



The ‘Humanitarianisation’ of civil society: Legal tensions, unaccompanied youth and homelessness in Malmö

Priscilla Solano

Senior lecturer, Global Political Studies, Malmö University, Sweden

priscilla.solano@mau.se

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7636-3858>

Abstract

This article highlights the restructuring of the Swedish welfare state through looking at how a humanitarian logic has entered civil society at a local level around the issue of precarious housing for unaccompanied youth. Drawing on existing literature on ‘humanitarian reason’ (Fassin 2011) and ‘humanitarian citizenship’ (Cabot 2019), the article explores the 2019 ‘crisis’ affecting unaccompanied youth as they turned 18, and how civil society morphed into emergency organisations in Malmö, Sweden. Focus is specifically centred on shifts in law and policy, and rewritten guidelines that limit access to housing support. As responsibility for issues such as homelessness are displaced onto the individual by social services, the article argues that the situation of housing as humanitarian for unaccompanied youth is yet another symptom of the erosion of the social democratic welfare state in Sweden.

Keywords

civil society, hospitality, humanitarian logic, unaccompanied, welfare state

Introduction

In 2019, a key focus for civil society in Malmö, a southern city in Sweden, was the situation of housing for unaccompanied youths who had turned 18 during or after the process of seeking asylum. The legal landscape in Sweden went through specific shifts after 2015, wherein migration law and social work law begun to intersect in new ways, obstaculating access to social protections (Lundberg & Kjellbom, 2021). One important amendment was adopted in the *Reception Act*¹ in June 2016, which implied that financial support be immediately withdrawn in the case of an asylum rejection (Lundberg & Kjellbom, 2021). Otherwise, asylum seekers are entitled to financial support for daily allowance, accommodation compensation² and special grants (Migrationsverket, 2021b). For unaccompanied youths turning 18, this marked a shift to being examined under the same rules as adult asylum seekers and losing the rights to support and assistance that unaccompanied minors had previously had (Migrationsverket, 2022). For some youths, it meant having to leave their accommodation and move out on their own, lose access to housing support, a social worker, a trustee, and financial support (see also Solano, 2024).

1 Riksdagen. Lag (1994:137) om mottagande av asylsökande m.fl (1994).

2 Some areas are affected by accommodation compensation (Migrationsverket, 2021d).

Bea, an active staff member at a grassroots organisation, who had been around before, during and after the so-called 2015–2016 refugee crisis in Malmö, explained that 2015 had not been the real ‘crisis’ in Malmö. Then, in 2015–2016, everyone had wanted to help the refugees arriving. Instead, the crisis was happening now, in 2019, when most actors and civilians had disappeared from the scene, laws were more restrictive and political will was absent. For civil society in Malmö, this situation of emergency was described as novel.

The city of Malmö is the first point of entry into Sweden from Europe by land or water, so it was the main gateway for asylum seekers arriving in 2015. It has been identified as a site of migrant struggle (Nordling, 2017). During the 2015 refugee crisis, Malmö became what Cabot (2019) has called a ‘humanitarian marketplace’ (see also Pries, 2018). By this is meant a proliferation of organisations and volunteers that set up camp to receive people in the train station and across the city, giving information, distributing food or providing shelter. The city also faces high unemployment and household dependency on social assistance, and is well known for having a large population of irregular migrants (Nordling & Persdotter, 2021, p. 60). In Malmö specifically, the cost of social assistance has recently been highly politicised (Nordling, 2017).

The purpose of this article is to explore ‘humanitarian’ civil society efforts geared towards alleviating the suffering of unaccompanied youths in the absence of access to social services, and begin to unpack the puzzle of other eroding structures within the Swedish welfare state. More specifically, the aim is to inform the general debate on the consequences of the relationship between the social democratic welfare model and migration. Rather than focusing on the year 2015, the year the refugee crisis peaked, this article, by centring the argument on the year 2019, brings into view the specificity of what happened in the aftermath of 2015. After 2015, migration laws were reformed, and interacted more with social services laws limiting access to services including accommodation. The implication of these shifts could begin to be grasped in 2019. This article focuses on what I will refer to as the ‘humanitarianisation’ of civil society in Malmö. By ‘humanitarianisation’ of civil society is meant the emergence of volunteers and staff from the bottom up—in the absence of access to social services and social rights—to provide support with acute needs and emergency-like services such as housing. This article is guided by the following question: how were services on behalf of unaccompanied youth constituted in relation to housing support during 2019 among civil society actors? In this quest, this article will follow an exploration of the interactions between migration law and social work law and ground this exploration with the experiences shared by civil society on their work assisting unaccompanied youths.

When unpacking the ‘humanitarianisation’ of civil society, I consider three key analytical commonalities. The first is *humanitarian logic*, following Fassin’s (2011) coinage of ‘humanitarian reason’. Secondly, I consider the discourses used to describe the situation in Malmö as humanitarian, the organisations’ efforts geared towards alleviating the housing situation of unaccompanied youths as an emergency, and the hierarchies of lives that emerge within the object of their projects as those without access to social rights. Finally, I draw on Cabot’s (2019) theorisation of ‘humanitarian citizenship’ to explore the objects of civil society projects, and replace it with the ‘humanitarian resident’ in the Swedish case. For Cabot (2019), ‘humanitarian citizenship’ encompasses the compromising of rights, where suffering sometimes functions as a precondition for accessing rights even for citizens, who themselves become the target of humanitarian efforts. In the case of Malmö, a distinction is drawn between ‘humanitarian citizenship’ and ‘humanitarian resident’ as the Swedish Social Services Act (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2007) does not mention citizenship explicitly but defines entitlement under ‘residency’ (*bosättning*)

(Nordling & Persdotter, 2021: 158). By using the ‘humanitarian resident’ this case study shows how categories can end up being clustered by the municipality – such as unaccompanied youths with the structural homeless – and become the target of humanitarian efforts rather than social services. More specifically, I look at which preconditions exist and what type of suffering counts as legitimate, to receive certain entitlements, such as housing support.

The ‘humanitarianisation’ of civil society at municipal and governmental levels in Sweden is significant for three reasons. *First* it reveals that the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ can be traced not to the so-called ‘long summer of migration in 2015’ but to the ricochet effect of increasingly austere migration laws in its aftermath, and their interaction with social work law obstaculating access to social protections. *Second*, the ‘humanitarianisation’ of civil society reveals how the category of unaccompanied youth is clustered with other homelessness categories (or, often, not accounted for at all) by the municipality of Malmö, as minors transition into adulthood. Especially the transition to adulthood means losing access to social service support, including housing. *Third*, the categorisation of homelessness by the municipality, and the use of age as a sorting device to access social services, reveal the shift in social services at a municipal level towards granting individual responsibility for issues as homelessness to specific vulnerable groups as rejected asylum seekers.³ This article argues that the emergence of humanitarian logic in a changing civil society in Malmö, addressing the ‘housing crisis’ of unaccompanied youths, must be understood as a symptom of a rapidly eroding social democratic welfare system that affects all inhabitants of Sweden.

In what follows, I will first provide a critical assessment of methods and theoretical considerations. I will then give an overview of migration policy and law, and its relationship to the welfare system and civil society in Malmö. Finally, I will ground my findings in the particularities of civil society interventions, focusing on housing and homelessness issues for unaccompanied youths in Malmö.

Methods

The methodology of this article is decidedly qualitative, given the absence of official statistics on the target group. More importantly the sensitivity of the issue and status of the target group has been identified as not suitable for quantitative methods (Düvell et al., 2010). The research discussed in this article is based on twenty-two interviews conducted in Malmö between November 2018–August 2019 from a total of five key civil society actors and a desk-review on social work law and migration law. Semi-structured interviews were selected as a key tool for the collection of qualitative data for acquiring more in-depth and useful answers. Given issues of access and location, as well as time constraints, semi-structured interviews were found to be the best method for comparing data and developing a more representative picture of the organisations involved in assisting unaccompanied youths.

My contact with civil society began from November 2018, before I could begin some of my interviews in January 2019. Civil society in Malmö is a tightly knit group, and I rapidly learned which were some of the key organisations that were involved during the 2015–2016 refugee crisis and after. Of the civil society actors selected, one operates at a grass-roots local level, two operate at a national level and two operate at a national and international level. I also attended workshops and events with other organisations

³ On the issue of age as a sorting device, see also Walker and Gunaratnam (2021).

and governmental actors. Snowball sampling (Lee, 1993) was used to expand contacts in the field and get interviews and gatekeepers were key to access the field in general.⁴ It is important to note that all organisations part of this study were receiving government and/or municipal funding through some project or other, or were in cooperation with authorities. All of the organisations part of this study also gathered under the same umbrella organisations to establish dialogue with the Migration Office.

The analysis involved coding, transcription of interviews and a careful review of secondary data. The semi-structured interviews were guided by inquiries on services, needs, cooperation and funds among civil society, with authorities and the wider society. The themes that emerged out of the interviews were used to illustrate the key characteristics of the logic that guided civil society in Malmö during what civil society actors referred as the ‘longer crisis’ experienced through 2019. The analysis navigates the politico-legal landscape and the welfare system in Sweden at a municipal level, as well as civil society interventions and resource distribution. Those cited echo what most civil society actors answered (with more language clarity) during the interviews. The focus is to unpack the representations of these organisations and not on personal experiences.

After 2015, many of the organisations present at the train station scattered, but multiple key actors, among them the five selected, continued to assist those that were under temporary status or were in between statuses, especially unaccompanied youths. These actors were selected as they continued cooperation with authorities.

An important section of civil society that is composed by radical left activists, that is, those who engage in extra-parliamentarian activism, also termed as ‘radical’ by Hansen (2020), engage in measures to counter what they see as dispossession and displacement of non-citizens. These actors providing acute assistance to refugees, and undocumented migrants in Malmö are excluded from this study, as these organisations work out of the public spotlight in order to protect the target group, and also often opt out of cooperating with authorities. This throws light on the matter that organisations set themselves apart from everyday life through their rules and regulations, and form a nexus with information control. Organisations therefore regulate, filter and control information in order to exert power (Perwez, 2008: 88). One can also flip this around, and note that information may be controlled by organisations in order to protect the target group. Given this, I considered that those working in these organisations might be reluctant to share information as a means of protecting their status and their target group, and might thereby impede access to knowledge or grant themselves the responsibility to filter information. I did not identify this as an obstacle to this study, as I focus on what is and can be shared in the public dimension. I was very careful to remove any confidential information, interactions or other general information irrelevant to this article, or which was of an individual nature or was not meant to be shared. All organisations have been anonymised or received pseudonyms, were well informed that the information they shared would be used for academic purposes and publications, and they fully consented to partake in this project. The author speaks fluent Swedish and translated all data collected.

The ‘humanitarianisation’ of civil society

There is considerable literature contributing to understanding the mushrooming of humanitarian efforts in different contexts. Sandri (2018) has looked at ‘volunteer humanitarianism’ considering those who refuse aid from aid agencies and the government.

⁴ For a more elaborate discussion on access and reflexivity, see Solano (2024).

McGee and Pelham (2018) have looked at 'grassroots humanitarianism' as an alternative to professionalised forms of aid. Horstmann (2017) has considered the intersections between grassroots, local and international humanitarian practices in 'everyday humanitarianism'. Brković (2020) defines 'vernacular humanitarianism' as aid provided by local actors in line with socio-historically specific ideas of humaneness that cannot be addressed through conventional channels of help. All the above literature engages the notion of humanitarian logic. Derluyn (2018) has noted that in many Western states there are established separate structures for reception and care of unaccompanied minors from mainstream services for children and youth. Unaccompanied minors often face particular sets of challenges in receiving states (see Menjívar & Perreira, 2019).

In general, civil society actors in Malmö working with migrant and refugee issues have been explored as part of a solidarity movement working against discrimination and xenophobia, and for the rights and integration of migrants and refugees (see, for example, Odmalm, 2004 and Hansen, 2020). Yet, when it comes to migration and refugee issues, civil society groups in Malmö have different politics, analyses and visions (see also Solano, 2024). Some welcoming initiatives are more politically neutral, and have had ongoing cooperation or dialogue with the government, such as the Red Cross or Refugees Welcome Initiatives (Povrzanovic Frykman & Mäkela, 2020). Some organisations host projects funded by the government or the municipality while others, especially those designated as radical left activists (see Hansen, 2020), opt out of this type of funding and cooperation. This article focuses on the 'humanitarianisation' (i.e. they are filling social services gaps as a humanitarian endeavour) of those actors that still cooperate and are also partially funded by the government or the municipality.

Beyond Sweden, actors geared towards humanitarian efforts towards citizens in, for example, Greece, have made visible a new logic of care, namely an emergency-like care that goes beyond social rights (for citizens) and human rights (for refugees) in the Global North. This logic has been linked to global trends towards neoliberalism that have included the dismantling of the social state and a rise in precarious and temporary work (Cabot, 2019).

In the Swedish case, the dismantling of the social democratic welfare model has been hotly debated, with cutbacks following an economic crisis in the 1990 s. There is still no consensus on this matter. Some academics argued over a decade ago the social democratic model was alive and well and survived liberalisation without retrenchment (Lindbom, 2008). Others working within the context of unaccompanied youth and homelessness argued against this exceptionalism. Schierup and Ålund (2011) have, for example, shown that 'Swedish exceptionalism' as a tolerant, multicultural and egalitarian welfare state, did not transfer to migrants and refugees. More recently, Sahlin (2020) has exemplified this in the case of residents suffering from structural homelessness. Dahlstedt & Neergaard (2019) looked at this in relation to the migration regime. Nordling and Persdotter (2021) have looked at the case of the undocumented, while Lundberg and Kjellbom (2021) address the pitfalls and promise of the social democratic model through the intersections of social work law and migration law. Scholars such as Bengtsson and Jacobsson (2018) have focused on the shifts in the Swedish welfare state by looking at the Swedish centre-right working alliance government's work-first approach (2006–2014). The reforms implemented to shrink the welfare state are argued to have made a new social cleavage in society and a redistribution from the public to the private sector. Bengtsson and Jacobsson (2018) argue this shift in the social democratic model has resulted in a new institutional framework for social protection coined as a 'work-first, consolidation state'.

When it comes to considering those that fall between the cracks humanitarian reason has become prevalent. For Fassin, *humanitarian reason* has as one of its dimensions the creation of the obligation to intervene and provide attention to others. He notes the vocabulary of suffering as pivotal in evoking the responsibility to protect and how it is used as a tool to ‘qualify the issues involved and to reason about choices made’ (2011, p. 2). Debates on what the humanitarian act stands for are still ongoing, with corresponding debates over which organisations are humanitarian.

In Sweden, the alleviation of suffering—in the context of for example unaccompanied youth—is not universally addressed by specific protections within the welfare state. The ‘humanitarianisation’ of civil society implies filling voids created by state institutions and paradoxically filled sometimes by government funded civil society efforts, not as a matter exclusively of social rights, yet not exclusively as a matter of human rights, humanitarian aid efforts and/or charity but as an intersection between all. My focus in the present article is the role of emergencies and humanitarian efforts by civil society, namely the prioritisation of ‘rescue’ as one manifestation of this intersection. This is not meant to subtract value from civil society interventions, nor contentious politics that may arise within these organisations, nor to oversimplify the ‘humanitarianisation’ of civil society in Malmö. Ultimately, this interplay reveals the restructuring of the welfare state.

The tensions between migration law, the welfare system and housing

The Swedish government chose to go down to a minimum to scare people from coming to Sweden (Interview with Laura, civil society staff, April 2019)

In 2015, 162,877 people applied for asylum in Sweden. By contrast, in 2010 only 31,819 people applied (Svenska Röda Korset, 2018). At the time, Malmö received two-thirds of the refugees that entered the country (Migrationsverket, 2016a). At one point, in October, 10,000 refugees entered Malmö every week (Tanner, 2016). As help from the authorities experienced weeks of backlog, civil society felt compelled to fill the gaps: ‘welcoming’ refugees, feeding them, giving them clothes, toys and hygiene products, and offering them a place to sleep. Even with delays, the Swedish government initially made significant efforts to organise and welcome the refugees. As the prime minister put it, ‘my Sweden does not build walls’ (Ekberg, 2015). Yet by November 2015, within months of this assertion, the government had shifted its rhetoric and declared that refugee flows pose ‘a serious threat to the public order and the security of the nation’ (Ekberg, 2015). This was not exceptional: across Europe, representations of refugees fragmented between those in need of protection, or those to be rejected (Boccagni & Giudici, 2022; Holmes & Castañeda, 2016). As Laura stated in the quote above, government cutbacks in quotas were done with the purpose of reducing the entry of refugee applicants.

Border controls were enforced between Denmark and Sweden. In November 2015, the government introduced a Temporary Aliens Act with the purpose of curtailing the number of asylum seekers. Unaccompanied children seeking asylum in Sweden were especially affected by the praxis of authorities assessing their needs for protection as deportation was being considered (Jansson-Shevaraz & Lundberg, 2019). In 2015, before the Temporary Act came into force, there were 9,524 rejections (Migrationsverket, 2016b). In 2016, after the implementation of the Temporary Act, rejections more than doubled, to 19,669 (Migrationsverket, 2016b). Combined with the austerity of the Act on the Reception of Asylum Seekers (Riksdagen, 1994:137), this made the situation acute for

many. As the law stated, 'Anyone covered by this Act is not entitled to assistance under Chapter 4. Section 1 of the Social Services Act (Riksdagen, 2001:453) for benefits of a corresponding nature. There is also no right to assistance for housing costs' (1 §, Lag (2021:769) Riksdagen, 1994).

In 2017, the Swedish government continued to take drastic measures to curtail asylum-seeker claims. A total of 9,617 males and 337 females were subjected to medical age assessment exams by the Swedish National Board of Forensic Medicine (*Rättmedicinalverket*, RMV), using dental x-rays and knee scans. Many doctors and lawyers condemned this, stating that medical imaging was inaccurate, even if not illegal. Mostad and Tamsen (2019) confirm that, contrary to RMV claims, many individuals were misclassified. The misidentification of unaccompanied minors as adults meant losing crucial social service support for housing and basic needs. This is the counter-argument that these types of tests are useful for granting child status.

As the situation grew critical for unaccompanied young people, politicians drafted a new law, aimed at this group, to compensate for the most serious consequences of the Temporary Aliens Act. In 2018, the Swedish Upper Secondary School Act (*gymnasielagen*) gave young people attending upper secondary school the opportunity to apply for an extension to their temporary residence permit to complete their studies or to seek work when their studies were completed (Migrationsverket, 2021c).⁵ Around 11,800 young persons applied under the Upper Secondary Act (Swedish Red Cross, 2019: 46). But those granted residence under this law did not receive support in finding housing.

Barker (2017) points out that Sweden has a long history of humanitarianism based on the principle of equality as foundational in society, but this clashes with the logic of welfare state solvency and nationalised membership. In general, citizens of a nation-state have certain rights and entitlements, based on distinctions that exclude foreigners. In Sweden, these distinctions are at odds with the universalistic character of the *Regeringsformen* and Social Services Act. The *Regeringsformen* (one of four fundamental laws in Sweden) (see 2 §), formulates the right to housing as an obligation not a right solely for citizens. Fitzpatrick et al. (2014, p.453) describe it as a 'programmatic right' rather than a 'legal right' by which they mean that 'legal rights' are about a 'right to action' for individual citizens, whereas 'programmatic rights' are about pursued political goals. In the words of Bengtsson (2011), p.255), they are 'political markers of concern'. The Social Services Act also does not stipulate or limit rights for particular groups or categories, including for undocumented migrants (2 Chapter 1 §). However, this is a framework law, placing responsibility for implementation on the municipality, and therefore municipality guidelines must also be considered (2017, p. 33).

Each municipality answers for the social services within its domain, and has the ultimate responsibility that individuals get the support that they need. (translation Nordling, 2017, p. 132)

In short, both the interpretation and implementation of the social service act and the planning and provision for housing rests on local municipalities.⁶ Moreover, the Upper

5 Residence permits are conditional on the student completing their studies and getting a job after completing upper secondary school.

6 Although it must be noted Lidén and Nyhlén (2016) noted that subnational variation exists in self-government in municipalities in Sweden. This was not grasped in this research.

Secondary Act sets restrictions as has the Refugee Reception Act (Lundberg & Kjellbom, 2021) on access to social protections.

Beyond law and policy, the growing erosion of the social democratic welfare system is achieved through the careful re-writing of guidelines on social assistance and shifts in administrative practices (Nordling & Persdotter, 2021). These ‘bordering’ practices are argued by Nordling and Persdotter (2021) to occur at a local level rather than from above, but are consistent with shifts in the national migration policy debate. The nexus between national migration policy and municipal social policy needs illustrates how different migratory statuses and deepened social inequalities are affected (Nordling & Persdotter, 2021). Below, these affections will be grounded by exploring the case of homelessness and unaccompanied youths in Malmö.

The ‘humanitarian resident’: housing issues in Malmö for unaccompanied youths

As noted above the precondition for accessing rights even for citizens and residents has become the target of humanitarian efforts in Runqvist and Sahlin (2023) have looked at the impact on the newly arrived (*nyanlända*). Björkhagen Turesson (2019) has explored the everyday life issues of homeless children in Malmö. There are multiple groups facing accessing issues including: citizens, residents with low-income families with children and the undocumented. This article focuses on the underlying reasons for the particular housing issues faced by unaccompanied youth in Malmö, and these are linked to how certain categorisations, and the housing policies used to address these categories, have become increasingly exclusionary in Sweden, and have come to shape the ‘humanitarian resident’. The ‘humanitarian resident’ relates in this case to the distinctions created between the ‘social homeless’ and the ‘structural homeless’. The former refers to persons with mental health and substance abuse problems, who need support to find housing. The latter has come to be understood as referring to persons with no ‘special difficulties in finding housing’ (Sahlin, 2020, p. 39). Since 2019, social services are hindered to work with the structurally homeless (Malmö Stad, 2021). The result has been that certain overlapping groups have faced growing exclusion from settlement⁷ and homeless policies, including, for example, newly arrived refugees and structurally homeless people in Skåne county, in which Malmö is located (Sahlin, 2020). For unaccompanied youth in between statuses, or with conditional residence permits as those under the Swedish Upper Secondary Education Act, complex restrictions on benefits may push them into homelessness or precarious housing conditions (Scott, 2022). For those who hold residence permits and have transitioned to adulthood, this has also meant being categorised and assessed as structurally homeless, forcing them to use suffering as a precondition for demanding rights. Björkhagen Turesson and Staaf (2021) have recently looked at how the rights and protections of housing are implemented on homeless children in Malmö in the shifts that

⁷ State assisted refugee allocation to housing has been a strong point of contestation in Sweden for decades, especially in relation to segregation (Valenta & Bunar, 2010). In the aftermath of 2015, the 2016 Settlement Act has been the most important point of contention, where it was mandatory for municipalities to receive a certain number of refugees and allocate them accommodation. This implied a redistribution of costs, standards and temporary solutions at a local level. Emilsson and Öberg (2022), show how paradoxically the implementation of the Settlement Act in 2016 has meant increased inequality at a local level for refugees adding to the already problematic scenario of refugee allocation in the country historically and to the current situation of unaccompanied youths who have transitioned into adulthood.

happened during 2019 mentioned above, finding the situation of children has worsened since the guidelines in Malmö changed in 2019, as these children are no longer identified as part of the target group by Malmö municipality.

Since 1996, Malmö has issued a report mapping homelessness in the municipality. In the 2020 report, the city identified 1,115 adults and 365 children as homeless (Malmö Stad, 2021), where homelessness was reported as shrinking. But, when the municipality reports on homelessness and precarious housing situations, these typically exclude undocumented migrants, those in between statuses, those awaiting a decision on their asylum claims, unaccompanied youth under the Upper Secondary School Act, EU migrants and the structurally homeless.⁸ This is because the municipality's own guidelines for social services do not include housing support for these groups. Thus, as according to Skånes Stadsmission, a key organisation working on homelessness issues in Malmö, a large proportion of those in unstable housing situations are not included in the city's accounting (Emmelin, 2021). When the city of Malmö claims that homelessness has declined, what this actually means is that fewer people are receiving support from the municipality, not that there are fewer homeless people (Skånes Stadsmission, 2020).

In the case of unaccompanied youth, on arrival, the Swedish Migration Agency offers asylum seekers the option to apply for accommodation and financial support while awaiting a decision.⁹ Accommodation compensation is offered in cases where the applicant has a job, or a job offer, but the Migration Agency does not have any residences to offer (Migrationsverket, 2021a). Under Swedish law, the Migration Agency must consider the child's best interest (Migrationsverket, 2021a), and children may continue to receive housing support even if their asylum case is rejected. However, once an unaccompanied minor turns 18, this support is immediately lost.

The austerity in the law and policies signal the emergence of the 'humanitarian resident' in given the structural homeless are not identified as a group entitled to support from the Malmö municipality. This austerity also signals a growing marginalisation of vulnerable groups that in this case situates unaccompanied youth with no access to social rights nor human rights and instead under a humanitarian logic of rescue that manifests in a continuum of precarity as will be detailed below.

The case of civil society as emergency organisations

The 'humanitarian' crisis

As Bea, most civil society actors interviewed, with few exceptions, recurred to describing the situation of unaccompanied youth as a 'humanitarian' catastrophe or crisis. The exceptions were manifested in larger, well-established organisations where staff did not see their work in Sweden as humanitarian, and their perceptions of humanitarian aid and crisis were linked to actual sites of war, far away, such as in Syria. Yet for Alana, a pivotal actor among the civil society, unaccompanied youths were 'in an incredibly vulnerable situation which I would say is a bit like a humanitarian catastrophe in many ways, where one is exposed, increasingly destitute and brittle.' In fact, a Swedish Red Cross report in 2020 denounced a humanitarian situation in the case of unaccompanied youth (Svenska

⁸ It is important to delve further into the category of structurally homeless, and who is the majority of this group. Given newly arrived migrants have no anchoring in the housing market or lack social networks, many end up categorized as structurally homeless.

⁹ This is changing now in the *Tidöagreement*. This article will not delve into the consequences, but flags the need to consider this in future research.

Röda Korset, 2020) and assessed in another report the humanitarian consequences of the Temporary Alien Law (Svenska Röda Korset, 2018). This was echoed throughout most actors interviewed. For Bea, the was about:

those that fall between the cracks (*hamnar mellan stolarna*). The Temporary Law, which does not feel temporary, creates a very high vulnerability but also those people who have been identified as adults and are still awaiting an answer, since 2015, on their asylum application. When it comes to housing, they might not want to move out to new accommodation. They might not want to live alone, maybe they are scared of adults; they might not want to move to a new city far away from where they are. They already have a social network and school in Malmö. Then, for example, they can become homeless: they are 18 years old, they have to pay their accommodation, pay rent. All this creates an enormous vulnerability... when homelessness increases, it raises issues with making money for living expenses and food; addiction problems increase. This is a group that often is exploited, also in the media, and then when this is discussed politically or in the media, it has been normalised that it is okay to exploit this group... That this is a structural issue, nobody cares about.

As the most prevalent example raised, within this denounced ‘crisis’, by civil society actors participating in this research, was the issue of housing and homelessness of unaccompanied youths in Malmö. In the words of Per, who worked on this and similar issues for years:

Above all [the most acute problem is] homelessness, people in Malmö, a fairly large homeless shelter (*hårbärke*) was closed which [x organisation] ran with funding from the city of Malmö. But the city of Malmö wants to limit the number of places and they wanted to focus on another target group. A very specific target group who were people with addiction and mental illness instead of what [x organisation] had, which was for everyone. The reason was that Malmö thought that there is no need for everyone to have a shelter in that way.

Per’s work experience was that not only unaccompanied youth but in his words: ‘people are in many different situations looking for it [shelter]’. In the wider discourse and political debate in Sweden, homelessness is normally cited as a social issue linked to mental health or substance abuse. Indeed, it is thought to be very difficult to break free from the social welfare state that always cares for one. Yet as discussed above, Sahlin (2020) has shown that municipalities have taken measures to limit access to housing support through the use of categories and how these categories are linked to policies (Sahlin, 2020), and in this case, migration policies that obstruct access to certain protections.

By 2019, the need was so acute that at one point, Alana explained, ‘There is a kid (*unge*) every other day who has no connection (*sammanhang*) and has ended up outside [the system] and has come here through the door and asked for help. That is quite a few.’ In 2019 alone, her organisation had helped more than 500 unaccompanied youth. Per also underscored how structural issues impact the everyday lives of those not offered protection and status in a different way:

They do not have the same rights, they have some of the same care, but economically they live in a completely different level, they are physically vulnerable, they do not have anywhere to be, to sleep, so people go around in the libraries, malls, central station, and to any place to be

protected from the weather and wind, but there is also a high level of unsafety, risking being taken by the police and risking being deported to the country they came from. The legal status plays an important role, but also the extreme poverty they live in does.

At a meeting I attended, between two civil society actors and social services, the situation of homelessness was presented as critical, and I noted the issue of homelessness was recurrent in these organisations; it kept coming up in debates, meetings, awareness raising activities and the daily life of these organisations. In this meeting organised between civil society actors and social services, both organisations presented how they had attempted to support these youths and to mitigate the impact of exclusion from social services. One of the civil society staff members drew from the example of rescuing over 70 people living in a parking lot.

The discourse of humanitarian crisis was partly rooted in physical observation of, for example, people sleeping in a parking lot, but it also extended beyond that. The signs of poverty also manifested more subtly in the dismantling of social services and ever-tighter limits on the support extended to those in need (see also Sahlin, 2020; Nordling & Persdotter, 2021; Lundberg & Kjellbom, 2021). Paula, who had worked extensively with migrants before the 2015 crisis, described the current situation in 2019 as a matter of politics and the law:

It is legislation and the political winds that make our job more difficult, and it is more difficult. There's an incredible difference between when I started working here and now. When it comes to the government, there has been a shift in how this issue is viewed, which of course affects how it is.

With much frustration Alana confirmed in her own experience what Paula had shared:

Migration policies and the welfare political system have got stuck between each other, so this has been more about bringing in those young people and trying to get them back into the welfare system... Then, there is the austerity in migration policy. For example, changes in the LMA [the law on the reception of asylum seekers] has made it so that young people end up homeless faster, but also that social services after the summer of 2017 have conducted stricter assessments.

In short, from the above examples one can gather there was no unified representation on what the 'humanitarian crisis' meant for different civil society actors, but concerns over austerity in the law and policies were voiced by all actors interviewed and a novel situation for them as organisations to buffer, rescue, and step in to fill voids for the problems that came 'knocking to their doors' with unaccompanied youths, of which the most prevalent and acute at the time was homelessness.

Scale shift to emergency Organisations

In an ad hoc manner at the time, 2019, government funding for housing projects poured into two of the organisations. This funding was geared towards establishing the housing arrangement known as *fadderhem*, 'sponsors' for young people suffering from homelessness. Swedish citizens' households that were deemed eligible to host a young person over 18 years of age were sought. Markus, a civil society employee working on the project, explained that a sum was paid to the host household by the civil-society-run project,

and allowances were provided to the young person throughout the project, funded by the Swedish government. The amount allocated to the young person was dependent on assessments of how much support was granted through social services. This was indicative of a scale shift from social services to civil society, and the emergence of these actors as mediators but also as emergency organisations, as will be detailed below.

There were also economic subsidies which were dependent on residence status. For one organisation, the beneficiary had to prove they did not have a permanent residence permit, in order to get a membership card allowing them to shower and change clothes in the NGO and receive groceries. This was perceived as novel: to screen who needed the help more, fleshing out the creation of material hierarchies of humanity (Fassin, 2011) in the context of civil society and the making of the ‘humanitarian resident’: suffering was used as a marker to distinguish who could access the help based on residency.

There were also two out of the five organisations that opened a space for unaccompanied youths (although not exclusively). The first organisation, a grass-roots organisation, was open on a daily basis after lunchtime. As described by staff, great care was taken to have a welcoming and *mysigt* (a word often used in Sweden to refer to a cosy, homely, pleasant space or situation and close to the Danish word *hygge*) place. There was a living room available to hang out, a game room, pool table, computers, paintings by activists hanging on the wall, a kitchen offering bread, butter and cheese. Tea and coffee were also made available. The second organisation, working at a national level, had a similar space for hanging out, eating, and playing games. Both had private spaces to offer legal and social service advice. In short, the space was described as both a safe homely space and one that addressed acute needs. This was indicative that these young people lacked a space they could call home, and also faced acute needs, such as the need for food. On the use of the space, Bea explained:

They use [this place] like a living room. You, like, meet here, and then go and do something else. It is like a meeting place and then move on. They come eat, eat a sandwich, and then go and hang out in the city, and then come back and eat again if you could not have lunch or dinner... we are described as a second home. You have a place where you sleep, and then this place.

Close by were the homeless, waiting for food at a cafeteria run by another civil society organisation that was also active in finding housing for unaccompanied youth through earmarked projects. In the same building of the cafeteria were the showers shared by all deemed eligible by the organisation, and groceries were distributed. Young unaccompanied youth often found themselves in the proximity of the homeless of Malmö, both within civil society spaces and around the city, in public spaces and those opened for people to keep warm on winter nights. The fundamental reordering of local services towards emergency assistance was therefore not actually exclusive to non-citizens, yet as noted by Per, there were structural problems making the vulnerability of unaccompanied youths a humanitarian issue, an emergency: and the humanitarian issue was the lack of rights.

Beyond the homely space created in the grassroots organisations was the need for support in the form of mediation and finding housing or paying rent. As Olof, a civil society leader, explained, ‘We are [now] an unemployment office, a social services office. We give legal advice, even if we are not lawyers. I give legal advice, even though I have no training. Then we have to give a lot of social help, find housing for them, a roof over their heads.’ This was a new experience for him and many other civil society actors in

Malmö. As many civil society actors noted, this type of 'invisible' help was crucial, took up most of their time, and often re-emerged, even outside the boundaries of the organisation and the time they spent at the organisation, and had to do with a type of 'volunteer humanitarianism' (Sandri, 2018), where volunteers and staff without prior training have to provide what would normally be professionalised help: legal advice, social services advice and the like.

The morphing of civil society actors' services into emergency services filling voids was not static, and civil society actors felt compelled to continuously adjust. As Alana put it, 'to try and fix what has been torn down in the system and to help those young people who ended up being excluded...while one space shrinks, the other opens.' Thus, the need for a humanitarian space was presented as crucial to distribute basic things such as food and to assist with housing issues. The emergency-driven services emerged not because of the unexpected nature of a temporal emergency that solicits immediate resources, but as a drawn-out process made by politics, the law and its interpretation, which brought the problem to civil society's doors. Leo Sandberg and Panican (2022) have also noted the emergence of civil society to conduct welfare tasks funded by the state.

Civil society actors confirmed that unaccompanied youths often came up against bureaucratic red tape, and were in need of mediation, advice and immediate coordination to find a place to sleep. This help was provided in a twofold way. Primarily this support was provided by civil society on a voluntary basis through a network of civilian support, given the lack of funding, through donations to pay rent or offering a place to sleep. The second type of help was through project implementation. In this case, the need to participate in government-funded projects was prioritised over politicising issues, given the acuteness of the issue at hand, indicative of an emergency organisation logic. Neutrality emerged in the face of alleviating suffering in an immediate manner. As Olof explained, 'my work is to share the extreme vulnerability of this group and work close to politicians, with caution.' He also said, 'I do not like to be an emergency organisation, I would rather we could focus on being a cultural association.' But for Olof and others, this was not a choice they framed as one they could make.

To conclude, the emergency of the situation made civil society act in rescuing ways that were much more far reaching: instead of setting up language cafés and assuming that the welfare state would take care of the rest, they stepped up in the face of the void made by the state. What prevailed and was prioritised among the actors studied was the humanitarian logic that sought to alleviate immediate, acute problems, such as the case of housing. This does not mean that these organisations exclusively functioned as emergency organisations filling voids, but this is an important role they have acquired, and that must be considered in relation to the Swedish welfare system and its growing relationship to migration law.

Conclusion

More than two decades ago, Gould (1999) argued the erosion of the welfare state in Sweden through the harmonisation of economic policies that determine the parameters of social policy. This argument has been contested and there is no consensus in general within academia on the acknowledgement of an eroding welfare state in the country. Notwithstanding, the presence of civil society efforts filling voids for the welfare state requested by the government itself has been increasingly noted (Leo Sandberg & Panican, 2022).

This article has shed light on the role of civil society, stepping in to fill voids, in ameliorating the emergency conditions experienced by unaccompanied youths tangled in the challenges posed by politics and the law. This supports the argument that there is a slowly eroding welfare state linked to increasingly restrictionist approaches to migration. In this context, the representation of unaccompanied youths was mired in the victimhood proposed in humanitarian discourses by civil society, and in the ethical obligation to legitimate a subject as suffering and in need of care, which was clustered with other categories such as structural homelessness, and not as a matter of (unconditional) social rights.

The ‘humanitarianisation’ of civil society efforts was identified by civil society actors themselves as a type of shock shift that came to their doors and for which they were not prepared, and to which they had to rapidly adjust. In particular, the civil society actors learned to cater to the emergency-like situation of the young people who approached these organisations. This humanitarian logic was geared towards rescue, the alleviation of short-term suffering by for example finding housing, helping unaccompanied youth pay rent, or attempting mediation with authorities, or managing government funded projects to find a solution to the homelessness issue of unaccompanied youths.

The specific issue of homelessness of unaccompanied youths in 2019 and the emergence of civil society to cater to this group throws light on a new urban landscape in Malmö as unaccompanied youths were pushed into segregated spaces of high precarity, criminality, vulnerability and poverty (Scott, 2022). The instability and need to adapt that fell upon civil society, whilst still limited, contributes to the argument of a slowly eroding social-democratic welfare state in Sweden and in this case its problematic relationship to the migration regime at a local level.

I conclude with a reflection on civil society’s perception of a well-functioning ‘universal’ welfare state in the past, as an example of what ‘worked’. The need to ‘bring the youths back in’ to this system was often seen as the solution by civil society (see also Solano, 2024). More research is required to unpack how and when the erosion of the welfare state manifests, from economic policies and their interaction with social policies to migration policies interacting with social services. Beyond theoretical debates, the fact that young people were especially affected demands urgent attention and political will.

References

- Barker, V. (2017). *Nordic Nationalism and Penal Order: Walling the Welfare State*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315269795>
- Bengtsson, S. (2011). Virtual Nation Branding: the Swedish Embassy in Second Life. *Journal For Virtual Worlds Research*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.4101/jvwr.v4i2.2111>
- Bengtsson, M. & Jacobsson, K. (2018). The institutionalization of a new social cleavage: Ideological influences, main reforms and social inequality outcomes of “the new work strategy”. *Sociologisk Forskning*, 55(2–3), 155–177. <https://doi.org/10.37062/sf.55.18188>
- Björkhagen Turesson, A. (Ed) (2019). *Hemlösa barns vardagsliv i Malmö - utifrån ett barnrättsperspektiv*. Malmö universitet. <https://doi.org/10.24834/isbn.9789178770472>
- Björkhagen Turesson, A. & Staaf, A. (2021). How are children’s rights to housing, safety and protection implemented in practice in Malmö? *Nordic Social Work Research*, 13(2), 280–292. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2156857X.2021.1969263>
- Boccagni, P. & Giudici, D. (2022). Entering into Domestic Hospitality for Refugees: A Critical Inquiry through a Multi-Scalar View of Home. *Identities*, 29(6), 787–806. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2021.1909359>

- Brković, Č. (2020). Vernacular Humanitarianism. I *Humanitarianism*. Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004431140_0104
- Cabot, H. (2019). The European Refugee Crisis and Humanitarian Citizenship in Greece. *Ethnos*, 84(5), 747–771. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00141844.2018.1529693>
- Dahlstedt, M. & Neergaard, A. (2019). Crisis of solidarity? Changing welfare and migration regimes in Sweden. *Critical Sociology*, 45(1), 121–135. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920516675204>
- Derluyn, I. (2018). A critical analysis of the creation of separated care structures for unaccompanied refugee minors. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 92, 22–29. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.03.047>
- Düvell, F., Triandafyllidou, A. & Vollmer, B. (2010). Ethical issues in irregular migration research in Europe. *Population, Space and Place*, 16(3), 227–239. <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.590>
- Ekberg, A. (2015). Tal av statsminister Stefan Löfven vid manifestationen för flyktingar. Text. *Regeringskansliet* (blog). Regeringen och Regeringskansliet. September 6, 2015. <https://www.regeringen.se/tal/2015/09/tal-av-stefan-lofven-vid-manifestationen-for-flyktingar-den-5-september>
- Emmelin, E. (2021). Malmö stads hemlöshetskartläggning ger en falsk bild. *Skåne Stadsmission* (blog). November 22, 2021. <https://www.skanestadsmission.se/malmo-stads-hemloshetskartlaggning-ger-en-falsk-bild>
- Emilsson, H. & Öberg, K. (2022). Housing for Refugees in Sweden: Top-Down Governance and its Local Reactions. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 23(2), 613–631. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-021-00864-8>
- Fassin, D. (2011). *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present*. University of California Press. <https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520950481>
- Fitzpatrick, S., Bengtsson, B. & Watts, B. (2014). Rights to Housing: Reviewing the Terrain and Exploring a Way Forward. *Housing, Theory and Society*, 31(4), 447–463. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14036096.2014.923506>
- Gould, A. (1999). The Erosion of the Welfare State: Swedish Social Policy and the EU*. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 9(2), 165–174. <https://doi.org/10.1177/095892879900900205>
- Hansen, Ch. (2020). Alliances, Friendships, and Alternative Structures: Solidarity among Radical Left Activists and Precarious Migrants in Malmö. *Journal of Race, Ethnicity and the City*, 1(1–2), 67–86. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26884674.2020.1797600>
- Holmes, S. M. & Castañeda, H. (2016). Representing the ‘European Refugee Crisis’ in Germany and beyond: Deservingness and Difference, Life and Death. *American Ethnologist*, 43(1), 12–24. <https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12259>
- Horstmann, A. (2017). 7. Plurality and Plasticity of Everyday Humanitarianism in the Karen Conflict. In D. S. Yü & J. Michaud (Eds.), *Trans-Himalayan Borderlands: Livelihoods, Territorialities, Modernities* (pp. 167–188). Amsterdam University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9789048531714-009>
- Jansson-Shevaraz, S. & Lundberg, A. (2019). *Migrationsverket ändrar på lagens innehåll för att ensamkommande barn inte ska beviljas uppehållstillstånd i Sverige* (s. 1012–1019). Stockholms universitets förlag.
- Lee, R. M. (1993). *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics*. SAGE Publications.
- Leo Sandberg, E. & Panican, A. (2022). Ekonomisk hjälp från Svenska kyrkan - den instrumentella paradoxen och den fattiges utmattning. *Socialvetenskaplig tidskrift*, 29(1), 27–46. <https://doi.org/10.3384/SVT.2022.29.1.4413>
- Lindbom, A. (2008). The Swedish Conservative Party and the Welfare State: Institutional Change and Adapting Preferences. *Government and Opposition*, 43(4), 539–560. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2008.00268.x>
- Lidén, G. & Nyhlén, J. (2016). Structure and Agency in Swedish Municipalities’ Reception of Unaccompanied Minors. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 29(1), 39–59. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fev015>

- Lundberg, A. & Kjellbom, P. (2021). Social work law in nexus with migration law. A legal cartographic analysis of inter-legal spaces of inclusion and exclusion in Swedish legislation. *Nordic Social Work Research*, 11(2), 142–154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2156857X.2020.1861071>
- Malmö Stad. (2021). Bostäder & hemlöshet. Text. Malmö stad. 2021. <https://malmo.se/Fakta-och-statistik/Bostader--hemloshet.html>
- McGee, D. & Pelham, J. (2018). Politics at play: locating human rights, refugees and grassroots humanitarianism in the Calais Jungle. *Leisure Studies*, 37(1), 22–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2017.1406979>
- Menjívar, C. & Perreira, K. A. (2019). Undocumented and unaccompanied: children of migration in the European Union and the United States. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45(2), 197–217. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1404255>
- Mostad, P. & Tamsen, F. (2019). Error rates for unvalidated medical age assessment procedures. *International Journal of Legal Medicine*, 133(2), 613–623. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00414-018-1916-3>
- Migrationsverket. (2016a). Inkomna ansökningarna för asyl 2015; Migrationsverket (Swedish Migration Agency) January 1, 2016. <https://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.7c00d8e6143101d166d1aab/148555621938/Inkomna%20ansokningar%20om%20asyl%202015%20%20Applications%20for%20asylum%20received%202015.pdf>
- Migrationsverket. (2016b). Avgjorda asylärenden beslutade av Migrationsverket, 2015. <https://www.migrationsverket.se/download/18.7c00d8e6143101d166d1aad/1485556214929/Avgjorda%20asylarenden%202015%20-%20Asylum%20desicions%202015.pdf>
- Migrationsverket. (2021a). Asylum Regulations. <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals/Protection-and-asylum-in-Sweden/Applying-for-asylum/Asylum-regulations.html>
- Migrationsverket. (2021b). Financial Support; Migrationsverket (Swedish Migration Agency). January 7, 2021. <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals/Protection-and-asylum-in-Sweden/While-you-are-waiting-for-a-decision/Financial-support.html>
- Migrationsverket. (2021c). Gymnasielagen. Migrationsverket (Swedish Migration Agency). July 28, 2021. <https://www.migrationsverket.se/Privatpersoner/Skydd-och-asyl-i-Sverige/Gymnasielagen.html>
- Migrationsverket. (2021d). Your Own Accommodation; Migrationsverket (Swedish Migration Agency). September 8, 2021. <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals/Protection-and-asylum-in-Sweden/While-you-are-waiting-for-a-decision/Accommodation/Your-own-accommodation.html>
- Migrationsverket. (2022). When you turn eighteen; Migrationsverket (Swedish Migration Agency). <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/Private-individuals/Protection-and-asylum-in-Sweden/Children-seeking-asylum/Without-parents/When-you-turn-18-years.html>
- Ministry of Social Affairs. (2007). Socialtjänstlag (Social Services Act). Ministry of Social Affairs. https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/socialtjanstlag-2001453_sfs-2001-453
- Nordling, V. & Persdotter, M. (2021). Bordering through destitution: the case of social assistance to irregularised migrants in Malmö, Sweden. *Nordic Social Work Research*, 11(2), 155–168. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2156857X.2021.1940246>
- Nordling, V. (2017). Destabilising Citizenship Practices?: Social Work and Undocumented Migrants in Sweden. Doctoral Thesis (monograph). Lund University.
- Odmalm, P. (2004). Civil society, migrant organisations and political parties: theoretical linkages and applications to the Swedish context. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 30(3), 471–489. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830410001682043>
- Perwez, S. (2008). Towards an Understanding of the Field within the Field: Researching Female Infanticide by Researching NGOs in Tamil Nadu. In D. Sridhar (Eds.), *Anthropologists Inside Organisations: South Asian Case Studies* (pp. 72–88). SAGE Publications India. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9788132100591.n5>
- Povzanovic Frykman, M. & Mäkela, F. (2020). Post-2015 Refugees Welcome Initiatives in Sweden: Cosmopolitan Unverpinnings. In O. Hemer, M. P. Frykman, & P.-M. Ristilampi (Eds.), *Conviviality*

- at the Crossroads: The poetics and politics of everyday encounters* (pp. 165–188). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-28979-9_9
- Pries, L. (2018). Introduction: Civil Society and Volunteering in the So-Called Refugee Crisis of 2015 – Ambiguities and Structural Tensions. I M. Feischmidt, L. Pries, & C. Cantat (Red.), *Refugee Protection and Civil Society in Europe* (s. 1–13). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92741-1_1
- Riksdagen. Lag (1994:137) om mottagande av asylsökande m.fl. (1994). https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-och-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-1994137-om-mottagande-av-asylsokande-m.fl_sfs-1994-137/
- Riksdagen. Socialtjänstlag (2001:453) . (2001). https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-och-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/socialtjanstlag-2001453_sfs-2001-453/#K1
- Runqvist, W. & Sahlin, I. (2023). *Fyraårsgränsen: Om bosättning av anvisade nyanlända i Malmö*. (Research Reports in Social Work; Vol. 2023, No. 1). Socialhögskolan, Lunds universitet.
- Sahlin, I. (2020). Moving Targets: On reducing public responsibilities through re-categorising homeless people and refugees. *European Journal of Homelessness*, 14(1), 27–54.
- Sandri, E. (2018). ‘Volunteer Humanitarianism’: Volunteers and Humanitarian Aid in the Jungle Refugee Camp of Calais. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(1), 65–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1352467>
- Schierup, C.-U. & Ålund, A. (2011). The End of Swedish Exceptionalism? Citizenship, Neoliberalism and the Politics of Exclusion. *Race & Class*, 53(1), 45–64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396811406780>
- Scott, H. (2022). Survival over safety: non-reporting of criminalised violence by young migrants excluded from protection. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 48(19), 4793–4810. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2022.2099362>
- Skånes Stadsmission. (2020). Utvärdering av Skåne Statsmission Projekt. Unga i Hemlöshet; Skånes Stadsmission. <https://www.skanestadsmmission.se/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2020-Utvärdering-Projekt-unga-i-hemlöshet.pdf>
- Solano, P. (2024). (Forthcoming) ‘Civil Society Hospitality’: Welcoming Initiatives and Pragmatism Targeting Unaccompanied Youth in Malmö. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, 15(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.33134/njmr.796>
- Svenska Röda Korset. (2018). Humanitära konsekvenser av den tillfälliga utlännings lagen; Svenska Röda Korset. <https://www.rodakorset.se/globalassets/rodakorset.se/dokument/om-oss/fakta-och-standpunkter/rapporter/konsekvenser-av-den-nya-lagen-181206.pdf>
- Svenska Röda Korset. (2020). Humanitära situationen för ensamkommande; Svenska Röda Korset. <https://www.rodakorset.se/om-oss/fakta-och-standpunkter/rapporter/humanitara-situationen-for-ensamkommande-unga/>
- Swedish Red Cross. (2019). Humanitarian Consequences of the Swedish Temporary Aliens Act; Swedish Red Cross. <https://www.rodakorset.se/globalassets/rodakorset.se/dokument/om-oss/fakta-och-standpunkter/rapporter/humanitarian-consequences-of-the-swedish-temporary-aliens-act-181206.pdf>
- Tanner, A. (2016). Overwhelmed by Refugee Flows, Scandinavia Tempers Its Warm Welcome. *Migration Information Source*, February. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/print/15554>
- Valenta, M. & Bunar, N. (2010). State Assisted Integration: Refugee Integration Policies in Scandinavian Welfare States: the Swedish and Norwegian Experience. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 23(4), 463–483. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/feq028>
- Walker, S. & Gunaratnam, Y. (2021). Young, unauthorised and Black: African unaccompanied minors and becoming an adult in Italy. *Journal of Sociology*, 57(3), 690–706. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783321993918>