



WILCO

Welfare innovations
at the local level
in favour of cohesion

WORK PACKAGE 4

URBAN POLICY ORIENTATIONS IN LOCAL WELFARE IN MALMÖ, SWEDEN

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INTRODUCTION

This report describes and analyses urban policy innovations in local welfare in the city of Malmö, Sweden. The report is part of the WILCO research project and is one of the deliverables for work package 4.

1.1. Objective of the report

WP4 aims to understand local policy orientations and values in regard to welfare initiatives. Local policy orientations and values are normally produced in the political arena by politicians, technicians or experts, and the scientific community. In order to understand why decisions have been taken or not, it is argued in the WILCO project that we have to comprehend values and politics, technical constraints, and - in particular - expert discourses, which are developed by local epistemological communities (Majone 1997). Local epistemological communities define the core ideas of what good local welfare practices are, i.e. how successful or innovative efforts aiming to combat social inequality or to encourage social cohesion look like. They are not only responsible for the coherence regarding the local discourses on how policies have to be implemented or problems to be interpreted, but they are also related to other networks of specialists and stakeholders (Ferrera 1996).

1.2. Approaches

There are at least two approaches to analysing core values: on the one hand, the approach of Sabatier, who assumes that there exist coalitions of values and power relationships between these coalitions in specific policy fields (or constellations of actors, see for example Sabatier 1998, 1999). On the other hand, the approach of Jobert and Muller, who analyse, from the point of view of the public administration, what global and sectorial value orientations (which they call "referential") are (Jobert und Muller 1987). This report seeks to combine those two approaches by not only describing general and sectorial orientations, or configurations of coalitions of differences, but by simultaneously focusing on the coherences and contrasts between majorities and minorities, and between general orientations and sectorial ones.

1.3. Methodological approach and empirical material

Value orientations can be found in the official documents of the public administration and in debates in the local parliament that reflect also coalitions. A coalition is a discursively coherent group, which produces intersubjectively shared realities or truths, which are then reflected in the group's discourses and in documents. In order to analyse discourses, the methods used for this report include to (a) analyse documents linked to political debates in local parliaments, (b) carry out interviews with stakeholders in order to know better their commonly produced worlds, and (c) organise focus groups with a view to clarifying their diverging or shared positions in interactions.

In terms of documents in Malmö, the seven most recent political party programs of the represented parties in the city council of Malmö have been included in the study and thereafter analysed. Newspaper articles have also been used as empirical material. One of the major local newspapers in Malmö, the so-called *Sydsvenskan*, was selected as the main source. Using search strings, such as "housing + Malmö", "housing politics + Malmö", "labour market + young + Malmö", "unemployment + Malmö" and "childcare + Malmö", a set of articles were identified and deemed relevant for the study. In all 18 articles on the topic of child-care, 39 articles related to the labour market, and 16 articles on housing are included in the analysis. Furthermore, one recent political debate in the city council of

Malmö concerning child-care has also been included. The debate was transcribed from a web-TV broadcast published on the website of the municipality of Malmö. In addition to documents, interviews have been conducted for the study. Seventeen qualitative semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders have been carried out aiming to describe in-depth positions and ideas in the relevant policy fields.

The empirical material included in the study has subsequently been analysed by focusing firstly on identifying the dominant general value system in relation the orientations and values concerning the local welfare state, and secondly, on the dominant sectorial values as regards child-care, unemployment and housing. Furthermore, we have also identified the points upon which the main coalitions agree and disagree regarding the orientations and values of the local welfare state and the dominant sectorial values in the field of child-care, unemployment and housing.

2. THE GENERAL LOCAL WELFARE SYSTEM AND POLICY VALUES

The organisation of the Swedish welfare state has a tradition of a high degree of self-government at the local level (Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2011). When the development of the Swedish welfare state accelerated after the second world war, the parliament and the government at the time decided to place a great deal of the responsibility for public services with the local authorities. One of the reasons was the belief that local administration and local responsibility could best meet local needs.

The current Local Government Act, which came into force in 1992, defines and differentiates the roles of municipalities, county councils, and regions as follows:

- Local authorities are responsible for matters relating to the inhabitants and their immediate environment.
- The main task of the county councils and regions is healthcare and regional development.
- The Swedish parliament has 349 members and is the supreme political decision-making body in Sweden.

Accordingly, Sweden's local authorities, county councils, and regions have a great deal of freedom to organise their activities as they see fit. Local authorities, county councils, and regions are entitled to levy taxes in order to finance their activities. Taxes are levied as a percentage of the inhabitants' income, and local authorities, county councils, and regions decide on their own tax rates. Tax revenues are the largest source of income for Sweden's local authorities, county councils and regions and account for approximately two-thirds of their total income. As a consequence, there are major variations in the average income of the inhabitants of Sweden's local authorities, county councils, and regions. The cost per inhabitant, for providing the services to which they are entitled, also varies. In order to ensure fairness, a system has been introduced, called the local government equalisation system, and managed by the state, with the aim of providing equitable conditions in all local authorities, county councils, and regions. The revenues are consequently redistributed on the basis of tax base and level of expenditure. Local authorities, county councils, and regions may also charge users for their services. A non-profit principle applies, however, which means that fees may not be higher than the costs relating to the service concerned.

Furthermore, local authorities, county councils, and regions may procure services from private companies. Activities carried out by private companies on behalf of local authorities, county councils, or regions are financed using public funds. Privately run activities that are financed using tax revenues must offer citizens services on the same

conditions as those which apply to similar public services. This means, for example, that citizens pay the same for a service irrespective of whether it is provided by the public sector or by a private company. In some areas, such as refuse collection, public transport, and dental care, it has long been common for local authorities, county councils, and regions to procure services externally. It is only in the recent decades, however, that private companies have begun to run preschools, schools, and care facilities.

The structure of the health care system is such that there are over 1,000 local medical centres, doctors' surgeries, and district nursing clinics throughout the country. Together, these form what can be labelled as the primary care structure, which is the foundation of the Swedish healthcare system. At local medical centres, patients can be treated for all the health problems that do not require the technical and medical resources of a hospital.

Three-quarters of the activities of the local authorities are directly related to demographic factors and are determined by the number of inhabitants, their age and their state of health. In regards to education, care and primary healthcare, for example, the local authorities are responsible for practically all primary and secondary education. Child-care, preschools, and schools account for over 40 per cent of municipal budgets. The local authorities are also responsible for special schools for the intellectually disabled, for adult education (*folkbildning*), and for Swedish language courses for immigrants. Elderly care and care of the disabled are also important tasks for the local authorities and account for almost 30 per cent of their budgets. Care and assistance is provided in the home and in sheltered accommodation.

2.1. Introduction to the local welfare system in Malmö

The local authority in Malmö, with its twelve centrally organized field specific administrations (for example education, environment, and city planning) and its ten geographically organized city districts administrations, employs 20 000 people. The city district administrations are responsible for providing services to the people living in the particular area. These services include providing child-care, elementary schools, care of the elderly, care of the disabled, social welfare benefits, local leisure activities (such as for example public swimming pools and sport facilities), and the city district libraries. The city district administrations have a certain responsibility for local culture as well. In addition, the local welfare system include local companies, such as the local housing company (MKB), the Malmö Incubator (MINC) and other service and industrial companies requiring more business-like organizations (Malmö Stad, 2012). Affecting the local welfare system in Malmö are also nationally organized employment offices, regionally organized hospitals and health care centres, as well as the regionally organized public transportation system. Finally, the city of Malmö also has a long history of civil society engagement, with traditionally strong associations in the fields of sports, culture, and leisure, organised in the umbrella organisation MIP (*Malmö ideella föreningars paraplyorganisation*).

Of interest to the WILCO project in general and the relationship between WP4 and WP5 in particular, it should be noted that the concept of social innovation is a key discursive node in the dominant policy values regarding local welfare in the city of Malmö. It would seem as if there is a struggle among participating actors to find new, more innovative ways of handling social problems such as segregation and youth unemployment. As alluded to earlier in the text, three examples of such innovations will be presented here.

The first example is the Malmö Incubator (MINC). Malmö Incubator is owned by the local authority and is localized geographically next to the Malmö University. Its stated purpose is to match established companies (with its representatives from the traditional business world) with new entrepreneurs and researchers. The ambition is to encourage innovative

thinking and to maximize economic growth and minimize economic risk for growing companies. The Malmö Incubator is financed through the European regional development fund and is considered an important actor in the entrepreneurial network related to the University. It could be mentioned that this network has ties to the *Coompanion Incubator*, which is one of the innovations analysed in WP5.

A new commission, the Commission for a socially sustainable Malmö, is another example of social innovations being used to promote local welfare. The Commission consists of fourteen commissioners who are experts within the domains of social science, health, economy and urban studies, many of which are also employed professors and researchers at the Malmö University. The main task of the Commission is to assemble evidence and based on those propose strategies for reducing health inequalities and improve the long term living conditions for the citizens of Malmö (Malmö Stad, 2012).

The third example of social innovations, the *Områdesprogrammet*, is a local program considered to be innovative for local welfare. (This innovation is also part of WP5.) This program aims reduce segregation and socio-economic stagnation in specific areas in Malmö by creating new ways of working across internal administrations in the city. The program also seeks to work across sectors and involve and engage citizens as well as civil society organizations (e.g. Interview 4). An interesting assumption underlying the program is that it is the involvement of local actors and new forms of cooperation that are required for development, rather than more resources and funding (Ibid.).

2.2. Dominant policy values and innovations organising local welfare

By way of introducing the dominant policy values on local welfare in Malmö, a few notes should be made on the political rule. The city of Malmö has a long history of being ruled by the Social democratic party. Since 1994, the Social democrats have been in majority. In the latest election, carried out in 2010, the Social democrats were able to retain their influence, however in a coalition with the Green party and the Left party. As a comparison, an alliance of political parties on the right side of the political scale has been ruling the national level in Sweden. The national situation is in stark contrast to the local level in Malmö as regards another dimension as well: the political parties on the right - the so called opposition - are highly fragmented. Moreover, the third largest political party in Malmö is the Swedish democrats, a relatively new and upcoming party with its roots in the neo fascist movement (DN 2012-11-15). Another party represented in the city council of Malmö is the Swedish pensioners' interest party. The Swedish pensioners' interest party has come to play a fairly important role in the political life of Malmö, as the political parties in the opposition have decided to seek support from the Swedish pensioners' interest party instead of the Swedish democrats.

Understanding the political setting of the city of Malmö establishes a fundament for understanding the dominant values on local welfare. Based on interviews with politicians and civil servants in Malmö the dominant values regarding the welfare system, what it is, and what it should do could be related to a traditional social democratic view. Statements found in the political party programs support this (Social democratic party program 2012). The party program of the Social democrats, for example, presents the local welfare system as an instrument in fighting inequalities and closely connected to values such as social justice, class, equality, and social sustainability. Class differences and other inequalities are believed to constraining individuals as well as the overall society and risking to cause society to "drift apart." Other negative tendencies include class differences, poverty, and poor health (e.g. Interviews 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, and 12). Such tendencies are considered to be costly, wasteful, and may undermine the level of trust among citizens and in society. Social sustainability is therefore to be achieved by using local welfare as a mean to

equalize structural differences. The local welfare system is also linked discursively to concepts such as democracy and “empowerment” (e.g. the Green party program, 2012; the Left party program, 2012). There is also consensus among the various actors on the importance of local welfare for the citizens and that citizens should have the ability to influence the organization of local welfare.

Having but briefly outlined the dominant value system in regards to local welfare in Malmö, this report will now focus on the dominant perceptions of the main problems and solutions. Starting with the problems, a fundamental concept and problem related to local welfare in the city of Malmö is poverty. According to the Social democrats, for example, poverty is affecting people’s health, life expectancy, and is considered a matter of life and death. Child poverty is also part of the discourse on local welfare and the proposed main problems (e.g. Interviews 4, 7). Another major problem in the city of Malmö is believed to be unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular (see for example Interviews 1, 2, 4,7, 8,12). From a discourse perspective, it should be noted that the concept of unemployment seems to be intimately linked to the concept of exclusion, where the party programs of the ruling coalition argue for a dynamic relationship between the two: unemployment leads to exclusion, but exclusion is also considered to be a cause for unemployment. A third major problem area, as constructed by the policy discourse on local welfare, is segregation (e.g. Interviews 1,2, 4, 5, 6, 10).

Several of the respondents in the interviews carried out for this report talk about the so-called “million program areas” in relation to the perceived problem of segregation. Again, a discourse analysis could bring forward how segregation, as a consequence, is constructed with the support of other rhetorical and political concepts, including the field of housing and perceived problems such as exclusion and inequality (see for example Interview 2, 4, 6). Municipal commissioner Carina Nilsson, responsible for care and social service in Malmö, identifies another fourth problem for the local welfare system. She says that more and more people are excluded from the national social security system, due among other things to recent changes in regulations at the national level, and thus more and more people end up applying for social welfare benefits from the local authorities even though their only “social” problem is that they are unemployed or ill (interview 3). According to commissioner Nilsson, the exclusions of these groups have affected the local welfare system in Malmö in regards to financial planning, adjusting established social service routines, and meeting the needs of other groups (Ibid.). A fifth local welfare problem formulated by the various actors is gender inequality. Mainly discussed by the political parties, one agrees that gender inequality mainly is the responsibility of the municipality (Social Democrats party program 2012; Liberal party program 2010; Green party program 2010). Two examples of excerpts from party program could serve as illustrations: “The Social Democrats believe that gender work must be mainstreamed in all activities of the municipality” (Social Democrats party program 2012) and “The municipality must be a highly active employer in regards to preventive health work and gender equality” (Liberal party program 2010).

An integrated part of the discourse on main problems in local welfare is the necessity to act in relation to the same problems. In regards to poverty, for example, the political party program of the Social democrats argues that it is “a matter of life and death” (Social democrats party program 2012). The necessity to act in regards to child poverty, on the other hand, is constructed as a matter of firstly education and secondly employment. According to one respondent, child poverty affects student results and later on in life people’s possibilities in the labour market (Interview 4). The necessity to act in relation to the labour market is firstly discursively linked to the perceived importance for people to work, as part of social and interpersonal processes. Employment is furthermore important for integration processes (e.g. Interview 1, 2). The combination of employment being

important for social reasons and integration processes constructs employment simultaneously as a core area of welfare and as an area at the periphery of welfare. Municipal commissioner Andreas Schönström, responsible for labour market and adult education (*folkbildning*), says: “Work is a basic condition for all other kinds of welfare, when it comes to financing, but also when it comes to participating in other kinds of welfare. They are interlinked. (...) We know that psychological health and equality is connected to work” (Interview 1).

In regards to segregation the necessity to act is promoted on the grounds that society might “risks drifting apart” with negative implications on trust and security in society (e.g. Interview 1, 4). Segregation is furthermore viewed as destructive for social sustainability and social coherence, and as argued by commissioner Schönström: “It is a waste of people’s resources” (Interview 1).

In the sections above, the dominant values, the main problems, and the necessity to act have been presented. Here we will outline the dominant view on the importance of the local welfare system in relation to values, problems, and actions. The local welfare system in the city of Malmö in the dominant political discourse is premised on three overarching values: the transfer of resources to those in most need, the ability to serve the citizens, and to democracy. Starting with the transfer of resources, one illustration of this value could be found in the debate about progressive taxes in child-care (Debate on child-care, 2011-09-22). In that debate, the majority of the political system upholds the importance of transferring funds from households that earn more to those who earn less by using a progressive fee-system. This system enables more children to partake in pre-school child-care and its pedagogical activities. The opposition, on the other hand, here in the shape of the conservative and liberal political parties, argue firstly that all forms of transfer of funds should ideally take place at the national level. They also argue that it is the responsibility of the local authority to safeguard the quality of child-care, including the size of groups of children and the number of teachers per child. According to the opposition, these standards are impossible to guarantee if funds are transferred and fees subsidized. In their view the local welfare system should provide, maintain, and guarantee service of high quality. As a parenthesis, in this debate on progressive taxes in child-care, the Swedish democrats argue for the complementarity of child-care to the traditional family structure, as the family is to be the preferred care taker. In addition to the role of local welfare in transferring resources, it is also believed to be important in providing services to the citizens, and is interlinked with notions of democracy (e.g. Social democratic party program 2012; Left party program 2012; Conservative party program 2012).

Moving from perceived main problems to solutions, the intimate relationship in the discourses on local welfare between problems and solutions should be noted. One example that could be used as an illustration here is the problem of segregation (see above) and how it is discursively linked to the solution of education in the interviews. Pre-school and the normal school system are supposed to compensate for differences in living conditions and as such, education is constructed in an ambiguous relationship with segregation (e.g. Interview 4, 5). One of the respondents, municipal commissioner Anders Rubin, talks about a clustering of problems in the segregated housing areas:

We have many geographical areas in which the population differs greatly from the average population in the city when it comes to participation on the labour market, results in school and so on. It is the concentration of problems in these areas that is the real challenge to the local welfare system (...) It is the housing situation that creates this kind of segregation. And as problems

create more problems, these areas are, in a way, their own problem creator (Interview 2).

Furthermore, as regards solutions, several actors agree on the need to collaborate. Among politicians, experts, and representatives interviewed for this study, there is a need to increase the level of collaboration among different sectors in society. The Green party writes in its party program: “It is essential that the municipality has adequate resources in social services so that each person gets the help they need. At the same time, the nonprofit sector carries out fantastic efforts and cooperation between the municipality and civil society is essential for creating a social safety net that works for everyone” (Green party program 2010).

Other actors, such as the Swedish Democrats, concur: “With a clever design and marketing, we believe that many kind-hearted people living in Malmö are willing to make an effort in order raise the quality of life for the old in our municipality and to support the many times hard working personnel in home care” (Swedish Democrats party program 2012).

In addition to the need to increase the level of collaboration, many also argue for the need for new solutions (Interview 4, 11, 12, 14). “We have to think differently to get the citizens into the work force, we can not keep on with the old.” (Interview 4) One answer to the increased level of collaboration and need for new solutions is spelled civil society. According to civil society representatives, there is a general lack of knowledge regarding the role of civil society and what it has to offer. At the same time there is agreement on the idea to create new opportunities for civil society organizations in the development of local welfare. The Left party, for example, argues “Associations and other organizations must be regarded as important review instances on political decisions” (Left party program 2012). Moreover, existing structures for collaboration between the public and the nonprofit sector need to be revised in order for civil society to be able to take on a greater role in the production of local welfare. Current structures for financing are regarded to be biased towards certain types of associations and there are concerns that the nonprofit sector has allowed itself to adjust too much to the public sector. Here follows an illustration from the Conservative party program:

Today we see that different associations, even within the same activity, adjust their operations in various ways to the rules and regulations for municipality contributions. It gets unanticipated consequences. We want to look at how these rules and regulations can be made fairer, to enable associations that do not quantify their activities as easily also can take part of the municipality's contributions (Conservative party program 2012).

As a response to the perceived problems and their position within the broader, dominant view of local welfare, a new Commission has been launched. Interestingly enough, the Commission could be considered a new innovation in local welfare as well as a break with the dominant values and ideologies. The Commission is supposed to help develop new strategies to battle differences in health and living conditions in Malmö. As such, it could be interpreted as an acknowledgement of the inherent difficulties for the traditional approaches to remedy unequal living conditions, poverty, and segregation. As stated by one of the commissioners, Mikael Stigendal: “It is important for a society to analyse those processes that are promoting inclusion in society as well as the barriers that are faced by the excluded positions before one focuses on what processes that creates exclusion” (Interview 8). Commissioner Stigendal further argues that “we ought to see inclusion and exclusion as one process that starts simultaneously” (Ibid.). The political

recognition and acknowledgement of some of the previous problems inherent in the dominant value system on local welfare is shared with other actors, over and beyond the Social democratic party in Malmö. They too take a critical stand towards the local welfare state and would want to see and promote new innovations in this field. Another solution at the policy level includes an initiative called *Områdesprogrammet* (the Area program). The program is partly supposed to involve and reach out to local associations.

Finally, in this section on dominant values regarding local welfare, what are the commonalities across the different coalitions on social innovation? According to a representative from the organization Meetingplace for Social Innovation at Malmö University, social innovation attracts groups of people from different ideological positions. The attraction of social innovation mainly has to do with the combination of economic and social sustainability, where the activities need to be economical while at the same time address real social problems (Interview 9). Another factor contributing to the attractiveness of social innovation could have to do with the support from the European Union in terms of funding and structures. Even though some may question the sustainability of social innovations, the organization of some of these activities as networks among organizations, the university, and political actors is argued to pave way for the future as well as making social innovation less of a political debate.

2.3. Differing policy values regarding local welfare

In order to understand the different policy values regarding local welfare in the city of Malmö, the most significant political actors need to be presented. As described earlier, as regards political parties, the Social democrats together with the Left and the Green party form a coalition and are in majority in the city council. The opposition is made up of the Conservative and the Liberal party, at times supported by the Swedish pensioners' interest party. Other significant policy actors in the field of local welfare include the Commission for a Socially Sustainable Malmö, the *Områdesprogrammet*, the Malmö Incubator, and the Malmö University. The latter facilitates a "meetingplace for social innovation" as well as MEDEA - Living Labs (Malmö Högskola, 2012). In outlining the network of policy actors a set of entrepreneurs need also to be included. These entrepreneurs include *Yalla Trappan*, a social enterprise employing women in Rosengård (see e.g. the report for WP5). Another entrepreneur is *Uppstart Malmö*, an organization seeking to support social entrepreneurs and businesses.

Having outlined the most significant policy actors, the report now focuses on the differing policy values regarding local welfare found within the three main coalitions among the political parties. Starting with the majority, a set of values on local welfare is creating tensions among the three political parties. Even though the three parties agree on a large set of issues, for example on the positive role of the public sector and the local authority in creating employment and its special social responsibility (e.g. Social democratic party program 2012; Left party program 2012), there are still divergent values among the three. For example, in contrast to the dominant political party, the Social democrats, the Left party underscores the importance of organizing welfare "without losers, free of speculation, and that resources should be distributed according to the needs of the citizens" (Left party program 2012). In addition, the party argues that citizens as clients and employees of local welfare should be included to a higher degree, that health care and social care should be financed and provided by public organizations, and that the latter should be strengthened in regards to democracy, transparency, trust, and empowerment.

Civil society also has a role to play in party program of the Left political party, however - in contrast to the Social democrats - only as an actor that should be consulted on proposed legislative changes. The Green party also promotes certain values that could be argued to

differ from the dominant values of the coalition as a group as well as from the other two parties. The Green party emphasizes the notion of citizen empowerment and would like to empower citizen to exert more influence over local authority organizations. In accordance, the party would like to expand parliamentary democracy to also include propositions developed by ordinary citizens. As such, it could be said that the Green party would like to combine the best of both a well developed public service provision of welfare and of empowered citizens and organizations representing citizens, stressing individual and collective values simultaneously.

It is also possible to identify differing values regarding local welfare between the two political parties in the opposition. Both the Conservative and the Liberal party agree that the local welfare system should focus more on providing welfare and promoting and maintaining quality in local welfare (Conservative party program 2012; Liberal party program 2012). However, there are values that differ between the two parties. The Conservative party, for example, stresses that the main responsibility of the local authority should be to ensure quality and services to the citizens (Conservative party program 2012). The party also would like to promote a plurality of service providers, more partnerships among public and private organizations, lower income taxes, and increase the degree of freedom of choice in welfare. One proposed solution to pave the way for some of these ideas and values, promoted by the Conservative party, is to reform the organization of the local welfare system in general and the 10 different city district administrations in particular. According to representatives of the party, the current organization of local welfare paves way for unequal services to the citizens of Malmö and pits the different administrations in a rivalry with one another. The Conservative party wishes accordingly to promote a new organization of local welfare in which the political responsibility is more pronounced and centralized, and that at the same time ensures a plurality of service providers.

The Liberal party, on the other hand, would like to increase the role of private actors in welfare provision and retain only that which requires institutional authority. Underlying such a proposal is the idea that the private sector not only would, but could provide services far better than the public sector. At times forming part of the coalition in opposition, the Swedish pensioners' interest party would also prefer competitive tendering in health care and social services (Swedish pensioners' interest party 2012). Another differing value upheld by this party is the wish to centralize parts of the welfare provision, such as the regional health care and the locally provided care for the elderly, into the same organization.

The third largest party in the city council, neither part of the majority nor the opposition, the Swedish democrats, differs from the others in that it constructs immigration as the fundamental problem in local welfare (Swedish democrats party program 2012). Referring to themselves as a value conservative political party, the Swedish democrats would as a consequence want to stop the reception of refugees into the city permanently and would like to promote an increase in the civic identification with the "Swedish nation." In similarity with the Conservative party, the Swedish democrats too question the organizations of the local welfare system in general and the city district administrations in particular. However, in contrast, they would like to promote a city organization with what they refer to as special boards. Such boards would, according to the Swedish democrats, be less bureaucratic and therefore less costly as well as a more controlled and therefore pronounced system. From a more analytical perspective, it could be noted that none of the other parties in the city council agree with the Swedish democrats on the topic of immigration. And at least a representative from another party, the Social democrats, argues in an interview conducted for the project that the multi-cultural identity of Malmö

is part of the reason “why so many citizens of Malmö like and are proud of their city and why so many wishes to move to Malmö every year” (Interview 1).

The previous sections have outlined some of the major values on local welfare that differentiate the political parties within the dominant coalitions of mainly the majority and the opposition. As could be expected, the majority and the opposition disagree on a number of topics. Out of these, we will here address what we consider to be the two most important and prominent values and related conflicts: the role of the market in local welfare and the role of local welfare in the redistribution of resources. Starting with the role of the market in local welfare, most political parties in the city council seem to agree on the importance of creating a supportive institutional environment for private actors, entrepreneurs and innovations in order to promote more employment opportunities (e.g. Social democrats party program 2012; Green party program 2010; Conservative party program 2012; Liberal party program 2010). However, in regards to local welfare, the coalitions disagree on the role of private actors. The Left party, for example, does not recognize private actors in local welfare:

These so-called voluntary choices are many times a way to put the responsibility for the structural problems on the individual; if have you chosen incorrectly, you are to blame. Choices that presumes that there are winners, presumes also that there are losers in our society. It often has the consequence that those who are well off are even better off and those who are struggling are worse off - we will get a divided city. A policy of privatization is marketed as choice. Welfare should be conducted without losers, be free from speculation and be distributed according to each and everyone's needs (Left party program 2010).

The opposition, on the other hand, would like to encourage more private actors. Here follows an example from the Liberal party program:

More competition. It is the municipality's responsibility to finance its duties. It is also the municipality that should ensure that you, the citizens, will get value for your money. However, it is not a mandatory task for the municipality to produce the welfare services. Private contractors can often do this better and less expensively. The Liberal Party in Malmö wants therefore to procure all municipal operations that do not constitute core municipal activities (Liberal party program 2010).

The Green party believes that the debate would benefit from a more moderate point of view: “A large part of the political debate is about public versus private solutions. We do not believe that reality is as simple. The fact that the municipality takes a lot of responsibility and operates basic operations is not contradictory to allowing other actors to contribute” (Green party program 2010).

Another point of divergence concerns the role of profit in local welfare. Both the Social democrats and the Left party have taken a hard stance against profit in local welfare in contrast both to the opposition as well as values promoted at the national level by the Social democrats. A related matter to the role of private actors in local welfare concerns partnerships with the civil society. Even though none of the political parties in the city council of Malmö explicitly discuss the role of civil society, civil society organizations are invited to participate in local initiative, such as the previously mentioned Områdesprogrammet. A representative of CPE, Nils Phillips, argues that the public sector

has come to realize that it alone cannot solve all social problems, and that political hope is therefore invested in the notions of social innovation and civil society, in what he calls “a paradigmatic shift” (Interview 11). This view is shared with other civil society organization representative interview for this report (e.g. Interview 14, 15). A potential conflict related to the role of civil society in local welfare could be to expose social service provision to competitive tendering. Representatives from the civil society in Malmö, interviewed for this report, claim that competitive tendering needs to be based on different values than price alone in order for civil society organizations to contribute to local welfare (e.g. Interview, 11, 14, 15).

In regards to the role of local welfare in the redistribution of resources, it would seem as if the majority constructs the welfare system as primarily an equalizing tool (e.g. Social democratic party program 2012; Left party program 2012), whereas the Conservative and Liberal party focus more on using the local welfare system to motivate unemployed to enter the labour market (Conservative party program 2012; Liberal party program 2012). Another example of the conflict over the redistribution of resources and the role of local welfare concerns the case of child-care fees. When the majority decided to cut the fee for child-care for the poorest households in Malmö, the opposition argued that lowered fees should not be distributed in such a fashion that they might conflict with motivation to enter the labour market (e.g. debate on child-care 2011-09-22). This latter example illustrates well the conflict over the role of local welfare in redistribution, as the opposition focused on the consequences for the level of employment in the area, whereas the majority focused child-care as a tool for creating more equal living conditions. Another conflict related to the redistribution of resources and the role of local welfare concern the field of housing. The majority wanted to launch a new service, a rental queue for local apartments. Such a service, it was argued, would support a more equal and efficient housing distribution. The opposition, however, argued that the very same service could risk affecting the competition on the market in favour of the publicly owned housing company (e.g. budget debate 2009-06-15 and 16).

There are also a couple of policy issues, segregation and gender inequalities, which have been discussed earlier in this report, on which the different actors agree that these issues are local welfare problems in need of solution, however there is disagreement regarding the solutions and the way forward. Beginning with segregation, there is agreement among the various actors that Malmö has major problems with segregation. The actors do not agree, however, on who is responsible for the problem. Some formulate segregation as the state’s responsibility, others as the responsibility of the municipality. The Green party for example argue “We Greens are convinced that municipal design is a powerful tool to overcome segregation” (Green party program 2010), whereas the Swedish Democrats focus more on the state responsibility: “The irresponsible Swedish integration and immigration policy has given rise to segregation, alienation, crime and increased contradictions” (Swedish Democrats party program 2012). There are also actors who regard segregation as an individual problem. One such actor is the Liberal party:

In Malmö many children live in segregated areas. These children rarely come in contact with the Swedish language at home or in their spare time. For the Liberal Party is the evident that the school must provide such an opportunity. Individual schools and teachers have therefore embraced the principle that one during class time speaks Swedish in the classroom. The aim is to strengthen students' language development. The Liberal Party believe that this principle should be written into the local school curriculum (Liberal party program 2010).

The same reasoning applies to the second policy issue of gender inequality. As have been discussed earlier in this report, most political parties agree that gender inequality should be regarded as a local welfare problem and that the municipality is responsible for solving the issue. However, the political parties do not agree on what constitutes the best solution for the problem. The Left party, for example, are favourable to implementing quotas (Left party program 2010). The Conservatives and the Swedish Democrats, on the other hand, argue against implementing quotas: "We see it as a given that men and women should receive equal pay for equal work, but to invest tax money on pure hysteria in this area, we consider it to be a betrayal to the taxpayers. It also leads to quotas, which will be a reverse discrimination and we do not support this" (Swedish Democrats 2010).

The Conservatives propose to develop female entrepreneurship instead of implementing quotas:

We want to increase the opportunities to start and run businesses in areas that are dominated by women, such as health, education and welfare. In this way, many women will have access to a larger labour market and more employers within the welfare sector. With more options the possibility to influence work, working environment and compensation increases (Conservative party program 2012).

3. SECTORIAL POLICY VALUES AND INNOVATIONS

In the previous parts of the report, dominant values and points of divergence in regards to the general local welfare system have been described. The sections below will identify sectorial references, policy values and discursive innovations concerning the three fields of child-care, housing, and unemployment.

3.1. Child-care

Before going into the details of the sectorial policy values found in the empirical material, the role of local authorities in providing child-care is outlined. The roots of the Swedish child-care system can be traced back to the second half of the 19th century (Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2011). Industrialisation and migration to the towns had given rise to widespread poverty among families. Infant crèches were opened for the children of single mothers obliged to work for a living. Work shelters took in schoolchildren from poor families in the afternoons while at the same time trying to teach them some rudimentary crafts. Child-care was in other words an important measure for allowing for more children while simultaneously providing labor in the expanding industrial economy of Sweden.

These motives where in the latter period of the 20th century complemented with educational concerns. In contemporary Sweden, all children are entitled to a preschool place, and public child-care is formally extended to children aged 1-12. In Sweden, compulsory school begins at the age of seven but prior to that almost all six-year-olds attend voluntary preschool classes designed to prepare them for the first grade. Children who have yet to start school or preschool classes for six-year-olds can attend regular preschools, family day care homes and open preschools while older children have access to leisure-time centres, family day care homes and open leisure-time activities

In terms of the shared responsibility for child-care between national and local authorities in Sweden, "governance by the rulebook" has been replaced by a more target- oriented and results-oriented system when it comes to division of responsibilities among national, regional, and local governments in managing child-care (Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson

2011). This means that the central government in Sweden now outlines the overall goals for child-care while the local authorities are responsible for implementing them. The regulations governing child-care are set out in the Education Act. The present Education Act came into force in 1995 and prescribed stricter compliance on the part of the local authorities than previously. The Act defines the forms of child-care that are to be provided. It also spells out the obligation of local authorities to provide child-care for children aged 1-12 to the extent required in order for parents to work or study.

Moving then to the sectorial values related to child-care in the local welfare system in Malmö, one could identify a set of dominant values adhered to by both the majority as well as the opposition. These commonly shared values include the notion that pre-school child-care should have a compensatory function, and the role of child-care in preparing children for school as well as for personal development (e.g. Social democratic party program 2012; Left party program 2012; Conservative party program 2012; Liberal party program 2012). Another commonly shared value is that child-care could serve as a safety buffer for children living in socially vulnerable situations. The Left party and the Green party also argue for the need to implement gender sensitive pedagogical methods in child-care (Left party program 2012; Green party program 2012). There is also agreement across the different actors regarding the importance of keeping the size of the child groups small, the general lack of resources, the lack of qualified employees, and inequalities.

There are also divergent policy values on child-care in local welfare. One such discussion concerns on-going tendencies. Sonja Nilsson, planner, the Municipal Board, argues for example that the child-care is at risk of becoming a counter-productive institution in terms of its consequences for segregation (Interview 5). If the quality of child-care is unequally spread within the city of Malmö, she says, it might actually reinforce segregation within the city. As a consequence the Left party is promoting a redistribution of resources and a reduction in child-care fees for certain groups in society (e.g. debate on child-care 2011-09-22) As mentioned previously, the opposition disagree as this would affect motives for entering the labour market. Another point of divergence concerns the role of private actors in child-care. Similar to the rest of Sweden (cf. Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2011) the field of child-care in Malmö has been subjected to privatization, allowing for private companies and civil society organizations to provide child-care. The Liberal party for example are in favour of allowing for more private actors in the field of child-care. According to Sonja Nilsson, the introduction of private actors has resulted in employment opportunities for new groups in society (Interview 5). However, it has also affected the level of education and competency among child-care personnel. There is also disagreement regarding the role of choice among different providers and the issue of language. In regards to the latter, all actors agree on the importance of language, but disagree on the importance of Swedish as the primary language. Some political parties, for example, argue that mother tongue should be provided and that teachers should be able to communicate in more than one language.

3.2. Employment

By way of introduction to the sectorial values on employment, it should be noted that Sweden has a tradition of encompassing and redistributive income security and active labor market policies at the national level (Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2011). The traditional labor market policy can be described as a universalistic model of activation. This policy has been directed towards different segments of the population and with the aim to integrate or re-integrate unemployed citizens into the labor market. This has often been combined with - at least formally - strict forms of work enforcement within the social protection system. The practice of labor market policy today, however, is more of combination of job service, guidance, labor market programs, vocational induction

schemes, rehabilitation for working life and activities for young persons with functional limitations.

Decentralization in this field has taken place since the mid 1990s (Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2011). Since then the municipalities have been the primary actors to run different forms of programs to activate unemployed and persons on social welfare benefits. It is up to the different municipalities to develop programs - within frames of the central policy - that are adapted to local needs and resources. A new trend in the field of employment at the local level is organizational coordination between authorities such as insurance and employment offices in line with "one-stop-shop-models".

In terms of sectorial policy values, it is striking how most political parties and civil servants seem to agree upon unemployment as a central local welfare problem. One example from an interview with a policy maker: "We have had a huge high movement of people to Malmö from the rest of Sweden and we have not been able to catch up. There is just so. We have not been able to meet this influx of people, and we have not been able to match the labour market to the extent that would have been needed" (Interview 1).

There seems, furthermore, to exist a consensus between the political blocks in the city council that a beneficial entrepreneurial atmosphere is important for creating working opportunities, as mentioned previously. The unemployment issue is also believed to be addressed by more and better education as well as internships.

There are, however, also some major differences between the political blocks. One such conflict focuses more on the discrepancy between the national and the local level. The right-wing alliance at the national level has since 2006 been pushing a policy dubbed as "workfare. The "workfare" politics has, according to local politicians in Malmö, resulted in a more restricted social security system, with higher demands put on unemployed in order to receive sufficient unemployment insurance funds, as well as changed rules for the social security funds paid to people when they are ill. The latter has implied that people who are ill for longer periods of time end up having to apply for social welfare benefits at the local social welfare administration office instead (e.g. Interview 3). In response the local majority in Malmö has been pushing what they call "a local responsibility" when they try to ease the consequences for people who has been pushed out of the social security system (e.g. interview 1). The local responsibility includes employing people in the public sector and the introduction of progressive child-care fees. The latter indicates that differing national policy values are reinforced and translated at the local level into a debate about the redistribution of resources and the role of local welfare.

Another divergence in policy values concerns the rights of workers. For example, according to Ewa Glimhed, LO Malmö, there has been a "dumping" of working conditions and rights for workers. As an example she mentions how restaurants in Malmö have started to put into system to employ people on loose, "test-term" contracts without pay (e.g. interview 12).

From an analytical perspective, two rather divergent policy views on employment seem to emerge from the empirical material. The first regards unemployment as a social problem, with severe affect on mental and physical health. Employment policies are therefore a solution to several local welfare problems. The other regards unemployment as more of structural and national policy problem. The first view considers the local authority as responsible for partly finding a solution (e.g. Interview 7). The second view, that relates unemployment to national structures, argues that national employment offices and social security systems are responsible. "It is not the individual's fault that it has fallen into a premium situation, the cause lies in the economic policy that does not prioritize full

employment” (Left party program 2010). One interviewed representative even argues that the role of the local authority in the first view is better equipped to deal with unemployment, whereas in the second view its role is to “clean up the mess” of national policy failures (e.g. Interview 3).

There are also views that the solution to the unemployment problem could be found at the individual level:

There are different solutions for different individuals. Foremost one has to find out, put energy into, what the individual needs to move forward. There is no "quick fix", not even if they come from the same country. You cannot say that everyone from Iran or Iraq should have it so and so. You have to talk to every person.

Political parties to the right of the political scale argue, however, that unemployment best is battled by means of better structures for businesses. The Conservative party argues, for example, that the municipality should support people wanting to start their own businesses and reduce administrative red tape.

3.3. Housing

Sweden has had a national housing policy since the late 1940s in the sense that it has been directed towards the housing market as a whole and not towards special categories of households or tenure (Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2011). “Good housing for all”, regardless of income, has been the overall goal for the national housing policy and an important ingredient of social welfare policy. The semi-public bodies - for example the local housing companies - have played a central role in the political goal of good housing for all. Public housing became in this way a cornerstone of the Swedish welfare policy.

During the 1990s, however, Swedish national housing policy changed dramatically with a deregulated housing market and a more market oriented approach (Nordfeldt and Segnestam Larsson 2011). Swedish national housing policy transformed as a consequence from a general to a more selective policy where public housing no longer can be considered as a cornerstone in the welfare system. This is a policy change that has been supported by both former social democratic governments and the previous liberal/conservative government. In this way the Swedish policy follows mainstream European policy, with less tax benefits and restrictions.

As a consequence to these changes housing policy is no longer a particularly visible policy field on the national level. The responsibility for housing supply lies at the local level, with the local authorities. The local authorities are according to the national law of housing supply obliged to compile a policy for local housing supply, once every length of office. Additional consequences include the closing down of public housing assignment agencies, the adoption of market principles by municipal housing companies, and the conversion of rental apartments into co-operative apartments.

Moving from a general introduction of local housing to the policy field of housing in the city of Malmö, there seems to be consensus about problems related to housing, such as too many people living in small dwellings, the lack of housing, homelessness, the linkages to segregation, and the need for new solutions. One example is the shortage of apartments. This problem can also be further specified, to a shortage of affordable rental apartments for young people and unemployed (e.g. Interview 6, 12). Homelessness is another policy issue on which most parties agree. “Homelessness is the housing problem most extreme manifestation. No child should grow up without a home to live in.” (Social Democrats party

program 2012) Even though homelessness is considered to have many causes, the main cause addressed by the various actors is the lack of housing (Interview 3 and 9; Green party program 2012). The state and the municipality are regarded as the main responsible actors for finding and providing a solution to the issue of homeless, but actors also talk about the need for collaboration across sectors and the importance of the civil society.

The Liberal party believes that the municipality should provide the resources needed to give the homeless a dignified existence. We also believe that the voluntary organizations must play a central role in this work and are given better opportunities and conditions than is the case today. The Liberal party want the municipality to endorse a guarantee of shelter for all people living in Malmö (Liberal party program 2010).

Everyone agrees that the main solution to addressing problems related to housing is to build more. There is disagreement however regarding how more building is to be promoted. The Left party argues for investment contributions, the Liberal party would like to sell municipality housing and use the capital build more, and the Conservative party would favour turning rental apartment into condominiums. Regarding the latter:

Enable the transformation of rental apartments to condominiums in exposed areas. Offer tenants living in these areas the opportunity to redeem their homes. This has several positive effects on the housing environment. What you own you take care of and studies show that people stay in the same area for longer periods. The opportunity to own your own home attracts also people from elsewhere (Conservative party program 2012).

Another consensus concerns the proposed solution to the problem of “transit areas,” i.e. socio-economically segregated housing areas. “It is a big burden for a city of the size of Malmö to become a transit for so many people. This is evidently reflected in the labour and housing markets.” (Interview 7) The proposed solution seems to be to upgrade rental apartments to cooperative associations of apartment owners, enabling - at least in the policy discourse - stability and socio-economic development of these areas. Policy actors would also like to see more “mixed” housing areas. The Social Democrats argue for example:

A socially mixed housing is a key ingredient in ensuring greater integration. Additional buildings are needed in many areas to achieve socially mixed housing. It can be about building condominiums in areas dominated by rental apartments, rental apartments in areas dominated by condominiums, or to get greater variety in areas with only a few types of apartments (Social Democrats party program 2012).

Additional areas for consensus regard a too high degree of people living in small dwellings, lack of affordable housing affecting young people, private landlords and insufficient maintenance of housing, called a “slum strategy” by the commissioner Anders Rubin (Interview 2), and illegal housing practices.

Finally, there is some uncertainty in regards to what the local welfare system can actually do in order to deal with the housing problems. A lot of the housing politics are considered regulated nationally and/or on the market, leaving less room for local policy initiatives (e.g. Interview 6). In contrast to the description above, interviewed representatives,

furthermore, claim that the local authority is restricted in its different policy alternative, even though the national level has decentralized the housing responsibility. The transformation of the local housing authority company into a for-profit organization has restricted the number of alternatives even further.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS: COHERENCE AND INCOHERENCE IN LOCAL WELFARE SYSTEM POLICY VALUES AND INNOVATIONS

This report has described and analysed urban policy innovations in local welfare in the city of Malmö, Sweden. Using official documents of the public administration in Malmö, debates in local parliament, and excerpts from interviews with various stakeholders, the focus of the report has been on identifying the dominant general value system in relation to the orientations and values concerning the local welfare state, and secondly, on the dominant sectorial values as regards child-care, unemployment and housing. Furthermore, the report has also identified the points upon which the main coalitions agree and disagree regarding the orientations and values of the local welfare state and the dominant sectorial values in the field of child-care, unemployment and housing. This final section of the report summarizes some of the main findings and discusses the degree of coherence in local welfare system policy values.

4.1. Dominant policy values

Summarizing the main findings of the report, the dominant values policy values organising local welfare in Malmö could be described as traditional Social democratic. This implies among other things that the local welfare system is regarded as an instrument in fighting inequalities and a system that is closely connected to values such as social justice, class, equality, and social sustainability. There is also consensus among the various actors on the importance of local welfare for the citizens and that citizens should have the ability to influence the organization of local welfare. Fundamental challenges for the local welfare system include poverty, unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular, segregation, social exclusion, and gender inequalities. There is also an intimate relationship between the perceived problems and the proposed solutions. Hence, segregation, for example, is to be reduced by education. The policy actors also promote more generic solutions to a host of problems. These generic solutions include cross sector collaboration, promoting civil society, and social innovations.

4.2. Differing policy values

Moving from the dominant to the differing policy values regarding local welfare in Malmö it should be noted that there are differences not only among the different political parties, but also within the two political coalitions. For example, in contrast to the dominant political party, the Social democrats, the Left party underscores the importance of organizing welfare “without losers, free of speculation, and that resources should be distributed according to the needs of the citizens”. It is also possible to identify differing values regarding local welfare between the two political parties in the opposition. The Conservative party, for example, wishes to promote a new organization of local welfare in which the political responsibility is more pronounced and centralized, whereas The Liberal party, on the other hand, would like to increase the role of private actors in welfare provision and retain only that which requires institutional authority. Moreover, the third largest party in the city council, neither part of the majority nor the opposition, the Swedish democrats, differs from the others in that it constructs immigration as the fundamental problem in local welfare. Finally, as could be expected, the majority and the opposition also disagree on a number of topics. Out of these, the two most important and prominent values and related conflicts could be argued to be the role of the market in

local welfare and the role of local welfare in the redistribution of resources. There are also a couple of policy issues, segregation and gender inequalities, which have been discussed earlier in this report, on which the different actors agree that these issues are local welfare problems in need of solution, however there is disagreement regarding the solutions and the way forward.

4.3. Sectorial policy values

There are also agreement and disagreement on policy values and discursive innovations concerning the three fields of child-care, housing, and unemployment. Beginning with child care, commonly shared values include the notion that pre-school child-care should have a compensatory function, the role of child-care in preparing children for school as well as for personal development, and that child-care could serve as a safety buffer for children living in socially vulnerable situations. There are also divergent policy values on child-care in local welfare. Points of divergence concern the role of private actors in child-care, the role of choice among different providers, and the issue of language. In terms of sectorial policy values on employment, it is striking how most political parties and civil servants seem to agree upon unemployment as a central local welfare problem. As a consequence, there exists a consensus that a beneficial entrepreneurial atmosphere is important for creating working opportunities. The unemployment issue is also believed to be addressed by more and better education as well as internships. Major differences between the different coalitions include the rights of workers and if unemployment should be regarded as a social problem or as more of structural and national policy problem. Finally, regarding housing, there seems to be consensus too many people living in small dwellings, the lack of housing, homelessness, the linkages to segregation, and the need for new solutions. One example of disagreement in the field of housing concerns how to promote more buildings. The Left party argues for investment contributions, the Liberal party would like to sell municipality housing and use the capital build more, and the Conservative party would favour turning rental apartment into condominiums.

4.4. Contextualising social innovations

There seems to be interplay among discourses, instruments, and social problems regarding local welfare in the city of Malmö. This interplay will here be discussed in terms of discourses promoting innovations, discourses preventing innovation, and finally draw it together. Beginning with discourse promoting innovations, there is agreement across the various coalitions and political actors on the need for new solutions in local welfare. Sweden in general as well as the city of Malmö are struggling with various issues related to welfare and all actors agree on the need to reform existing structures and seem to be open to new ideas, values, and instruments. Supporting this agreement is the shared view of what social problems that need to be addressed in local welfare as well as across the three sectors of child-care, housing, and employment. In this context, particularly in the city of Malmö, social innovation is considered a central concept for reforming current welfare practices and introducing new ideas. Based on the actors interviewed and other findings presented in this report, it seems as if social innovation could be considered a cross-political concept in terms of its social and economic values. The concept of social innovation also and apparently attracts people and organizations from various ideological backgrounds and positions. In other words, the discourse on local welfare seems to include dimensions that promote social innovations.

To the favourable local context could be added an enabling national policy environment. Changes in the national environment include a deregulation, a national political interest, and the importance given to self-governance.

At the same time there are elements in the discourse surrounding local welfare in the city of Malmö that could be argued to prevent innovations. One of these elements is the impression that there is disagreement among the different actors and coalitions regarding the methods and instruments to be implemented. Some of these perceptions and instruments concern the role of welfare in the promotion of the good society and that not everyone are as positive in towards on-going attempts at introducing other service providers of welfare than the public sector, in something that has been dubbed as a “commodification” of welfare. As a consequence coalitions disagree on the role of alternative providers of welfare including civil society organizations. Certain actors in the discourse on local welfare would also like to further the freedom of choice citizens have in choosing among schools, day care centres, and health care providers, among other things. From an analytical point of view, it could also be argued that social innovation as an idea, value, and instrument could be regarded as challenging established welfare notions in the city of Malmö, as inherent values more are related to a liberal political perspective on citizens, organizations and society. Examples of these values include the focus on the individual as a focal point and the positive views on cross-sectoral collaborations and partnerships. Even though actors across the political spectrum seem to agree on the notion of social innovation and its role in reshaping current local welfare regimes, social innovation should perhaps be regarded as an ideological proxy or a Trojan horse for a liberalization of the welfare in Malmö.

Bringing the interplay together, there is coherence among discourses, approaches, and social problems in some sectorial fields, such as employment, which seem to provide an enabling national and local environment. At the same time, there are incoherencies in a number of dimensions. One is the analytical conflict between the idea of social innovation, arguably laden with liberal values, and traditional welfare notions based on social democratic ideals. Other incoherencies could be found between ideologies and approaches between the two cities of Malmö and Stockholm, national and local discourses, the rhetoric and the practice of social innovations, and finally between specific innovations. Most importantly, it would seem as if there is limited diffusion of the idea of social innovation as regards scale, resources, and impacts in Malmö, regardless of the fact that most political parties seem to embrace the idea at a discursive level.

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THE WILCO PROJECT

Full title: Welfare innovations at the local level in favour of cohesion

Acronym: WILCO

Duration: 36 months (2010-2013)

Project's website: <http://www.wilcoproject.eu>

Project's objective and mission:

WILCO aims to examine, through cross-national comparative research, how local welfare systems affect social inequalities and how they favour social cohesion, with a special focus on the missing link between innovations at the local level and their successful transfer to and implementation in other settings. The results will be directly connected to the needs of practitioners, through strong interaction with stakeholders and urban policy recommendations. In doing so, we will connect issues of immediate practical relevance with state-of-the-art academic research on how approaches and instruments in local welfare function in practice.

Brief description:

The effort to strengthen social cohesion and lower social inequalities is among Europe's main policy challenges. Local welfare systems are at the forefront of the struggle to address this challenge - and they are far from winning. While the statistics show some positive signs, the overall picture still shows sharp and sometimes rising inequalities, a loss of social cohesion and failing policies of integration.

But, contrary to what is sometimes thought, a lack of bottom-up innovation is not the issue in itself. European cities are teeming with new ideas, initiated by citizens, professionals and policymakers. The problem is, rather, that innovations taking place in the city are not effectively disseminated because they are not sufficiently understood. Many innovations are not picked up, because their relevance is not recognised; others fail after they have been reproduced elsewhere, because they were not suitable to the different conditions, in another city, in another country.

In the framework of WILCO, innovation in cities is explored, not as a disconnected phenomenon, but as an element in a tradition of welfare that is part of particular socio-economic models and the result of specific national and local cultures. Contextualising innovations in local welfare will allow a more effective understanding of how they could work in other cities, for the benefit of other citizens.