

# Kreativa individers bostadsområden och arbetsställen

Belysta mot bakgrund av näringslivets omvandling och  
förändringar i bebyggelsestrukturen i Göteborg

av

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## ABSTRACT

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This thesis studies the residential areas and places of work of an age cohort of individuals defined by education as creative in Gothenburg, Sweden, during the latter stages of structural economic change. Postindustrial cities such as Gothenburg use waterfront redevelopment, a growing service industry and the intensification of place marketing as tools in a competitive urban arena. Creativity, through the use of terms such as “creative class”, “creative city” and amenities, is becoming an important ingredient on the same competitive urban level where planners and policy-makers try to attract talented, educated and creative individuals in order to boost economic growth. However, the argument that creative individuals drive economic growth remains contested. Underlining this argument is the creative class thesis stating that creative individuals will move to cities that correspond with their lifestyle-preferences regardless of whether or not potential employers are located in the same area.

The aim of this thesis is to shed light on whether the residential areas and place of work of creative individuals change. A further aim of this thesis is to investigate if globalisation and structural economic changes affect creative individuals' choice of residential areas and places of work in urban areas, using a unique longitudinal micro database (GILDA) and interviews. In addition, by use of official statistics, this thesis studies the changes taking place in Gothenburg's economy in relation to economic restructuring and their consequences on the location of residential areas and places of work in Gothenburg.

Studies conducted on the creative class thesis depict concentrations of the creative class in suburbs characterised by expensive housing and lack of sufficient places of work in the local area. The creative class thesis clearly states that the location should be downtown, whereas observations point towards the peripheral parts of the city. Hence, there is a gap in the field of knowledge regarding creative individuals' residential areas and places of work. A possible explanation could be changing preferences depending on age.

Results show that there was an overrepresentation of creative individuals in the centrally located city districts in the year 1990 compared to the rest of the population in the cohort. In the year 2006, the creative individuals had become part of the same suburbanisation as the rest of the population, i.e. both the creative individuals and the comparison group moved out of downtown Gothenburg. Only a small subgroup among the creative individuals remains in downtown Gothenburg, hence remaining loyal to the stated destination of the creative class. The fact that age and family composition can be argued to be more important than proximity to a downtown creative milieu constitutes the main conclusion of this thesis. Putting priority on, for example, more spacious housing in the suburbs highlights a difference between the Swedish and US creative context, where most notably Florida (2004) states that the same city district will remain the creative individuals' home and place of work. The establishment of Norra Älvstranden has brought new places of work in mostly high-tech industries and waterfront residences close to downtown Gothenburg. However, following rapid growth between 1990 and 2006, the number of employed creative individuals at Norra Älvstranden declined between 2006 and 2008. A possible explanation could be sensitivity towards changing global demand.

**Keywords:** Creative individuals, Gothenburg, residential area, place of work, structural economic change, waterfront redevelopment, age cohort

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