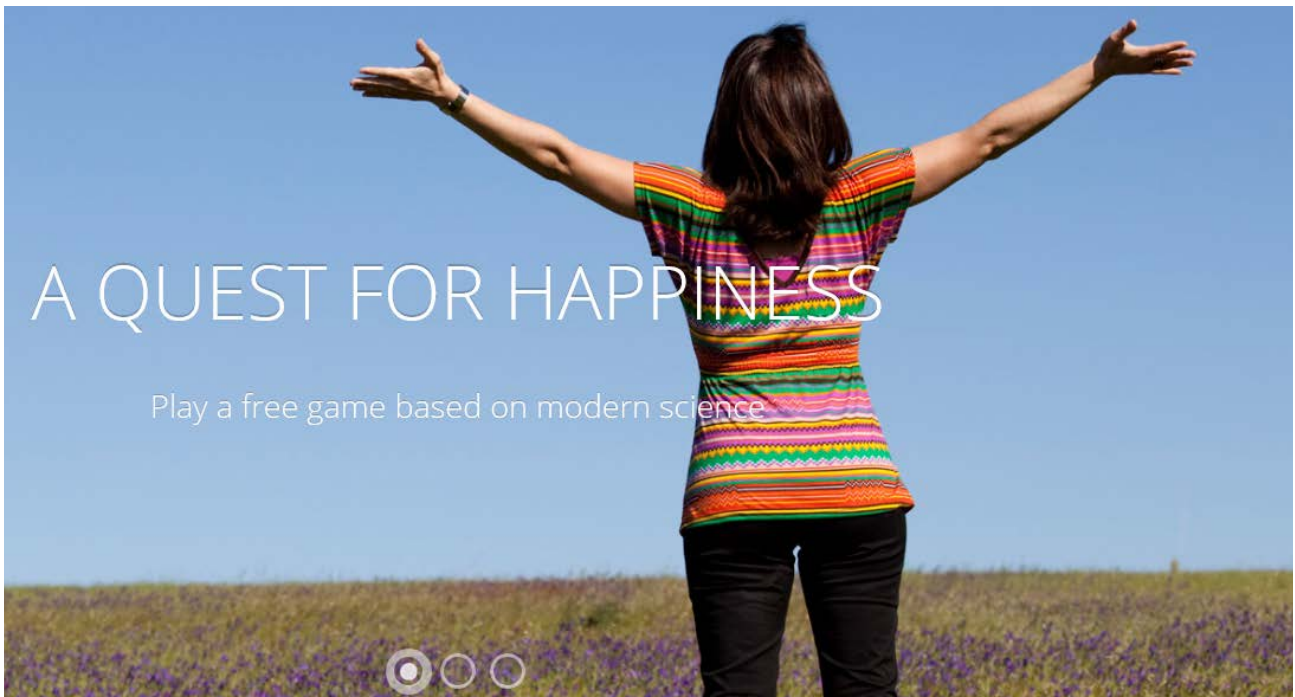


**WHAT:** DIABAHS is an ongoing evaluation project aimed at investigating whether dialogue is a way for architects and developers to create a sustainable residential environment for senior citizens.

**WHEN:** 2016–2019

**PARTICIPANTS:** The Gothenburg Region and Chalmers' Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering are running the project. A number of stakeholders are linked to the project through the four pilot projects in the municipalities of Alingsås, Gothenburg, Mölndal and Tjörn.

**READ MORE:** [www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/content/diabahs](http://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/content/diabahs)



## Dissemination of the Future Happiness Challenge game

Lifestyle changes are needed to achieve a climate transition in our municipalities—but how do these changes affect our well-being? What is it really that creates happiness? In the spring of 2018, the Gothenburg Region helped pupils to consider these questions through our digital sustainability game Future Happiness Challenge, which was developed in 2014 in collaboration with Mistra Urban Futures and the City of Gothenburg.

The game is about the relationship between happiness and climate impact and is based on the research report “Low Carbon Gothenburg 2.0”, which was produced by researchers at Chalmers University of Technology as part of the Mistra Urban Futures project WISE (Well-being in Sustainable Cities). The report shows that there is no correlation between greenhouse gas emissions and happiness and concludes that we can achieve the target of two tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per person and year without negatively affecting our general well-being.

The aim of the game is to be as happy as possible. In 2018 the Gothenburg Region played the game with 250 high school pupils and 10 teachers, all from the municipalities of Ale, Kungälv and Gothenburg. Some of

the sessions were in conjunction with the annual Science Festival. In the game, students play different characters who live and work in a city. They can make different lifestyle choices linked to housing, transport, consumption and diet, which will lead to different amounts of greenhouse gas emissions. Their choices will in some cases lead to natural disasters where some of the characters may suffer.

“To reach the emissions targets set by the Gothenburg Region’s municipalities, it is important to get a discussion going and to reflect on these issues. By sharing and disseminating the Future Happiness Challenge game, we have engaged the region’s young people in the transition towards a sustainable society, a transition they will be involved in making happen,” says Jonas Franzén, the contact person for the game at the Gothenburg Region.

The game can be downloaded at [www.grspeldatabas.se/fhc](http://www.grspeldatabas.se/fhc)

Read more about the game, the students’ reactions and the original research report here: <https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/what-came-next/research-based-game-highlights-climate-change-issue-gothenburg>





# Mistra Urban Futures events during 2018

## Annual conference in Gothenburg 2018: Conflicting Goals in Sustainable Urban Development

255 satisfied people attended the Mistra Urban Futures Gothenburg Conference held on the 4th of October at the Lindholmen Conference Centre.

A broad array of speakers shared their knowledge, and the audience graded the overall quality of the conference as 4.1 out of 5. The most well-received speakers were Lars Thunberg of the City of Helsingborg, and Anna Rosling Rönnlund, CEO of Gapminder. Her inspiring lecture encouraged the audience to see the world as it is and base our worldviews and decisions on facts.

The conference also allowed attendees to delve into one of five thematic sessions:

1. Suitable housing for everyone—sustainable development
2. Migration, integration and social inclusion
3. The area outside the city—who is planning there?
4. What role does culture and cultural heritage have in sustainable urban development?
5. Targets in transport planning—where are we going and how do we get there?

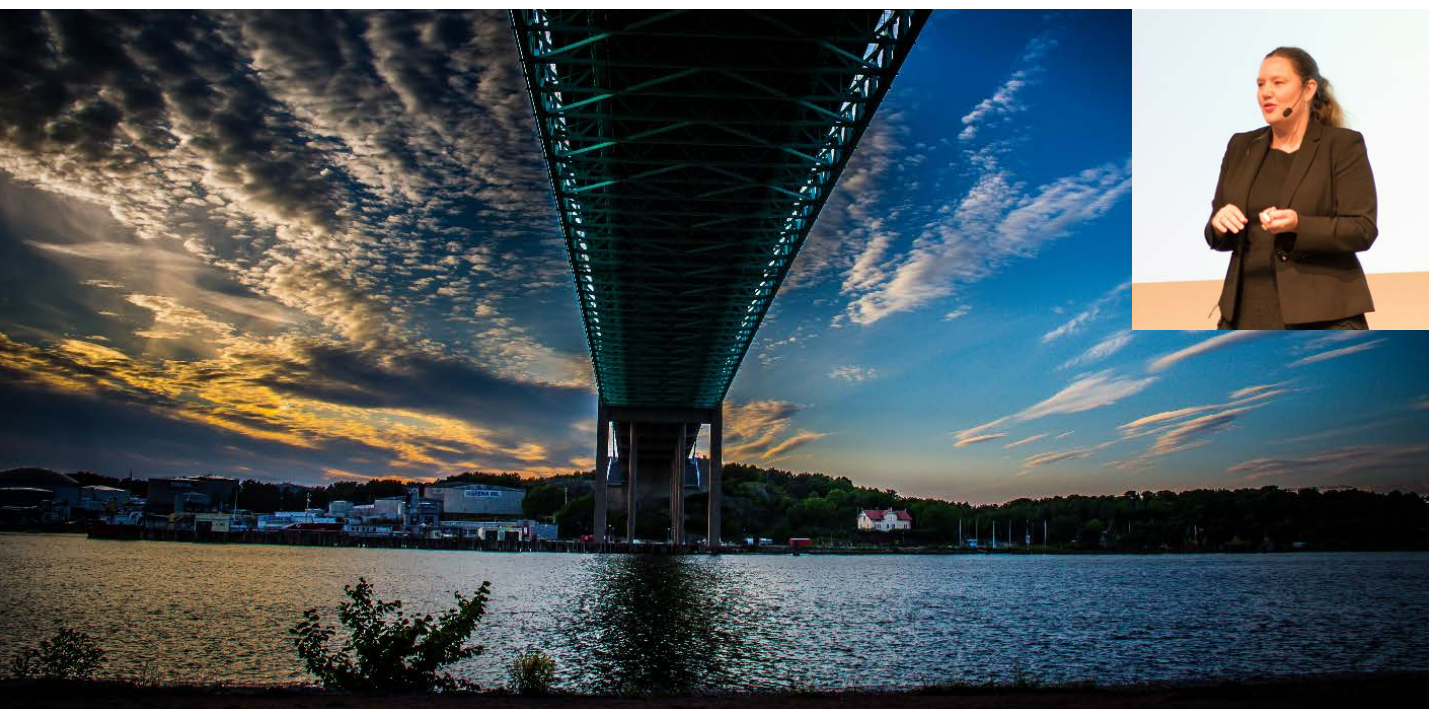
## International Conference in Cape Town

The Mistra Urban Futures Annual International Conference “Realising Just Cities—Comparative Co-production” was held in Cape Town in early November.

About 180 people participated, of which just over 20 from Sweden—both researchers and practitioners included in the comparative projects.

See more here:

<https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/event/RJC2018>



We should see the world as it is and base our views on facts, says Anna Rosling Rönnlund, CEO of Gapminder, at the conference in Lindholmen, Gothenburg.

## Mistra Urban Futures' own events

Mistra Urban Futures organizes several event series to help develop and share knowledge about sustainable urban development and to create networking opportunities. The events welcome discussion and are aimed at researchers, practitioners, politicians or anyone interested in the subject.

**Urban Lunch-time** involves a lecture and a networking lunch, primarily focusing on disseminating results from Mistra Urban Futures projects. Eight Urban Lunch-times were held in 2018 with approximately 700 attendees in total.

**Urban Research**—a seminar form that starts with an introductory lecture on a specific topic. Then everyone participates in a discussion and shares their knowledge. About 225 people attended one or more of the five seminars in 2018.

**Urban Lecture**—an in-depth lunch lecture with an internationally renowned researcher in sustainable urban development. 14 participants took part on one occasion.

**Mellanrum** is a series of evening lectures followed by discussions with the audience, with a focus on social

perspectives in sustainable urban development. Mistra Urban Futures organises Mellanrum in collaboration with the Gothenburg Region, the University of Gothenburg, Chalmers University of Technology's Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering, the City of Gothenburg and the Gothenburg City Museum. The nine Mellanrum lectures in 2018 attracted 310 attendees.

**Annual Lecture**—a total of 340 participants gathered on the 5th of December to listen to the legendary architect and author Jan Gehl. See more information and a film from the event here: <https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/event/annual-lecture-jan-gehl-5-december-2018>

**Report Seminars** involve the presentation of a report written by members of a Mistra Urban Futures project. In 2018 the reports "Tools for joint knowledge production" and "Methods for sustainable place development" were presented.

More on Mistra Urban Futures events:

<https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/events-overview>



The Annual Lecture – this time with the legendary architect and author Jan Gehl, and 340 listeners.

# Agenda 2030

In 2015, the world received the outline of a joint path towards sustainable development when the United Nations General Assembly adopted Agenda 2030, which contains 17 global sustainable development goals (SDGs) and 169 sub-goals. The sustainability goals have already had an impact in a range of different sectors and many municipalities have begun the work of implementing them.

In 2018, the Gothenburg Region's Mistra Urban Futures network invited guest speakers who have investigated how to implement the Agenda in practice.

**WHAT:** Comparative project that investigates municipal implementation of Agenda 2030.

**WHEN:** 2017–2019

**PARTNERS:** Mistra Urban Futures, Observatory on Latin America, The New School, New York; Nagrika, Delhi.

**READ MORE:** <https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/project/implementing-new-urban-agenda-and-sustainable-development-goals-comparative-urban>

## Hello Sandra Valencia!

You are a researcher at Mistra Urban Futures and leader of the Mistra Urban Futures project “Implementing the New Urban Agenda and The Sustainable Development Goals: Comparative Urban Perspectives”.

*What is the project about?*

We're investigating how different cities have interpreted, implemented and engaged with the New Urban Agenda and Agenda 2030 goals. The cities included in the project are Gothenburg, Malmö, Cape Town (South Africa), Kisumu (Kenya), Sheffield (UK), Shimla (India) and Buenos Aires (Argentina). We look at how the individual cities are working on implementing the Agenda, but the project also focuses on mutual learning between the cities.

*What can municipalities learn from each other regarding implementation of Agenda 2030?*

Although the cities are very different in terms of size and resources, there is still potential for the cities to learn from each other. Some city administrations have done mapping exercises to identify the most relevant goals for them at the local level, while others have developed communication materials and campaigns to raise awareness about Agenda 2030. Many have benefited from exchanging experiences on how the Agenda 2030 efforts have been organized within each city administration; some have worked through teams in existing sustainability







”The municipality realized that homelessness was an important indicator that was totally missing from the national level indicators. Such interpretations may be interesting for all cities to look at.”

Sandra Valencia, researcher and project manager, Mistra Urban Futures.

offices or international offices, while others have started a dedicated Agenda 2030 office.

Another area where the cities have had a productive exchange is on how to handle the indicators for the different sustainable development goals. The indicators are decided at national level, but often need to be interpreted for relevance at the local level. Buenos Aires is a good example of this interpretation. The municipality realized that homelessness was an important indicator that was totally missing from the national level indicators. Such interpretations may be interesting for all cities to look at.

*The project will continue through 2019, but are there any lessons already?*

Experience from the project shows that the Agenda 2030 goals can be used to start a conversation about sustainable development. The goals don't cover everything, and it's important to reflect on how and why we measure sustainable development. Indicators are often chosen based

on what data is available, which doesn't always provide the most relevant picture. It is also important to have a holistic view of sustainability and pay attention to goal conflicts and synergies, both within Agenda 2030 and in relation to a municipality's own ambitions.

*As a researcher, tell us about your experience of co-production with the municipalities in the project?*

It is an interesting dynamic, particularly as we researchers in the project are both researching what the municipalities are doing *and* actively working together with them through co-production. This means that the research is very applied and relevant, but also requires a critical distance, which is a challenge. However, applied research together with the municipalities facilitates critical reflection in relation to the Agenda 2030 goals, which also becomes a theoretical contribution to urban research.



The project team for 'Implementing the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals: Comparative Urban Perspectives'.



The Gothenburg Region (GR) consists of 13 municipalities who have chosen to work together. We run development projects, have government assignments, conduct research, organize courses and we are the voice of the metropolitan region in western Sweden. In our networks, politicians and officials meet to exchange experiences and ideas, and to decide on joint ventures. Our goal is for the region's one million inhabitants to have as good a life as possible.