

FROM LOCAL WELFARE REGIMES TO FRAGMENTED URBAN COALITIONS

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INTRODUCTION

The post-war expansion of the Swedish welfare state was largely a local phenomenon. Within the framework of comprehensive welfare programmes, municipalities and county councils became responsible for child care, education, health care etc. The implementation of these programmes were often in the hands of political coalitions led by "strong men", mostly Social Democrats. "The strong man" became the symbol of an urban welfare regime based on an alliance between a Social Democratic state, local politicians and business interests often linked to the housing sector. The partners of the alliance learnt to trust each other within the framework of a common world view: provided priority was given to infrastructural investments in favour of local business the outcome in terms of economic growth would satisfy the needs of both capital and labour, and there would be produced surplus enough for distribution by the "strong men" in local government, brought to power by a working/lower middle class electorate and a strong party organization.

Until the end of the 1970s the Swedish Social Democratic model of a rationally planned, although market-based welfare state was broadly acknowledged as a successful middle way between unfettered capitalism and state-controlled communism. However, when growing economic and ideological problems began to haunt the welfare state in the 1980s the concept of comprehensive, rationalist planning, and ambitious welfare policies were gradually replaced by ideologies and practices signified by catchwords such as decentralisation, deregulation, marketisation and consumerism. New forms of urban planning and governance were also triggered by local initiatives on a global scale. Thus both the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 and the Habitat II Conference in Istanbul in 1996 were occasions when actors representing not only central governments but also local governments and non-governmental organisations were brought together for concerted action aiming at sustainable planning and policies in a broad sense, including not only ecological but also social, economic and other aspects. Towards the turn of the millennium the term 'partnership' became the buzzword, indicating a development from government to governance as formulated both in political practice and in the academic jargon. In sum this development signifies on the one hand a growing fragmentation of urban politics and planning – the "strong man" is a forgotten creature - and on the other hand attempts by politicians, planners and other actors representing the public sphere at overcoming this fragmentation.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the development of a Swedish urban policy within the framework of a long-term historical perspective. Introduction included, the paper contains five sections. The second section is a brief analysis of the pre-history of the local welfare regimes, when there were diverging views within Social Democracy with regard to the proper division of labour between the state and the municipalities. The third section scrutinizes the post-war welfare/accumulation regimes, illustrated by examples from Swedish municipalities and using housing as a crucial policy area. The erosion and crisis of these regimes towards the end of the past Millennium is the topic of the fourth section, Housing policy now faded away as a crucial area of urban policy. Instead urban policy became fragmented to more or less enduring coalitions within different policy areas such as growth policy, environmental policy or social policy. The concluding section contains a short summary of the paper, and a table comparing three types of coalitions with regard to strategic policy target, crucial partners and resource basis.

BEFORE THE WELFARE STATE

The relationship between the central state and local government in Sweden has been strongly affected by the fact that Social Democracy has been in power more or less continuously since 1932. In the history of Swedish Social Democracy three rather distinct phases may be discerned.

Table 1. Three phases in the central-local government relationship in Sweden.

1890 – 1945	State socialism or municipal socialism?	Among two competing coalitions state socialism gradually became victorious to the detriment of municipal socialism. Growing distrust in municipal initiatives.
1945/46 – 1976/80	Municipalities as the creators of the welfare state. Strong men as symbolic guardians of welfare.	Local welfare regimes implement central government decisions, within the limits set by the needs of capital accumulation.
1980 -	The Swedish welfare state model in question.	Local government politics is fragmented into more or less temporary coalitions of public and private actors.

The transition from phase one to phase two will be the topic for this section. In the beginning of the 19th century there were many strong ideological conflicts within the labour movement. These conflicts did not only pertain to the classical issue whether the bourgeois state could and should be reformed or if it had to be crushed by revolutionary means. Neither was there a consensus whether the socialist society had to be governed by a central state or if a decentralised political structure was viable and desirable. Although the state socialist strand became the strongest one, the municipal, decentralist tendency in Social Democracy was always there.

In the decentralist perspective the municipalities are important actors as a link between the central state and the local units of production and consumption, whereas in the state socialist tradition the municipalities are considered the long arm of the central state having no other role than implementing state policies. At the level of programme both tendencies had a place, and in the party programme as of 1911 "municipal socialism" was even mentioned as a viable alternative. Local companies that were of importance with regard to people's welfare or had a monopolistic bias were among the candidates to be transferred into municipal ownership. Land and housing policy were also areas where municipal ownership was put on the agenda.

However, when voting rights in 1918/19 were extended to the adult population at large, and when political power was in sight the majority of the party leadership went for a centralist strategy of efficiency with little room for hesitant local politicians. The central party elite distrusted the visionary capacity of the local party people and, thus, in the party program as of 1928 municipalization of local companies was not any longer mentioned as a viability. The municipalities were given the advice to be financially restrictive. Thus, establishing municipal companies in housing or any other sector was now excluded from the agenda. Instead of the municipalities the Social Democratic party strategists found a new ally in the cooperative housing association (HSB). A number of decisions in the parliament during the 1930s paved the way for policies with the municipalities in a minor role.

The root cause of this is to be found in the historical context, where the actors took their decisions. The capitalist economy had been accompanied by sharp conjunctural ruptures, mass unemployment and little trust in the will and capacity of the politicians. Minority governments succeeded each other, and not until the mid-1930s was there established some sort of trustful relationship between the central and the local levels of government. The general agreement between capital and labour (Saltsjöbadsavtalet) in 1938 meant the beginning of a long period of almost unbroken peaceful co-existence on a labour market that had so far been plagued by never-ending conflicts.

The post-war programme of Social Democracy meant a strong appreciation of local government in Sweden. The ground was prepared during the war as increasing prices on building material had forced the private and cooperative builders to inhibit production. Thus to keep production of housing at a minimum level central government had to reactivate the municipalities. Municipal housing companies were to be initiated and given favourable state loans as was already the case with regard to cooperative housing. Following the post-war programme the municipalities were to start building companies, municipalize all land and gradually become owners of all multi-family housing.

Through a series of housing policy decisions in the parliament during the latter part of the 1940s the role of local government was substantially strengthened. The municipal housing companies and foundations (stiftelser) were strongly favoured in terms of state loans. As compared to the emerging municipal housing companies, cooperative housing was disfavoured, although the private builders had to spend even more money out of their own pockets. The municipal planning monopoly was introduced, and the general picture was that the municipalities had now been appointed the builders of the welfare state equipped with due instruments.

To understand urban policy in Sweden during the post-war era, housing policy is an appropriate point of departure. The new, ambitious housing policy that was established in the wake of the war aimed at the solution of several burning issues: the extremely bad housing standard had to be improved, the sharp conjunctural swings had to be dampened and industry's need for housing in expanding places had to be satisfied. As will be the topic of the next section, the municipalities were given key roles in this project. They were going to become the local welfare providers.

THE LOCAL WELFARE REGIMES

The development of the welfare state in Sweden more than in most other countries has been put in the hands of the municipalities. Thus following the second world war local government developed strong resources with regard to a number of crucial dimensions: constitutional-legal, regulatory, financial, political and professional (Elander and Montin, 1990). Taken together these local government resources represent a stronghold of the post-war local welfare regimes, and thus deserve to be described a little more at length. However, it should be borne in mind that the description mainly pertains to the heyday of the welfare state development, i.e. until the beginning of the 1980s, when this state began to erode.

The resource basis of the regimes

Local self-government is one of the main issues in the Swedish Constitution. Most municipal decisions are not subject to central government approval, and furthermore, and perhaps most important, local government has its own essentially unrestricted right of taxation.

Constitutionally, local government has a dual character, being simultaneously an 'antennae' of central government and a 'voice of the periphery' (Miliband 1969, 52-53). Thus, there are two fields of local government administration, i.e. facultative and mandatory administration. In the first field local governments are free to make their own decisions; in the second centrally decided laws regulate what local governments ought to do and must not do. The modern political history of Sweden illustrates that the latter field has grown faster than the former, and about three-quarters of municipal expenditure relates to mandatory, often closely related tasks. These tasks can be seen as an indicator of social-democratic and social-liberal welfare ambitions with regard to social, health and educational policies.

Traditionally local government in Sweden has been carried out by lay people, directly at town meetings or, in the cities, by local councils. Indeed it was not until 1953 that the representative system became mandatory. And even towards the end of the 1950s there were still municipalities without any employed administrative staff. On the other hand the number of representatives was drastically reduced with the amalgamations in the 1950s and the 1970s (Strömberg and Wetserstahl, 1984: 54). The locally elected bodies are not subject to the parliamentary principle which exists at the national level. Because the representatives reflect their constituencies proportionally, all political parties participate with a fair amount of electoral support, participate in local government. Consequently, policy has a broader political and social anchorage that would have been the case if it had been 'deconcentrated', i.e. led by a centrally governed, non-representative bureaucracy.

Although municipal policy in Sweden has been 'locality' based party politics also penetrates the political system deeply. Thus the central-local dimension cuts through the minds and actions of activists within each of the political parties, continuously provoking internal conflicts, at least in a period of financial restrictions. Of course, professional competence is also a necessary condition for local government to become something more than decentralization within central government, i.e. deconcentration. Since

recruitment and advancement within the local administrations have become strongly sectorized and merit-based, local administrators represent great professional competence.

In sum, local government as it has evolved in post-war Sweden nicely reflects the welfare ambitions once formulated by the Social Democrats. But what did that mean in terms of urban governance? To answer this question, a closer eye at land and housing policy may give some clues.

The regimes

When in 1945 a Social Democratic majority government entered office high priority was given to land and housing policy. The aim was to achieve a high and steady production of housing in the population centres where industry was expanding, and to raise the housing standard of the financially weak who could not afford to buy their own houses or to pay the deposit required by a housing cooperative. To this end the municipalities were to take over the new blocks of flats, and unproductive speculation in land would be checked. To reach these goals the state provided loans up to 100% of the production costs for the non-profit builders - whereas private enterprises and builders of single-family houses were only provided 90% and 85% respectively - there was a general rent control, and the municipalities were encouraged to use their site leasehold right, and to start and develop municipal housing. In brief post-war Swedish land and housing market was increasingly characterised by a large non-speculative segment (Strömberg, 1984; Dickens et al, 1985). Considering the weighty powers given to the local governments for pursuing an active housing policy there is no wonder that this policy sector attracted powerful interests and became a stronghold of local Social Democratic politics.

Looking broadly at the organizational basis of housing in Sweden during the heyday of the welfare period one can firstly conclude that housing had a stronghold at the central government level in the Ministry of Housing, using the National Board of Planning (planverket), the National Board of Housing (Bostadsstyrelsen) and the 24 County Boards of Housing (länsbostadsnämnderna) as organisational instruments of implementation. However, the main governmental instruments of social housing policy were the municipalities, or, more exactly, the municipal council (kommunfullmäktige), the municipal board (kommunstyrelsen), the municipal housing committee (byggnadsnämnden) and the real estate committee (fastighetsnämnden), and their offices. Of course, this indicates that the local political context was of crucial importance. Thus having a majority of seats in a municipal council, alone or in a coalition with another party/other parties, was a necessary condition for the Social Democrats to capture the command positions in the housing related units of the municipal administration.

At distance post-war development of local politics in Sweden may look like a period when the Social Democratic strong man, 'the boss' (pampen), was the undisputed leader. The strong man was in charge of the municipal administration and seemed to be able to implement the new housing policy without appeal. Municipal housing companies managed a growing stock of modern, cheap rentals that were distributed among grateful citizens. But the scope of action was not only decided by political circumstances. A politician who wanted to accomplish great deeds, firstly had to mobilise tax resources based on an expanding industry, which could pay salaries to citizens moving in from the countryside. Secondly he also had to adapt to patterns of actions and institutions stored by history. However, the local history of economy and politics vary, and thus the local welfare regimes appeared in different

garments. Nevertheless one may identify three major types of regimes: the patriarchal, the co-operative and the progressive.

The patriarchal regime

Industry is commonly regarded as an urban phenomenon. However, at least in Sweden quite a large proportion of industry was born in the countryside where iron ore and wood were raw materials close at hand. The communities growing around the industrial sites became the cradle of Social Democracy, and, consequently, at the end of World War II a number of Social Democratic trade union experienced men were sitting heavily on most crucial positions in local politics. One example is the municipality of Munkfors where the local economy was dominated by the big ironworks. However, the influence of the ironworks was not just a case of economic dominance. The company owned all land suitable for building and disposed of financial and knowledge resources which the local government could not match. Strikingly, the company was allowed to place one of its managers as a chairman in important political boards despite the fact that he was not a Social Democrat (Tropp 1999; 1995).

The relationships between the company owners, the trade union board and the local government were characterized by consensus, although at bottom there was an axiomatic norm that the interests of the company always had priority. Housing, child care and other social services for the workers were functions perfectly in line with the interests of the company. However, being the only actor with due resources, the company had to act in the name of the municipality. Thus a large part of the local public sector in Munkfors was reserved for the employees of the company, although many utilities were also meant for all inhabitants. As late as in the middle of the 1950s the fire brigade, the public bath, water and sewerage, parks and road light were functions to a great extent financed by the company. At the end of the 1960s, when demand for the iron products produced in Munkfors decreased, the company transferred these costs to the municipality, which had to face a 60% increase of its costs.

The history of Munkfors may be overexplicit, but the theme is well known from all Swedish municipalities dominated by one or several big companies. During periods of formation and expansion power is distributed in a way that resembles the pre-industrial, patriarchal society. Although local politicians and trade unions are actors to take into account they neither have ambitions nor possibilities to counterpose the power of the company. What is good for the company is good for the local community.

The co-operative regime

Before the end of World War II the main functions of the municipalities were poor relief, elementary education and law and order. In all other phases and aspects of life citizens were supposed to manage on their own. Such a political context is a breeding-ground for co-operative solutions. Thus in the early 1920s tenants organized themselves in local associations not only to be able to exert pressure on the state and the landlords, but also to start their own housing production. The co-operatively owned houses were managed by a national federation of housing associations, HSB. Initially HSB used the construction workers' co-operative companies (BPA) as entrepreneurs, as their policy was to build and manage housing "without private profit".

Membership in the HSB cost money, and only relatively well salaried workers were able to help themselves in this way. In the city of Malmö there

were in the 1930s comparatively many workers who were able to save money enough to pay the entrance fee for a HSB flat. The HSB association in Malmö grew fast, as did a parallel co-operative association, and soon became an influential actor in the policy network that developed into a local welfare regime characterized by a consensual relationship between an upper stratum of the working class, the middle class and many owners of small firms. This regime developed a self-help strategy, counterdistinctive to a strategy mainly based on municipal ownership and control of land and housing (Billing, Olsson and and Stigendahl, 1992).

However, in the wake of World War II the co-operative tendency of the Social Democrats in Malmö had to strike a balance with the "municipal socialists", including a consensual relationship between local government and local capital owners. An illustrative example of this strategy was the building of the Rosengård rented housing estate that was accomplished by the end of the 1960s, comprising almost 20 000 inhabitants. Based on a comprehensive municipal plan local private banks and entrepreneurs were mobilised to produce an estate that was to be owned and managed in three equally big parts owned by the municipal housing company (MKB), one private company (BGB) and the co-operative housing association (HSB) (Ibid.: 285).

In the 1970s stiffening international competition exposed an obsolete industrial structure in Malmö, several old textile industries had to close, and several of the remaining central industrial firms moved to other parts of the country. Although municipal and party power became concentrated in a few individuals, the political strategy was very much in line with the self-help ideology. Forming a number of public-private partnerships (although this term was not used at that time) investments were orientated towards building a new city hall, stock exchange, concert hall, golf course, and luxury hotel in the city district of Triangeln. All this was done at the same time as housing estates like Rosengård, Lindängen and Holma were severely affected by unemployment and social rootlessness. Returning to power in 1988 after a three year break, the Social Democratic had to face a tricky challenge:

The concentration of power within the city and the party, the distance between those in power and those without, turned receptiveness into what many must have perceived as deafness ... However, no one escapes his or her own history. Malmö's enfeebled economy, profound social problems, and conflict of interests confronted the election winners with enormous difficulties. Moreover, the bourgeois local government between 1985 and 1988 privatized large amounts of property in Malmö and replaced leaseholds with private ownership. Even parts of the MKB (the local housing company) were privatized ... Thus, not only was every attempt at traditional municipal socialism undermined, but also local independence. (Ibid.: 300).

The progressive regime

"The co-operative housing association does not build for our people" - the 'strong man' in Örebro was outspoken and only few disagreed. In Örebro HSB had not succeeded the way it did in Malmö, and there were few Social Democrats having bonds of loyalty to the housing co-operation. In the wake of World War II the queues for housing grew at the same time as the representatives of the housing co-operation complained that only few workers had enough money to pay the entrance fee for a co-operative flat. This paved the way for another solution of the housing question. The new

instrument was the municipal housing foundation, which was soon to become the major landlord in the city of Örebro.

The political basis of the Örebro solution was a strong concentration of political power in one man who was sitting on almost all the crucial chairs: chairman of the local government board, director of the municipal housing foundation, and chairman of the housing allocation committee; just to mention three of his positions (Strömberg, 1984). Considering the prominent role of housing in post-war Swedish politics, and especially in the days of the Million Dwellings Programme (1965-74) Örebro became the "undisputed paragon among towns, the example so often cited in public discussions of architecture and planning. Here was where new ideas had been introduced and tried out" (Arkitektur 1979: 2). In 1975 the municipal housing company took as much as 36% of the total housing stock (Elander et al., 1991: 189).

In Munkfors the company owners were the patriarchs having power and will to adjust life for their workers. There is a basic similarity with Örebro, although in that city the strong man was elected by the citizens. Having the responsibility for the well-being of the local citizens at large, he interpreted his mission in line with the power holders in Munkfors: what is good for the local firms is good for the local citizens. Thus there is evidence that about 70% of all social rented flats were excepted from the regular queue to be distributed personally by the strong man in accordance with needs of local firms, the employees of these firms, and people in special need. This habit that was accepted by the political opposition signifies one important ingredient of the local welfare regime: the local citizens' trust in their political representatives (Strömberg 1994: 118).

At the end of the 1960s Örebro like Munkfors was severely hit by unemployment, when the traditionally dominating shoe industry shut down. The strong man's bold plans for a new enormous housing estate managed by the municipal company were cancelled. The company faced a serious liquidity crisis only to get solved by the municipality buying the land that had now become unprofitable. Economically as well as politically this was an expensive transaction causing tax increases and a non-socialist voting victory in the 1972 local elections.

When the Social Democrats returned to power in 1976 their first mission became not to redistribute an ever increasing social welfare output, but to balance the municipal budget. Large scale housing production by the municipal company was exchanged for more modest expansion, where private, co-operative and public landlords had an equal share of the new stock. The heyday of the strong man was history, and as an appointed governor (landshövding) he now saw his successors legitimize their power in another way. The responsibility for substantial budget cuts were decentralised to neighbourhood councils and, later on, also to users' boards.

THE EROSION OF THE LOCAL WELFARE REGIMES

The collapse of real-socialism in the Soviet Union, and in Central and Eastern Europe meant that socialism of all sorts, and not just in the region, were badly discredited. Not even the Swedish welfare state, and the idea of building a society on the values of solidarity went unaffected by this ruptural event. Already in the 1980s, the Swedish welfare state had been questioned by both the non-socialist parties and many Social Democrats. Doubts were raised whether it had not expanded to excess and, as a consequence, a number of administrative reforms were launched, under catchy labels like New Public Management, decentralization, deregulation and privatization (Montin 1993). Among them were new laws providing discretionary powers in place of detailed mandatory regulation of various public activities, e.g. the Social Services Act (1982), the Health and Medical Care Act (1983), the Natural Resources Act (1987), and the Planning and Building Act (1987). Local authorities were now allowed to organize their own activities and to use central-government grants within not so narrow limits. Less regulated by central government, they allegedly became better able to supply goods and services to meet local needs.

However, there was also another side of the coin. While local governments had greater freedom of action, their finances became subject to stronger central-government control, both directly through the financial potentials of the grants system and indirectly through legislation, especially that on decentralization and deregulation. The purpose was to induce local governments to reduce growth in their spending. In addition, local governments anticipated the central-government strategies by being more business-like in management, by forming public-private partnerships, and also by privatizing. Thus, in the 1980s Sweden witnessed a development in central-local government relations that could aptly be summarized in the formula, "centralizing financial power - decentralizing responsibilities". The message from central to local government was that "you are freer than before to do as you want but within a narrower financial framework" (Elander and Montin, 1990).

As a crucial sector of urban policy in Sweden, housing came under fierce attack on part of the non-socialist government elected in September 1991. Stressing its determination to roll back the state and to break with the Social Democratic housing policy, the new government did not wait long to cut the Ministry of Housing into pieces, thereby in reality strengthening the parliament's housing committee (bostadsutskottet) as an arena of housing policy formulation. The attempts to depoliticize the housing provision system meant disintegration of the functional as well as the broader organizational interests involved in the old public housing policy community, thereby transforming this community in the direction of a looser kind of network. Thus during the 1990s housing in Sweden shifted towards the market pole of the state-market continuum. Government subsidies to the housing sector diminished, a number of administrative and financial regulations disappeared, and market rents were programmatically accepted, even by the National Federation of Municipal Housing Companies (SABO). In addition these companies lost their privileged position as "companies beneficial to the public" (allmännyttiga bostadsföretag) (Elander 1994: 95-122).

The degradation of housing as a crucial urban policy sector was accompanied by a number of other changes pointing in the direction of local

welfare state fragmentation. The economic aspects of globalisation means that financial power increasingly resides in transnational networks of banks, insurance companies and other potent actors, which, taken together, represent a formidable force, more or less ungovernable from a national government, let alone local government point of view. Closely related to the economic aspect the accelerating development of the information/communication technology penetrates societies in a way that contributes to the ungovernability problem of the traditional politicians and planners. The ecological threats of global warming and pollution in various forms also add to the governability deficit on the part of national and local governments. In sum, these and other indicators of globalisation create political responses that are commonly labelled political fragmentation

Fragmentation

Political fragmentation means that public power becomes less important as a guidance for policymaking in a broad sense (Bogason, 1996). Thus public planning, decisionmaking and implementation move from the national government level towards civil society, market, government levels above or below national government, or a combination of these. Following Lash and Urry (1994: 283) the state has become "disorganised", no longer being a centre for authoritative policymaking, being too small for addressing the big problems, and too big to solve the small ones. Held (1999) argues that we now face a situation where individuals, groups, governments and other political subjects are caught in a network of overlapping responsibilities, where it is very difficult to recognise the appropriate site of politics and democracy.

Parallel to this development of political fragmentation there is also one of social fragmentation and segregation. Globalisation and political economism in conjunction have caused economic and social inequalities within and between nations (Adelman, 1998: 24), on the local level appearing as "dual cities", "divided cities", "polarised cities" or "split cities". Many researchers argue that this development leads to social segregation, low voting turnout and decreasing social cohesion in society as a whole (Friedrichs and O'Loughlin, 1996; Madanipour, Cars and Allen, 1998; Khakee, Somma and Thomas, 1999; Musterd and Ostendorf, 1998).

Sweden was long regarded as an exceptional case, able to happily escape from the worst manifestations of ethnic segregation. Within the framework of a national welfare state, local regimes were able to use their policy instruments in housing and other sectors for a general welfare policy with high integrative ambitions. However, in the beginning of the 1990s the immigration flow to Sweden resulted in heavy concentration of immigrants especially in the three major urban agglomerations (Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö), and words like "marginalisation" and "ghettoization" entered the public debate. Politicians and planners were not prepared to handle this issue as illustrated by the fact that ethnicity was largely neglected in the first round of planning as pursued in line with the new Planning and Building Act (Khakee and Thomas, 1999).

Politics in general became more differentiated and fragmented; there was decentralisation, privatisation, New Public Management (NPM), partnerships and other kinds of policy networks.. NPM reforms, such as creating models of 'arms-length' political control, and the introduction of user boards and the like in order to enhance the citizen role of consumer and user made municipal politics and administration more fragmented (Montin 2000). The party system was also fragmented, with a more multi-faceted party structure emerging, especially at the local level. However, in this trend towards fragmentation different kinds of coalitions were also discernible, and

we will in the following sections draw the attention to three types of coalitions that may be identified around three kinds of issues, i.e. ethnic and social exclusion/inclusion, economic growth and ecological sustainability.

Urban policy on the national agenda

The contours of an explicit national urban policy slowly rise out of the ruins of the housing policy that was cut to pieces towards the end of the 20th century. Thus, in the 1990s accelerating housing segregation and social exclusion became the midwife of a national urban policy in Sweden. The country's system of housing provision has long been characterized by a unique diversity of tenure (Molina, 1998; cf. Duncan and Barlow, 1991). The relative strength of each of the different types of tenure has remained the same ever since the implementation of the Million Dwellings Programme that was accomplished by 1975. Private rented, public rented and co-operative housing take about 20% each of the stock, whereas 40% of the stock is owner-occupied. Through this system the residents are sorted out on different kinds of tenure roughly in correspondence to their class, generation and ethnic belonging.

Any policy having the ambition to combat social exclusion has to take into account the fact that excluded people are concentrated to areas dominated by public rented housing. The size and the technical quality of the publicly owned housing stock are factors allowing for a geographical mixture of social groups, thus there has never been a one-to-one correspondence between social group and tenure. Thus public rented housing in Sweden has never had the stigma usually connected with "social housing" in most other countries (Harloe, 1994; Elander; 1994). What happened during the 1990s, however, is that there was a marked social polarisation within the public housing rental stock. Housing segregation increased and a number of housing estates became resorts for immigrants and other groups of socially excluded residents.

Policies for urban housing regeneration in Sweden were formulated and implemented within various programmes giving the municipalities and the landlords a fairly wide scope of discretionary action. The effects of renewal policies sometimes resulted in gentrification (with regard to inner-city blocks) or "turn-around" on parts of the more peripheral estates, mostly owned by the public housing companies (Vidén and Lundahl 1992: 186). Conversely, other estates experienced a tendency towards residualisation, i.e. qualitative deterioration and an increasing proportion of low income, unemployed, disabled and elderly tenants in the public housing stock.

The background thus given is important when it comes to analysing the birth and growth of an explicit national, urban policy in Sweden. It shows that the ground was well prepared for the broader area-based urban policy that was to develop in the 1990s. In contrast with the limited concern for particular aims and targeted groups in the 1980s, it is striking that segregation issues in the 1990s ascended to a top position on the agenda of political and academic debate. As argued by Andersson (1998), "this reflects real changes in segregation patterns, real changes in people's awareness of the existence of these patterns, and also real changes in how people in general perceive the importance residing in particular social environments".

Although the reason for the segregation issues to reach the top of the political agenda is complicated, two circumstances are crucial. Firstly, in the beginning of the 1990s Sweden experienced a series of economic problems earlier unheard of during the post-war period. The housing and real estate market, and subsequently the financial system, almost collapsed, unemployment quadrupled from 2 to 8%, the state's budget deficit exploded, and the Swedish krona lost 30% of its value compared with the

major European currencies. Secondly, Sweden, received its greatest immigration wave ever (103 000 individuals in 1993/94 and more than 400 000 during 1985-84). The new immigrants were severely affected by the economic crisis; for example the rate of unemployment among the non-Nordic immigrants was above 30% in 1996 compared with less than 5% in 1990 (Andersson, 1998).

In terms of political priority, the issues of social segregation and social exclusion became urgent for at least two reasons. Firstly, the strained financial situation of the municipalities had serious effects on their capacity to deliver social services to their citizens. For example there were reductions of money spent on nurseries and schools in poor neighbourhoods. Secondly, neighbourhoods with a concentration of immigrants were more hardly hit than others in terms of unemployment and general social problems. Politicians, administrators, social scientists, and the media expressed fears that this development would lead to gang violence, crime, political apathy and extreme right-wing activism. Strikingly, in September 1997 the State Commission on Metropolitan Areas published a report titled *Delade städer* (Divided Cities), concluding that the three major metropolitan areas in Sweden were clearly segregated with regard to ethnic and socioeconomic criteria. The Commission was just one among several bodies set up around the middle of the 1990s to investigate aspects of social segregation and social exclusion, and to propose lines of action.

In sum, although Swedish cities are less sharply divided along the socioeconomic dimension than cities in most other countries, the ethnic divisions during the 1990s became so sharp that it gave birth to a national urban policy focused on the 'immigrant dense' neighbourhoods in the three metropolitan cities, i.e. Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö (Andersson, 1999).

In terms of governance the efforts to combat ethnic polarisation in the metropolitan areas can be characterized as a central government top-down strategy aiming at the mobilisation of a broad set of actors at the neighbourhood level, thus including different municipal administrations, agencies for labour exchange and re-training, social insurance offices, voluntary associations, residential property owners, business associations, and the residents themselves. As a spider in this web of actors and subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior there is a co-ordinator at the local government level (Andersson, 1999: 619). Although no comprehensive evaluation of this strategy has so far been undertaken one may conclude that it represents a kind of coalition-building that is clearly different from the local welfare model, where policy was more of an internal local government affair. The area-based strategy with territorially based programmes represents an approach that highlights one particular set of problems in selected neighbourhoods. Thus, the strategy is in itself both an expression of policy fragmentation, and an effort to overcome the institutional problems connected with fragmentation.

Growth coalitions and negotiative planning

During the 1960/70s a number of regional policy measures were implemented with the explicit aim to strengthen cooperation and regional cohesion between the rich and the weak regions of the country. The regions were categorized in terms of need for support, the municipalities were classified along a ladder specifying their function in the economic geography of the country, and there was created an extensive system of re-distribution of resources between rich and weak regions and municipalities. In other words, there was an explicit ambition on part of central government to create

a regional system that was unified in terms of economic strength and political governance.

However, during the 1980s this regional policy has been replaced by a policy where the state directly or indirectly support greater regional differentiation and regional competition. Every region, city and town now try to marketize itself in a wider West European and global context. The metropolitan cities compete for major sports events, cultural festivals and other international spectacles. To catch the spirit of this development scholars have used expressions like "Selling Places" and "Festivalisierung der Stadtpolitik" (Häussermann und Siebel, 19xx; Bianchini and Parkinson, 1992; Ashworth and Voogd, 1990). Malmö, to take just one example, orientated itself towards the continent, intensifying its contacts with Copenhagen, Kiel and Hamburg, and trying to distinguish itself through the Triangle project ("Skåne's Manhattan") with a Sheraton hotel in the city centre, and, ten years later through the even more spectacular Scandinavian Tower, higher than the Eiffel Tower (Jerneck, 1993; Nyström, 1998). Also smaller towns act in the same vein, as illustrated by the slogan "global small town", where - thanks to IT - you can "work in the world and live in Askersund" (Dannebrink and Eriksson, 1996).

The Swedish EC membership in 1995 became a trigger for a less unified regional and urban policy in Sweden. A wider market forces politicians and actors to reconsider their geographical position and competitive strength in relationship to other regions and cities both within and outside the country. For example, to benefit from the EC structural funds, regions in Europe have to define themselves as collective actors specified by EC rules and criteria. There is also a tendency that future EC policy will become more explicit with regard to urban issues (Atkinson, 1999; Parkinson, 1999; Feter, 2000).

Towards the end of the 20th century investments in urban infrastructure were increasingly a result of agreements between private investors and local governments. The former were given building rights, favourable loans and cheap, or even free land in exchange for a "globe", a sports arena, a transport terminal or a small housing estate on an attractive site (Newman and Thornley, 1996). The habit of making policy this way is commonly labelled "negotiative planning" (förhandlingsplanering). Thus development programmes and projects including both particular local government agencies and private investors have become commonplace in Swedish municipalities the last decades. The Vasa Terminal and World Trade Centre at the Central Station in Stockholm is commonly mentioned as a trend setter in this respect.

In the beginning of the 1980s the City of Stockholm declared the need for a new central bus station and thus announce a competition for the best solution in partnership with the public railroad company (Statens järnvägar). Eight formal agreements were negotiated with the winning consortium stating that the profits for the renting of offices, hotels and other commercial activities were to finance the construction of the bus station. Neither the City of Stockholm nor the railroad company contributed any money. Other similar cases of negotiative planning often mentioned are the Stockholm Globe project and the Triangle project in Malmö. The rationale of negotiative planning could be summarized like this (Khakee and Elander, 2001; Tonell, 1991):

- Traditional local government policy and planning is replaced by or subordinated to partnerships including public and private interests.
- There is a strategic dependency between the actors within the partnership.
- Negotiations take part in secrecy but within a shell of formal, legitimate decisionmaking.
- The partners adjust their action and their ambitions gradually to reach an optimal output.

- The partners constitute a closed circle which does not allow for public participation.
- The common drive for a local government to establish a public-private partnership is a will to create "urban image", something it cannot do on its own, due to lack of money.
- The major aim is to generate economic development, whereas social ambitions are absent.
- For private capital negotiative planning can be a road to new investments in an era when "million programmes" and other large projects do not find their place on the agenda.

Empirical studies seem to verify this overall picture of negotiative planning, although there may be investment projects where one or more of these characteristics are not present. In terms of coalition building the habit of negotiative planning could very much be seen as an expression of policymaking through growth coalitions, commonly reducing local government to but one of several partners in a multi-agency partnership.

Agenda 21 and the urban green coalitions

So far the most comprehensive strategy for global action on ecologically sustainable development is the Agenda 21 endorsed by the 178 government delegations that attended the Rio Summit in 1992. Lacking any supra-national legal sanctions and financial guarantees implementation is largely delegated to a national and a sub-national level, explicitly comprising nine major 'stakeholders' or 'partners': women, children and youth, indigenous people, non-governmental organisations, local authorities, trade unions, business and industry, the scientific and technical community, and farmers (Lindner, 1997: 11). Chapter 28 of the Agenda urges that local authorities should produce a local Agenda 21 in co-operation with local residents and institutions. As six years later confirmed by the Habitat II conference in Istanbul the Agenda 21 propagates a broad partnership approach to meet the challenges raised by a global commitment to sustainability in a very broad sense. The more or less explicit message is that everyone has something to win (the synergy effect) and no one has anything to lose from such a broad partnership approach (Elander and Lidskog, 2000: 35).

Thus Agenda 21 leaves to the nine major 'stakeholders'/'partners' the task of operationalising the way forward. Considering the fact that 'sustainability' is defined within the context of three overlapping circles - economic development, social justice and ecological sustainability - it goes without saying that the scope of implementation becomes very wide. Of course this makes evaluation a very difficult task, although one may identify at least four signs of success: a global moral commitment, the building of new institutions, the participatory approach, and the signal that ecological modernisation is possible; i.e. the escape from the dead-end of the traditional environmental debate between the 'business-as-usual' approach and the 'fundamentalisms' of many deep ecologists and eco-socialists (ibid., 47).

With regard to urban politics and the environment, one should be especially attentive to the implementation of the Local Agenda 21 (LA 21). Sweden is among a small group of countries that gave a high priority already at the outset, and by July 1995 virtually all Swedish municipalities had taken a decision to initiate work on LA 21, and about half of them had a special Agenda 21 co-ordinator. LA 21 as practiced by the various municipalities commonly includes elements of a communicative planning approach in the spirit of the global partnership propagated by the Rio Declaration and Habitat II (Khakee and Elander 2001).

Looking at LA 21 in a broader perspective, local as well as national environmental policies in Sweden are identified as the products of three different coalitions (Lidskog and Elander, 2000: 213). The dominating one is constituted by a majority of political parties, environmental agencies and to some extent the Swedish Society for the Conservation of Nature (SNF). The approach is one of ecological modernisation, where all actors through ecological enlightenment will gradually make their activities environmentally adapted. A happy marriage between economic growth and ecological sustainability is possible through education, financial instruments and other steering mechanisms. A second coalition consists of the export-orientated business and the manufacturing industry stating that Sweden should *not* try to become green forerunner. Instead Sweden should concentrate its work upon creating international legislation that gives common conditions for all companies in the world, not trying to create national legislation that would cause damage to the country's industrial competitiveness in the international market. A third coalition - including parts of the environmental movement in Sweden, e.g. the Green Party and the Friends of the Earth, a number of organizationally free-standing activists and many young people - calls for radical and immediate change of Swedish society. This coalition, which is the weakest of the three, tries to combine the quest for global justice with that of ecological sustainability.

Focusing upon the municipal level it is obvious that there also local green coalitions rallying around LA 21. These coalitions are represented in green pockets of local government (the LA 21 co-ordinators, and parts of the town planning offices for example), although they don't often seem to have a hegemonic position in comparison with the growth coalitions. They can be quite successful in issues such as sewerage and waste treatment, recycling, green public purchase, green consumption and green accounts, whereas in issues like energy, traffic, heavy infrastructure, environmental protection and agriculture their scope of action is narrower. In the latter case business interests, the central state and extranational actors such as the European union and transnational companies are actors of a much heavier weight. A striking example is a city with 120 000 inhabitants, where steps forward on the green path have obviously been taken in terms of waste recycling, a better public transport system, and an increase of cyclists. However, at the same time the city council has sanctioned the enlargement of the small airport, which will cause substantial increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, although this increase will not be measurable within the limits of the city administrative border (Lidskog and Soneryd, 2000).

CONCLUSIONS

Housing policy was as a cornerstone of the Swedish post-war welfare model and a focal point of local welfare regimes firmly based on a working class/lower middle class electorate, and a strong party organization. Housing had a high priority in the overall Social Democratic welfare strategy and the municipalities were given due means of implementation such as monopoly of planning, favourable loans for social rented housing, and powerful municipal housing companies. Aside from the Social Democratic party the local regimes also included tenants and co-operative associations (HSB), construction workers' producer co-operatives (BPA), and other branches of the party tree.

The local welfare regimes appeared in partly different guises, although three main types have been identified in this paper, i.e. the patriarchal, the co-operative and the progressive regime. However, when the Million Dwellings Programme was completed in 1975, housing policy slowly degraded as a hot issue, and when the fiscal crisis of the state definitely struck Sweden at the end of the 1980s, the non-socialist government taking power after the 1991 election gave it a final blow. Thus, today the property tax has transformed housing to a source of central state income instead of a "tax payer burden" for social reform and many local governments consider selling out parts of their social rented stock to co-operative housing associations or private landlords (Lindbom, 2001; *Vår bostad*, 2001 (3): 12-13).

In the first part of the 1990s there was a great immigration wave in Sweden leading to a concentration of unemployment and other social problems to municipally owned housing estates that were already more or less stigmatized. Central government then took its first steps towards a national urban policy, deciding on a number of support programmes earmarked for metropolitan neighborhoods with a high density of immigrants. The actors implementing this top-down, area-orientated strategy may be seen as constituting social coalitions, each one including the Ministry of the Interior, a municipal co-ordinator, municipal housing companies, social workers, and voluntary associations more or less tied to a particular neighbourhood. Other coalitions on the local policy arena are the public-private partnerships in economic development, and the green coalitions around the various Local Agenda 21. On one hand these three types of coalitions can be seen as manifestations of a fragmented local welfare regime, but on the other hand, they may also be interpreted as attempts to overcome this fragmentation.

Thus, looking broadly at policy-making in Swedish towns and cities one is struck by the co-existence of more or less contradictory strategies that seem to indicate the presence of overlapping and/or competing partnerships, coalitions or regimes. It seems that we are facing a situation, where urban governance is increasingly fragmented and dispersed either to a myriad of partnerships created in a more or less ad hoc-like manner, or to competing growth coalitions, social justice coalitions, and green coalitions. The growth coalitions, often appearing under the label public-private partnerships, are commonly legitimized by reference to their synergetic effects, i.e. they are said to be more efficient than traditional forms of government, whereas the other types of coalitions are commonly legitimized by reference to the values of deliberative and participatory democracy. Of course, in both cases only empirical studies of particular partnerships can answer, whether a particular

partnership is efficient or democratic. However, this goes much further than the aim of this paper (cf. Elander and Blanc, 2000).

The story told about the three types of coalitions in this paper could be roughly summarized in the following table.

Table 2. Coalitions emerging in the Swedish post-local welfare regimes.

	Strategic policy target	Crucial partners	Resource basis
Growth coalition	Heavy infrastructure Commercial and cultural spectacles	Public-private partnerships	Co-ordinated financial resources Traditional growth rhetoric Social Democratic, Conservative and Liberal Party consensus
Social justice coalition	Social and ethnic integration Multicultural society	Municipal housing companies Tenants' associations Social workers	Selective central government programmes Rhetorical reminder of Social Democratic welfare model
Green coalition	Urban ecology Urban environment Urban health	Environmental activists LA 21 co-ordinators Green movements Green Party	Global commitment in the spirit of Rio and Habitat II Ecological modernisation strategy rhetorically formulated by central government

Although this picture of the emerging coalitions does not have a basis in comprehensive empirical research, arguably there is enough evidence to regard it as a platform for future research. Indeed, the two authors are both already involved in such research with an empirical focus on the post-war history of three Swedish cities. To this we will return in future publications and seminars.

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