EU IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

An Analysis of the European Union’s Role in the Area of Urban Social Sustainable Development, with Regards to the Case of the City of Malmö, Specifically the District of Fosie.

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, the intention is to analyze the role of the European Union (EU) in the projects which aim towards urban social sustainable development. The city of Malmö and its district of Fosie serve as an example of a concrete geo-political entity. The study presents facts concerning the EU urban policy and data regarding the EU’s influence in the area of urban social sustainability in Malmö and the district of Fosie. The data are analyzed with use of the concept of urban social sustainable development and the theory of actoriness. The results disclose that by applying ‘soft politics’ based on partnership, encouragement and support, the EU established itself as an important local actor in the area of social sustainability, and suggest that the validity of this claim may be EU wide. The EU will likely continue to develop further as an actor in this field; it is the intention of the EU as well as the ambition of the city of Malmö.

Keywords: EU project, urban social sustainable development, Malmö, Fosie

Word count: 9876
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1. **INTRODUCTION**

During my three years of studies in Malmö, I became increasingly interested in and engaged with the city’s development. As an immigrant myself, I have been concerned about the issues connected to challenges of multiculturalism and Malmö’s problems with low level of social sustainability which I heard being discussed in many occasions. Therefore I decided to combine the focus of my study career (International Programme for European Studies) with my local interests.

In this paper, the intention is to examine the role of the European Union (EU) as an actor in the field of ‘urban social sustainable development’. The city of Malmö, specifically its district of Fosie, is to serve as a factual case for analysis of EU actorness in a concrete locality. The central question of the study is:

*What kind of role does the EU play in the area of urban social sustainable development, with regards to the example of the city of Malmö, specifically the district of Fosie?*

By browsing through the information and documents on the topic, there is quite a lot to be found on concrete projects, but I haven’t succeed in finding any document which would analyze the function of the EU as an actor within the field of social sustainability in a concrete geo-political entity. I believe that studying the EU’s influence in a concrete locality could serve as a case-example of EU’s involvement in the local agenda for social sustainable development. This kind of analysis could also, in a more general sense, help to improve the understanding of the EU’s urban policy and the concept of urban social sustainable development.

I presume that the EU is on its way to become a key actor for the urban social sustainable development in Europe and that this fact would be in some way reflected in the projects in Malmö/Fosie.
2. METHOD

My intention is to depict and analyze the role of the European Union in the projects which aim towards urban social sustainable development. This will be done in a form of case study with the field of study being the city of Malmö, and the further focus lying on its district of Fosie.

I believe that Malmö is a brilliant example for such a study. It is, to a considerably high degree, a culturally diverse city, and it has been dealing with many kinds of social challenges. In recent years, the social sustainable development has climbed up to the top of Malmö’s agenda (Tykesson, 2010, pp. 110). It is presumed that the impact of the EU is very complex and multidimensional; therefore the analysis will focus on a concrete geopolitical entity within the city of Malmö, namely the district of Fosie. The concentration on the district of Fosie should enable a deeper review of the possible factors of influence. With consideration to the complexity of the EU’s paper in the area of urban social sustainability, a detailed analysis of its impact on the city of Malmö as a whole would require much more extensive study. Fosie is a perfect field for the study, since it has cooperated closely with the EU and many of the projects in the district have been carried out within the EU-wide networks. The analysis of the actions and projects for social sustainable development in Fosie could therefore be a relevant reference of the EU’s role in a wide range of cities throughout the Union.

Yin defines case as “the real life set of events from which data will be drawn” (Yin, 2004, pp. 14). The data can have qualitative or quantitative nature (Yin, 2004, pp. 14). This paper will rely predominantly on the qualitative evidence with some minor use of quantitative data.

Andersen (2003, pp. 1) observes two types of theoretical ambitions within the case studies-literature on the EU:

A) Applied theory for interpretation and explanation
B) Theory elaboration and construction.

“Concepts and theories can account for specific cases, and case studies can provide rich material for theory construction” (Andersen, 2003, pp. 1). The choice of theoretical tools should therefore be selected in light of the research’s aim. The primary intention is to define
and explain the role of the EU in the field of study, which has been narrowed down in order to make the study practicable with respect to its extent. The theory of actorness will serve as a tool for interpretation and explanation of the EU’s role as an actor in the studied area. Apart from the geopolitical dimension of the field of study (the city of Malmö and the district of Fosie), there is another one - the ‘operational’ dimension, which is represented by the ‘urban social sustainable development’. The introduction and discussion of the concept is essential, since it is one of the cornerstones of the study. Additionally, it is vital for understanding, and useful for evaluating the concrete projects and actions. It will also serve as a reference for comparison of the ‘European’ and the local approach.

A case study analysis involves collecting and presenting data, analyzing them, and then offering interpretations and conclusions (Yin, 2004, pp. 16). The analysis part will contain presentation of selected data connected to the case: facts about the EU urban policy, the city of Malmö and its district of Fosie, and the projects which can be classified as ‘aiming for urban social sustainable development’. Criteria for such a classification will be the concept of urban social sustainability. Only those projects which are currently in the phase of implementation or those which have a connection to the current ones will be selected. The purpose of this preference is the aim of depicting the most up to date facts of the EU as an actor in the field of study. The theoretical tools will be employed in order to analyze and discuss the EU actorness.

The objective of the study is not to evaluate the impact of the projects on urban social sustainable development. The intention is to analyze, discuss, and possibly elaborate a theoretical explanation of EU’s role in these specific urban related issues, supported by the findings and the arguments elaborated in the study.

3. SOURCES AND MATERIAL

The study is limited in respect to the used material and theoretical tools. The results and the arguments elaborated upon them are subject to them. Since the analysis focuses on a multi-dimensional phenomenon, there is a corresponding variety of sources. The selection of material is a crucial part of the analysis; therefore it was carried out with carefulness and with regards to the aim of the study. Findings or statements of major significance for the analysis were often verified and confirmed by other sources.
For the general evaluation of the EU urban policy, predominantly the articles of Atkinson (2007) and Parkinson (2005) will be used. Rob Atkinson is professor and urban research director at the University of Bristol, Michael Parkinson is Director of the European Institute for Urban Affairs. He also works as adviser on urban affairs to the European Commission, OECD, and EUROCITIES (European Institute for Urban Affairs, 2010).

The theoretical section is based upon the Bretherton and Vogler’s book (2006) on the global actorness of the EU. The sustainable development definitions are elaborated upon the articles of Torjman (2000), Vice-President of the Caledon Institute of Social Policy, and Dempsey (2009), researcher of the Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development.

The research work of Michael Stigendal (Urban Studies senior Researcher at Malmö University and follow-up researcher of the SÖM Fosie CoNet network project1) and the documents and reviews by Bertil Nilsson (district of Fosie officer, project manager for SÖM Fosie) were the primary sources for the analysis of the EU’s role in the district of Fosie. Other frequently used material originates from European institutions, the city of Malmö official documents, statistics and documents of other Swedish and international institutions, and official documents and reviews from the concrete projects, networks and programs.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1. The Social Dimension of Sustainable Development

Before defining its social dimension, it is essential to determine the meaning of sustainable development itself. Sustainable development is a term, which is frequently used, but hard to define. Sherri Torjman (2000, pp. 2) observes that the challenge derives from the non-prescriptive, rather normative notion of sustainable development and defines the term as “a holistic approach to improving the quality of life” (Torjman, 2000, pp. 2) with presumption of substantial links among economic, social and environmental well-being. It implies that changes in any domain will have an impact upon the other two (Torjman, 2000, pp. 2).

1 SÖM Fosie (SydÖstra Malmö – South-east Malmö) – the project is described in the analysis section (pp. 20 – 22).
The European Commission offers a similar definition:

"Sustainable Development stands for meeting the needs of present generations without jeopardizing the ability of futures generations to meet their own needs – in other words, a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. It offers a vision of progress that integrates immediate and longer-term objectives, local and global action, and regards social, economic and environmental issues as inseparable and interdependent components of human progress” (European Commission webpage, Sustainable Development, 2011).

The definitions point out clearly the objective and the principles of interdependence, but they do not mention any elements and instruments of sustainable development. Torjman identifies three key directions which he derives from a studied interpretation of the concept: poverty reduction, social investment and building of safe and caring communities. These priority areas have roots in the fundamental principles of the sustainable development concept and they derive from the conclusions of major international documents (Torjman, 2000, pp. 2).

The three priority areas introduced by Torjman seem to be interconnected. While all of them represent a concrete objective, they could also serve as instruments to support each other. The United Nations define poverty as the ”greatest threat to political stability, social cohesion and the environmental health of the planet” (United Nations Development Programme, 1994, pp. 20). Social investment means investment in human resources. Two major areas for social investment are health and education. Building safe and caring communities is a principle which implies that all individuals and sectors have a responsibility to promote human well-being (Torjman, 2000, pp. 4). From these three statements could be concluded, that reduction of poverty and investment in health and educational structure are the cornerstones for social sustainable development. Second conclusion is that the development of these cornerstones is most successful when all individuals and sectors are conscious of their responsibility for human well being and engaged in promotion of it. The interdependence of the three priorities becomes more obvious with the statement that in order to enable all the individuals to act with responsibility, there is a need for an inclusive social environment with equal possibilities of access to healthcare and education.
According to the European Commission, sustainable development is not determined exclusively by policies. It must be handled by the whole society as guiding principles for citizens’ every day choices, as well as political and economic decisions. This requires profound changes in thinking, in economic and social structures and in consumption and production patterns (European Commission webpage, Sustainable Development, 2011).

“One way that citizens engage with communities is through direct involvement in their institutions and activities. /…/ Another way to encourage meaningful engagement is through community problem solving (unemployment, poverty, promote arts. /.../ Deliberation entails the careful weighing of options against what is valuable and possible” (Torjman, 2000, pp. 5). Investment in education provides the basis for economic success as well as a foundation for an ”informed intelligent citizenry that comprises the bedrock of democracy” (Torjman, 2000, pp. 4).

Dempsey et al. (2009) go further towards conceptualizing the social sustainable development in urban areas. They connect it to the concept of ’sustainable community’, which is underpinned by factors such as social equity and justice (Dempsey et al., 2009, pp. 1). As indicated in the foregoing paragraphs, social sustainability is a complex multi-dimensional concept. Dempsey et al. add an underlying question to this statement: “what are the social goals of sustainable development?”(Dempsey et al., 2009, pp. 1). According to the authors, this question is open to a multitude of answers, with no consensus on how these goals should be defined.

At the core of the term of urban social sustainability, the authors identify two overarching dimensions: social equity and sustainability of community. The issues of social equity are political and policy-natured, focusing on the notion of social justice (Dempsey et al., 2009, pp. 8). The ’sustainability of community’ dimension is concerned with the functioning of society in its sense of a collective entity, embodied in the term ’community’. Dempsey et al. also introduce five specific inter-related measurable aspects of community sustainability: social interaction, participation in collective groups and networks in the community, the stability of the community, pride and sense of place, and safety and security (Dempsey et al., 2009, pp. 5).
Social interaction is the communicative process which is essential for the formation of both human nature and of the social order. "Without social interaction, people living in a given area can only be described as a group of individuals living separate lives, with little sense of community or sense of pride or place attachment (Dempsey et al., 2009, pp. 5). Participation in local and community activities is considered as one of the domains of social capital; it relates closely to the sense of community through its association with the concept of civic society (Dempsey et al., 2009, pp. 6). The dimension of community stability consists in support to social capital² (e.g. through educational and community facilities), and minimizing crime and anti-social behavior (Dempsey et al., 2009, pp. 7). The sense of community consists in residents’ sense of attachment and belonging to the physical environment in which they live, their attachment to other people living there, as well as the social order, common norms and the civic culture (Dempsey et al., 2009, pp. 7). The safety of a community is fundamental part of its social sustainability and consists in “fulfillment of basic needs required before social cohesion³ can be achieved” (Dempsey et al., 2009, pp. 8), thus an antecedent of any positive social activity in a given community.

Benchmarks of political participation, such as electoral turnout, can be used to measure certain urban social sustainability, concretely the dimension of participation in local activities and networks defined by Dempsey et al. (2009, pp. 6). It is argued that the community stability dimension is related to residential turnover. More concretely, low residential mobility is widely regarded as a positive quality of a society. A high residential turnover could be a risk for community stability and could be seen as a sign of failure, but it does not have to be so in every community. Some communities or neighborhoods offer a setting appropriate for residents at particular life stages that are characterized by greater mobility, such as students (Dempsey et al., 2009, pp. 7).

² Social capital in a local or regional context could be defined as "features of social organization such as networks, norms and trust that can facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit" (European Foundation for Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2005, pp. 3).

³Social cohesion is understood as "a dialectic balance between three values: freedom, equality and solidarity” (Dickes, Valentova & Borsenberger, 2009, pp. 2). It could be also percieved as the other extreme of social dissolution (Dickes, Valentova & Borsenberger, 2009, pp. 2).
4.2. The Social Constructivist Perspective of Actorness

The social constructivist approach is founded on the claim that "human beings inhabit a social world, which they have themselves created but to which they are also a subject" (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, pp. 21). The 'social world' is composed of structures which provide opportunities as well as constraints. An actor could be understood as whatever unit in the structure who has agency - that is who can make rules, but in the same time has to obey to the existing rules (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, pp. 21).

Agency arises from 'action settings' or distinct patterns of opportunity and constraint which are subjected to the structure (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, pp. 21). Knowledge of these settings, availability of resources and decisions concerning the timing and the approach of applying them, political will and skills are factors which can determine actorness (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, pp. 21).

Bretherton and Vogler present a theoretical concept which I find, after some minor adjustments, very useful for the analysis of the EU’s actorness in the field of urban sustainable development. Their approach to the EU as an actor ‘under construction’ presupposes “a complex set of interacting processes, based on the notions of presence, opportunity and capability, that combine in varying ways to shape the Union’s external activities” (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, pp. 24).

Bretherton and Vogler, define EU actorness by three conceptual elements: opportunity, presence and capability. ‘Opportunity’ refers to the set of ideas and events on the external/international arena to which the EU has will and capacity to respond (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, pp. 24 - 27). The concept of ‘presence’ consists in the relationship between the developments of the EU and the expectations of its external influence (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, pp. 27 - 29). ‘Capability’ corresponds to the level of effectiveness of external action. This fragment is the most technical one and is directly connected to the EU’s institutional framework, its potential to formulate effective policies and the availability of appropriate policy instruments (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, pp. 29 - 30).

Bretherton and Vogler apply this approach on analysis of EU’s external actions but I presume that the same approach could be used for a study of EU’s activities in the local/urban field.
5. ANALYSIS

5.1. EU Urban Policy?

The EU has formal responsibility for regional policy – but not for urban policy. In 1991, the Commission’s proposal to give the EU responsibility for urban matters was rejected by the member states (Parkinson, 2005, pp. 10). Parkinson (2005, pp. 12) presents six arguments which have been used to justify an increased role of the EU in the urban policy:

1. The cities are recognized as regional economy drivers, which prove the clear linkage between the city and the region. Since there is no conflict or difference between urban and regional economies, there should be no policy difference.

2. The key components of modern economies – innovation, creativity, communication, and skills – are concentrated in the urban areas. Therefore, in order to increase national and European competitiveness (as set in the Lisbon agenda), the EU should intervene.

3. The cities attract immigrants seeking opportunities, who often stay out of the mainstream of urban life. Consequently, the cities are confronted with social challenges such as social exclusion, emergence of disadvantaged neighborhoods and residential segregation. Both national governments and the EU have a moral responsibility to help people and communities in dealing with social challenges. It is also argued that these challenges pose an obvious threat to the political and social stability of the EU.

4. The urban social challenges are not local but international – common to all European cities – and interconnected. Therefore they require cross-national responses. An EU response is legitimated by the fact, that these challenges are to a considerable extent a consequence of EU policy concerning the free movement of goods, capital and people.

5. The European Commission has acquired a strategic position as an international organization. It possesses a wide understanding of the challenges and responses experienced in European cities. The Commission has been engaged in a broad range of
policies, programs, processes and places. It has a crucial competence to encourage awareness, networks, good practice and innovative responses in cities.

6. The Commission has been already involved in a wide range of policies with urban agenda. However, Parkinson claims, that “the impact of such actions upon urban areas is not transparent or clearly understood “(Parkinson, 2005, pp. 12).

Parkinson (2005, pp. 21) also stresses that the importance and the impact of EU programs differs by the country or region of implementation. The United Kingdom is quite reluctant to the EU urban policy outside the accession countries. The effects of EU subsidies were considered minor in most of North Western Europe (Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany) and in Austria. On the other hand, the EU was very important for the cohesion countries: Portugal, Greece, Ireland, Spain – and parts of Italy and Germany (Parkinson, 2005, pp. 21).

The roots of the EU urban policy date back to 1992 when the Treaty of European Union set cohesion alongside monetary union and the single market as one of the main goals (Parkinson, 2005, pp. 13). In 1993 the Structural Funds’ budget was doubled by the Council, which increased the concern for cities. According to Parkinson (2005, pp. 14), the essential point of concern for cities in regional policy was marked by the Commission’s publication ‘Sustainable Urban Development in the European Union: a framework for action’ (1998). This publication constituted a setup for EU’s approach to urban policy and led to extension of the URBAN\(^4\) Community Initiative to URBAN II, under which the URBACT program was launched (Parkinson, 2005, pp. 14). The URBAN approach was the first occasion which linked socio-economic challenges to spatial structures (Parkinson, 2005, pp. 21).

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\(^4\) URBAN is the Community Initiative of the European Regional Development Fund for sustainable development in the troubled urban districts of the European Union. URBAN II is a follow up to URBAN I (1994-1999) and aims to promote the design and implementation of innovative models of development for the economic and social regeneration of troubled urban areas. It focuses on strengthening information and experience-sharing on sustainable urban development in the European Union (European Commission’s web page, Inferegio, URBAN II, 2011).
URBACT

Urbact is an exchange and learning program designed to promote sustainable urban development, jointly financed by the EU’s European Regional Development Fund and the Member States. The URBACT program encompasses 5000 active participants in 300 cities and 29 countries (Urbact webpage, Urbact at a glance, 2011). The program affirms that cities play the ‘key role in facing increasingly complex societal changes’ and enables them to work together to develop new and sustainable solutions to major urban challenges, which integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions (Urbact webpage, Urbact at a glance, 2011). Urbact is part of EU’s cohesion policy and at its core is the goal to implement the Lisbon-Gothenburg Strategy.

Lisbon – Gothenburg Strategy

The Lisbon strategy is an initiative set forward during the European Council summit in Lisbon in March 2000. The agenda’s objective was to make EU ”the most competetive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy by 2010” (Euractiv, 2007). The strategy covers a wide range of policies with the aim of making Europe more dynamic and competitive with focus on employment, economic reform and social cohesion (Lisbon European Council – Presidency Conclusions, 2000).

At the Gothenburg European Council summit in June 2001, the Commission’s proposal ‘A Sustainable Europe for a better world: A European Strategy for Sustainable Development’ was discussed. The summit gave rise to a new agenda, designed to deal with threats to quality of life with focus on issues such as climate change, poverty and health threats (European Commission’s webpage, The European Sustainable Development Strategy, 2010). The Gothenburg agenda completes the Lisbon strategy and it identifies seven major challenges to sustainable development:

- Social exclusion and demographic ageing
- Climate change and energy
- Transport
- Consumption and production
- Natural resources
- Public health
URBACT projects involve primarily cities, but also other local authorities, universities and research institutions. Realistic outputs are ensured by involving key players from each partner city via Local Support Groups and developing an effective Local Action Plan (Urbact webpage, Our Missions, 2011). Knowledge based on experiences from different projects is collected and implemented into integrated processes that encompass the economic, social, cultural and environmental dimensions of urban development. The outputs of URBACT projects are available to all city policy makers throughout Europe through its web site and National Dissemination Points – relay points spreading the information in each country’s national language (Urbact webpage, Our Missions, 2011). An URBACT project is a network which encompasses 6 to 12 cities (or other partners) from at least 3 member or partner states, which are enabled to work together on a specific urban issue linked to sustainable urban development. The projects last between two and three years and are funded partially by the URBACT, the European Regional and Development Fund and/or the European Social Fund, and the national and local contributions (Urbact webpage, Our Missions, 2011).

URBACT II project, a follower of URBACT I (2002 – 2006), was launched in 2007 with the implementation period of 6 years. The specific aim of URBACT II is supporting exchanges of experience among city policy-makers, decision-makers and practitioners in order to ensure transferring of know-how. URBACT II also aims to assist the cities in defining their action plans for sustainable urban development.

The activities linked to the structural fund use in European regions are defined and coordinated by the European Commission. The URBACT program and its projects are partly financed by the Commission, which contributes 78% of the budget through the European Regional Development Fund (Urbact webpage, Supervision Bodies, 2011).

5.2. Why is Malmö a good case for the study?

Malmö is a city which has gone through a significant transformation in the past decades. It managed to recover after the collapse of its heavy industries in 1970’s and 1980’s and to turn
population decline into population growth (Urbact Cities Facing the Crisis – Impact and Responses, 2010, pp. 40). The less positive side of Malmö’s recovery is the fact that certain groups of residents have not been benefitted by the progress. The large immigrant minorities, which represent around 30 per cent of the city’s population, were left behind (Urbact Cities Facing the Crisis – Impact and Responses, 2010, pp. 40). As a result, Malmö has been dealing with long term issues connected to social exclusion such as segregation and increase of social divisions.

The rise of the Öresund-bridge, foundation of Malmö University, and the transformation from industrial economy to service-based economy are the features which made Malmö a prime example of a ‘comeback city’ (Urbact Cities Facing the Crisis – Impact and Responses, 2010, pp. 41). However, the city’s prosperity of the last two decades has not been shared by all residents, and the lack of social sustainability is present and obvious in many spheres. The excluded groups consist foremost of residents with low levels of education, language difficulties, or drug and alcohol problems. Indicators such as employment levels, the number of inhabitants on income support, educational attainment levels, or housing conditions show that Malmö has performed below the national averages (Urbact Cities Facing the Crisis – Impact and Responses, 2010, pp. 41).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1.</th>
<th>Post secondary education, Swedish and foreign born 25-64 years old per FA region, year 2008. Percent and numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FA region</td>
<td>Swedish residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Göteborg</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malmö</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Median of net income per month, Swedish and foreign born 25-64 years old per FA region, year 2008. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FA region</th>
<th>Swedish-born</th>
<th>Foreign-born</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Difference Swedish/Foreign-born</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>19690</td>
<td>13640</td>
<td>18350</td>
<td>6050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Göteborg</td>
<td>18510</td>
<td>13060</td>
<td>17630</td>
<td>5450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malmö</td>
<td>17690</td>
<td>10690</td>
<td>16460</td>
<td>7010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Integration: Rapport 3, Database STATIST, SCB (pp. 58)
FA region (Funktionella Analysregioner) Functional Analysis Regions
The tables above (TABLE 1.) are elaborated upon the analysis of the Statistic agency of the Swedish government and they confirm the arguments stated in the Urbact report (Urbact Cities Facing the Crisis – Impact and Responses, 2010). The educational attainments, as well as the income levels are the lowest among the three major Swedish cities. Reason behind the numbers could, to some extent, be the size of the city. With regard to the almost equivalent educational attainment of foreign born residents, the proportion of foreign born residents in respective municipality could be considered a factor of influence. However, the median income of foreign born residents in Malmö is significantly lower than in the other two cities. This is a clear demonstration of social segregation and lack of equal opportunities.

The Urbact study reports extremely high residential segregation by presenting some facts of specific areas in the city. They are characterized by unemployment levels from 45 per cent to 80 per cent (with up to 65 percent of residents living on income support), overcrowded housing conditions, up to 60 per cent of children leave 9th grade without sufficient marks to make them eligible for high school, up to 95 per cent of the residents are of immigrant backgrounds, and the life expectancy is significantly lower than in other parts of the city (Urbact Cities Facing the Crisis – Impact and Responses, 2010, pp. 41). The disaffected youths present a significant threat to the city’s future development with consideration to the fact that 45 per cent of Malmö’s youth population have an immigrant background (Urbact Cities Facing the Crisis – Impact and Responses, 2010, pp. 41).

Stigendal (a., 2009, pp. 3) confirms that the problems of social exclusion are concentrated to a coherent area east and south of the city centre, covering almost 25 per cent of the Malmö’s population, which makes Malmö the most segregated city in Sweden. The most of the Fosie city district belongs to this area (Stigendal, (a), 2009, pp. 3). In the recent years, social exclusion in the city has been recognized as the most complex and important barrier to sustainable development and is often discussed and problematized in official documents and operative plans of the municipality (Tykesson, 2010, pp. 2, Boverket, 2009, pp.110).

“The city’s work needs to be directed at creating a sustainable city from all aspects. Environmental, economical and social sustainability needs to be integrated so they can mutually strengthen each other, which requires an increased focus on social sustainability, …” (Commission for a Socially Sustainable Malmö, 2011).
TABLE 2.
Electoral Turnout: Percent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Difference 2006/2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malmö</td>
<td>77,56</td>
<td>79,63</td>
<td>2,07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>79,98</td>
<td>82,36</td>
<td>2,38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>75,16</td>
<td>76,96</td>
<td>1,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Göteborg</td>
<td>79,54</td>
<td>82,72</td>
<td>3,18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>82,42</td>
<td>84,96</td>
<td>2,54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden average</td>
<td>81,99</td>
<td>84,63</td>
<td>2,64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Valmyndigheten 2011 (Swedish Electoral Authority)

Dempsey et al. (2009, pp. 6) claim that benchmarks of political participation, such as electoral turnout, can be used to measure urban social sustainability. In the table above (TABLE 2.), the eastern part of Malmö appears to feature significantly lower electoral participation than the rest of the city, and the municipality of Malmö as a whole performs well below the national average.

The facts presented above demonstrate that Malmö is a city which has been dealing with significant issues connected to the lack of social sustainability. Segregation, social dissolution and social injustice appear to be the major challenges.

5.3. Malmö and the EU: Towards the Urban Social Sustainability

The Context of Projects Aiming for Social Sustainability
The range of possibilities of dealing directly with the challenges (discussed in the opening of the analysis part) is limited to the city council’s areas of competences which cover: education, culture, museums, libraries, streets, parks and leisure, the environment and city planning (Urbact Cities Facing the Crisis – Impact and Responses, 2010, pp. 42). To deal with its social problems, the city of Malmö exercised a significant shift in policy directions when on March 3, 2010, the city council adopted the decision to develop the social sustainability of the city with the objective to include and integrate all the residents of Malmö into society and make
them participate in its prosperity (Boverket, 2009, pp. 114). The purpose of the program is to reach social sustainable development and it should function as a device and an operation method to develop Malmö as a city where all the three notions of sustainability – the environmental, the economic, and the social – mutually reinforce each other (Boverket, 2009, pp. 114). The strategy will be implemented in four programs targeting four geographical areas within four city-districts, which are believed to be the key areas of strengthening the city’s social sustainability (Urbact Cities Facing the Crisis – Impact and Responses, 2010, pp. 43):

1. Seved (district council South Inner city)
2. Holma-Kroksbäck (district council Hyllie)
3. Lindängen (district council Fosie)
4. Herrgården (district council Rosengård)

Although the programs’ implementation is included in the local administration’s budget, the possibility of co-financing from EU Structural Funds will also be explored (Urbact Cities Facing the Crisis – Impact and Responses, 2010, pp. 43).

The 'Local Development Agreements’ are considered to play the key role in the Swedish Government’s aim to combat social exclusion and to decrease segregation (Sweden Urbact Dissemination Point, 2010, pp. 2). These are agreements of long-term cooperation with city districts or neighbourhoods which are highly disadvantaged or suffer of social exclusion. The current agreements aim at identifying the topics that constitutes focal points in the Government’s and the municipalities’ common work with urban development and in the period of 2008-2010, 21 municipalities with altogether 38 city districts have been involved (Sweden Urbact Dissemination Point, 2010, pp. 2).

The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs (Ungdomsstyrelsen) study 'Vägarna in’ (The ways in) reports that the municipalities involved in the development projects benefit significantly of knowledge exchange networks with other municipalities involved in urban development projects or previous experience of it and highlight the importance of European Urban Knowledge Network (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2009, pp. 11). European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN) is a network designed to collect and share knowledge and experience on tackling urban issues. The major components of EUKN are the 17 member states of the EU, the European Commission and the two major programs concerning urban sustainability – Eurocities and URBACT (EUKN, (a), 2011).
Although the Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs compliment the work of the EUKN, the EU urban policies are often more appreciated by the cities than by the national governments (Parkinson, 2005, pp. 23). They represent an alternative source of subsidies, with regards to low or reduced national spending. They also offer a possibility to increase influence of the cities, which is often limited by the national governments (Parkinson, 2005, pp. 23). Parkinson also claims that the cities attach great importance to guarantee EU funds and moreover, that the European title gives special status to the projects.

“In some countries URBAN is seen by cities as an essential addition to their development opportunities, which they often enjoy independently of the national government’s will” (Parkinson, 2005, pp. 23). The official document of Malmö city, ‘Strategi för Malmö stads internationella arbete’ (The Strategy for Malmö city’s international acting), emphasizes that the city has to approach proactively the development of the EU and the opportunities which arise from the European integration process (Malmö Stad (a), 2011, pp. 2). Every administrative department of the city of Malmö has named an officer which works with the EU issues. These officers form together the EU network of the city of Malmö (Malmö Stad (b), 2011, pp. 2).

**The Projects in the District of Fosie**

The district of Fosie is the second largest district of Malmö which accommodates around 42,000 residents of approximately 100 different nationalities. The district is characterized by a diverse potential as well as by serious problems. In 2008, 43 per cent of the residents were born abroad; in the sub-district of Hermodsdal (3226 inhabitants) 54 per cent were born abroad and only 41 per cent of the residents at the age of 20-64 had a gainful employment (Stigendal, (a), 2009, pp. 3). Stigendal highlights that many residents in Fosie, particularly young people, feel deserted, and claims that failures to solve these problems are often explicable by the lack of cooperation between the different actors (Stigendal, (a), 2009, pp. 3).

The ’Bi-Annual Report’ of Sweden Urbact National Dissemination Point emphasizes the application of a holistic view in the projects, if they are to succeed, as well as flexibility and the ability to focus on the active participation (Sweden Urbact Dissemination Point, 2010, pp. 4). The report presents an example of a successful increased cooperation in the activities of
the 'Work and Integration Centre'\(^5\) (AIC) in Malmö, which invokes and supports young people to contact different authorities to express their needs. The local meeting place ‘Lilla Växthuset’ (The Little Green House) is complimented for its competent staff which has good local knowledge and intercultural competence (Sweden Urbact Dissemination Point, 2010, pp. 4). The project involved creation of a meeting place for young people formed by their own interests and needs, aiming at finding ways to work and education (Malmö stad webpage – Lilla Växthuset; Sweden Urbact Dissemination Point, 2010, pp. 2).

'Young in Research' is another project of Malmö city, which introduce young people to research as a summer job. Both examples are local projects initiated through a larger umbrella project (SÖM Fosie) funded by the European Regional and Development Fund.

The project SÖM (Sydöstra Malmö – South-east Malmö) Fosie was designed to reduce segregation in Malmö and to contribute to economic, environmental, and social sustainable development in the city district (Nilsson, 2010, pp. 4). The earlier experiences of projects founded on the cooperation with EU programs, such as URBAN and URBACT I, have been used in many different ways within the SÖM Fosie project (Malmö Stadsbyggnadskontor, 2010, pp. 7).

The Malmö-led network within URBACT I, “Young People from Exclusion to Inclusion” (Ungdomar från Utanförskap till Innanförskap) was carried out by cooperating closely with research. The project was led by the city of Malmö; the other participating cities were Gijón (Spain), Copenhagen (Denmark), Aarhus (Denmark), Göteborg (Sweden), Gera (Germany), Helsinki (Finland), Velenje (Slovenia), Ukmerge (Lithuania), Lomza (Poland), Strovolos (Cyprus) and Tallinn (Estonia); and implemented in 2004 – 2006 (Stigendal, 2009, pp. 1). Its outcome: “The Guidelines for Acting” (Riktlinjer för handling) is considered a valuable device for the work within SÖM Fosie (Nilsson, 2010, pp. 4).

The district administration of Fosie was granted capital for a propagation-centre concerning URBACT in Sweden: URBACT NDP (Urbact National Dissemination Point). One of its

\(^5\) The Work and Integration Centre (Arbets- och Integrationscenter – AIC, Fosie district of Malmö) is an “up to date one-stop agency, including outreach work as an important part of the activities”(Weeber, 2009, pp. 4).
The Networks

The interdependency and complexity of the networks becomes obvious already when examining the actors involved in one local project. The SÖM Fosie involves close cooperation of the municipal Housing and Urban Development Office (Stadsbyggnadskontoret), the Local Roadworks Department (Gatukontoret), the Fosie district administration, the residents and other private actors (Nilsson, 2010, pp. 4). The scheme below (TABLE 3.) depicts quite well the composition.

TABLE 3.

Scheme of Organization within the SÖM Fosie Project, Source: (Nilsson, 2010, pp. 10).  

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6 Styrgrupp (Steering Committee), Områdesutvecklare Lindängen (area developer for a sub-project Lindängen), Områdesarbetare Ungdomsfrågor (area operative – the youth-issues), Utbildningsförvaltningen Ung I Sommar (administrative body for education: project ‘Ung I Sommar’), Stena Fastigheter (Stena – real estate agency), AIC (Arbets och Integrations-Center – Work and Integration centre), Stadsbyggnadskontoret (Housing and Urban Development office), Service förvaltningen (Service administration department), Gatukontoret (Roadworks Department), MKB (municipal real estate agency), Områdesarbetare (area operative), Multiortsarena/samordnare (multi-sport arena/coordinator), Företagsnätverkare (business corporation)
CoNet (Cohesion Network) is a network of 11 EU cities under the URBACT II project which aims at exploring current approaches to strengthen social cohesion in neighborhoods (CoNet Newsletter, 2010, pp. 1). The partner cities are Malmö (Sweden), Palermo (Italy), Zabrze (Poland), Alba Iulia (Romania), Liverpool (United Kingdom), Gijon (Spain), Apeldoorn (Netherlands), Sofia (Bulgaria), Brussels (Belgium), Vaulx-en-Velin (France) with Berlin (Germany) as the network’s leader (CoNet webpage, 2011). CoNet brings together experiences in neighborhood-based and integrated approaches to local development with focus upon strengthening communities and neighborhoods, education and employment (CoNet webpage, 2011). The network consists of three pillars. The first one is composed of 11 Local Support Groups working on Local Action Plans; secondly, 11 thematic meetings (one in each partner city); and thirdly, an interconnected (city to city) project support scheme bringing officers and experts from one city to another, in order to ensure direct transfer of know how (CoNet webpage, 2011). One tangible output of CoNet’s work is its ‘Guide to Social Cohesion’ (2011) which is a result of three year cooperation and learning process from CoNet partner cities. It is a summary of academic approaches, good practice examples and interviews with practitioners and politicians along the core tasks of the network.

Stigendal defines seven steps typical for network-based projects. The first components are benchmarks – standards to pursue and references which enable performance-measuring (Stigendal, (b), 2009, pp. 4). The six further steps consist of “training for peer review teams, the host city’s writing of a pre-review report, the peer’s desk review of the pre-review report, peer review visit, making an assessment and giving feedback by writing a post-review report” (Stigendal, (b), 2009, pp. 4 - 5). This peer review system is used as “a tool for mutual learning whereby local policies, programmes and practices are evaluated by colleagues from other cities – peers who act as ‘critical friends’” (Stigendal, (b), 2009, pp. 4).

Nilsson claims that the accumulation of experiences, the inter-sectoral approach, network-based partnerships, post-reviews and research, and the connection of the local approach to the structural funds and the European perspective are the keys to the local sustainable development (Nilsson, 2010, pp. 7). The concrete intention of the project (SÖM Fosie) was to
foster employment percentage growth and reduce the needs for economic support; make the district attractive and secure; augment democracy, participation and prosperity (Nilsson, 2010, pp. 9). On the other hand, Nilsson also confirms that the development depends on commitment and participation of the individuals in the neighborhood (Nilsson, 2010, pp. 9). Weeber confirms what becomes detectable through the analysis of the projects in Fosie, when he states that “the inclusion of young people bridges the communication gap and is especially stressed in Malmö’s projects” (Weeber, 2009, pp. 4). He also presents five success criteria which were developed by the CoNet network through the experience of ‘Young People from Exclusion to Inclusion’ project:

1. Strengthen the ability of young people to act by themselves: empowerment
2. Strengthen Social Relations
3. Structural Changes of schools – to capitalize on the potential of young people, tackle the structural causes of exclusion in order to prevent pupils losing faith and opting out
4. Cooperation with local society
5. Renewing the view on knowledge (Weeber, 2009, pp. 4).

Stigendal argues that the setup and the limits of which kind of needs can be answered are decided and subordinated to the EU policies and formulated in the criteria for the EU grants. If the criteria are not fulfilled, there will be no grant. That is why the EU conditions must be analyzed on the first place, in order to adjust the local needs and design the project with the constant aim of making it compatible with the Commission´s prerequisites (Stigendal, (c), 2009, pp, 2).

5.4. Discussion
In the first part of the analysis, the facts, the projects and the system descriptions, which were evaluated as relevant for the study, were introduced. In this stage of the paper, I would like to create an interaction between the statements and facts presented previously and the theoretical concepts. The aim of this interaction is to generate evaluations, arguments or ideas which
would help to improve the understanding of EU’s paper in the field of urban social sustainability.

As I previously argued, I believe that the analysis of the district of Fosie in Malmö could reveal patterns which would be identical or very similar to those in other cities of the European Union. It was also clearly demonstrated that Malmö and its district of Fosie constitute a perfect example for a case study of EU’s influence on urban social sustainable development. It is therefore I permit myself to claim that the EU actorness in Malmö and its district of Fosie could generally represent the EU’s role in the area of urban social sustainable development in whole the Union. Based on these arguments and the data presented in the analysis I developed three general claims, which will be introduced and discussed in the following section.

1. The local and the European perspectives on dealing with urban social challenges are inter-related; moreover, the EU funded programs are designed to increase the interdependence.

The presented data reveal a high degree of compatibility between the local approach and the EU one. Social exclusion appears to be the top issue in the agenda of the programs in the city district of Fosie. It also appears as the first of the seven major challenges to sustainable development defined in the Gothenburg agenda. The city of Malmö officials also stress the social dimension as the most crucial of the three dimensions of sustainable development (Tykesson, 2010, pp. 2; Boverket, 2009, pp.110; Commission for a Socially Sustainable Malmö, 2011).

The EU funding serves as an incentive for the municipalities to develop projects which fit in the frame and thus become applicable for the EU financial support (Stigendal, (c), 2009, pp, 2). The fact that one of the conditions for an URBACT project is that the network is based at least in three member or partner states – the ‘multinational conditionality’ may result in weakening the national government’s influence in the local development and, in the meantime, strengthening the role of the international dimension and thus the dependence of the cities to the institutions of the Union. This effect becomes much more intensive when the same occurs simultaneously in a broad range of cities. Bretherton and Vogler (2006, pp. 22) present the definition of the EU as a network based and organized on pooling and sharing of sovereignty. A clear consequence of this analogy is the challenge to territoriality. The
interdependence is network based, with the EU as its creator, promoter and coordinator.

2. The EU acts as the network encouraging, managing and supervising organ, and it could be considered as a global (EU wide) promoter of urban social sustainable development.

By encouraging network based projects, the EU developed broad and dense international networks of projects. All those networks are co-financed by the EU funds, which makes the Union directly involved and enables it to have a ‘global’ overview. This makes the EU an actor which actually, to some extent, manages and supervises the urban social sustainability projects (in those localities involved in the networks and programs). The data of URBACT, presented earlier in the paper, and its implementation in the district of Fosie are good examples. As it was stated previously in the analysis, URBACT encompasses 5000 participants in 300 cities in all the 29 EU member states.

Is it a win-win situation? The projects of SÖM Fosie appear to address the most important social challenges of the district, such as youth alienation and lack of confidence in authorities. Their implementation is flexible and always closely connected to evaluation and research which leads to accumulation of experiences and knowledge. The approach promoted, developed and supported by the EU is based on the concept of urban social sustainable development. The concept of sustainable development was strongly emphasized and promoted by the EU: this fact may easily lead to the conclusion that the decision of Malmö city council on applying this approach was (with high probability) a result of lobbying of the EU. On the other hand, the lobbying would not be that successful if the approach would not be reasonable. The premise of support, whether financial or organizational, is certainly a key aspect of its success.

The EU is probably the only body in position to provide such a large scale support due to its ‘presence’\(^7\) in all member states (which facilitates its function as a network co-creator and supervisor) and the financing potential. The EU appears to be the most significant contributor to urban social sustainable development in Europe. Departing from the statement that the

\(^7\) As it was demonstrated in the case of Malmö, every administrative department of the city of Malmö has named an officer which works with the EU issues. These officers form together the EU network of the city of Malmö (Malmö Stad (b), 2011, pp. 2). It is presumed that most of the cities in the Union have a similar EU network.
urban social challenges are common to all cities in the EU\(^8\), the approach of creating and supporting projects based on networking and sharing know-how improves the possibilities of dealing with social challenges more effectively and EU wide.

Parkinson (2005, pp. 21) argues that the projects in the earlier stages of URBAN were successful only in some areas because of the lack of “more integrated response to urban problems in mainstream programmes”. This argument is also supported by Stigendal, who highlights that the earlier failures of solving the social problems in Fosie are often explicable by the lack of cooperation between the different actors (Stigendal, (a), 2009, pp. 3). EU is a promoter of integrated approach, which is regarded as a prerequisite for sustainability and is widely accepted by the city of Malmö as well as researchers and other institutions.

The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2009, pp. 11) confirms that the municipalities involved in the development projects benefit significantly of knowledge exchange networks with other municipalities involved in urban development projects or previous experience of it and highlight the importance of European Urban Knowledge Network which, among others, relates to the URBACT program. Additionally, the EU funded projects in Fosie are characterized by the aim to involve all the actors who could contribute to social sustainability (see the scheme of SÖM Fosie, pp. 17) and promote the holistic view of the problems and active participation (Sweden Urbact Dissemination Point, 2010, pp. 4).

3. **Cities are being gradually more involved in the process of European integration**

The EU gains more influence and closer cooperation with municipalities throughout Europe. Consequently, its contribution to the local development could, to some extent, lead to increased popularity of the EU among the citizens. The EU programs are designed to promote participation of all the actors in the district, especially the residents. The effect is profitable for both the EU and the municipality: it could be considered a good tactics for increased electoral participation (the local and the European) and it undoubtedly contributes to social

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\(^8\) The demographic challenges, which are considered to be the key issues behind the major social challenges of European cities, are to a considerable extent a consequence of EU policy concerning the free movement of goods, capital and people. The urban social challenges are not local but international – common to all European cities – and interconnected. Therefore they require cross-national responses (Parkinson, 2005, pp. 12).
sustainable development of the district as well as to sustainable development throughout the EU. 9

TABLE 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits for the city</th>
<th>Benefits for the EU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- an essential addition to their development opportunities</td>
<td>- The sustainability of the cities improves the overall sustainable development in the EU since the urban issues are interconnected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- alternative source of subsidies, with regards to low or reduced national spending</td>
<td>- The EU acts and market itself as a promoter of urban social sustainable development, which can increase its attractiveness and popularity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- a possibility to increase influence of the cities</td>
<td>- Promotion of active participation in the projects may have some effect on electoral participation, both in municipal and EU elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- as a part of a network, the city can create new partnerships on different levels with variety of purposes and benefits</td>
<td>- The cities become increasingly more dependent on the EU support, which could facilitate for the Union to gradually increase its influence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above (TABLE 5.) is elaborated upon the claims of Parkinson and other arguments and findings presented in the analysis. Its purpose is to confront the benefits which the EU actorness in urban social sustainable development produces for the municipality and for the EU itself. Although it is hard to weigh the EU’s contra the local benefits, they seem to be

9 The cities are recognized as regional economy drivers, which prove the clear linkage between the city and the region. They are also the holders of the key components of modern economies – innovation, creativity, communication, and skills (Parkinson, 2005, pp. 12). Therefore, the cities play an important role for national and European competitiveness and development.
Quite in balance. There are certainly some disadvantages too, for example the costs for the EU and the increased interdependence for the cities. However, with respect to the benefits, they are considered less significant.

According to Bretherton and Vogler’s definition of actorness, an actor is whatever unit in the structure who has agency (the ability to make rules as well as the obligation of obeying to the existing ones). With regards to this definition, the EU is undoubtedly an actor. In the area of urban social sustainable development, with regards to the case of Malmö and its district of Fosie, the ability to make rules is not acquired by creating policies or directives. Instead the EU exercises its influence through network based programs and partnership. The EU funding functions as an incentive which motivates the participants to conform to the rules (conditions) made by the EU. Regarding the existing rules which the EU has to respect, an excellent example is the principle of subsidiarity (established by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992), which only allows the EU to act if a problem cannot be adequately settled by the member states acting on their own, or if the Community could deal more effectively with a given problem. “The general aim of the principle of subsidiarity is to guarantee a degree of independence for a lower authority in relation to a higher body or for a local authority in respect of a central authority” (European Parliament, 2001).

“The European Commission has sought to recognize and support many of the issues and initiatives outlined above in its various urban and spatial communications, but it finds its scope for action even more circumscribed than national governments. The need to respect subsidiarity places strong restrictions on what it can do” (Atkinson, 2007, pp. 16).

Knowledge of the ‘action settings’ (the patterns of opportunity and constraint subjected to the structure), the availability of resources, the timing of and the approach to applying them, political will and skills – these are, according to the constructivist approach (presented in the theoretical section), the factors which determine actorness. In this study, the EU proved itself to utilize effectively all of these factors. The table bellow (TABLE 4.) is elaborated upon the combination of the theoretical concept of actorness and the actual analysis of the EU as an actor in the area of urban social sustainable development in Malmö and the district of Fosie.
TABLE 4.

Factors of EU actorness discovered by the analysis of the EU as an actor in the area of urban social sustainable development in Malmö and the district of Fosie

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Scientific</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Structural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consist of</td>
<td>Mainly the Structural Funds</td>
<td>The ability to carry out an EU wide research</td>
<td>Political skills and will</td>
<td>The ability to act simultaneously in many places, to create and manage EU wide networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use as</td>
<td>Incentive for other actors in order to motivate them to conform to the rules made by the EU</td>
<td>Research enables finding the appropriate method (timing and approach) of acting in a given area</td>
<td>Experiences of exercising influence in many levels and areas, knowledge of opportunities and constraints in a given field of acting</td>
<td>Increasing interdependence between the cities and the EU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The TABLE 4 will now serve as an overview, and a basis for developing the theoretical discussion further by bring in Bretherton and Vogler’s conceptual element of opportunity, presence and capability (see the ‘Theoretical Framework’ section).

In this study, the ‘opportunity’ refers to the set of ideas and events on the local arena to which the European Union has will and capacity to respond. By looking back at the analysis of the EU’s involvement with the projects and programs in the district of Fosie, it could be deduced, that the EU decided to address the social challenges of the district by applying the approach of the urban social sustainable development. It responded by providing structure for a knowledge-sharing network creation within the URBACT program, and by co-financing the concrete projects in the city-district.

The ‘presence’ factor consists in the relationship between the developments of the EU and the expectations of its external (in this case local) influence. The analysis shows that the EU could be considered, at least to some extent, the creator and the main promoter of sustainable development concept in Europe. As it was previously stated, the social dimension is one of the three cornerstones of sustainable development. The study has also presented arguments which explain why the development of the cities is important for the EU and why the EU
should be involved in the urban policy. The combination of these statements provide the answer which could be simplified as follows: The EU has developed an extensive foundation of networks and programs which aim for social sustainable development in the urban areas. The EU is expected to develop further as an actor in this field; it is the self-evident intention of the EU as well as the ambition of the cities.

The notion of ‘capability’ corresponds to the level of effectiveness of external (local) action. It is a technical fragment, which is directly connected to the EU’s institutional framework and its potential to formulate effective policies and the availability of appropriate policy instruments. The potential of EU’s institutional framework to act in the area of urban social sustainability is well introduced in the table above (TABLE 4.) The notion of ‘resources’ could be easily changed to ‘capabilities’ or ‘technical capabilities’. When it comes to the level of effectiveness of EU’s local action (in terms of actorliness); this could be proven effective by the level of collaboration with other political actors - the local authorities, who are not reluctant to subordinate their action plans to the rules (conditions) made by the EU.

"Intersubjective systemic structures consist of shared understandings, expectations and social knowledge embedded in international institutions. (...) Intersubjective structures give meaning to material ones, and it is in terms of meanings that actors act" (Wendt in Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, pp. 21). In constructivist analyses, the structures do not have material nature; they are rather defined as intersubjective. This means that structures do not determine the outcomes, but they provide ‘action settings’ within which agency is displayed (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006, pp. 21). However, the fact is that it is the EU which is the international institution in which the shared understandings, expectations and social knowledge are embedded. This puts the EU in the centre of the action.

The evaluation of the projects’ outcomes, respectively their actual effects on urban social sustainability, was not brought up in the paper. This was due to its minor relevance for the aim of the study. However, the effectiveness of the projects may play an increasingly important role in the future. The report ’Vägarna in’ (The ways in) by the Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs (Ungdomsstyrelsen) shows that there is a lack of knowledge among the municipalities about the project participants: their socio-economic background, and their previous contacts with authorities. This and the diverse nature of the projects make it difficult to evaluate the actual outcomes (Ungdomsstyrelsen, 2009, pp. 7). Researchers, such as
Dempsey or Torjman, which attempt to deal with the concept of social sustainable development, have discovered some patterns which could help to measure social sustainability. Dempsey et al. (2009, pp. 6) claim that benchmarks of political participation, such as electoral turnout, can be used to measure urban social sustainability. Income levels could be used to some extent as well. But the electoral participation seems to be the best measure, since it has a direct connection to the notion of community participation, defined by Dempsey as one of the essential components of urban social sustainability. I believe that a further study with the aim of finding a connection between electoral participation and the impact of the EU projects in Malmö would be valuable. A good approach could also be the study of the projects with regard to the five success criteria, which were formulated from analysis and comparisons of the 19 case study reports, and presented in the Operational Guidelines, one of the outcomes of the Youths – from exclusion to inclusion project (Stigendal (b), 2009, pp. 2).

Another way to follow up this paper would be to do a comparative case study of EU actorness in the area of urban social sustainable development in another city, preferably a member of the same network as Malmö. I also believe that interviews with those officers who work with the EU issues within the local administration of Malmö, especially those of Fosie would be a valuable add to this study.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, the intention was to examine the role of the European Union in the projects which aim towards urban social sustainable development. The city of Malmö and its district of Fosie served as an example of a concrete geo-political entity. The study consisted in:

1. Presentation of relevant data about the EU urban ‘policy’
2. Presentation of relevant data about the EU’s influence in the area of urban social sustainability in Malmö and its district of Fosie,
3. Analysis of the data with help of the concept of social sustainable development and the theory of actorness.
My presumption, that the EU is a key actor of urban social sustainable development in Europe, was confirmed. It has also been demonstrated that, in the case of Malmö and its district of Fosie, the EU has become a significant partner of the local actors which strive for social sustainable development. The EU’s approach of ‘soft politics’ based on partnership, encouragement and support proved itself as an effective means of putting through its will and establishing itself as a local actor. The local and the European approaches to urban social sustainable development are interrelated, due to the nature of the EU funded programs, which are designed (by the EU) to create and gradually increase the interdependence. The URBACT projects have the potential to reduce the gap between the EU and the citizens, while helping the cities to develop urban social sustainability. The EU will likely develop further as an actor in this field; it is the obvious intention of the EU as well as the ambition of the cities.
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