Immigrant integration conflicts in Malmö through a development communication lens

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‘Stop fighting and wrecking my Rosengård’

—Translation of protest sign held by a woman in Malmö, Sweden
Photo credit: Swedish newspaper Sydsvenskan (2009, p. C1)

ABSTRACT
In the context of significant numbers of Muslim newcomers immigrating to Europe and perceptions of failed integration in Sweden, and in light of the urban conflict and increasing debates about integration as a one-way or two-way street, this paper sets out a “communication for development”-informed theoretical framework that focuses on the struggle for social cohesion and immigrant integration in Malmö, Sweden. The paper uses triangulation to view this challenging situation from various perspectives. Not only does this reveal that unemployment and lack of power have taken their toll on agency among migrants—particularly Iraqi men—but also that the strongest stories showing immigration as an asset—particularly Iraqi women—are not being told in the media. Through the use of empirical material from Malmö, this paper contends that participatory communication in Malmö is less than participatory, and that integration in Sweden, in its expectations, leans uncomfortably close to assimilation. The paper gives examples of several development communication initiatives for integration that have had positive results, with strong evidence that community media, as just one example, has proven effective at improving immigrant integration. The paper concludes that development communication initiatives show promise for improving social cohesion in Malmö, and that these can be effective only if the choice to participate, and the choices of initiative, medium and content are made by the migrants themselves.

[219 words]

Key words: development communication, communication for development, communication for social change, immigration, integration, social cohesion, social inclusion, multiculturalism, interculturalism, inter-ethnic relations, identity, transnationalism, community media, participatory communication, participatory media, citizen media, migrant media, minority media, third sector media, community radio, social capital, agency, moral panic.
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

On an airplane en route to Scandinavia, an American-Swede set the tone for what I would hear in many conversations while in Malmö. I commented on how diverse, how multicultural Malmö has become. “Integration is a failure in Sweden,” he said. “They have no gratitude. They have no respect.”

On the flight, and then in informal conversations in the streets and shops and restaurants of Malmö, I began to get an outsider’s initial impression of how locals—including immigrants—viewed the concept of integration.

Britta Strom of the City of Malmö Department of Integration and Employment said that in Swedish social policy up to the 1970s, the expectation of new Swedes—though the term was avoided—was “assimilation.” In the 1970s, the thinking changed and the expectation was no longer that immigrants ought to largely relinquish their cultural identities and merge into homogenized Swedes (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009). And yet…in the media, and in the casual conversations that I witnessed in Malmö, Sweden-born Swedes suggested that integration has failed because *they* need to change.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this paper are:

- to gain an understanding of integration challenges and the local context in Malmö (via field research) from the perspectives of immigrants and the municipality;
- to learn what evidence exists globally that communication initiatives can be effective both in increasing agency among immigrants and improving social cohesion.


1.3 Statement

There is a need for greater voice, agency, and genuinely participatory civic communication for newcomers in the city. There is global evidence to support an argument that communication initiatives—such as migrant-owned and produced media—can improve integration and social cohesion (Lewis, 2008a, p. 32). These are worth exploring further with immigrants to determine whether communication initiatives ignite interest, and if so, what media structures and what kinds of content would migrant communities—and it must be from them—wish to create to increase their access to voice.

Why is this issue important enough to explore? Integration is not currently successful in Malmö, segregation is increasing (Andersson, 2007, p.83); employment integration of immigrants is decreasing (Bevelander, 2010, p.297); school marks in immigrant communities are decreasing (Erikson & Rudolphi, 2010, p. 300); crime in rural Sweden is increasing (Ceccato & Dolmen, 2010, p.1); and when media portrayals of immigrants or foreign-born citizens are in the media, it is usually in a negative light (Support for Cities, 2007, p. 21). With integration, Sweden has good policies (labour market, education, living conditions, social welfare) but poor outcomes (such as employment level and school results) (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009). Swedish citizens believe that integration has been a failure (Hellström & Nilsson, 2010, p. 63).

1.4 Context of the Study

In the spring of 2009, I was among four Communication for Development graduate students who received funding from the municipality of the City of Malmö to cover flight and living expenses tied to a research project. The municipality was specifically interested in funding people who would bring perspectives from outside of Scandinavia. Initially, the funding was for an initiative called Malmö 2015. In March 2009, city council shelved the Malmö 2015 project, but the four funded projects continued on. All four in some way looked at immigration and integration in the City of Malmö. Each of us was provided with one contact who was an employee of the City of Malmö. Each of us met with our contacts at least once, who had varying levels of availability and interest in the projects. My contact was Britta Strom, a key figure with the Department of
Integration and Employment who has worked there for many years (and very recently retired). Though she had very limited availability she had enthusiasm for the project, and she cared deeply about integration issues.

1.4.1 Immigration and integration . . . in Europe

Europe's Muslim population has more than doubled in the past 30 years and will have doubled again by 2015 (Michaels, 2009). With over 15 million Muslims in Western Europe today, at least four percent of the total population, (Savage, 2004, as cited in Modood, 2007, p. 4), the number of Muslims is larger than the combined populations of Finland, Denmark and Ireland.

![Estimated Proportion of Muslims in European Countries, c. 2000, 2007 and 2008](image)

(Marechal, 2002; Westoff and Frejka, 2007; IISA/Pew, 2009 (ongoing project);, as cited in Kaufmann, 2009, p. 1)

1.4.2 . . . In Sweden

Sweden's population is over nine million—9,345,135 as of January 2010. (U.S. Department of State, section 1). In 2007, close to 100,000 people immigrated to Sweden—the largest number of immigrants in one year since the measurements started in
Throughout the war in Iraq, Sweden accepted a large number of Iraqi refugees—over one hundred thousand. (Christodoulou, 2009). In 2008, the largest group of asylum seekers to Sweden were Iraqis, and Sweden has in recent years taken in more Iraqis than any other Western country (Christodoulou, 2009, p. 1).

1.4.3 . . . In Malmö

Malmö is the third-largest city in Sweden, with a population of over 280,000, of which 80,000 were born abroad. Citizens represent 174 nationalities and speak 147 different languages, not including the Nordic languages (Persson, verbal presentation, March 2009). Malmö has the highest proportion of immigrants of all of Sweden’s major cities (City of Malmö, 2007b, brochure).

Since 1990, the proportion of the population of Malmö born outside Sweden has increased from 16% to 30% (City of Malmö, 2007b, brochure)—whereas the percentage of people born abroad in the whole country was 13.8% in 2009 (U.S. Department of State, section 2). Out of Malmö’s quarter-of-a-million-plus population, at least 20% is said to be Muslim (Michaels, 2009). In all of Sweden, just 5% are Muslim (U.S. Department of State, section 2). One wonders whether this shift over such a short period of time has contributed to the perceptions of failed integration—more so than is the case in countries where immigration has shifted the demographic over a longer time.

An article in the Christian Science Monitor stated that Malmö now has the highest percentage of Muslims of any Western European city (Brandon, 2005, page 2). This is a dramatic identity change for a city that identifies itself as Swedish, and it leads to an identity crisis among those who were born in Sweden, as they must reconsider what constitutes a Swedish city and what it means to be Swedish.
1.4.4 In Rosengård

According to a 2004 international headline: “The suburb of Rosengård in the southern port city of Malmö has come to symbolize Sweden’s problems” (Richburg, 2004, p. A1). Rosengård is a city district in Malmö with a population of about 22,000. It is largely made up of children and young adults and almost entirely immigrant communities—60% are first-generation immigrants, and 26% are second-generation immigrants (City of Malmö, January 2010a, brochure).

1.4.5 Employment

While the whole country’s unemployment rate, as of February 2010, is 9.3% (U.S. Department of State, section 2) Malmö’s is higher because it has a much higher unemployment rate among the significant immigrant population. In Rosengård, of those aged 20 to 64, the employment level is only 38% (City of Malmö, January 2010a, brochure). Within Rosengård, in a small neighbourhood called Herrgården, only 15 to 20% of the population has jobs. (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009). The people of Iraqi origin have the lowest employment rate—only 21.5% for men and 10.8 percent for women (Broomé, Dahlstedt & Schölin, 2007, p. 19).

1.5 Selection of the Case Study

As with products, each nation seems for better or worse to have a “brand” association—a few words or a distinction most commonly thought of by those not very familiar with the country. In North America, seems often to be referred to with awe. In a conversation about human rights, or environmental policies, for example, Sweden is what we aspire to be. Looking at Sweden from afar has often meant looking upward.

So for those who hold this “brand impression” of Sweden it may be surprising, as it was to me, to learn (read, see and hear in media and public discourse) about an increased resistance in Sweden against immigration (Pollard & Shanley, 2010; Lannin, 2010), to witness the frequency of media reports on immigrant-attributed violent incidents in Malmö, and to see or read interviews or specific stories to do with crime in the city.
district of Rosengård that seem quite shocking in that they do not fit the identity commonly attributed to Sweden – for example a police officer in an on-camera interview commenting that firefighters will not work in the neighbourhood without police escort (*Fox News Muslimer In Malmo*, 2007).

I had been to Malmö twice previously, but for field research I was based in Malmö for four weeks, exploring migrant experiences in the city with particular focus on the Iraqi population because those from Iraq account for the largest number of Malmö immigrants (City of Malmö, January 2010b, brochure). Secondarily, integration, particularly with Middle Eastern Muslim populations, has become a controversial, headline-making issue, not only in Malmö but also in many European, post-7/7, post-9/11 cities.

2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Review of Literature

2.1.1 Area A – Sweden Integration Challenges

2.1.1.1 Integration Identified

The European Commission suggests that integration “should be understood as a two-way process based on mutual rights and corresponding obligations of legally resident third country nationals and the host society which provides for full participation of the immigrant” (European Commission, as cited in Baldwin-Edwards, 2005, p. 4).

The Economic and Social Committee (ESC) of the European Union refers to civic integration as “based on bringing immigrants’ rights and duties, as well as access to goods, services and means of civic participation progressively into line with those of the rest of the population, under conditions of equal opportunities and treatment” (as cited in Baldwin-Edwards, 2005, p. 4).
Tariq Modood (2007) points out, however, that there are quite different understandings of the terms “integration” and “assimilation.” He argues that the use of the word “assimilation” in American sociology is similar to what is meant by “integration” in Britain. He cites Jews in America as an example of “a successfully assimilated group but the use of this term includes awareness that they have also changed the American society and culture they have become part of” (pp. 47-48).

Another definition is that integration is the “process by which immigrants become accepted into society, both as individuals and as groups” (Penninx, as cited in Baldwin-Edwards, 2005, p. 4). But Baldwin-Edwards argues that this definition seems too close to assimilation: “According to this analysis, the unequal distribution of power between the host society and the immigrants means that it is the host society which has the greater say in the determination of outcomes” (p. 4).

Malmö is struggling to adjust to its relatively new identity as a city made up of diverse cultures, ethnicities and religions. Though “ethnic” or “native” Swedes may support the idea of an intercultural environment, many who were born in the country associate immigrants with crime, reliance on social welfare, poor school results, and segregation (Bideke & Bideke, 2008, p. 76). There is a divide that includes “... the high unemployment rate amongst those with foreign background, differences in educational achievement, as well as financial vulnerability and child poverty among children with parents born abroad” (Bideke & Bideke, p. 76).

2.1.1.2 Integration & Identity Theory

Sander argues that one challenge is that Sweden “has been an unusually ethnically, culturally, religiously and socially homogeneous society” (as cited in Carlbom, 2003, p. 68). The idea of “unusually homogenous” will be worth coming back to while considering the volatility around cultural issues in Malmö. For example, there is much debate and a reluctance to produce or permit publications in languages other than Swedish, because the national and municipal stance is that they want to do more, rather
than less, to increase the Swedish-fluency rate among new immigrants (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009).

This debate, from a wide-angle lens, involves wrestling with identities. In my view, there is more discomfort in Sweden than, for example, in (English) Canada about the continued existence of this zone Bhaba calls “third space,” which is when “…the diasporic site becomes the cultural border between the country of origin and the country of residence” (Bhabha, 1994, as cited in Karim, 2003, p. 5).

Research conducted in Canada provides evidence that with “old country” vs. “new country” loyalties, “third space” can be a place where both exist at the same time:

Some contend that strong attachments to multiculturalism on the part of new Canadians may weaken attachment to the country. The March Focus Environics [Research/Focus Canada] survey provides no evidence for this and on the contrary implies that new Canadians possess higher attachments to such symbols of Canadian identity as the flag and the national anthem than do others. (Jedwab, 2003, p. 1)

Carlbom (2003) might not agree with this. He further distinguishes “pluralists” from “multiculturalists,” saying that, though both value cultural differences, multiculturalists are “…in favour of ethnic/religious institutions—and thereby a separation of Muslims from other Swedes”—while pluralists believe that “…it is the established public institutions which should be characterized by cultural diversity” (p. 26).

The term “multiculturalism” is rarely seen in government-produced Sweden/Malmö documents. Yet Hall’s (2000) definition of liberal multiculturalism is perhaps very fitting for Sweden: “…liberal multiculturalism seeks to integrate the different cultural groups as fast as possible into the ‘mainstream’ provided by a universal individual citizenship, tolerating only in private certain particularistic cultural practices” (p. 210).

2.1.1.3 Media, Moral Panic & Social Capital

“Immigrants = danger” seemed to be the message in media most days during my field research in Sweden. This isn’t unique to the country: a European Union review found
that news about ethnic, cultural, religious minorities and migrants was focused on negativity, problems, crime and conflict (ERCOMER, 2002, as cited in DeSouza & Williamson, 2006, p. 21).

One interesting area where research exists on integration successes is the topic of social capital. Snoxell, Harpham, Grant and Rodriguez (2006) stated that crime, social tensions and conflict are the most visible signs of integration challenges, and they resolved that “…social capital is a key factor in the development of conflict-resilient cities” (p. 77).

Field research and findings demonstrate that social tensions, crime and conflict are a challenge in Malmö. They also reveal, however, a puzzling disconnect between fears and reality in the district of Rosengård, one that is perhaps explained by research on moral panic where “. . . the official reaction to a person, group of persons or series of events is out of all proportion to the actual threat offered. . . .” (Hall et al., 1978, as cited in Garland, 2008, p. 10).

Snoxell et al. (2006) argue that there are three kinds of social capital, and that all three need to be built simultaneously (p. 77). This will be explored in more depth in a later chapter, when discussing the evidence regarding community media and social cohesion.

### 2.1.2 Area B – Development Communication

#### 2.1.2.1 Participatory Communication

This paper draws on several theoretical concepts at different stages of the discussion, but the grounding theoretical work is participatory methodology from development communication, and the concepts of Freire (1970). Freire challenged top-down communication, encouraging free dialogue and defining active grassroots participation as a central principle:

> [Freire’s] approach has been called “dialogical pedagogy” which defined equity in distribution and active grassroots participation as central principles. Communication should provide a sense of ownership
to participants through sharing and reconstructing experiences. 
(Waisbord, 2005, p.19)

Dagron (2001) went further, arguing that “the main elements that characterize participatory communication are related to its capacity to involve the human subjects of social change in the process of communicating” (p. 34).

I explore in what ways bottom-up civic communication currently does and does not exist for immigrants in Malmö.

The key for successful integration, for active citizenship of immigrant communities, is what has been learned in development communication about participatory communication: that strategies and values must be organized “from the perspective of the communities that are the end beneficiaries” (Dagron, 2001, p. 34). I argue that the City of Malmö is not yet mainstreaming true participatory communication. There is reference to participatory opportunities and processes, and also examples where the planning at some stage involves immigrants, but their perspectives are not included as a beginning point.

I argue that there is a need for migrants in Malmö, and in Rosengård in particular, to have control of communication tools and all of their content. This is among the key issues distinguishing participatory communication from other communication for development strategies aiming for social change: “…people as dynamic actors, actively participating in the process of social change and in control of the communication tools and contents” (Dagron, 2001, p. 26).

From observations, media coverage and field interviews, I give evidence for how immigrant communities in Malmö—particularly Muslim and Iraqi communities, and in relation to both communication process and media—apply:

Especially in communities that have been marginalized, repressed or simply neglected…participatory communication contributes to instilling cultural pride and self-esteem. It reinforces the social tissue through the strengthening of local and indigenous forms of organisation. It protects
tradition and cultural values, while facilitating the integration of new elements. (Dagron, 2001, p. 25)

Participatory ethnic media, in particular community media, should do just this: embrace cultural tradition, discuss the culture, politics, events and realities of the land where they now live, and envision a country that new and established citizens create together.

Further relevant literature and theories on identity, integration in Sweden, development communication, and community media will be woven throughout the discussion in this paper, as they add insights when related to specific findings and analysis.

2.2 Conceptual Framework or Approach

The conceptual framework or approach is as follows:

• Learn how the City of Malmö looks at the issue of integration.
• Identify ways, if any, that the city utilizes participatory communication.
• Listen to what Malmö Iraqi immigrants think about Malmö’s approach to integration and how they feel about the extent to which the government initiatives are participatory.
• Ask how these populations feel about media coverage of their communities.
• Consider how integration efforts are helped or hindered by Malmö media coverage of Swedish Iraqis, and of Rosengård.
• Explore how immigrants feel about their access to media, and their “access to a voice.”
• Research what innovative and/or effective communication initiatives have been tried in Malmö or elsewhere to improve social cohesion.
• Unearth what evidence exists that foreign language (i.e., not Swedish language) community media (e.g., radio) does not, as sometimes feared, have a negative effect on social cohesion—and, in fact, has proved to have a positive effect.
3 METHODOLOGY

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Research Objectives</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Source(s) of Data</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situation report on current context in Malmö regarding: immigrant integration through development communication lens, and a scan of communication initiatives elsewhere (for migrants and policy-makers to consider and brainstorm together).</td>
<td>Obj. 1. Through triangulation, get a picture of current challenges and needs regarding integration in Malmö, and assess perceptions of communication needs.</td>
<td>Question 1. What is the current context regarding immigration in Sweden and integration in Malmö, from the perspectives of migrants, social service deliverers and policy creators? Question 2. What is the public and media discourse regarding the high-immigrant population community of Rosengård, and how does it agree or contrast with residents’ views? Question 3. What has the City of Malmö done in the way of participatory communication with newcomers, and to what extent do newcomers experience it as participatory?</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Obj. 2. Give an overview of the benefits of and the options for evidence-based communication initiatives for integration.</td>
<td>Question 1. What range of communication initiatives have been experimented with elsewhere, and with what results? Question 2. What proof is there that communication initiatives are causal to improved integration?</td>
<td>Text analysis</td>
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3.1 Methodology Context

This chapter is a general outline of the methodological aspects of the thesis.

The research design was premised on a constructivist approach that privileges the voices of the diasporic culture and its sub-cultures (women as well as men, Middle Eastern Christians as well as secular Iraqis as well as Muslims).
The research methods utilized include:

- Purposive sampling (snowball)
- Triangulation
- Semi-structured in-depth interviews
- Observation
- Literature search (desktop study)

An advantage of being based in Malmö versus, for example, conducting all interviews by Skype or email, was the additional information that could be absorbed by being within a community. Carlbom (2003) also used observation in his research, and he argued that observing social situations has a long tradition within anthropology and has been theoretically developed by scholars in the so-called Manchester school (p. 36).

In addition to observations I made while based in Malmö and while visiting communities like Rosengård, this thesis is based on both informal (everyday conversations) and formal discussions and interaction with various types of residents, including: native Swedes who run a library anti-discrimination program based in Malmö, the Muslim firefighter-in-training who works at the café, Rosengård citizens whom I asked for help when I was lost, Muslims—from an Imam to practicing to secularized Muslims, Christians from the Middle East, and Swedish civic workers at both the neighbourhood and City level.

Qualitative interviews were conducted as part of field research, to get as accurate a picture as possible of the conflicts and challenges of integration in Malmö.

For an issue as complex, and sometimes as heated, as immigrant integration, it was important to get various perspectives on the issues. This was accomplished by way of triangulation: at its simplest, triangulation means mixing approaches to get two or three viewpoints of the things being studied (Olsen, 2004, p. 4), rather like getting three compass bearings to determine where exactly you are. For this project, interviews included municipal staff—both at a citizen’s office and in City Hall, immigrants who were unhappy in (and with) Sweden, immigrants who felt at home in Malmö, and an Imam who worked in a school to which Sweden-born students no longer go.
To identify the best interviewees, those who would be information-rich, I utilized snowball purposive sampling, as defined by Patton (1990):

_Purposive sampling_ is a popular methodology in qualitative interviewing, where interview subjects are selected because of some characteristic. (p. 230)

_Snowball_ is a method of purposive sampling in which a researcher identifies cases of interest from people who know people who know people who know what cases are information-rich, that is, good examples for study, good interview subjects. (p. 243)

I conducted interviews with migrants, particularly members of, and those who work with, the Iraqi community. These were in-depth interviews, as defined by scholars at Queensland University in Australia:

In-depth interviews are, in the Ethnographic Action Research context, semi-structured interviews in which the EAR researchers are encouraged to view them as detailed conversations. They are conducted with a range of people, guided by an interview schedule and a list of a few major topics to be covered in each interview, while leaving lots of room to respond to what is interesting in the conversation. (Taachi, Foth & Hearn, 2009, p. 98)

### 3.2 Methodology: Lenses and Limitations

#### 3.2.1 Liberal Interviewee Bias

The interviewees who had immigrated from the Middle East were referrals. In all cases, I was put in touch with them by local contacts. So that they were open to discussing with me their experiences of integration, media coverage and media access, I spoke to those who had some openness to the concepts—so I was not hearing the views of Islamic fundamentalists. In fact, the women I interviewed on my second visit to the Rosengård Citizen’s Office were Muslim women opposed to the hijab. One other woman I interviewed elsewhere did wear the hijab, although she had lived in Sweden for almost 15 years and only began wearing the hijab after 9/11. Although the two women—as with other interviewees—may not be reflective of the spectrum of Arabic and/or Muslim
communities in Malmö, they live in Rosengård and/or run women’s associations, and so are familiar with the range of views in Malmö.

Sofielund is the location of most of Malmö’s Iraqi churches, and the individuals that I interviewed in Sofielund were Iraq-born Christians, often Baptists.

3.2.2 Language Barriers

Two language-related issues to some extent compromised the information I gathered. I lacked funding for interpreters, and as such, those interviewed in most cases had at least a moderate level of English. Immigrants who still rely on their birth language for much of their communication in Sweden would likely have contributed quite different experiences of integration.

Another significant limitation was that many of the publications and print materials in the Office of Integration were, of course, available only in Swedish. For example, Britta Strom of the Integration and Employment Department at the City referred to several reports that she considered very good on topics related to Malmö or Rosengård and integration. I tried to find them online, and if I was successful, I put the text into Google Translate and thereby obtained some information, but because of the quality of the translation, this was of limited benefit compared to what would have been possible if I had been able to understand the text. Similarly, because of language limitations, I’m not certain that the publications I have used and cited are the most up-to-date.

Getting specific information—particularly during my desk work conducted from Canada—was challenging in spite of Google Translate, particularly the quests for the most current Swedish statistics, and for information about Arabic-language or immigrant-owned and operated community radio stations within Rosengård.

Language was also an obstacle in my early research. Attempts to connect with initial contacts (provided or found) were usually not successful as there were no responses to
emails. This may have been because those contacted were not comfortable enough with their written English to respond or that they lacked the additional time necessary to communicate in a language in which they were less than fluent. I speculate that this also explains the difficulty getting responses to my emails seeking information about community radio stations in Malmö and Rosengård.

My challenges with language are also why some of the statistics about Sweden are from sources such as the U.S. Department of State.

3.2.3 Voice Recording & Audio Records

I had hoped to obtain audio clips, both for use in presentations, and also as I thought that academic validity might require that accurate transcriptions and raw data be available. However the majority of interviewees were not willing to have the discussions recorded, and as such there are no transcripts. There was a range of reasons for this reluctance, but usually their concerns related to safety and were definitely legitimate. (Just one example: for some of the jobs that they held prior to immigrating, they were viewed as traitors. Though promised immediate protection by and asylum in different countries, in reality the delays and inaction could be terrifyingly long, and it wasn’t uncommon that some would be killed during these waits.) Any public profile (even years later, continents away, masked, or seemingly too indirect to be identifiable) was just too risky.

Some asked not to be identified. Some asked for assurance that their comments would not be linked to or identified with any organization or association, or assurances that organizations would not be named. For these reasons, pseudonyms or first names only are used for some of the interviewees in this paper (with the exception of public figures and municipal employees), and some organizations are not identified.

Though proof of data via audio records (and the resulting capability to later listen to, analyze, and transcribe them) was my preference, I weighed this against ethical challenges, wondering to what extent interviewees ought to be pressured past any fears or
discomforts about voice recording—and curious if and how often that line gets pushed in academia by scholars concerned about the validity of their data potentially being dismissed by peers.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Immigrant experiences

4.1.1 Agency

In interviews conducted for this project, it seems that immigrants—particularly men in the Iraqi community—feel disempowered. The feeling seems to be that the odds are stacked against them and are almost (or entirely) insurmountable. An Imam in Malmö suggested that for men immigrating from the Middle East, encountering the realities of gender equity in Sweden often means loss of identity and loss of agency: “The pyramid is upside down. Men are not at the top any more. Now women and kids are at the top, and men have nothing to do.” (A. Ibrahim, personal communication, March 2009).

For the men I interviewed at one of the local Middle Eastern associations, their pre-immigration perceptions of what life would be like in Sweden were very different from the reality. One man who spoke many languages, including reasonable English and Swedish, had managed two dozen people in his job in Iraq and yet still could not find work after three years in Sweden. He spoke with resignation: “I thought something else when I came here” (anonymous, personal communication (March 2009). The female Iraqi immigrants interviewed were of the opinion that there was a definite sense of labour discrimination in Sweden – by gender, race, and religion.

The male perspective was not all negative – they respected the values of their new country: “They are treating me like a human being; people have respect. I dream to come here” (anonymous, personal communication (March 2009).
Sometimes this admiration was mixed with yearning for the birth country: “Peaceful, clean, calm, but I am missing . . . in my country the markets open from early in the morning until 1 a.m., and families are walking around all this time, and . . . I can’t bear it” (anonymous, personal communication (March 2009).

For all the men interviewed, the negatives trace back to the spiral of unemployment, and they have lost faith in being able to grasp the agency to affect their own change. “The helping money is not enough, and especially at my age,” said one Iraqi in his early 60s, formerly a scientist. “So many of my friends now, they are suffering” (anonymous, personal communication (March 2009).

One multi-skilled, multilingual man in his early 30s said that his wish (though impossible for safety reasons) would be to go back to Iraq and be a politician: “I could see taking rules from here and transferring them back to my country. But I spent 15,000 to come here – everything I had. I have no money to go home” (anonymous, personal communication (March 2009).

He said that, at his organization, this was common among the men—though they might want to repatriate back to Iraq, it wasn’t a financial possibility. Now they question the decisions that they had made to migrate. “They wish they had not come. They would prefer to return home” (anonymous, personal communication (March 2009). He no longer believed that his situation in Sweden would improve: “I am not glad I came. I am . . . hopeless” (anonymous, personal communication (March 2009).

This takes me to one instructive, though non-academic, perspective which enlightens the concept of agency—a line from T.S. Eliot’s (1950) play, The Cocktail Party, where you find that there is one more step than you expected there to be, and suddenly, at the bottom of the staircase, you turn from an active agent… who is in control of his destiny, into what Eliot calls ‘an object [a]t the mercy of a malevolent staircase’. (as cited in Brittle & Cosgrove, 2006, p. 13)
Asylum refugees expect dramatic change in a new country. They wrestle with the bewildering unexpectedness of discovering that they are not active agents for their own lives, and instead must respond to migration officials, municipal bureaucracy, unfamiliar customs, a foreign language, inability to get work, and sometimes a feeling of not being welcome. The necessary learning and adaptation may seem insurmountable. They no longer belong in their countries of birth, yet they find that they cannot reach a state of belonging in their new country either. They remain on “the malevolent staircase.”

Waisbord (2005, p. 2) had a useful perspective on participatory communication that is instructive here. Perhaps Malmö’s strategies have followed participation more as an end, rather than the messier and more complicated process involved in participation as a means.

Development communication, according to Waisbord (2005, p. 2) aims to “…remove constraints for a more equal and participatory society.” Qualitative interviews for this project have, as a result of the intensity of their content, guided the research toward somewhat of a needs assessment. Removing “…constraints for a more equal and participatory society” does seem to be what immigrants are saying is needed here (as is likely the case in other cities with many immigrants). So it is worth exploring what development communication might offer in the way of potential solutions. The Rockefeller Foundation refers to “communication for social change” rather than development communication, emphasizing dialogue as central to development, and seeing development as working to “…improve the lives of the politically and economically marginalized” (as cited in Walsbord, 2005, p. 35). If the immigrants’ employment statistics and resulting living status portray them as economically marginalized (as I believe they do), and if the percentage of immigrants holding civic decision-maker positions is low (which it is), and if immigrants don’t participate in public forums because they don’t feel heard (which seems to be the case), then immigrants are indeed politically marginalized. And this points to the fact that “communication for social change” strategies are worth exploring. In another view, development communication means “…to raise the quality of life of populations, including to increase income and well-being, eradicate social injustice, promote . . . freedom of
speech, and establish community centers for leisure and entertainment” (Melkote & Steeves, 2001, p. 229).

I note “freedom of speech” with interest, because further information in this paper reveals that, although legally nothing in Sweden or Malmö prevents immigrants from speaking their minds, they lack forums where they feel that they can be genuinely heard.

Carlbom (2003) states that Islam is the largest faith among residents of Rosengård, and that the neighborhood has gone through a process of Islamization:

[I]t is noticeable in everyday life in various ways. Nowhere else in Malmö is it possible to observe such a great concentration of women dressed in hijabs as in Rosengård. One of our informants, a man from Iraq, said that he had never in his life seen so many traditionally-dressed women in one and the same place. During recent decades, there has also been a growth in the number of Islamic associations in the neighborhood. (p. 31)

Imam Ibrahim stated that there are many who spend much of their days watching news and programming, in Arabic, from and about their own countries. Satellite TV dishes are particularly visible in Rosengård. Watching so much about war and crisis, he said, can make it difficult to move on (A. Ibrahim, personal statement, March 2009).

He also noted that the development of the supermarket in Rosengård Centrum was an attempt at integration by design on the part of the City’s social planners. The idea was that a supermarket with very low prices would draw citizens from all cultures, and that they would meet and speak across the aisles and increase the degree of comfort with one another. He tells this story wryly: “It did not work” (A. Ibrahim, personal statement, March 2009).

Ibrahim says that the families in the neighbourhood around the school are 95% Muslim, but often that this is more tradition than religion. On one or two streets in Rosengård, the residents are mostly Iraqi, but Rosengård is hardly unicultural—people from 43 nationalities live in Rosengård. But the “white flight” that he has seen in the time he has worked in the neighbourhood does not help with social cohesion (A. Ibrahim, personal statement, March 2009).
Employment challenges lead eventually to a learned helplessness that becomes difficult to escape from. “Many spend their leisure time, even 24/7, watching satellite TV from their home countries, following the war, the bombing,” says Ibrahim. “Many who have been in the community for more than 20 years have never worked.”

For some there is also a difficult change in power between generations. Referring to the students in his school, Ibrahim says, “Youth have felt diverged from their parents’ lives. The families are divided . . . their home country and the TV programs that connect them back there, and this school and society” (A. Ibrahim, personal statement, March 2009).

Each Saturday, Imam Ibrahim meets at the school with mothers and teen girls who are struggling with conflict between first and second-generation values related to their cultures. He tries to help them find ways to reconcile their faith and traditions with the laws of their new country. In their home cultures, “most follow their parents until they are 24, 25, 26, even 30 . . . here, 14-year-olds are getting independence.” And the methods to enforce discipline are so different culturally. Parents say to him, “No beat, no punish—what we can do?” So he holds sessions with 12 or 13 sets of parents, discussing with them “how they can change their attitudes toward their children.” “I tell them, there are ways, effective ways, to gain respect and discipline of kids with no physical punishment,” says Ibrahim. He also talks with them about attitudes toward paying taxes: “If you are cheating on your taxes, you are cheating on Allah, cheating God,” he tells them (A. Ibrahim, personal statement, March 2009).

### 4.1.2 Ghetto? Enclave? Segregation in Malmö

Malmö has been called “one of the most segregated cities in Europe, with most migrants in the suburb of Rosengård, where satellite dishes bring TV programs from Turkey, the Balkans and Iraq. A quarter of Rosengård residents are Muslim, and there are fears that they could become an ethnic underclass” (Migration News, April, 2008).
The city knows it has a segregation problem: “The lack of ethnic and cultural diversity is present in most sectors in our society—in everyday life, in the labour market, in political life, in the life of associations, and in cultural life” (former Minister of Integration, Ulrica Messing, cited in Carlbom, p. 44).

URBACT is a European Union exchange and learning program of 255 cities and 29 countries exploring solutions to major urban challenges (European Union, (n.d.), p. 1). In URBACT’s 2007 report on support for European cities, it was noted that in Sweden many of the residents have a foreign background “... and the cities have problems with tackling the social and economic problems caused by lack of integration and the separation between indigenous and migrant populations...” (Support for Cities, 2007, p. 32).

Ibrahim says that the segregation originated in the 1960s and 70s with the Million Program - a plan to build a million new residences in Sweden between 1965 and 1975. Ibrahim, as well as being the local Imam, is the liaison between the school and parents at the school in Rosengård. He has been in Rosengard for 20 years, so has a unique perspective from within the community (A. Ibrahim, personal statement, March 2009). Ibrahim (2009) notes that the Rosengård housing buildings were built in the 60s, but then were left empty for a very long time. When they were finally occupied, they were very overcrowded, often with five to eleven in a family, as compared to Swedes who usually have three to four. With so many people in one household, the inhabitants were often outside and the Swedes found it noisy. Also, the immigrants were largely unemployed and tended to keep later hours than the working Swedes. Gradually, the native Swedes left the area. As those with Swedish ancestry have moved out of the Rosengård area, the school too has seen dramatic changes. When the Rosengård school began, there were 600 pupils, 157 of them Swedes. Now there are 740 pupils, and no native Swedes (A. Ibrahim, personal communication, March 2009).

There is much concern among indigenous Swedes about segregation, and immigrants are often pointed to as the cause of the problem – segregation as their choice (Persson, verbal presentation, March 2009). Though “they want to live only among themselves” may be a
common opinion, the causes of segregation in Malmö are more complex. Much of the housing for refugees in Malmö was provided here in this segregated area. It seems unfair to house refugees in a segregated area and then criticize them for choosing segregation. The City became aware of the need to house newcomers in mixed neighbourhoods, and has since spread new housing through the city.

Housing segregation is also affected by the black market housing situation. In Malmö, apartment rental ads are commonly not placed by landlords, but by current tenants looking to rent out with second or third contracts, and they are only willing to consider renting their apartments if the type of housing they want to move to is provided in exchange. City residents aren't keen on living in Rosengård. As one expat Canadian Swede remarked, “. . . it seems that Malmö's housing policies—the black market and the nepotism—are contributing to pinning immigrants into a segregated area” (anonymous, personal communication, 2009).

Other factors include discrimination. One study had investigators respond to a large number of housing ads, sending emails with their names in Swedish and other emails with their names in Arabic. There was a dramatic difference in the responses received by the latter (Ahmed & Hammarstedt, 2008, p. 362).

Not all residents in Rosengård want to stay there…but the stigma around all the connotations of “Rosengård” makes it challenging if they do want to find housing elsewhere. Sometimes they seek Ibrahim’s assistance in responding to rental ads for flats. He phones the Swedish landlords, but they become reluctant - concerned about noise level or crime potential based on where the immigrants have lived. At one point or another, the conversation changes:

When I tell them my name . . . or when they ask, “Do they work?” or “Where are they from?” “Rosengård.” “How many children?”

When they come to Rosengård, they stamp it—and they cannot move. Immigrants from Bosnia or Yugoslavia, they move away, but those who are Arabic, they stay. (A. Ibrahim, personal communication, March 2009)
Stigendal noted that Malmö is “clearly a segregated city”, and it could still be said about Malmö today: “...what’s disputable in Malmö is not whether or not the city is segregated, it is, not only in terms of housing but also in terms of the labour market; of having or not having a job” (1999, as cited in Broome, 2007, p. 19).

The community of Rosengård is not the only part of Malmö with problematic segregation. For example, Rose-Marie Mazzoni of the City of Malmö said that the Sofielund area “is becoming a mini-Rosengård in terms of segregation” (R. Mazzoni, personal communication, March 2009). But the focus of segregation concerns, in media and public and academic discourse, seems to be Rosengård. In this discourse, the association is that segregation is bad, that it is an alarm bell, a precursor to urban problems.

Some academics have argued that the likelihood of living next door to someone who is an ethnic minority may be one important contributor to the extent that the minority is in harmony or disharmony with the majority population (Wood & Landry, 2008, p. 258). Hewstone and Schmid agree that lack of any social contact does matter. Their study in Northern Ireland found that meaningful contact between Catholics and Protestants reduced distrust and increased empathy. However, in their view, merely living in a mixed neighbourhood did not create that meaningful contact. This is interesting given Putnam’s recent conclusion (2007, as cited in Spender, 2007, p. 4) that in ethnically diverse areas in the United States, there is less trust and civic engagement, leading him to advocate for “more opportunities for meaningful interaction across ethnic lines.”

Not everyone agrees that ethnically segregated neighbourhoods are a bad thing. As Canadian multiculturalism scholar Hiebert (June 2009, slide 8) has said, general enclaves are interpreted in polarized terms: as revealing economic marginalization and a lack of assimilation or integration, or as helpful social environments essential to the well-being of newcomers and members of minority groups. Some see enclaves, some see ghettos. Ludi Simpson of the University of Manchester is in favour of ethnic neighbourhoods and has become their most outspoken advocate. She states:
A number of scholars have come to realize that uni-ethnic neighbourhoods are actually the quickest and most likely to integrate, both culturally and economically. Ethnic clustering, in this analysis, is simply a vital first step toward becoming full members of mainstream society, something that can take more than a generation. (as cited in Saunders, 2009)

A recent European survey showed that Muslims do not want to live only among themselves; in fact, they want the opposite (Broomby, 2009).

This is corroborated by Ibrahim: “You must have work and have neighbours who help you come to understand more about the society you are dealing with. To integrate yourself, you must have people to integrate yourself to” (A. Ibrahim, personal communication, March 2009).

For some, the term “integration” may sound uncomfortably similar to “assimilation.” Though on paper Malmö stresses the different definition, City publications, the media, and conversations with the general public suggest that while “integration” may be a more comfortable word, the expectations are still actually much like “assimilation.”

For newcomers, it can often be frustrating if they identify as Swedes and yet are not accepted as Swedes:

We are all Swedish. In the fifties, we were guest workers (definitely not staying), then we became foreigners (definitely from the outside), then immigrants (no matter how long we had been here), and finally new Swedes (even though we’re Swedish citizens). But we’re Swedish, and that’s that. (Gringo editor-in-chief Zanyar Adami, as quoted in Claude, 2006)

The unspoken question often seems to be: Where do your loyalties lie? To the country you came from, or are you committed to Sweden? Broomé (2000) argued that defining oneself by birth country or nationalism isn’t locked; that identity is shifting all the time. “Country of birth should not be conclusive for a person’s identity, if identity is a construction that is constructed and reconstructed during a person’s life span” (as cited in Predd, p. 15).
4.1.3 Fanning the Flames about Rosengård

To deliver news and information, media often try to use the vehicles of story and drama. In Malmö, this often places crime and immigrants—and Rosengård—on the front page. In 2004, the city’s conflicts reached the front page of the Washington Post:

Iraqi refugees—there is no country outside the Middle East that has welcomed them as Sweden has. Four years after the fall of Baghdad, more than two million Iraqis have fled their country and there is no end in sight. What may be in sight are the limits of Sweden's open asylum policy, which has previously made the country Europe's odd man out.

The suburb of Rosengård in the southern port city of Malmö has come to symbolise Sweden's problems. Here fire engines and ambulances are apparently a regular sight on the street known as Ramelsväg, where the residents are almost exclusively Iraqi refugees.

What can you expect, with sometimes as many as 12 people to an apartment? But still they keep coming, around 80,000 of them across Sweden by the last count. (de Jong, 2007b)

In addition to the public and media slant on Rosengård that seems to differ significantly from the reality, there is also hatred and hyperbole—a disturbing “moral panic”—building about Malmö, including on the Internet. It is alarming.

In a text article from the Radio Sweden website (2009b), the headline reads: More Youth Clashes with Malmö Police. Though the article does acknowledge that the violence points to the poor housing conditions, overcrowding and high unemployment in the area, it also refers to “fire-starting youngsters,” “the notorious Rosengård suburb,” “failure in integrating,” and the uncomfortable phrase, “darker-skinned newcomers.”

It might be argued that most people dismiss media reports that sensationalize, but the evidence doesn’t point that way. A Canadian study suggests that immigrant stereotyping in media has a very damaging effect: “Negative depictions of minorities teach minorities [in Canada] that they are threatening, deviant, and irrelevant to nation-building” (Mahtani, 2001, section 1).
It isn’t a far jump to hypothesize that media representation of groups as somehow “irrelevant to nation-building” might lead minorities to less civic engagement and to being less open to integrating with the majority.

In Rosengården, the fact that journalists are now strictly forbidden at the Rosengården school is a startling and powerful statement of the immigrant community’s frustration with the constant negative spin (A. Ibrahim, personal communication, March 2009).

4.1.4 Fear vs. Reality

On quick Internet searches about Malmö, as might be conducted by someone who is discovering, researching and forming an impression of the city for the first time, one of the results that quickly comes up is a You-Tube-hosted video that aired on America’s Fox News—and has been rebroadcast on Swedish TV (Fox News Muslimer In Malmo, 2007). Fox News is notoriously right-wing, and the picture this video paints of the neighbourhood is alarmist. In one clip, the TV crew is in the back seat of a police vehicle, interviewing the officer who is driving. He talks about the violence, noting that one police vehicle cannot travel into the area unless accompanied by another for protection. In another clip, the head of a school is asked how many of his students are Swedish-born. He smiles—“None.”

One international headline (on the Radio Netherlands website) proclaims that Rosengården is “the eye of the storm,” and that it “has come to symbolise Sweden's struggles” (de Jong, 2007). Carlbom (2003, p. 28) said, “Rosengården is one of the most famous urban suburbs in Sweden, and it has, through the years, become a place about which every Swede knows something.”

In public discourse as well, there is a lot of fear of the Rosengården area. And in what is perhaps a sad need for humans to feel a sense of belonging by creating an “other,” Iraqis outside of the area are afraid of Rosengården. Iraqi men I spoke to do not go to Rosengården. One expresses worry about my going again. They say they hate the violence. "It is the
people from Yemen; from Saudi Arabia," one man says (anonymous, personal communication, March 2009).

4.1.4.1 Moral Panic

I arrived for field research in Malmö after a newly-published very controversial report published by Sweden’s Academy of Defense assessed the current level of threat to Sweden by the Islamic population. The report said that there is an increase in the level of Islamic radicalization, that one to three out of 15 “garage mosques” have a violent extremist message, that 1500 Malmö residents belong to extremist groups, and that radicalization in schools is increasing. Iraqis were considered to be the fourth most “vulnerable” group, with Moroccans first (Swedish National Defense College, 2009, slide 11).

Media in Malmö mostly dismissed the report because it contained no references: “They interviewed 30 people who don’t even live in Rosengård, and there has been much criticism about who their sources are—who they say are no longer available” (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009). Others I spoke to felt that the conclusions might be right, but that the scientific validity was nil, and as a result it had been widely discredited and dismissed. Though City staff or academics may dismiss the report, it is not an isolated example of rumours about Islamic newcomers as threats.

After my arrival in Malmö, an unplanned area of research became necessary because of mixed, confusing information about the degree of ethnic violence and conflict in Rosengård. To get an accurate picture of local context and the current state of integration, I needed to investigate to what extent the fears and rumours in public discourse were grounded in reality. What I discovered was what Out of the Shadowlands, a paper on migration and citizenship, refers to as “the agenda of fear” and “the threat of them.” “They are coming and we must protect ourselves and defend our way of life” (Out of the Shadowlands, 2006, p. 28).
4.1.4.2 Reality

Carlbom (2003) noted the powerful stigma about Rosengård:

One of the most enduring myths about the neighborhood, well-described by the ethnologist Per-Markku Ristilammi (1994), is that Rosengård is a dangerous place, a place characterized by social chaos, crime, and violence. This type of knowledge did, of course, affect research at an initial stage, because this was knowledge which I, as a native Swede, had un-reflexively incorporated into my own subjective stock of knowledge. . .
It took me almost a year to get rid of these pre-determined representations about the neighborhood, and to begin to see everyday life there in a more realistic manner. (p. 35)

In Malmö, in public discourse, Swedes seem to not infrequently refer to the Rosengård area as a “ghetto” or a “slum.” In fact, a curious duality was occasionally present—in public discourse, if one person referred to the area with one of those terms, another Swede would try to retract the comment, or become visibly embarrassed and uncomfortable. “Slum” or “ghetto” did not seem applicable, based on the external views on the streets and around the buildings of Rosengård.

Carlbom (2003) wrote of his own puzzled reaction on first visiting:

As are many native Swedes who visit the neighborhood for the first time, we were initially surprised by the high degree of social order and the high material standard which met the eye. The neighborhood, sometimes described as an immigrant ghetto, showed no (or very few) similarities with, for example, American, British, or German areas of the same kind. (p. 30)

The reports of violence and stigma by the public and in the media are not altogether false.

One of the few English-language sources of news about Sweden ran a story online, excerpted below:

*Rosengård Firefighters Call it Quits*

After months of suffering through thrown rocks and threats directed at his squadron during numerous calls to the Rosengård neighbourhood in Malmö, local fire chief Henrik Persson said on Tuesday he is stepping down from his post. “I’m not getting any support from our top management. They don’t listen to our requests for a secure working environment,” Persson told the Sydsvenskan newspaper. . . . Firefighters and police officers have long been subject to thrown rocks and threats on
calls to Malmö’s Rosengård neighbourhood, with firefighters working to introduce measures to make their jobs safer. But their efforts have been for naught, according to Persson, who feels that he can no longer guarantee the safety of his colleagues. (*The Local*, April 2009).

Yet Ristilami (1996) noted what seems still to be true: “…Whether they are materialized in newspapers, research reports or oral narratives among the people of Malmö, the stories about Rosengård have become something that to a certain degree has lost contact with the reality of the area” (as cited in Predd, 2000, p. 55).

At the City of Malmö, Persson also said that citizens are feeling insecure, suggesting that they feel that violence in the city has increased. But, he says, crime statistics say the opposite (C. Persson, presentation, March 2009).

In City Hall, Britta Strom of the Integration and Employment Department is well aware of the very negative reputation of danger in Rosengård and she disagrees: “I have been there hundreds and thousands of times. It has been a rumor” (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009).

4.1.4.3 The Space between Place: Tolerance and Racism

Carlbom (2004) pointed to the social inclusiveness in Malmö as bleak but similar to that seen elsewhere on the continent. “The social situation for Muslims in Sweden shows the same characteristics as for Muslims in other parts of Europe: they suffer from unemployment, live ethnically and religiously segregated, and constitute a target for Islamophobia and discrimination” (p. 13).

One of the associations that I visited several times and sourced for interviewees over the course of the field research was one such target. This local Arabic cultural, non-political organization in Malmö has received two letters in the mail, neither of them welcoming. The second consisted of the words “Go home” and what seems to be uncomfortably close to a threat, a photograph of one of the organization’s members. The member in the photo
was participating in a peaceful protest about approval of residency (interviews conducted at local association, March 2009, identities protected).

Devoretz (2004) argued that it is the norm for indigenous citizens to feel “neutral or against further immigration,” because the economic benefits of immigration are seen only in the long term, and are “diffused over the nation state,” while “. . . cultural, educational and direct economic costs of immigration are absorbed at the neighbourhood level” (p. 2).

His theory is similar to an earlier study on racism in southern Sweden, which argued that “. . . The violence toward Swedish immigrants does not happen in a vacuum, it happens when the local population can economically rationalize their xenophobia” (Wigerfelt & Wigerfelt, 2001, as cited in Devoretz, 2004, p. 26).

There is concern in Sweden that these attitudes will get worse, and part of that concern arises from such actions as the closing down of the Swedish Integration Board and the National Institute for Working Life, the cut-off of funding to the Swedish Centre Against Racism (an anti-racist umbrella organisation for a number of Swedish NGOs), and zero 2008 financial support to the national Centre against Racism (Bideke & Bideke, 2008, p. 65), and the September 2010 election of a candidate from the “anti-immigrant” Sweden Democrat Party to Parliament (Pollard & Shanley, 2010; Lannin, 2010).

4.2 Findings on Official Responses

At the end of 1999, the City Council in Malmö adopted a plan to promote integration. In Sweden, “integration” is a common term for governments looking at immigration and interculturalism, and it means that “everyone who feels excluded shall become full participants in society” (City of Malmö, n.d., a). That’s the definition, and the City’s integration action plan focuses on “their inclusion in municipal programmes and agencies” (City of Malmö, Integration, n.d., a).
In part to help newcomers to find their way after leaving one country and arriving at
another, the Department of Integration and Employment at the City of Malmö employs
ten people that work with programs and evaluation (not counting operational staff). The
budget for integration programs is 365 million kroners a year, and there are some real
efforts toward social cohesion. There are “ambassadors” and “city landlords” in
Rosengård (who wear red); there are link workers, who work a bit like facilitators or
bridge-builders or coaches and exist in a number of areas where there is interaction with
the public; there are three extra police stations in areas with high immigrant populations
(including Rosengård); there are youth centers that help with jobs and programs for
young adults. The City publishes newcomer guidebooks for immigrants to Malmö, and is
working to improve housing conditions in parts of Rosengård. In 2008, the City started a
committee on anti-discrimination, made up of nine politicians and representatives from
eight associations, including the Arabian Women’s Association and EBEN/USCL, the
Association for the Peaceful Use of Islam (B. Strom, personal communication, March
2009).

How do outsiders view Sweden’s efforts at helping newcomers to adapt? The URBACT
program, among other functions, gets leading experts on cities to visit chosen European
cities for eight days each, in order to analyze problems and offer potential solutions. One
such city was Boras in Sweden, and the expert’s conclusions about integration in Sweden
included a striking comment: “. . . of the various conclusions presented by the expert, one
in particular emerged: integration cannot be a one-way street” (Support for Cities, 2007,
p. 33).

This view of Sweden and integration is heard more from people living in intercultural
cities and visiting Sweden than it is in Sweden itself. That difference is interesting.
Within Sweden, it seems that initiatives and programs are still focused on getting new
immigrants to change. Rarely in Sweden does one see initiatives and programs
emphasizing that, with so much of the population being non-indigenous, Swedes too must change.
One of the solutions stressed by the expert visiting Sweden was the need for “the more systemic use of citizens’ committees, which could receive Structural Fund financing” (Support for Cities, 2007, p. 33). It would be useful for the City of Malmö if further research were done on how to make a citizens’ committee truly participatory, hypothesizing that if it were, citizens would attend and engage.

Nader (1997), an anthropologist, reminds us that hegemonic ideological control is “embedded and invisible” and that “those who in fact exercise it may not understand its extent” (as cited in Support for Cities, 2007, p. 34).

Recommendations for cities in Sweden included “. . . tackling prejudices and deconstructing stereotypes, school projects on culture, ethics and religion, as well as managing the media by a promotional strategy of good news stories. . . .” (Support for Cities, 2007, p. 37. Issues relating to prejudices and managing media will be discussed in later sections of this report.

A woman who worked with immigrants in Malmö in her job with the Sweden- and EU-funded Development Partnership Program made an insightful comment which is useful in how it supports and articulates the URBACT finding. In the online EuroNews TV story (2007), she commented that Malmö is a very segregated city, adding that a lot of immigrants don’t want to integrate because they don’t feel welcome - that they don’t feel like Swedes even if they were born in Sweden and went to Swedish schools. “Both have to compromise, because it’s not a question of one group integrating into another group. The whole society has to re-integrate because there have been very many changes.” (Arjumand Carlstein as cited in EuroNews, June 16, 2007).

Wood, Landry & Bloomfield (2006) expanded on the idea that integration cannot be a one-way street: “Others have gone further to argue that the future lies not in finding better ways of integrating outsiders into, say, British society, but in fundamentally reappraising what we understand British society to be” (p. 4).
There are examples of the City of Malmö accepting this premise and working on a shift to more of a two-way street, i.e., that it is not only immigrants who need to change, but also Sweden-born Swedes. Christer Persson of the City of Malmö sometimes frames integration problems as “they” but also acknowledges the “we”:

We have not been able to integrate those who come from other countries. People are ambivalent about going back home, so they don’t get very much involved. They are depending on social allowances and often have no work—it is a challenge. Many of the young people from this second generation of immigrants have had problems at school. There is a language problem with education. They don’t get the marks they need. How do we improve the situation for them in order to get them equipped for work? Work is the main instrument for integration. With work they can be free, choose for themselves, live life in a different way than depending on social benefits. (C. Persson, verbal presentation, March 2009)

Thoria El shaikh is the Chief Information Officer for the Citizen’s Office in Rosengård. She knows there are opinions in the media and among the public, that refugees have not integrated and that while they avail themselves of their rights, they do not participate in their duties as citizens and that they find ways to undermine the system. She knows there is anger about immigrants who get fake divorces so they can get paid apartments for two ex-spouses and rent out the second one. She knows there is anger about immigrants who buy cars in Germany or Denmark and re-sell them for profit in Sweden without paying tax on the profits. The reality, she says, is that unemployment is the underlying issue behind most problems in the neighbourhood (T. El shaikh, personal communication, March 2009).

A term not as frequently heard as “integration” in Sweden, but definitely heard internationally, is “social cohesion”:

The integration of immigrants into a host society is a hotly-contested issue (Vermeulen, 2004, p. 27), yet is generally regarded by policymakers throughout the EU as a legitimate objective of public policy – often with yet another nametag, “social cohesion,” attached to it. Most recently, the term social cohesion has been used almost synonymously with integration (Entzinger, 2003, p. 6), at least in the sense that societies with high levels of social cohesion are necessarily those whose immigrant populations are well-integrated. (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005, p. 4)
Wood et al. (2006) argue against the “community cohesion” model. They see it as “harmony at all costs,” and that as being problematic, believing that “. . . disagreement and dispute, far from being avoided, [are] a vital component of a healthy and vibrant democratic community” (p. 19).

For Britta Strom of the municipality, the best work that the City has done in integration was ten to fifteen years ago when they had an innovative program to reach isolated families. They built associations, working with the mother tongues and with new employment programs. She was proudest of their work in Hyllie, a community that was largely Arabian, Albanian and Afghani. They decided to find the key people in families. . . so they identified thirty teachers, doctors and medical people within the communities, planned courses, and gave them particular attention. There was a definite rise in school results.

What was particularly successful was that they were able to get the system to use unused people. They were teaching in their own language and in Swedish. Government ministers visited, and the work was hailed as very progressive. The program got troubled kids into sports, employed link workers who served as bridges between the many departments of government, involved parents to galvanize preschool programs, and improved security and lowered crime in neighbourhoods. At the same time, they partnered with the regional newspaper, launching a newspaper insert (printed in different languages), hiring a journalist and creating a Rosengård office to focus on positive stories about the neighbourhood. But funding was stopped after five or six years, and 2006 was the last year that the program had money (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009).

In Strom’s view, there are two ways to preserve as much as possible from the city’s integration initiatives. Since 2004, there has been the “welfare for all” program, but again, says Strom, there has been no money for the program and many of their good ideas have disappeared. The integration perspective “. . . was faded out, and focus instead went to new building programs—but not in the poor areas”. The other initiative that Strom
would like to continue is the new strategy for developing public spaces in Rosengård (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009).

An important aspect in the context of Malmö as it relates to immigration is that becoming fluent in Swedish is mandatory as part of the commitment required of immigrants (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009). Language is a matter of debate in the City. Strom, the head of the Integration and Employment Department, suggested that her department would like to print more publications in other languages and have material on the website in other languages. However, that view is not consistent throughout the City. Politically there is much reluctance to allow information to be produced in languages other than Swedish; the fear is that, if Swedish is not mandatory there will be no incentive for immigrants to learn it (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009).

### 4.2.1 Participatory Communication and the City of Malmö

There are eleven citizen’s offices, in Malmö, one in each district. They help with questions about child care, schools, care for the elderly, care and help for the handicapped, help for individuals and families, after school care, interpretation, and local culture. They also help if anyone needs assistance finding an apartment. Citizens can use the computers and copy machine and read newspapers and magazines, and each office also has a newspaper with articles and information about that district.

The immigrants often use these services and in Rosengård, the Citizen’s Office is an immense success. It is visited by people who speak 55 languages, and just among Rosengård’s Arabic-speaking population, between 60 and 100 people visit the office every day. It is a large centre, and the services are wide-ranging, including health advisors and weekly self-employment sessions. In 2008, 120 Rosengård citizens served by the centre started businesses.

Chief medborgarkontoret Thoria El shaikh, the lead communication and information officer for Rosengård, says that the local civic officials hold open public forums monthly,
with translators, to hear people's concerns. But very few people attend. She isn’t certain why: “Perhaps with the language issue, translation isn't enough; maybe people are frustrated by not being able to speak directly for themselves.” But she has a theory that seems to come a bit closer to some of the concerns heard from newcomers in Sweden: “Maybe the only real issue they want to address is unemployment, and they keep saying that and nothing changes, so why think anything they say could effect changes? So why bother anymore?” (T. El shaikh, personal communication, March 2009).

The second agenda for these meetings is to try to increase civil society involvement and citizen participation—to discuss what are citizens’ rights, but also what are their duties as citizens. El shaikh says that other international bodies have had to do much more than this, including formal local elected councils in each neighbourhood to help newcomers build an understanding of democracy (T. El shaikh, personal communication, March 2009).

This seems a standout recommendation—that the City could perhaps improve immigrant citizen engagement by investigating truly participatory communication strategies, researching the rapidly-changing realm of participatory government (with interest in how it intersects with newcomer communities), and listening to immigrants when designing the dialogue process. The much-emphasized distinction made by immigrants is real participatory engagement, as opposed to the appearance of such.

Imam Ibrahim’s earlier suggestion that more efforts need to be made to make citizen-municipality engagement truly participatory is echoed by the chief information officer for Rosengård’s Citizen’s Office: “. . .not just in terms of ask and answer, but actual dialogue” (T. El shaikh, personal communication, March 2009).

Another area where the City is dissatisfied with citizen engagement has to do parent engagement with their children’s schools. The role of school-parent liaison was created in Malmö to help bridge gaps. Imam Ibrahim explains that immigrant parents often do not come to meetings at the schools and so it is difficult for teachers to discuss conduct
He thinks that citizens do not respond to these opportunities because they feel they will not be heard, that it is not truly participatory and it will make no difference (A. Ibrahim, personal communication, March 2009).

In some ways, the City acknowledges weakness in their participatory attempts. They know the areas in which they need to improve internally, and Persson identifies them:

- When is a person really integrated? How does the concept of participatory relate to democracy?
- What kind of groups help immigrants? There are formal and informal groups working on this, but dialogue could be improved.
- We need to create meeting places, and create a crossover dialogue between groups.
- We need to connect the east side of the city with the centre or west; to use media to connect the many sides.
- We need less-segregated areas. They choose to live with family in separate areas.
  (C. Persson, verbal presentation, March 2009)

There are also individual examples within the City where residents have been invited to participate in meaningful ways. Rose-Marie Mazzoni, for example, who develops cultural projects and facilities for the City of Malmö, plans to set up participatory community discussions about how to create a new central community centre. Some of the street design for the area was also done in consultation with local residents (R. Mazzoni, personal communication, March 2009).

Connected to that, Persson has identified the one “necessary action item” from the dormant Malmö 2012 project as “. . .the development of meeting places” (C. Persson, verbal presentation, March 2009).

This particular item is also visible in the City’s new Rosengård plan:

Creating conditions which promote new networks and meeting spaces in the local surroundings and the rest of society is important. To achieve this, physical spaces which are conducive to such meetings are needed in both the interior and exterior environment. Rosengård of today lacks premises for businesses and commercial activity but also public, common areas and meeting places. (City of Malmö, 2008b, inside back cover)
These are positive steps, and they touch on some of what the URBACT report (2007) identifies as key issues in Sweden and solutions specifically for Sweden—including a need for more civic participation, social inclusion and regeneration, and “more systemic use of citizens’ committees.”

An example of this lack of the systemic use of citizens’ committees can be seen in the process to date on the plan to develop the physical environment in Rosengård. Interestingly, the first stage of this strategy report—including what should be built or developed and where—was developed without any consultation with citizens. The City’s Integration and Employment Department seemed uncomfortable or embarrassed about this fact and emphasized that they intend to consult with residents in the next stage of the program (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009).

The City of Malmö is aware that it needs more work and new strategies on the integration issue—not only throughout the city, but also within the walls of City Hall. The inadequate amount of truly participatory citizenship out in the communities is perhaps partly explained by looking at the executive level at City Hall.

The City is the largest employer in Malmö. While the percentage of other-than-Swedish-ancestry Swedes in City Hall is slightly lower than represented in the City’s population, it is not significantly different. However, there is “dismal” representation in the City at the decision-maker level (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009).

It hasn’t been well studied, but 2001 research showed an imbalance as compared to the city’s population: 82.5 of the city’s administration were of Swedish origin (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009). Curiously, Iraq is the country of origin with the most significant difference between the citizens’ population in the city and their representation in City administration (Broomé, Dahlstedt & Schölin, 2007, p. 23).

Although there are ongoing attempts to increase the number of non-indigenous Swedes working for the City so that it more closely mirrors the population it represents, Strom is
frustrated about the small percentage of foreign-born Swedes with decision-making power. She said that in many ways “and perhaps most ways”, the city is still not a participatory government in its policy planning (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009). But they have begun, and one example of this is the Malmö City Anti-Discrimination Committee. Composed of representatives of various ethnic and anti-discrimination organizations and Malmö City staff, the function of the committee is “. . . to assess the situation in Malmö with respect to collaboration and communication. . .” and to follow up on the work of Malmö City within the framework of the project European Cities against Racism (City of Malmö, 2007a, p. 4).

Among City staff, it is interesting to note the discourse exploring the reason for low civic involvement by immigrant communities. Though there is discussion of social cohesion and admission that the City bears some responsibility for not being inclusive enough, the “blame” discourse seems more dominant. For example, “They choose to live with family in separate areas” (C. Persson, verbal presentation, March 2009).

Also notable is the difference in discourse between a City administrator’s comment, “They are not participatory in the community” (C. Persson, presentation, March 2009) and a comment by a Swede of Arabic origin who immigrated over 20 years ago. In perhaps the most powerful comment on civic participatory opportunities from all of the field interviews, he said that the opportunities are superficial, that citizens are not invited to have true participation, that essentially they are saying: “We have no power. You and us, we’re not sharing it: you have it” (A. Ibrahim, personal communication, 2009).

4.3 Findings on Media

4.3.1 Portrayal in Media and Access to Media

When I was researching in Malmö, I heard of a positive media story related to immigrants – in the regional newspaper Sydsvenskan, there was an article about a teen initially from Turkey. She had been profiled five years previously in the paper when she
was hospitalized with illness from the stress of raising her young siblings on her own. When as a young adult she later contacted the newspaper for news coverage of a project, a journalist remembered her name. She was in law school, and this became a positive news story, not just of an inspiring human being surmounting difficult circumstances, but also of the kind of life transformations that Swedish dollars have made possible (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009).

About fifteen years ago, the City of Malmö along with a regional newspaper launched an initiative specifically designed to address the absence of positive stories about immigrants and the community of Rosengård. A reporter based in the community found and wrote the stories, and they were published in a new section in the newspaper. Strom views these media advocacy programs (and this period of time) as some of the most successful work of the Integration Department (B. Strom, personal communication, March 2009).

All newcomer interviewees that I talked to said that media depictions of their communities were overwhelmingly negative, and that it seemed these were the only stories media were willing to tell. In the Citizen’s Office in Rosengård, Thoria El shaikh is frustrated and annoyed with the imbalance in media reports on the neighbourhood: “Media never mentions any of the positive things going on in the community” (T. El shaikh, personal communication, March 2009).

This lack of positive media coverage is problematic. According to “Racism in Sweden—The ENAR Shadow Report,” media researcher Ylva Brune reported to the Delegation for Human Rights that “. . . groups that are likely to be subjected to discrimination are almost invisible in the media” (cited in Bideke & Bideke, 2008, p. 16).

But it could be different: Communities like Rosengård “. . . are not only places of banishment for those who have the least freedom of choice. They are also communities bursting with vitality. . . .” (Arntsbert & Ramberg, 1997, as cited in Predd, 2000, p. 171).
As an outsider with journalism experience, it seems to me that positive, feature-worthy stories, inspiring profiles and compelling perspectives definitely exist in these communities. If well-pitched, these are stories at which the media would bite. For example there are powerful, stereotype-busting Arabic women in Rosengård, strong role models and leaders in the city. And they like living in Rosengård. Some were powerful speakers and some had powerful stories to tell. When I asked if they had ever been interviewed or featured in any media, very few had, and these are leading people in their communities. Many positive and uplifting stories exist, stories that would allow Swedes to see immigrants as an asset.

Let me, for example, tell you about Taghrid, who immigrated from Iraq 18 years ago, and though she was a single mother raising two children in a new culture and learning a new language, she completed a degree in Lund in Gender and Politics. She is a great example of immigration as an asset: a non-traditional Iraqi, a female divorcee opposed to the hijab, who fought funding issues, language, poverty and societal barriers to launch and helm two significant Arabic women’s associations in Malmö. She is proud of her role helping Arabic women to become aware of their own strengths and capacities. “There are many women who sit, no work, they think rules are their role and they must be caretaking,” she says. But despite her uplifting story and her leadership role, no media have ever asked to interview her (Taghrid, personal communication, March 2009).

And let me tell you about Nidal, who works as a specialist in Malmö’s hospital. She moved to Malmö in 2003, two months before the war began. She had worked in acute medicine in Iraq, and then in Malaysia. Her family came too: five sisters, one brother, and her parents. After two years of re-training, she obtained her Swedish medical credentials. She is an exception—single, unmarried, no children, and opposed to the hijab. She is a remarkable myth-buster in many ways, someone who spent three years in what she describes as “the hell of unemployed waiting”—in her case, waiting for training in the absence of acceptance of foreign credentials. She is a case study in integration success, as well as an example of the systemic problems that could be addressed to speed up the employment and integration process. She is outspoken; no shy wallflower. It is
perplexing that she has never been profiled in the media, never been interviewed about medicine, or issues in Iraq, or improving the path to integration, or about her own story (Nidal, personal communication, March 2009).

In 2002, two books were published that told the inspirational intercultural bridging stories of Swedish Muslim’s experiences of Sweden. But when the books were released, there was criticism of happy illusions belying the reality (Carlbom, 2003, p. 103), of the “sunshine stories” (P. Ouais, personal communication, March 2009). I am not arguing for happy immigration stories at the expense of truth. My concern is that currently, the Nidal and Taghrid-type stories are not being told in the media because the trend is negative-only immigration journalism, and I believe that is at the expense of truth.

5 ACCESS TO A VOICE: CITIZEN MEDIA

As mentioned, qualitative interviews with migrants in Malmö indicate that they are disempowered to a significant degree. Many men seem confused about their new roles in a gender-equal world and no longer have faith in the possibility of agency in Sweden. The groundbreaking women have amazing stories but they are nowhere in the media. The Imam and the Rosengård Citizen’s Office agree that migrants do not appear at civic consultations or parent meetings because they no longer believe that articulating their needs will have any effect on outcomes. The statistics on how many migrants hold decision-making roles in the municipality are dismal. In short, disempowerment is a recurring theme, and, as evidenced in this paper, the integration of immigrants in Sweden is perceived as unsuccessful.

So now we turn with curiosity to look at how other parts of the world have attempted to counteract the disempowerment of migrant populations, and this leads to some interesting results in the area of communication. Evidence shows that communication and the use of the media can be a powerful tool for integration (Melkote & Steeves, 1991, p. 355). What is very recent and perhaps momentous in connecting citizen media and integration is that “now governments are not just acknowledging, but declaring the connection”
One example of this is The Council of Europe, which just in 2009 stated that community media “can serve as a factor of social cohesion and integration” (Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, as cited in Fairbairn, 2009, p. 22).

Access to voice is powerful. Waisbord (2005, p. 19) wrote that “…community-based forms of communication . . . could provide opportunities to identify common problems and solutions, to reflect upon community issues, and to mobilize resources.” Hamelink (1990, as cited in Waisbord, 2005, p. 19) stated, “…group media has helped marginal groups to speak to one another, to articulate their thoughts and feelings in the process of community organizing.”

This “mobilizing” is seen in the growth of minority, migrant media: “Multicultural broadcasting is gaining popularity vis-à-vis the separate/separatist ethnic media” (Georgiou, 2003, p. 39). Alongside is the growth ofethnic media advocacy.

### 5.1 Media Advocacy

Media advocacy is “…the strategic use of mass media to advance social or public policy initiatives” (Wallack, Dorfman, Jernigan, & Themba 1993, as cited in Waisbord, 2005, pp. 23-24). If the aim is to promote responsible portrayals, mobilize groups in support of certain issues and policies (like immigration), change public perception (that integration is a failure), and disseminate information through interpersonal and media channels towards gaining social acceptance (and/or political acceptance) on specific issues (Waisbord, 2005, p. 23), then there is a strong argument for using media advocacy for development initiatives in Malmö.

Waisbord (2005, p. 23) goes on to say, “…existing linkages could also provide agents that were familiar with (or even from) the community who could assist in creating organizations and networks to stimulate participation.”
In the course of field research, I met several people who I believe would champion such initiatives and take leadership in their development.

Community members, rather than ‘professionals’, should be in charge of the decision and production processes. This is precisely what ‘small media’ offer: an opportunity for media access in countries where the mass media are usually controlled by governments and urban elites. (Waisbord, 2005, p. 20)

### 5.2 Participatory Radio

In spite of the advancing speed of change in media technology, already zooming past Web 2.0 to Web 3.0, and with the global shifts in participatory government via the Web, immigrants interviewed in field research did not have computers. And though mainstream radio may seem like a dying medium, the literature shows that community radio is more than strong.

Among the people advancing research in this field is Georgiou (2003), who has provided evidence that there are “. . . a growing number of new generation multicultural [media] programmes” (p. 38).

According to the international participatory media agency InterNews, in the past eight years or so there has been growing academic interest in situating citizen or community media—typically called “third sector media,”—within theoretical perspectives:

Public sphere theory (including modifications of Habermas so as to recognize alternative or counter-public spheres is the area most drawn upon by commentators (e.g. Rodriguez 2001) but other theoretical sources include hegemony (Gransci), social capital (Putnam, following Bourdieu) and Paolo Freire’s pedagogical writings, in particular his notion of conscientisation which, whether consciously acknowledged or not, underlay much of the practice throughout the 1970s (Atton 2001, 2004; Cammaerts & Carpentier 2007; Couldry & Curran 2003; Downing 2001; Howley 2005; Jankowski with Prehn 2002; Rennie 2006; Rodriguez 2001).

(as cited in Fairbairn, 2009, p. 10)
Some of this research, as well as that of Lewis (2008a), has shown that community radio can lead to social cohesion. Studies done in places such as Australia, Ireland and Scotland show very positive associations among participatory radio, empowerment of marginalized populations, and integration.

Vasta (2004) asks whether:

\[\ldots\] identity formation can contribute to a form of separation and ethnic closure or can communities, based on identity formations and identity politics, enhance their levels of civic virtue and collective action; secondly, are ethnic communities in Australia rallying together through various forms of collective action to achieve social justice goals within their own ethnic groups and across the broader community? (p. 1 [abstract])

I contend that there is:

- evidence that dispels her first concern,
- evidence that supports her middle thought that community radio enhances civic-mindedness among an ethnic population,
- evidence that provides hope that her third stated possibility, of furthered social justice both within a cultural community and in the broader community, shows much promise.

A 2003 report to the representative organization for community radio in Ireland (CRAOL) concluded: “\ldots there is a high level of collaborative work between community radio and community bodies. This is especially true of community-based groups that have a focus on social inclusion issues” (Unique Perspectives 2003:41, as cited in Fairbairn, 2009, p. 22).

In Scotland, a report commissioned by the Community Media Association stated: “\ldots community media provides a platform for those who are often voiceless in society \ldots powerful campaigning tools to bring attention to inequality and injustice in communities \ldots [and] to present their perspectives and challenge negative images of themselves (Paul Zealey, 2007, p. 5, as cited in Fairbairn, 2009, p. 22).
One question that could be raised is that increasing agency of immigrants wouldn’t necessarily improve integration in any way if these radio programs are by/for their own communities. Lewis’s response is perhaps one of the strongest statements to include when approaching governments with arguments for supporting migrant media:

On the question of whether third sector media contribute to social cohesion or threaten it, the evidence points to the sector being an important factor in social cohesion and citizenship, particularly for minority ethnic communities and refugee and migrant communities. (Lewis, 2008, p. 7)

An Australian report not only links community media to empowerment, but also (significantly for governments considering funding) links community media to increasingly active citizenship of immigrants:

. . . where community voices can be heard—and for many marginalized communities, it is the only places their voices can be heard . . . empowerment at another level comes through . . . an awareness of the monolithic nature of mainstream media and frustration at its increasing inability to take account of cultural difference . . . It is clear . . . that the community broadcasting sector is playing a significant role in revitalizing the idea of active citizenship media. (Meadows, Forde, Ewart, and Foxwell, 2007, pp. 102-3)

The data indicates “. . . that different projects of alternative minority media can challenge exclusion and can get involved in areas of minority participation in multi-ethnic societies” (Georgiou, 2003, p. 44).

As a result of these studies and government announcements linking integration and cohesion with immigrant-produced media, almost weekly now I come across a related new initiative, such as the Migrants and The Media Project involving five EU countries (UK, Ireland, Spain, Hungary and Greece).

### 5.3 Community Radio as Social Capital

As for community radio specifically, “. . . community broadcasting contributes towards empowerment in that it trains individuals in broadcasting skills (DoCA, 1997); it forms
local and extended networks (Melzer, 2000); and it can provide ‘a sense of local community identity’ (Elson, 2000)” (all as cited in Van Vuuren, 2001, p. 3).

Perhaps the most interesting element in community radio is, as Waisbord (2005, p. 20) argued, that “…the value of participatory media is not in being instruments of transmission but of communication, that is, for exchanging views and involving members.” Dagron (2001, p. 6) says that “…radio in fact has been the most important medium for development and social change worldwide”, and that:

. . . the smallest and most precarious community radio station already makes a difference for community. The presence of a community radio station…has an immediate effect on the population. . . . Radio has been instrumental for social change and moreover, has invented participatory communication, as we know it today.” (Dagron, p. 13)

Here is one media initiative that has been attempted in the U.S., allegedly to improve civic engagement:

An example of a “big media idea” currently being tested by the Voice of America (VOA) to ignite democratic sentiment among Middle Eastern youth was described by Marc Nathanson and a colleague on the Broadcasting Board of Governors, Tom Korologos. Instead of all-talk cerebral fare, the VOA is experimenting with a pop music format modeled on the American Top-100 FM style. Broadcast in Arabic, interspersing American songs with songs in Arabic, the goal of Radio Sawa (which means “together”) is to attract listeners for the news segments sandwiched into the music. In a matter of months the service has acquired a sizeable audience. (Shister, 2003, p. 40)

“Voice of America” is large radio, not community radio. Audience numbers it may have had, but I am skeptical about what social change benefits actually resulted if it is neither participatory, nor—as Dagron insists is critical (A. G. Dagron, personal communication, March 2009)—located and run at the community level in the most marginalized community.

Social capital is a new idea gaining worldwide recognition (Baron, Field & Schuller, 2000, p. 1)—one with many definitions. According to Fukuyama (1995, p. 6), it is the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups, organisations, and at
the workplace. Snoxell et al. (2006) suggest that it is a key factor in the development of conflict-resilient cities, and that three types of social capital—bonding, bridging and linking—together capture the elements of building trust within and across groups. “Bonding capital” means relationships among people who see themselves as sharing a common background. “Bridging capital” refers to relationships between people without a common background (p. 77).

A study of three communities in Greater Belfast since the 1960s found that only the community with high levels of bridging capital—with mixed associational and sports clubs—was able to avoid the human insecurity that was plaguing much of Northern Ireland (Darby, 1986, as cited in Foreign Affairs Canada, 2006). The third type of social capital, “linking capital,” means relationships among people of different power levels. Snoxell et al. (2006) stated that all three types of social capital are necessary for integration to work, and that it is critical that they are built simultaneously. He also stated that a failure to pursue all three elements of social capital can generate negative social capital (p. 77).

A side note worth considering is that this could be useful as an argument in support of diasporic organizations—something that field research in Sweden revealed can be quite controversial with taxpayers.

According to Onyx and Bullen (1997), social capital is generated

\[\text{\ldots through the participation in networks, and can be produced almost anywhere where there are people interacting voluntarily (most likely in voluntary associations) in the common interest. It is therefore not limited to geographic communities but whenever people come together. Finally, social capital requires a proactive citizenry, that is, active and willing individuals with a sense of personal and collective capacities to produce desired outcomes (or empowerment).}\]

(Onyx & Bullen, Mapping Minorities, (5-6; 24-25), as cited in Van Vuuren, 2001)

Some scholars, however, argue that social capital methodology limits the results from being translated to interpreting social capital’s effects at the grassroots:
Social capital, however, has much in common with a *pluralistic* research tradition. This argues that voluntary organizations enable individuals to directly participate in political activity, or in the case of organizations without political aims, widen people’s interests and contacts, and provide them with leadership skills which ultimately results in political mobilization. Pluralist studies are mainly based on quantitative survey research of large populations. As such they are unable to shed light on the nature of participation at the organisational and individual level. (Pickvance 1986, pp. 225-6 as cited in van Vuuren, 2004, p. 4)

5.4 *Minority Radio in Sweden Now*

Alfonso Gumucio Dagron is a development communication leader, and an advocate for community radio and its power to facilitate change. During a brief discussion in Malmö, (A. G. Dagron, personal communication, March 2009) he asked about the existence of immigrant-owned-and-produced community radio in the most challenging area of the city. On hearing that Sweden leads globally with what it calls “neighbourhood radio,” he stressed that such a station is effective only if located within the specific community considered to be the hub of a community’s challenges—in the case of Malmö, within Rosengård.

Field research revealed no awareness among interviewees of community radio participation options. What is the situation and context of community radio currently in Sweden and Malmö?

Sweden has actively supported minority media projects—along with The Netherlands, they are “the two countries with the richer and more diverse minority media availability” (Georgiou, 2003, p. 39). The country’s cultural policy is characterized by a “world culture perspective”—that is, a recognition of the meeting of different cultures as positive for the country—and a focus on “participation of all in cultural life” (Camaeur, 2002, p. 10, as cited in Georgiou, p. 42).

Camaeur also stated that:
Sweden stands out as the country with the most diverse and numerically significant diasporic media production, a result of availability of funding for community and ethnic media projects, as well as the availability of radio frequencies and digital channels to such alternative projects. (Camaeur, 2002, p. 10, as cited in Georgiou, 2003, p. 42)

In Sweden, “community radio” is more often called “neighbourhood radio”:

. . . the Swedish närradio system is without parallel in Europe. There are some 160 CR stations with one FM frequency being reserved in most municipalities except for the three largest cities, to which more are assigned—Stockholm 6, Gothenburg 4 and Malmö 2. Broadcasting time on the transmitters is shared by a range of non-profit local associations including student and religious organisations who must find their own production facilities. Licences are issued to each group for three years by the Radio and TV Authority. (Lewis, 2008b, p. 13)

Seven hundred local organizations in Sweden produce radio programming via 165 local low-power transmitters concentrated mostly in the three largest cities, cable networks carry thirty local community television channels, and there are about ten web-based community media initiatives (Lewis, 2008b, p. 16)

Curiously, (if this 2001 article is accepted as accurate), the numbers of community radio stations used to be much higher: “. . . There are more than 2000 community radios in Sweden, the majority catering to special-interest communities” (Fraser & Estrada, 2001, p. 30).

If accurate, this may relate to another comment by Camaeur (2002): “Yet, most of minority media rely on voluntarism and subsidies and thus lack professional standards and often face problems of long-term survival” (as cited in Georgiou, 2003, p. 42).
6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Final Summary of Findings

A beginning exploration point for this paper was to look at the evidence-based work in development communication and communication for social change, and to ask whether there is anything that could be helpful for a city looking for solutions to social cohesion challenges. My research question asked how development communication theories might be applied to social cohesion issues in Malmö and how they might add insight to potential solutions.

In my interviews, I gathered information about immigrant integration initiatives in Malmö, the perspectives of those creating and executing integration policies, and the perspectives of the immigrants themselves.

Field interviews revealed:
- Many immigrants, including some men who have been in Malmö for years, feel hopeless about getting jobs.
- Iraqi immigrants in the Rosengård community feel that they have no power, and this is the reason why so few show up for parent-teacher meetings and for monthly public outreach meetings with local political representatives.
- Positive, feature-worthy stories, inspiring profiles and compelling perspectives are abundant in these communities, but these stories are not being told. Yet these stories and profiles are definitely strong enough to garner media attention and to be published and broadcast.

6.2 Major Conclusions

It may be argued that this paper speaks too exclusively about what Carlbom (2003) calls “pluralist discourse,” or, as in his summation, from a position that (Sweden-born) Swedes are the problem (pp. 67-68). It could be argued that the strongly worded statements about Sweden in the URBACT Secretariat report (2007) are unbalanced and that their
lens is also pluralist discourse. My perspective on this is perhaps influenced by two things: 1) by being Canadian, where multiculturalism/pluralism (not popular with scholars and policy-makers elsewhere) is one of our most strongly held values; – and 2) by my work in Sri Lanka, where the Tamils have lived for so long yet are still, in policies and government discourse, treated as though they should be grateful for whatever they get and should quietly integrate, and as such have no right to make demands. The reality is that the Muslim and Iraqi populations are now in Sweden. This means that new policies and a re-formed concept of what is meant by “Swedish” are necessary. A new concept of the country will have to be negotiated, not based on what the population makeup has been in the past, but based on the population that exists in Sweden—and in Malmö—now.

I believe that the international evidence around participatory communication and community media for integration proves that communication initiatives can make a significant difference to splintered communities. I also point to the World Bank 1999 study that asked marginalized people globally what they wanted more than anything else, and their responses were not to do with housing or food, or anything structural or systemic, but rather they wanted “access to a voice” (Wolfensohn, 1999).

Research shows that community media can help with social cohesion. It seems reasonable to suggest that communication initiatives should be explored as part of a solution for the challenges in Malmö.

I’m somewhat wary about discussing the promise or possibilities or options in development communication and community media when these ideas have not been specifically identified by migrant communities. Isn’t this counter to what is participatory?


If decisions were made outside of the community and the latter was assigned the role of implementing and evaluating results, participation was
limited to instances that depended on decisions previously made. It was not true participation and, therefore, maintained power inequalities. (p. 21)

Similarly, Waisbord (2005) argues, critics of participatory communication said that it “. . . could also be seen as foreign, pushing for certain goals and actions that have not resulted from inside communities. . . .” (p. 21).

My interest in bringing forward the strong evidence about communication initiatives improving social cohesion is to answer those who might outright dismiss the notion of community media for social cohesion (“That wouldn’t work.”) and therefore not authorize a next step, which would be to begin to ask Malmö’s immigrants for their opinions and ideas. Communication initiatives would need to be chosen and led by them.

In the summer of 2010, the City of Malmö passed the first new integration plan in over ten years and proposed a new anti-discrimination plan (B. Strom, personal communication, June 2, 2010). However, two factors may significantly affect the participatory processes toward which the current municipal government has been gradually shifting.

Since the field research—in fact quite recently—there has been an announcement about a power shift in the country in political responsibility for integration policies and programming. Ironically, while thematically this paper is discussing the critical need for bottom-up decision-making regarding integration issues, it seems that, for Malmö, some of that power is in the process of being removed. Due to a sense of failed outcomes in refugee integration in Sweden, as of December 2010 areas of municipal responsibility will shift to the national government (Hiebert, 2010a, slide 9). This moves away from what has been a system with the municipal government in a key role, i.e., developing and administering most integration programs (Hiebert, 2010a, slide 8). The focus will become preparation for employment, with “stronger incentives to work,” and the core indicator of integration success will be the acquisition of a job. This follows from newly EU-defined integration measures for all states to use (an initiative led by Sweden)—measures dominated by employment, income, and education (Hiebert, 2010a, slide 12).
Sweden is moving in the opposite direction to countries such as Canada with regard to immigration services and integration planning: recentralization as opposed to decentralization (Hiebert, 2010a, slide 12). In Canada, NGOs have a longstanding tradition of playing an important role in settlement services (Hiebert, 2010a, slide 11). Sweden’s NGOs and other partners have a very negligible role (Hiebert, 2010a, slide 8). To keep some degree of bottom-up, participatory connection to communities (evidence showing that this is necessary to effect change) the national government should consider exploring strategies to strengthen NGOs and encourage a not-for-profit—and perhaps social enterprise—immigrant services sector. It appears that this would be necessary in order for centralized integration planning to work. Sweden should also explore to what extent there are cost savings in countries like Canada where so much of the immigrant services delivery is in partnership with non-profit organizations.

The second factor is Sweden’s elections. Elections in Sweden happen at all three levels of government at the same time (Richburg, 2004, p. A1). The country has just had an election, voting to keep the current government although losing its majority. At the previous election, the national and state governments shifted to the right. Malmö held its ground. If at any stage voters at the municipal level elect to get rid of the current government, this could significantly change policies and programs to do with social cohesion. I hope that the national government will heed what the evidence shows: for change to happen in communities, the solutions need to happen not at the national level but at the community level.

### 6.3 Areas for Further Research

Media Advocacy: Journalists are intensely busy, and in my experience the negative stories take the lead largely because high drama stories (heard across the police scanner or in the streets) are much quicker to find. If the city engaged citizens in finding and pitching, or writing, the positive stories, or working as a liaison with the City identifying
stories from a community media station, in my opinion the media coverage could be much more balanced.

It would also be useful to do a desk study looking at evidence for how media slant can shift racial/religious tensions, and particularly to look at what research has been done on this subject in terms of migrant communities in affluent countries. Is there evidence from studies in other international cities that advocacy by the city could reduce the negative coverage of the Arabic communities in Rosengård?

International Media: Is it accurate that international media stories portraying Malmö in a negative light (in relation to immigration and conflict) are increasing? What is the most convincing evidence that international, rather than local or national, media are most likely to publish stories that are counter to prevailing local or national media opinion?

What are the best practices by international municipalities that show measured results in shifting public opinion related to different religions or races? What evidence is there that media strategies have been proven effective as part of the solution to urban conflict? In these examples, what strategies have helped to avoid accusations of “whitewashing” (attempting to create an imbalanced, false-positive perception)?

Social Mobilization: It would be useful to see more research on international best practices of engaging NGOs in the role of mobilizing communities to change public opinion and media coverage and identifying their own success stories.

What initiatives in Swedish or Scandinavian or European media have existed involving journalism contests for stories by people in the largest minority group or most-maligned group, and which, if any, have evaluated community responses?

What evidence is there that negative media coverage about a city or country can be damaging and have a proven economic effect?
6.3.1 Further Research Desired by Interviewees

Broomé, Dahlstedt and Schölin (2007) stated, “... despite the fact that the City administration has been the object of considerable academic attention, the organization as a whole is not well studied” (p. 20). This still seems to be the case.

City interviewees were asked what they themselves would consider to be the most valuable areas in which to have further research. One piece of research that would be valuable to (Department of Integration and Employment) Britta Strom would be convincing evidence for producing communications in different languages— and evidence that nationalism and integration don’t suffer as a result. She believes that City communications need to be more tailored to people who are going to use the services and adjusted to suit their needs. Is there evidence that producing multi-language government publications does not restrict learning of the national language, or does not impede integration, or does not restrict civic involvement? Literature reviews and further study would be useful.

Another piece of research that would be valuable has to do with hiring practices within the City of Malmö. Although the policies exist, the practices really do not. There is not strong enough leadership on this. All the departments have guidebooks on hiring more foreign people, but these pieces of communication are seldom used. Those in the Integration department are interested in strategies, and more convincing evidence could motivate municipal leadership to push staff to get the guidebooks off the shelf and into action. Is there any evidence that shows that a more accurate reflection of the population in municipal government at the management level has economic benefit for cities? Or electoral benefit? What evidence exists that hiring more immigrant employees is a good business decision and/or a good economic decision?

A third thing that the City needs is stricter evaluations for the work of the Department of Integration and Employment, more follow-up generally, and clearer decisions about the indicators of integration. What literature exists that contrasts integration initiatives of international municipalities with high immigrant populations? What indicators do they
use, and how can different measurements in different cities be effectively compared to see which might be best practices?

Fourthly, the Citizen’s Office in Rosengård wants to see more research about women in Rosengård. What are their views on civic participation? How could participatory communication be used to increase citizen engagement on the part of the district’s women?

One potential next investigation after this paper, and it would require funding, would be determining if there is community interest in creating participatory community media. This would be critical—ensuring that the community makes the decisions. In “. . . the developing field of participatory communication . . . planners realized that the sense of ownership couldn’t be promoted if the beneficiaries didn’t have a word in the decisions made before a particular project started (Dagron, 2001, p. 9).

This investigation would consist of consultation with the community about the idea of community media, the factors they think might affect the creation and execution, and, later in the process, discussing potential champions and tipping points. If the project went ahead, community participants would need to be heavily involved in implementation and evaluation, and ultimately work toward taking ownership.

As an example, could the creation of a community media station in Rosengård work to give a greater sense of power and engagement to residents and reduce the extremely negative coverage of Rosengård and the Arabic communities?

According to Hornik (1997), communication for social change means viewing changes in quality of life in terms of citizen empowerment (pp. 45-60). If quality of life for Malmö immigrants is to improve, enhanced citizen empowerment is essential. Evidence shows that citizen media has this potential and more. “For some people the mechanism of empowerment may lead to a sense of control; for others it may lead to actual control, the practical power to effect their own lives” (Rappaport, 1984, p. 3).
7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix A: Interviewees

Associations or organizations represented:

Department of Integration and Employment, City of Malmö
Citizen’s Office, Rosengård
Cultural department, City of Malmö
International Arabic Women’s Association
Arabic Women’s Association
Iraqi Cultural Association
Faculty of Health and Society, Social Work, Malmö University
Imam, School/Families Liaison, Rosengård skolan
Living Libraries program, Malmö Library

Metropolis British Columbia, Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Diversity, Vancouver
Multicultural Social Planning Department, City of Vancouver

Qualitative research interviews, individuals:

1. Britta Strom, Development Manager, Department of Integration and Employment, City of Malmö
2. Thoria El shaikh, Chief Information Officer, Citizen’s Office, Rosengård
3. Rose-Marie Mazzoni, City of Malmö
4. Imam Ali Ibrahim
5. Taghrid Laibi Khalef, founder of two Arabic women’s organizations in Malmö
6. Dr. Nidal Ali, General Practitioner (Specialist candidate) at a Malmö hospital; former surgeon
7. Pernilla Ouis, Senior Lecturer/Researcher, Faculty of Health and Society – Social Work, Malmö University
8, 9. Men at a local Iraqi association in Malmö
10. Muslim Swedish woman, Somalia-born, in Sweden 14 years
11. American-born journalist, Stockholm
12. Living Libraries 1
13. Living Libraries 2

In Canada:

14. Baldwin Wong, Multicultural Social Planner, City of Vancouver
15. Daniel Hiebert, Co-Director, Metropolis British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Diversity (also Ph.D., Geography Faculty, University of British Columbia). Currently on secondment at Malmö University.
7.2 Appendix B: Interview Questions

Questions were adjusted to fit each interviewee, but this is a sample of the prepared question lists. Additional questions were added based on information in the interviews.

Questions to Citizens Office, Rosengård
What services and resources?
Difference between Citizens Office and medborgarkontoran?
Live Rosengård? What love about?
What do people come for most often?
What resources or communications do you wish you could provide?
Are most people happy living in Rosengård, or do they want the ability to move?
With the black market housing system in Malmö, how difficult would it be for them to move?
Participatory process and the municipality: In what ways has this happened? Where does it need to happen more?
Thoughts on mosaic vs. melting pot, appropriateness of “integration” as a goal, notion of “social cohesion”?
Access to media?
Access to produce own media?
Aware of community radio?
What most lacking in Malmö?
What most needed from municipality, especially re: information and communication?
Host programs: How familiar? Used much here?
How can associations seek funding?
Leads for women’s association contacts?

Questions to City
What strategies have been tried, with what successes? What have been the results? What constraints? What lessons?
Social mobilization and NGOs
What do they do that’s participatory?
What limits their participatory initiatives, both online and offline?
City’s media relations people, how do they try to encourage more voices in media from immigrant communities?
What integration initiatives are you most excited about; are you most proud of?

Questions to Iraqi Women
Almost all paper information is in English—how overwhelming or difficult was that when you first came?
This office, what have you ever come here for/used this for?
“Integration”—your experience of it? Is it realistic? Is it fair? How would you change integration policies?
Heard of living libraries?
Of host programs?
Dr’s story—told “she pushed through”—pushed through what?
“International” Arabic women—why ‘International’, and not just ‘Arabic’?
Aware of community radio?

Questions to Imam
What sort of grades do kids get here? What grade results do they want?
What does he do exactly?
How common are imams in schools?
Biggest challenges?
How Swedish-fluent is the student population? The community?
How successful are parent-teacher meetings? Problems getting parents to show up?
Why?
Living libraries program—any surprises?
Any comments from people re: changed views/prejudice?
What would he say to another city thinking about developing a similar program?
Ever hear anger?
Needs to be bigger? No one I asked in Malmö interviews had heard of it (except Britta Strom, who was indifferent about it)
Media & Rosengård—see any positive stories?
Which would you tell?
Community in Malmö—Sunni? Shia?
Community meetings?

Questions to Iraqi Men
What services and resources and activities exist in the association?
By “Cultural Association,” are you perceiving culture as arts?
How funded?
Active NGO-nonprofit sector in Malmö?
Participatory communication w municipality? Listening? Responding? People not coming to monthly open houses—why? Dialogue?
Most successful initiative of culture as a bridge?
Involved in initiative, strategies against racism? Status? state of racism? What is needed re: information and communication from the municipality?
Festivals – how can culture be shared outside of the community?
Aware of community radio
How involved are women in the association?
Perspective personally on “integration,” social cohesion vs. integration, mosaic vs. melting pot?
7.3 Appendix C: Districts, City of Malmö

[Rosengård is in red]

7.4 Appendix D: Areas within the district of Rosengård

Source: City of Malmö, www.Malmö.se
7.5 Appendix E: TS Eliot, The Cocktail Party

…There’s a loss of personality
Or rather, you lost touch with the person
You thought you were.
You no longer feel quite human.
You’re suddenly reduced to the status of an object —
A living object, but no longer a person.
It’s always happening, because one is an object
As well as a person.
But we forget about it
As quickly as we can.

When you’ve dressed for a party
And are going downstairs, with everything about you
Arranged to support you in the role you have chosen.
Then sometimes, when you come to the bottom step
There is one step more than your feet expected
And you come down with a jolt.
Just for a moment
You have the experience of being an object
At the mercy of a malevolent staircase.


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