DIFFERENT PROBLEMS – SIMILAR SOLUTIONS

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Europe.

Good practice against social exclusion in five European cities

Final report of the Elipse project

Different problems – similar solutions

Mikael Stigendal

CONTENT

PREFACE

More than 50 persons from six European countries have participated in the *Elipse* project. By completing this final report, I'll be the one that brings this project to its end. That's a great responsibility which makes me feel honoured but also a bit scared. It seems quite impossible to do full justice to all the dynamic interactions that have taken place within the project.

For a while it looked as if the project would end in failures. To be sure, we have had difficulties and that shouldn't be concealed. Yet, in spite of the short amount of time and limited opportunities for meeting each other the programme has been delivered. We have reached a result which others will be able to use and build further upon. And now it's my responsibility to present it. But before doing that, I take the opportunity as well to present those that have been involved.

The first one I want to mention is of course the project leader Kenneth Öman from *Fosie City District Council* in Malmö. We have had a very constructive collaboration. It was the Fosie City District Council that took the initiative and contacted me, early in May 2001. Then, in only five weeks we managed to complete a proposal. Also, a large share in this had Ola Nord, the representative of the Malmö City Council in Brussels. During the whole project, the leadership team has consisted of Kenneth, Ola and myself. The three of us have complemented each other very well in terms of knowledge and contacts.

However, if it hadn't been for my long-lasting contacts in Newcastle and Hamburg I don't think we would have got very far. I have known Bill Lancaster and Natasha Vall at the *University of Northumbria* in Newcastle for many years. Their support for the project has been crucial. Natasha took on the responsibility as the Newcastle local researcher. Half way through the project, Graham Soult took over that responsibility. Bill has been responsible for the internal evaluation of the project, enclosed as an appendix.

In Hamburg, I got to know Thomas Mirbach through an earlier project

about social exclusion. He has shared the responsibility as local researcher with Simone Müller, both representing the Hamburg partner *the Lawaetz-Stiftung*. Thomas has had a vital role in the project due to his many emails to me with support, comments on draft versions, comments on my comments on his comments (all this should have been attached as an appendix – an excellent proof of real exchange), suggestions, advice and encouragement.

In Turin, *Associazione Gruppo Abele* took on the partnership and Paola Molinatto has been responsible for the local research. Also, Paola shared the responsibility with me for arranging the first one of our two international conferences. To our great pleasure, Gruppo Abele invited us to arrange it at their premises in the outskirts of Torino, called Oasi di Cavoretto. That turned out to be a very good choice, much appreciated by the project participants.

In Copenhagen, Torkil Lauesen from the *Kvarterloeft at Noerrebro Park* has been responsible for the local research. In France, Georges Rensonnet has been in charge of the local research representing our partner *Association CITEVAL*. Due to a lack of contacts in the city originally proposed, the city of Lille, the French partner wanted to focus on a rural area. The project leadership accepted that, yet being aware of the difficulties involved in comparing urban and rural areas. Such comparisons are very important and relevant to make, indeed, but requires a lot of time and knowledge. Thus, it hasn't been possible to integrate the French case in this final report.

In each city, the groups had a local conference during the summer 2002. The first meeting with all the participants took place at the conference in Turin, 25–27 October 2002. I went to that conference in the belief that we all had approximately the same understanding of the project. I believed that we had reached an agreement on its methods. On that basis, I was keen on trying to develop the project further and hence I suggested the use of a matrix. Kenneth and I got prepared by bringing lots of copies and also colour pens (most of them yellow).

Now it makes me smile, but it didn't feel that funny at the conference. The matrix suggestions provoked quite strong reactions; surely legitimate because of problems with the suggestion itself. But the reactions also made visible the differences in understandings and interpretations of the project. A joint understanding hadn't yet been reached about for example the use of indicators and role of the practitioners in the project.

I introduced an alien element into a situation which due to different un-

derstandings didn't seem to be very structured, well thought and accepted. Thus, many participants asked for clarity. What was this project all about? As the participants really wasn't sure about what they took part in, my defence of the matrix made me probably look like an old-fashioned top-down commander. It gave the impression of contradicting the bottom-up principles, advocated in the project proposal.

Fortunately, these strung feelings were turned into the opposite at the Malmö conference in January 2003. How was that possible? Obviously, many participants had decided to sort things out constructively. That was certainly a major reason. Perhaps it shows how people who work with social exclusion deal with problems. But I also regard Turin as a necessary precondition for Malmö. If it hadn't been for the event in Turin, Malmö wouldn't have been so successful.

After the Malmö conference, the good atmosphere has been acknowledged and praised by several participants. One of them is Susanna from Turin who wrote a message at the Web-board. I have got her permission to use the quote:

> *Despite our bad English, we felt involved in a community who shares aims, problems, and something like a common, basic meaning of our work, a sort of "basic ethical sense" of social work.*
> *What I appreciated is not only discussing about exchanges, differences, new and good and different practices, but also finding something I feel basic, fundamental for social practitioners and social researchers: to be and to feel not only serious professionals but "social actors" too. I mean: actors who – through their work – take a responsibility upon the society, upon promoting social justice, upon defending the human and social rights of everyone, first of all the poorest and the powerless ones. To be a social actor means also to act as "a minority who create other minorities" and involve other actors in participating, democratic and empowering processes of social development. In this sense, if Elipse' meetings gave us this feeling, well that is a good outcome!*

A very big thanks to all that have participated in the *Elipse* project.

Malmö the 1 of May 2003
MIKAEL STIGENDAL

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SUMMARY

Social exclusion is one of the greatest problems and challenges of our times. The concentration of socially excluded people in certain urban areas threatens to cause a break-up, not only of the cities but the whole of society. However, many good examples exist in how to combat social exclusion. Practitioners who work in these urban areas often have a lot of knowledge about good examples, and also about social exclusion in general, what it means and why it exists.

In the EU-funded project *Elipse*, practitioners and researchers have co-operated. The practitioners work in urban areas characterized by social exclusion, located in Malmö, Hamburg, Newcastle, Turin and Copenhagen. The project has had as its first objective to take advantage of the knowledge the practitioners have. The second objective has been to compare the differences and try to create a joint knowledge about good practices. The comparisons have been both local and international. In order to succeed, an action-oriented research approach has been used within the project. The development of such a method has been the third objective of the *Elipse* project.

The title of the final report summarizes the main conclusions of the *Elipse* project. Social exclusion differs between the urban areas and the cities, mainly depending on the nature of the market economy and the welfare states. The combination of a low wage sector of the market economy and a liberal welfare state regime tend to make an increasing amount of people vulnerable to social exclusion.

The attempts to solve these problems of social exclusion usually include the labelling of people. Practitioners in all the cities know a lot about how labelling can aggravate the problems and prevent solutions. The development of urban policies have to be based on awareness about those risks. In fact, behind the labels, the life of the socially excluded doesn't have to

mean misery or helplessness. The practitioners in the *Elipse* project have given evidence of the potentials that exist among people in excluded areas. Such potentials have to be at the centre of every solution and good practice.

In spite of all the differences in social exclusion, there is a strong tendency among practitioners representing different categories and also countries to strive towards similar solutions. That's one of the most important conclusions of the *Elipse* project. Instead of just producing a catalogue of good examples, we have managed to reach a broad agreement on six criteria that every practice needs to fulfil in order to be regarded as good.

Firstly, problems should not be defined beforehand but as part of solutions, letting people taking part in defining them. Secondly, good practice must include empowerment, making people feel that they can do something. Thirdly, good practice is characterised by a holistic view. Fourthly, network and new ways of co-operation have to be created in order to make an example good. Fifthly, good practice has to establish meeting places where people may turn up voluntarily. Sixthly, it takes time to create a good practice and thus, time has to be granted.

The *Elipse* project has highlighted the need for different categories working with social exclusion to come together, discuss and break the boundaries in developing a shared knowledge. Also, the need for a closer collaboration between practitioners and researchers has been acknowledged, built on mutual respect and recognition. Practitioners and researchers possess qualitatively different kinds of knowledge, the one neither better nor worse than the other. Above all, practitioners and researchers have a lot to learn from each other. And such learning seems essential in order to combat social exclusion and preserve the whole of society.

Lenzsiedlung, Hamburg.

1. INTRODUCTION

The *Elipse* project deals with good practices in the promotion of social inclusion. It has been financed by an EU programme called 'Preparatory actions to combat and prevent social exclusion'.[1] In the call for proposals, there were three areas of application. We applied for funding from the third area, viz. 'Promoting innovative approaches in policies for combating exclusion through the exchange of good practices':

> *"It is meant to support identification of innovative approaches, the exchange and dissemination of good practices at all levels with a view to improving the effectiveness of social integration policies and facilitating access for all to a certain number of resources, rights, goods and services."*

The importance of innovative approaches was emphasised in the application documents: 'Since some preparatory actions have already been successfully concluded on such topics, the Commission will give preference to innovative proposals, both in terms of content and partnerships.' In other words, it would not be enough just to meet and to create networks. A more profound content to the meetings and to the creation of networks would be needed. That was how we understood the conditions for funding.

This was the basis on which we formulated the objectives of the project. The application included six objectives, all of which did not carry the same weight. The first three are the main objectives:

1. To extract, assess and take care of knowledge about good practice that exists among people who work with area-based social exclu-

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1. http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-prot/soc-incl/index_en.htm [accessed 24 April 2003]

sion, either professionally or voluntary, practitioners as well as researchers.

2. To engender and establish a joint understanding, based on a bottom-up and multi-dimensional perspective, among representatives from different groups and cities working with social exclusion, practitioners as well as researchers.

3. To develop action-oriented methods for how to succeed with promoting co-operation and exchanges of information in ways which means taking care of existing knowledge and the engendering of a joint understanding.

In a way, the third objective is a prerequisite for the first two. If we don't succeed in developing the methods, we are not likely to be able to take advantage of the knowledge about good practices, much less engender a joint understanding. On the other hand, we are developing the methods with the express purpose of taking advantage of the knowledge of good practices and engendering a joint understanding. In this sense, the first two objectives are prerequisites for the third.

In addition to the three main objectives, we formulated three more objectives in our application:

4. To develop the capacity of the players concerned to address social exclusion effectively, both by adapting cross-sectoral approaches and taking part in networks at European level.

5. To encourage various ways of co-operation in order to combat social exclusion and promote social inclusion which could continue to develop after the project has finished.

6. To use the project in order to develop an international university course in Urban Integration building on knowledge by participants from various occupations and nations working with area-based social exclusion.

These last three objectives should be regarded as a desired consequence of us having succeeded with the first three. If we manage to develop a method that makes it possible to take advantage of the knowledge of good practice and engender a joint understanding, that will hopefully also strengthen the capacity of the practitioners, contribute to the development of networks, and be used in the development of an international university course on the theme of Urban Integration.

Thus, constructive meetings between practitioners will not in themselves be enough for the project to be successful. Nor is it enough that the project just leads to the creation of new networks. Constructive meetings and the creation of new networks are, indeed, desirable, but the extent to which the project will be successful primarily depends on how we manage to fulfil the first three objectives. What knowledge about good practices has the project been able to extract, assess and take advantage of? What kind of joint understanding has been engendered? How successful has the project been in developing a method that makes it possible to take advantage of knowledge and engender a joint understanding? The success of the project will hinge on the answers to these questions.

It must be said that the application was not primarily made because of the prospects of funding. We have, of course, adjusted ourselves to the financing conditions, but there are more profound reasons for the application. Social exclusion is one of the most important problems of our times. It is also an increasing problem, which threatens to undermine society. We would like to contribute to solving this problem. This is the most fundamental purpose and driving force of the project.

In the application, we stated three additional reasons for wanting to carry out the project. The first is based on the awareness of how much knowledge about good practices, professionally or voluntarily, there is to be found among practitioners. It is also our view that this knowledge is not taken advantage of. There is seldom time enough for individual practitioners to put their knowledge into words. Moreover, this may not be properly reflected, assessed and taken advantage of, mainly due to a lack of time, support and context. And researchers usually attach more importance to hard facts from public databases.

The second reason is based on the experience of how those who combat social exclusion sometimes make things difficult for each other. The lack of meetings and co-operation between different categories of practitioners paves the way for different approaches and attitudes. Such differences too often hamper the attempts to solve the problems of social exclusion. They may even cause new problems.

The third reason is the distance between practitioners and researchers. Between people actively involved in combating social exclusion (the 'practitioners') and social researchers, wide gaps too often exist in terms of understanding, language, attitudes and knowledge. Such gaps counteract the development of efficient solutions as practitioners and researchers

neglect each other's potentials (knowledge and experience).

This final report presents the main results of the *Elipse* project. However, the project has also resulted in six local reports, written on the basis of local conferences with the participating practitioners, held in each city. These local reports will be available at the *Elipse* web platform.[2] For those who are interested, the web platform includes the final report, available in four languages, along with the local reports, examples of good practice extracted from the local reports and information about the *Elipse* project.

The web platform builds on the experiences of Internet communication in the project. At the start of the project, a Web-board site was set up at Malmö University. It has allowed us to inform each other and communicate. The most remarkable achievement with the Web-board is the presentations. 50 project participants have presented themselves, practitioners as well as local researchers and leadership. Many of the presentations are quite personal and that has certainly facilitated establishing the project as a viable social context.

Building on these experiences from the Web-board, the web platform has its location at Malmö University. It will become a part of establishing Urban Integration as a subject of research, debate and dissemination. In that way, the web platform fulfils the sixth objective of the *Elipse* project, mentioned above, yet not in terms of an international university course, but more as a resource for students, researchers and, indeed, practitioners who wish to know more about social exclusion as well as the combat against it. Moreover, everybody who wishes to comment on the reports or the examples of good practice will have the opportunity to do so at the web platform. The web platform will also make it possible for the *Elipse* participants to retain the contacts and hopefully develop them further.

The technology behind the web platform has been created and designed at the Malmö University (one of its six fields of education and research, the one called Arts and Communication). It is based upon a flexible technology called Ezone, which can be used and developed in various ways. Thus, it has been especially designed in accordance with the needs of the *Elipse* project. It will also be possible to develop in accordance with the use of it.

The existence of the web platform creates very favourable conditions

2. http://ezone.mah.se/projects/elipse

for writing this final report. It does not have to be detailed about everything. Those who wish to know more about for example the areas or the good practice have the opportunity to look it up at the platform. As a consequence, this final report does not have to be so extensive. The access to both these media in parallel makes it possible to address various audiences in presenting the result of the project. Those who only want to know about a particular example of good practice or a single urban area can find that at the web platform. Those who want to get into the arguments or want to know more about the project as a whole will be able to read this final report. Finally, those who want to know the most will have the opportunity to do both.

Central Fosie, Malmö.

2. THE AREAS AND CITIES

The areas are located in the cities of Hamburg, Newcastle, Turin, Malmö and Copenhagen.[3] At first glance, the differences between these cities look considerable. They differ for example in size, ranging from 1.7 million inhabitants in Hamburg to 265.000 in Malmö. A crucial similarity makes these cities very interesting to compare. Hamburg, Newcastle, Turin, Malmö and Copenhagen are old industrial cities. And more than that, they were all integral to the development of industrial society in their respective countries. Those cities even symbolised the industrial society, more than other cities did. This was obvious, particularly in terms of the size and strength of the working class. There is an abundance of working-class history and culture in these cities. Political parties, deeply rooted in the working class, have governed them for a long time. These five cities have embodied industrial society, its rise and its heyday, but also its fall. During the last decades, they have all suffered from difficult readjustment processes. This constitutes an important and common background to the social exclusion that has developed in all five cities.

One area has been selected in each city. All selected areas are characterised by relatively high levels of social exclusion. That's why they have been selected. The local researcher and group of participants in each city have been responsible for the selection. The areas were not required to be of the same size, neither geographically nor in terms of population. We have, however, tried to attain clear boundaries: physical and/or cultural and/or political.

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3. These areas which are distinguished by their level of social exclusion are in the first instance part of the social problematic of the individual cities and this problematic needs to be examined in terms of the larger socio-economic and cultural context of those individual connorbations. Readers who wish to avail themselves of this knowledge are adviced to read the socio-economic data of these places, presented at the *Elipse* web platform. http://ezone.mah.se/projects/elipse

What to say, then, about the choice of areas? How does the choice of areas serve the objectives of the project? What conditions does the choice of areas create for the recruitment of participants? What knowledge about good practices will it be possible to take advantage of because of the choice of areas? What comparisons of such knowledge will the areas make possible, in local as well as international terms?

The differences seem to be greatest between the areas in Turin and Hamburg. Geographically, Lenzsiedlung in Hamburg (population: 3.000) is undoubtedly the most clearly defined of all the areas, 'surrounded by streets, fenced off to the other quarters and districts. From the outside Lenzsiedlung is perceived as a closed, autonomous area, although its inhabitants have to leave it for almost any daily necessities'.[4] Lenzsiedlung also gives a homogenous impression. The houses resemble each other and differ markedly from their surroundings.

In Turin, one of the city's ten wards has been selected. It's the sixth ward, with a population of 104,000. The Turin area gives a much more heterogeneous impression. Certain parts of the area originate from the 12th century. But the area also includes industrially produced housing from the 1970s. The heterogeneity is also reflected in the Turin report: 'In the whole ward, the different ages of the buildings, in particular of public housing, define the social evolution of the territory and the corresponding social problems. While the oldest settlements are characterized by a more stable social situation and integration and by a prevalence of social needs related to the elderly, in the seventies and eighties most recent settlements show difficulties related to unemployment, distress in relationships and family conflicts.' Thus, Lenzsiedlung and the Turin area differ both in size and spatial structures. That means a difference in the experiences among the practitioners. Certainly, it makes a difference to work in a small, homogenous and clearly bounded area, compared to a very large and heterogeneous one.

However, the experiences practitioners gain not only depend on how an area looks or on its size. It also depends on the composition of people in terms of class, gender, ethnicity or age, for example. An area may be heterogeneous in its physical design, but socially homogenous. Riverside West in Newcastle appears to be quite homogenous in both respects. With its

4. See the local reports, presented at the *Elipse* web platform.
   http://ezone.mah.se/projects/elipse

population of 30,700, the area is considerably larger than Lenzsiedlung, and consists, in itself, of four part areas. There are distinct boundaries between these part areas, but as the Newcastle report says: 'When taken together, the four case study wards form a distinct and coherent area of the city.'

The most striking, however, is the social homogeneity in Riverside West. According to the Newcastle report, only a few per cent of the area inhabitants seem to belong to an ethnic minority. It is obvious that Riverside West differs from the other areas in this respect. This probably creates quite favourable conditions for common experiences. Practitioners in Riverside West probably find it quite easy to understand each other. The question is, however, how easy the international understanding will be.

The opposite of Riverside West in terms of social homogeneity is undoubtedly Central Fosie in Malmö. Of all Central Fosie inhabitants, 38%

Riverside West, Newcastle.

were born abroad (1 Jan 2000), and 55% of the population are of foreign extraction. By this, it is meant that they were born abroad or that at least one of the parents was born abroad. In Copenhagen, the area selected is called Nørrebro Park. There, only 18% are of foreign extraction (they are called 'immigrants and their descendants' in the Copenhagen report). 'This is the highest figure in the city and in Denmark', the report states. This says a great deal about the big differences between Malmö and Copenhagen. In Malmö, 36% of the population are of foreign extraction according to the above definition. The corresponding figure for Copenhagen is 17%.

Lenzsiedlung also seems to include a significant share of ethnic minorities. However, the figures are not entirely comparable with the ones for Malmö and Copenhagen, since the Germans measure ethnic composition in terms of nationality. In Sweden, this approach has been abandoned due to a more generous legislation than the other countries. It is much harder, for example, to get a citizenship in Germany. On the other hand, you will be regarded as one of the majority inhabitants in the statistics when your German citizenship has been approved. This is not the case in Sweden. In Sweden, you will forever be regarded as one of the minority inhabitants under the heading 'Foreign extraction' in the statistics, regardless of how well you speak Swedish or how Swedish you regard yourself.

Hence, the statistics for Central Fosie may include quite a few Swedish citizens who speak Swedish flawlessly and consider themselves Swedish. In Lenzsiedlung, the figure reported is 40%, meaning inhabitants with a nationality other than German. This means that the 60% majority inhabitants may well include people born abroad, who speak with a language other than German for everyday use.

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Nørrebro Park Kvarter, Copenhagen.

The sixth ward, Turin.

In other words, these statistics have their limitations. That makes the ethnic composition difficult to compare. But, still, the figures can give some guidance. They make it possible to draw a rough dividing line between the areas. The ethnic composition is considerably more heterogeneous in Central Fosie and Lenzsiedlung than in the other areas. Central Fosie and Lenzsiedlung can be said to be homogenous in their ethnic heterogeneity. The people practitioners meet in these areas are probably mostly characterised by a broad ethnic composition. The experience of ethnic diversity may primarily be what practitioners from these areas have in common. In this sense, the experiences from Central Fosie and Lenzsiedlung are homogenous.

The differences may be considerable between the areas, but they all have one thing in common. They are all characterised by social exclusion. And that assertion doesn't have to be based on some common criterion. It's not based on the fact that all areas consist of large shares of ethnic minorities, because they do not. The Newcastle area includes practically no ethnic minorities, in contrast to the Malmö and Hamburg areas. Nor can inferior housing standards, for example, or slum be used as a common criterion.

Instead, the assertion could be based on the official view. Officially, all five areas are considered to be characterised by social exclusion. That's why considerable resources have been invested here. This is the similarity which could be taken as a starting point to proceed from. This is the similarity that makes the areas both possible and interesting to compare. But why, and on what grounds, have these areas been singled out as characterised by social exclusion?

3. PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL EXCLUSION

During the last few years, social exclusion has become a high priority issue on the European agenda. In March 2000, the EU Commission launched a strategy. In December 2000, an agreement was reached about common goals. National action plans against social exclusion were worked out during the first half of 2001. These plans were later used as a basis for the joint report that was published in December 2001, called the *Joint Report on Social Inclusion*.[5] The report begins with a grand statement: 'It is the first time that the European Union endorses a policy document on poverty and social exclusion'.[6]

The expression 'social exclusion' originates from the discussions in France in the 1970s about the new forms of poverty. The term, however, did not catch on in wider circles until the 1990s. The increased interest is associated with the Social Democratic election victories throughout Europe during the second half of the 90s. In the UK, Labour appointed a special unit for issues concerning social exclusion after their election victory in 1997, called the Social Exclusion Unit.

The widespread interest in social exclusion certainly reflects a fear for a split of society. However, worries for increasing divisions were expressed already in the 60s and 70s, but then in terms of segregation. As the worries grew in the latter part of the 80s, the concept of a 'two-thirds society' was coined. While the concept of segregation referred to divisions within society, the discussions about the 'two-third society' forecasted a real break-up. The widespread concern about social exclusion confirms the emergence of that break-up. During the 90s, it really occurred. That is the most profound reason for the interest in social exclusion. That is why it has become so popular. From being a forecast, it has become a fact.

5. European Commission (2002).
6. Ibid.

What, then, does social exclusion mean? This chapter will try to define the concept of social exclusion by using three sources of inspiration.[7]

3.1 Sources of inspiration

The sources of inspiration selected are the EU *Joint Report on Social Inclusion*,[8] the view of Eurocities[9] (the big and influential association of metropolitan cities) and the final report of the URBEX project,[10] one of the most comprehensive research projects up to date about social exclusion in an European context.

The intention is not to present the works of EU, Eurocities and URBEX in detail. Instead, the chapter will try to discern and get support for some basic principles. Take for a start the EU *Joint Report on Social Inclusion*, which signals the existence of an agreement within the EU concerning the definition of social exclusion. Without such an agreement, it is uncertain whether they would have managed to publish the *Joint Report on Social Inclusion* at all. This agreement is the basis of the major efforts that are now being planned. But what does the view they have agreed upon mean? What kind of principles does it express?

EU Commission

Previously, social exclusion was usually associated only with poverty. Social exclusion was considered to be in proportion to income. This view can be called one-dimensional. The *Joint Report on Social Inclusion* is instead in favour of a multi-dimensional view, which undoubtedly includes income, but 'in order to measure and analyse this phenomenon more completely, it would be necessary to take into account other equally relevant aspects such as access to employment, education, housing, healthcare, the degree of satisfaction of basic needs and the ability to participate fully in society'.[11]

The *Joint Report on Social Inclusion* identifies some key risk factors. That includes long-term dependence on low/inadequate income, long-term unemployment, persistent low quality employment (working poor),

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7. The position presented here builds on many other sources of inspiration as well. See for example Stigendal, Mikael (1999); Voges, Wolfgang & Kazepov, Yuri (Hrsg.) (1998); Castel, Robert (2000); Kronauer, Martin (2002).
8. http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-prot/soc-incl/index_en.htm [accessed 24 April 2003].
9. http://www.eurocities.org/ [accessed 24 April 2003].
10. http://gp.fmg.uva.nl/urbex/ [accessed 24 April 2003].
11. European Commission (2002).

poor qualifications and low level of education, growing up in a family vulnerable to social exclusion, disability, poor health, drug abuse and alcoholism, living in an area of multiple disadvantage, precarious housing conditions and ethnic background. A person who fits in with one or more of these factors runs the risk of being socially excluded.

However, when do these risks become a real state of social exclusion? What are the conditions for social exclusion to cross the boundary from risk to reality? For example, should a long-term unemployed person be regarded as socially excluded or 'only' as running the risk? The report does not answer such questions, probably deliberately. That is because it builds on a relational notion of social exclusion. Not an absolute one.

The report defines poverty and social exclusion "in relation to the general level of prosperity in a given country and point in time." That indicates the existence of differences between countries. For example, to what extent long-term unemployment should be regarded as social exclusion cannot be taken for granted but has to be studied. The degree to which long-term unemployment implies social exclusion also depends upon that particular society, for example in terms of its welfare benefits.

The definition relates social exclusion to a given society at a particular time:

> *"Throughout this report, the terms poverty and social exclusion refer to when people are prevented from participating fully in economic, social and civil life and/or when their access to income and other resources (personal, family, social and cultural) is so inadequate as to exclude them from enjoying a standard of living and quality of life that is regarded as acceptable by the society in which they live."*

The definition makes clear that social exclusion does not mean misery in general, but a particular type of exclusion from society. The view on social exclusion in the Joint Report on Social Inclusion expresses two important principles:

1. Social exclusion presupposes society.
2. Social exclusion exists in several dimensions.

Thus, social exclusion needs to be related to society by the use of a multidimensional perspective. But to what extent does that accord with the view of an influential European association – Eurocities?

1. Employment rate (Employed persons aged 15–64 as a share of the total population aged 15–64), by sex, 1999. European Commission (2001).
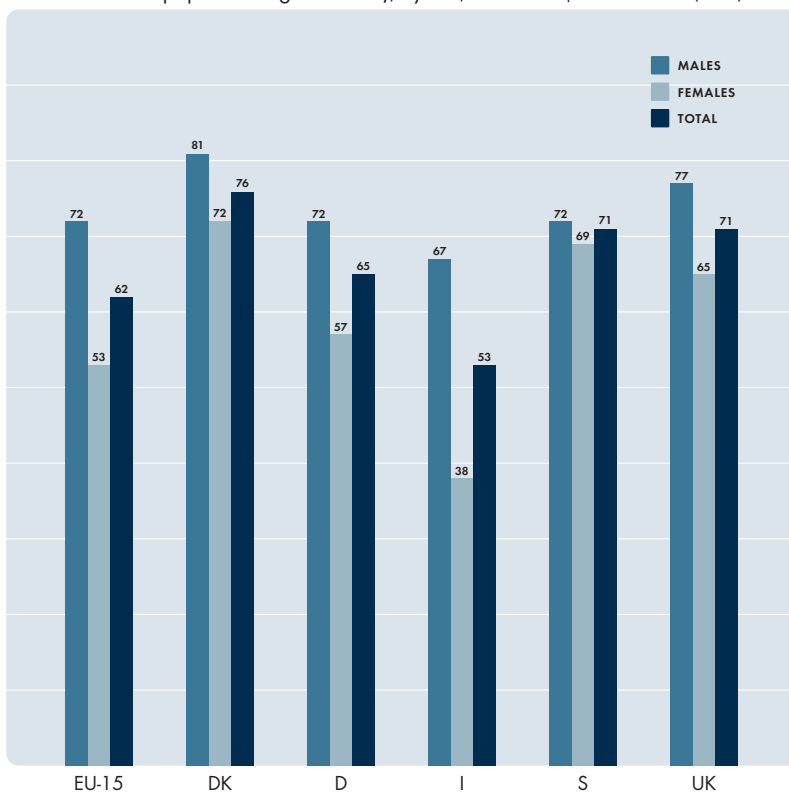
Eurocities

The Eurocities association, comprising more than 100 European metropolitan cities, has presented its view on social exclusion in a document called *Position Paper on Social Inclusion*.[12] The view has been developed by the Social Welfare Committee. It fully accords with the two principles represented by the EU in the Joint Report on Social Inclusion.

Firstly, the paper does not take the meaning of social exclusion for granted. Instead, it includes social inclusion as well in the perspective. Thus, it defines social exclusion as a complex and dynamic process, "in which not only the affected groups and their living circumstances are

12. Eurocities (2000).

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targeted, but the causes, the agents and mechanisms of exclusion as well."[13] Besides referring to labour market blockades, the paper underlines how policies may contribute to social exclusion by ways of operation, "e.g. often through stigmatising and 'correcting' approaches."[14]

Secondly, the paper distances itself from earlier definitions of social exclusion restricted to only the long-term unemployed. Instead it suggests a broader and multi-dimensional perspective. In addition to unemployment, it includes incomes, housing conditions, health, education, culture, power, age, gender, ethnicity, disabilities and so forth. Moreover, the broad and multi-dimensional perspective also deals with the changes of social networks and institutions outside politics. Earlier organisations like labour unions, neighbourhood associations, churches and political parties "have lost their power to 'order life' in a transparent way. In many cases these institutions even physically left the neighbourhoods in decline."[15]

In terms of these two fundamental principles, the EU and Eurocities represent the same view on social exclusion. However, it is possible to discern a third principle in the Eurocities view, expressed in the way the paper pays attention to the socially excluded life itself. What may emerge is being described as a culture of poverty, but also as a breeding ground for crime, vandalism and drug addiction as well as verbal harassment and violent behaviour. The emergence of such social contexts has to be stated as a third fundamental principle in a perspective on social exclusion.

3. Social exclusion can become a social context of its own.

It is in the light of such undermining forces that the Eurocities paper stresses the urgency of a solution. The increasing divide between social inclusion and social exclusion threatens directly urban social cohesion by being a "rupture of the urban social texture."[16] Not only the future of individual cities is at stake, but the whole "project Europe" which will fail, the paper claims, "if cities fail to safeguard social cohesion in an open, tolerant and democratic urban society."[17]

In arguing for a solution, the paper criticises the failure of sectoral approaches, "following the lines of traditional bureaucratic competencies

13. Ibid., p 3.
14. Ibid., p 2.
15. Ibid., p 7.
16. Ibid., p 6.
17. Ibid., p 8.

and divisions of interests",[18] and the lack of institutional changes. It also rejects the "top-down" development and implementation of traditional policies, which "turned out to be ineffective, because they left the target population without the feeling to be the owners neither of their own problems nor of the solutions, and because they made no use of the experience and expertise the 'dependent' had gathered in daily life."[19]

Instead, it argues for an integrated and area based approach which targets processes rather than groups. All democratic, public and private entities have to join forces over and across borders. Crucially, the policy depends upon the participation of the residents concerned. "Only with direct participation of the affected citizen, social policies can succeed." The paper urges a policy which makes maximum use "of the 'social and cultural capital' of the marginalized groups themselves."[20] It pleads for innovative and, if necessary, experimental policies in content as well as organization, which could establish forms of direct participation and real influence of the urban residents.

URBEX

URBEX is an acronym for 'The Spatial Dimensions of Urban Social Exclusion and Integration', an international research project undertaken between 1999 and 2002.[21] Financed by the EU 4th framework programme, URBEX comprised a thirty-strong international team of senior and junior scientists. The aim was to carry out an innovative and comparative investigation of social exclusion and integration in 22 neighbourhoods, located in eleven European cities: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Brussels, Antwerp, London, Birmingham, Berlin, Hamburg, Milan, Naples and Paris.

The URBEX project confirms the validity of the principles mentioned above. The first principle, the one about relating social exclusion to society, is very obvious in the ways URBEX stresses the type of welfare state, the historically grown economic structures and social networks. For example, URBEX concludes that the nature and organization of the welfare state has a fundamental influence on patterns of neighbourhood difference.[22] In

18. Ibid., p 5.
19. Ibid., p 6.
20. Ibid., p 12.
21. http://gp.fmg.uva.nl/urbex/ [accessed 24 April 2003].
22. Musterd, Sako & Murie, Alan (eds) (2002) p 19.

2. Youth unemployment rate (aged 15–24) by sex, 1999. European Commission (2001).
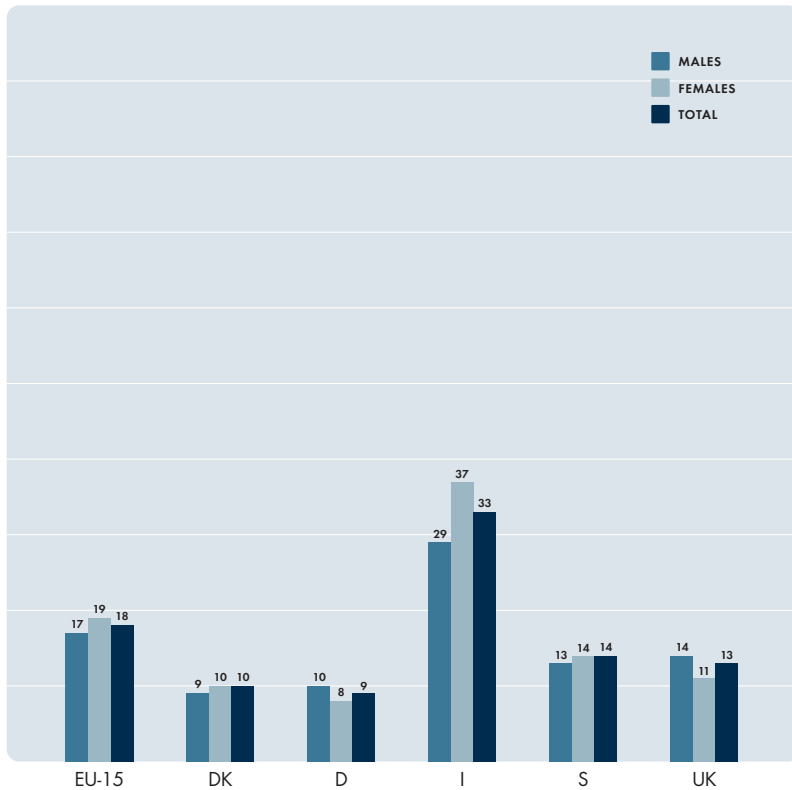
general, neighbourhoods in countries with weak welfare state systems are more likely to embody elements of greater inequality and crisis.[23]

Such differences between neighbourhoods, depending upon the particular society, may prevent the applicability of the best-practice policies.

> *What may be labelled as a neighbourhood solution in one context may create neighbourhood problems in another. The major sources of the differences between the cases we investigated are in the fields of education, policy interventions at various levels over the past*

23. Ibid., p 72.

decades, economic structure at the metropolitan level and opportunities to cope with recent changes in the world economy, types and levels of welfare state interventions, and local and regional histories.[24]

Also the second principle mentioned above belongs to the fundamentals of the URBEX project. The approach of the project is characterized as multi-dimensional, entailing a demand for a more differentiated policy in combating social exclusion.[25]

Among the most relevant findings is that per city and per neighbour-hood, differentiated policies are required in order to get to grips with social exclusion issues in small-scale areas.[26]

As a consequence, cities and states may certainly learn from each other "but should be cautious about copying policies. Our general feeling is that a much more differentiated and context-sensitive type of intervention will produce the best results."[27]

Also the third principle mentioned above is clearly discernible, for example in the way URBEX highlights the "insurmountable barrier between the most disadvantaged people and the rest of society".[28] The experience of social exclusion may become a social context of its own, fuelling for example riots, right-wing parties and, in general, an increase in social polarization.[29]

3.2 Social Exclusion – what does it mean?

The reports referred to above support a view grounded on three principles. The view of social exclusion has to be relational (relating social exclusion to particular societies) and multi-dimensional, but it also has to conceptualise the social contexts of the socially excluded life itself.

It is quite easy to define the principles negatively, in terms of what they do not mean. Firstly, to stress the relation to society means taking stands against treating social exclusion as one and the same phenomenon every-where and at any time. Secondly, to claim a multi-dimensional perspective means the rejection of associating social exclusion with, for example, only

24. Ibid., p 10.
25. Ibid., p 25–26.
26. Ibid., p 25–26.
27. Ibid., p 71.
28. Ibid., p 26.
29. Ibid., p 27.

poverty. Thirdly, to recognize the socially excluded life as a social context in itself means avoiding treating social exclusion as only helplessness. Socially excluded people may certainly be able to help themselves, however not necessarily in ways favourable to society.

To define the principles positively, in terms of what they mean, seems more difficult and complicated. The reports referred to above help us to establish the principles. However, more questions have to be answered in order to define them.

Regarding the first principle, how should we conceive the society that social exclusion has to be related to? The issue of social exclusion highlights the need for such a conception. If we cannot make clear what we mean by society, that affects our conception of social exclusion. It tends to lose its meaning. The first principle urges us to explore the meaning of society. How could society be conceived of as a whole? What makes it a whole? On what conditions does it exist as a whole? What do the borders of society consist of? Where are the borders that makes some included and others excluded?

The second principle covers the ways in which people can become excluded and pleads for a multi-dimensional view. But how many dimensions are there? It is easy to define the dimensions randomly. For example, the EU report mentions more than ten key risk factors. Should each one of them be regarded as different dimensions? The second principle urges us to take a deeper look at the multi-dimensional perspective. How is it possible to be excluded? On what grounds? In what ways? In how many ways? More than the ones mentioned in the EU report? Or fewer?

Regarding the third principle, concerning the social contexts of social exclusion, the Eurocities and URBEX reports treat it as a threat to society. But on what conditions do such contexts become a threat? And perhaps even more important, should they only be treated in terms of a threat?

So many questions. Some will say that it takes a book to answer them. And it probably will. At least if we want them to be answered thoroughly. However, that is not the intention of this report. It will deal with the questions in a pragmatic way to the extent that the explanations need to build on the answers. And such a need exists, the report will argue. To some extent, the questions above have to be answered in order to make the good examples presented below fully conceivable. This way of answering them will start by relating social exclusion not to society, but to social inclusion.

Exclusion and inclusion

On a more general level, social exclusion does not presuppose society in the first place, rather it presupposes social inclusion, both as a concept (logically) and as a phenomenon. Without social inclusion, there's nothing to be excluded from. It is impossible to be excluded from something that does not exist. Social exclusion may appear wherever there is social inclusion. Not everybody can be a member of a youth gang, for example. Not everybody might be allowed to join. Maybe a certain style is required. Bullying is a kind of exclusion. The bullies exclude you. From what?

In all the above cases from a social context. And just because this social context has very obvious boundaries, we can also perceive it as a form of social inclusion. People who find themselves inside the boundaries take part in the inclusion. They can be really included, for example in school, in the gang, at work, in the family or in society.

But whether you feel that you take part is another matter. A feeling of participation and actual participation do not necessarily go hand in hand. You can participate without feeling that you do, for example if all decisions are made above your head and you do not get the opportunity to have an influence on them. Or if you work without understanding the language.

On the other hand, you can feel that you take part without actually doing so, for example by supporting an Italian soccer team, but living in Malmö where you cannot even pay an entrance fee or be a member of a cheering section. Then you can hardly be considered to be actually taking part. But the feeling can be real. Social inclusion is strongest when actual participation and sense of participation coincide, that is, when you both feel that you participate and actually do.

We take part in social inclusion by taking on a role, for example as a pupil in a school, an assistant nurse in a hospital, a drummer in a band or a local researcher in an EU project. The roles are associated with requirements. There are certain things we have to do. We also have to master the social relationships of the inclusion. This requires communication. We have to understand each other and make ourselves understood. This requires trust, too. We have to trust each other. If we do not, we cannot function together.

Social exclusion may very well be a matter of lack of will. People simply do not want to participate. It may not feel meaningful enough. People may have too little say. They may not understand or trust each other. So, they choose to be excluded. Another reason for social exclusion could be

that people are actively shut out, for example through bullying. But social exclusion could also be the result of your not meeting the requirements for social inclusion.

Exclusion based on unmet requirements is usually not decided by single individuals. The requirements are included in the social context of the inclusion. On the other hand, single individuals may very well interpret the requirements differently and in this sense decide on the exclusion. This decision, however, is made within certain frameworks. Sometimes there is no doubt how the requirements should be interpreted. The role as a pupil in school, for example, is associated with age.

Society also functions as something to be socially included in, even if it is big, wide and broad. But society is not only made up of one social context, but many. We can participate in these social contexts by taking on roles. By playing roles, we take part in creating society; recreating, developing and maybe changing it. It is not only the actual participation in society that is important, but the sense of participation. This sense gives us cause to go on playing our roles.

Integration
At this stage, the perspective on social exclusion has to be enriched by a theory of integration. To talk about social inclusion just opens the door. If we want to know what is inside we need to use the concept of integration as our analytical tool. It makes it possible to better understand how society is held together.

Integration used to be defined as the bringing together of separate units or parts into a whole. What kind of separate units or parts may cohere? On a larger scale, it may concern societies. The EU could to some extent be regarded as an attempt to integrate different national societies into one whole. This is the pronounced purpose. The concept of integration is also used in referring to, for example, the Öresund region. Then, the different parts don't consist of whole societies, but of regions. Integration may also concern the fusion of companies or the establishment of government agencies.

The integration of the EU, the Öresund region and companies, as well as government agencies, has to be made in a systemic way. That concerns laws, rules and routines. The whole that emerges by the melting together of different parts is a social system. Thus, we may talk about system integration.

However, not every integration is systemic. The relations between different groups of people are also discussed in terms of integration. That is a matter of norms and attitudes. Certainly, changes of laws and rules may be required, but with the objective of changing attitudes and norms. If the objective is met, a new whole of the people has arisen. The process of achieving this new whole and the whole itself may be referred to as social integration. Thus, integration may occur in a systemic as well as a social way.

System integration and social integration depend on each other. A change or development in system integration needs to be built on some kind of social integration, perhaps acquired through the result of a general election, the annual meeting of a voluntary association or the board of a company. Social integration is about creating a mutual understanding and a sense of belonging. It's about the creation of a 'we'.

On the other hand, social integration depends on system integration as well. For example, in a society with big differences in wages, the prospects of creating a mutual understanding and a common will may turn out to be difficult. Social integration needs to be materialised in institutional changes and everyday routines.

In our thinking about social inclusion, we need to distinguish between system integration and social integration. Both are required in order to keep society together. Thus, it is not enough to get people into employment and in that way achieve systemic integration. People need to be employed in ways that make them motivated to become socially integrated as well. To become part of a common will and a joint 'we'. Otherwise, society may still break apart even with high levels of employment (see for example the phenomenon of 'gated communities').

It is a matter not just of participation (system integration), but also a sense of participation (social integration). The use of force in increasing the level of employment could easily create an unfavourable social integration. If people are forced to participate in society, that could provoke them to feel attracted to a form of social integration outside society. People could easily be part of social inclusion in the systemic sense, but in their feelings part of social exclusion.

A society does not always coincide with the real and geographical borders of a national state. Strong contemporary tendencies societalise regions more than the old nations. What about the Öresund region, for example? Will it become integrated to a new society, apart from Sweden and Den-

mark? In that case, what kinds of pressure will that mount on the Swedish and the Danish nation states as well as representative democracies?

Just as some cross-border regions tend to become societalised, tendencies of societalisation may also occur within the spatial borders of a nation-state, for example in a big city. Thus, social exclusion could mean the emergence of new forms of societalisation within a city, different from what we have become used to, but still similar to a society. Therefore, we should not take the meaning of social exclusion for granted. It could imply a whole range of social contexts, from the most individualised to a complex society in its own right, perhaps revolving around crime and with democracy substituted by violence.

Thus, the interest in social exclusion, which this report tries to argue in favour of, does not concern every social context. It is an interest in social exclusion from society, but from a particular perspective. Social exclusion means exclusion from what could be called a nation-society. That means an integrated whole, which consists of (among other things) a political system trying to hold it together, legal systems, means of earning a living, education and beliefs, but also a common will and identity, which implies that people inside recognise each other as well as the outsiders. Thus, the attempt to explain social exclusion has to proceed with an exploration of nation-societies.[30]

30. What societalization may mean in regions as well as local areas are very important issues, however not possible to dig deeper into in this project, due to the short amount of time.

4. SOCIAL EXCLUSION FROM NATION-SOCIETIES

In order to explain social exclusion we need to know about the integration of nation-society. How is it integrated, systemicly? What systems and structures does it consists of (system integration)? And what does it mean to be socially integrated (social integration)? As an example, part of the social integration in being a Swede (the 'we') is not to allow an individualisation of the labour market. For a long time, it has also been part of the Swedishness to reject a liberal alcohol policy.

Then, we have to explore the requirements of integration. What does it require to be integrated? Often, the systems and structures pose clear and stated requirements. For example, in terms of formal education, age or health. During the last few years, social competence has become a popular requirement in job adverts. A poor household economy excludes you from many 'normal' ways of need satisfaction. Just as often, such requirements can also be concealed. For example, gender inequalities structurally embedded in the labour market, tend to cause differences in wages. Another example of this phenomenon, known as "structural selectivity", is structural racism.

This report will focus on two important features of contemporary nation-societies. These are the capitalist market economy and the welfare state, both with a crucial bearing on the issue of social inclusion versus social exclusion. The requirements for achieving social inclusion determined by the capitalist market economy and the welfare state say a great deal about the reasons for social exclusion from the nation-society as a whole. Also, such a focus highlights the crucial differences between the countries, as the borders between inclusion and exclusion often vary.

4.1 Strong dependence on capitalist economy

During the post-war period, national societies in the West have become increasingly dependent upon the market economy. To take part in the market

economy as a producer, particularly through employment, has become crucial for the inclusive life, no matter if you produce commodities or services.

People also take part as consumers, but that depends to a high degree on their producer status. High wages equate with high levels of consumer power, while unemployment means the opposite. Yet, great consumer power is not enough. In order to become socially inclusive, it is also a matter of using it in a 'normal' way. As a consumer you take part by purchasing the goods and services of the day (perhaps at the moment a DVD-player).

However, the requirements for becoming and remaining employed differ. In some societies, the borders between being included and excluded as a producer in the market economy could be described as high walls. Such a description applies to Sweden and Denmark in particular, but also Germany. The high walls are made of regulations such as labour market laws and collective agreements.

In fact, the walls in Sweden, Denmark and Germany could be said to comprise the whole market economy, not just only working life but also consumption. A quite strong linkage exists between being included as a producer and as a consumer. If you take part in the market as a producer the wage acquired secures in most cases a good standard of living, due to the regulations of wages and working conditions.

In order to understand the implication of these walls, we have to go back to the post-war boom and its particular dynamic. Various theories exist about its mode of economic development; however, they are too often narrowed to market relations between supply and demand, building on assumptions associated with neoclassical economics. Instead, a more comprehensive and fruitful explanation of the post-war boom has been developed by the regulation theory, using the concept of Fordism.[31]

As a particular labour process, Fordism originated at the famous car factory in Michigan where its owner, Henry Ford, in 1914 raised wages and reduced the working day in exchange for the introduction of assembly line production. The Fordist model of development meant the implementation of mass production in large parts of Europe.

When the supplies of mass production became related to a demand in mass consumption after the Second World War, the dynamics of Fordism

31. See for example Billing, Peter & Stigendal, Mikael (1994); Aglietta, Michel (1976); Jessop, Bob (1990a); Jessop, Bob (1990b); Benner, Mats (1997).

3. Young persons unemployed for 6 months or more as a percentage of total young unemployed 1999. European Commission (2001).
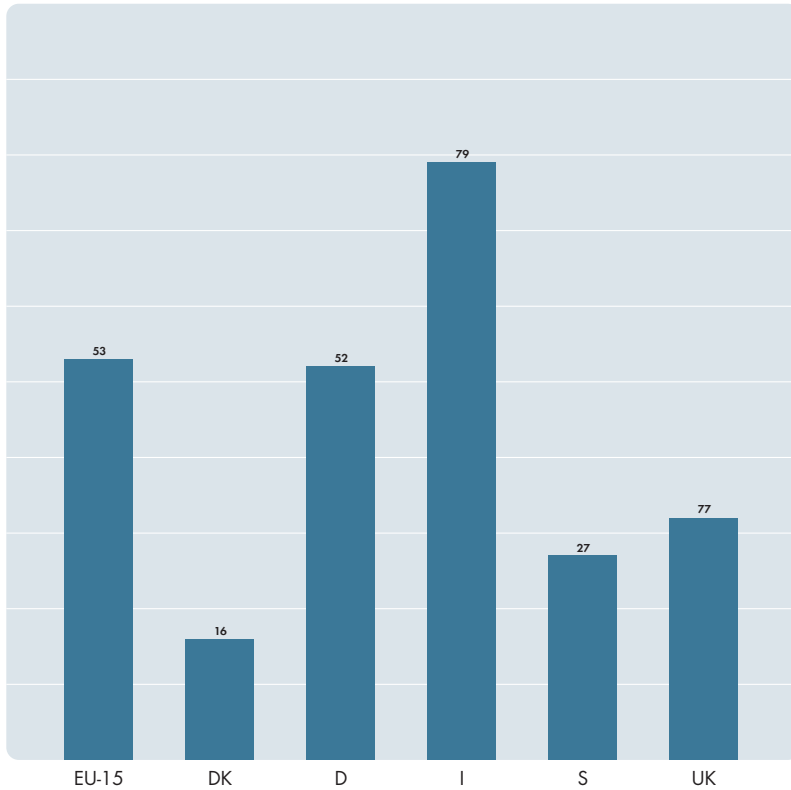
resulted in nothing short of a revolution. This also depended on the introduction of new regulations. The Fordist model of development comprised new forms of regulations like collective bargaining, monopolistic competition, centralised organisations and state intervention.

The concept of Fordism is a way to explain how the whole of society was affected by the post-war boom. New conditions were created for social inclusion and new risks for being excluded. However, Fordism permeated societies to a different extent and took shape in different ways. Some societies became more affected by the enlargement and enhancement of the capitalist economy than others.

Sweden belongs to the societies most revolutionised by Fordism and Britain to the least, in terms of both processes of production, modes of

consumption and institutional regulations. Without digging deeper into the reasons, we may just bear in mind the differences in, for example, car ownership or a modern housing standard with double glazed windows and district heating.

In Malmö, 39% of all dwellings were built during the Fordist heydays in the 1960s and 1970s, most of them assembly line produced.[32] In contrast, only 11% of the dwellings in Copenhagen were built during the same period.[33] Thus, the quite thorough Fordist revolution in Sweden engendered a much more modern housing standard than in both Britain and Denmark. In Copenhagen, 20% of the dwellings are without baths. In Malmö, the statistics don't even mention dwellings without both bath and toilet.

However, dwellings built during the Fordist heydays lacked many social qualities. Profit opportunities decided to a large extent how and where to build. The inhabitants of the new areas were supposed to eat, watch television and sleep there, but nothing more. Thus, almost no space for small shops, restaurants, pubs and club premises exists in the areas built during the 1960s and 1970s. The Fordist revolution reduced the homes and housing areas to sites for individual consumption, implicating new risks for being socially isolated and thus excluded.

Yet, during the Fordist heydays people were systemicly integrated by full employment. Collective bargaining took place on a national level between highly centralised organisations representing the most powerful parts of the economy. Capitalism in Sweden was organised to the benefit of industrial rationalisations and not interrupted by a 'stop-go cycle' as in Britain.[34] Thus, Swedish industrial companies did very well in the international competition, which entailed a constant demand for labour and an increase in real wages. Fordism in Sweden engendered high walls around the market economy, consisting of many labour market regulations built upon collective agreements between legitimate representatives.

In Britain, no representatives managed to build such high walls around the market economy. Representatives of both labour and capital didn't have the same legitimacy as in Sweden, because of much more shattered industrial and business relations. The lack of integration paved the way for a neo-liberal solution. After almost 20 years of Thatcherism, the walls

32. Billing, Peter & Stigendal, Mikael (1994).
33. http://www.sk.kk.dk/ [accessed 24 April 2003].
34. Gamble, Andrew (1988); Benner, Mats (1997).

around the market economy have almost totally crumbled. A low-wage sector of the British economy has got firmly established. The new Labour government since 1997 has displayed some ambitions to rebuild the walls, for example by introducing a minimum wage, but very modestly.

However, among the countries in the *Elipse* project, Italy has probably the lowest walls around the market economy. A Fordist growth model favoured Italy as well, although not the whole country, but in particular the so-called industrial triangle (Milan-Turin-Genoa) in the northwest.[35] The south of Italy was not affected and, indeed, has never had its own process of industrialisation. Italy has always between divided and the gap has grown over the years. That has made a social integration as well as a national Italian identify difficult. Thus, at the most, a Fordist mode of growth engendered a regional unity of system and social integration in the northwest. Also, it was facilitated by the high degree of regional autonomy in Italy.

The emergence of a unified national Italian society has been prevented by that increasing north-south divide, but also by the irreconcilable political struggles and incessant changes of government. That makes Italy less characterized by nationally imposed walls around the market economy than any other of the countries in the *Elipse* project. Thus, the scope for informal activities is large. In fact, the incidence of the informal economy on the GDP has been estimated to 20–25% in Italy, compared to 4–6% in Germany and 8–12% in the UK.[36]

As a consequence, in Italy but also in Britain, there is a lack of clear boundaries for where social exclusion from the market economy starts. The formal and informal economies, white and black, melt easily into each other. Then, the nation-society cannot be regarded as comprising the whole market economy.

Instead, a scope emerges for what has been called 'working poor'. As such, you may take part in the nation-society by being a producer in the market economy, but not necessarily by being a consumer. Low wages and powerless working conditions prevent many people from living a decent and 'normal' life. Parts of the market economy create inadequate opportunities for being systemicly integrated in the nation-society.

Moreover, the differences in how people become systemicly integrated

35. Andreotti, Alberta & Benassi, David et. al (2000) p 11.
36. Ibid., p 13.

create difficult conditions for social integration. How could people feel a stake in the same common 'we' with such enormous differences in living conditions, as for example between the north and the south in Italy? What unites the poor and the rich when the differences comprise so many aspects? What could serve as a common denominator for national identities?

In Sweden, Denmark and Germany, the market economy is still surrounded by high walls. Because of labour market regulations and collective bargaining, a working poor hardly exist. To take part in the market economy means opportunities to make a decent living. Taking part as a producer and as a consumer relates to each other. Either you take part in both senses or in none. Thus, to take part in the market economy as a producer always means a systemic integration in the nation-society. Moreover, the lack of a working poor means more favourable conditions for a national social integration than in Italy and England.

Yet, high walls like in Sweden and Denmark could be very hard to climb. As many unqualified jobs have been rationalised out of existence, the wall consists of relatively high educational demands. Without an education, it's not easy to get a job and thereby become inclusive. Also, the walls in for example Sweden could be said to consist of Swedishness. Many years of labour market regulations and collective bargaining have certainly left a cultural imprint, difficult for many immigrants to come to terms with.

For example, Swedishness means a validation of foreign education on Swedish standards, which too often prevent educated foreigners from resuming their former profession and even getting a job at all. In particular, the demands for a competence in the Swedish language create difficulties. Contrary to English, not many people in the world speak Swedish. Moreover, the cultures brought to Sweden by the immigrants are usually very alien to the Swedish. No joint background in a Swedish commonwealth operates as a reference point in favour of bridging cultural gaps.

The cultural barriers made it difficult already for many labour immigrants in the 60s from being socially integrated in spite of their employment. They were inclusive but didn't feel that way. The extensive recruitment from the countryside in former Yugoslavia meant an increase in cultural distances and an aggravation of difficulties. Thus, social exclusion started already during the heyday of the Swedish model, but in terms of social integration. In terms of system integration, the labour immigrants belonged to social inclusion.

However, the refugee immigrants, arriving to Sweden from the 70s and

onwards, became socially excluded both in terms of social and system integration. The refugee immigration during the last decades has coincided with the continuous industrial decline. The jobs in the old economy have disappeared and because of the persistent resistance against deregulation of the labour market the new economy consists to a much higher extent of qualified jobs. As a consequence, the demands for a particularly Swedish competence have grown and implied the heightening of cultural barriers around the market economy. Most jobs depend on an ability to speak and understand Swedish.

Hence, ethnic divisions on the labour market have not really appeared in Sweden, at least not to the same extent as in Britain. The low wage sector of the British economy means the existence of a labour market accessible for people with a lower education and a foreign background. It becomes very visible in the streets with people from ethnic minorities in low wage service jobs.

The Swedish labour market has a much stronger character of gender division. Generally, women get lower pay than men for the same kind of jobs. However, the most significant gender divide concerns the different sectors of the economy. In Sweden, gender and sector divisions coincide to a higher extent than in any other country. Women and men do not work in the same sectors of the economy. Typically, a lower wage characterises sectors dominated by women. Thus, high walls do not necessarily build on equal requirements. Even high walls can make social integration difficult.

4.2 Welfare states, but for whom?

People have to rely upon the welfare state when they get excluded from earning a living themselves as producers in the market economy. The reasons could be unintentional, depending upon, for example, unemployment or sickness, but exclusion could also be inevitable, depending upon, for example, the birth of a child or old age. The welfare state takes the responsibility for keeping people included, but not unconditionally.

From the perspective of social exclusion, at least two questions seem crucial. The first one concerns the conditions. On what conditions does the state provide welfare? Obviously, if you do not fulfil the conditions, the state does not support you and thus, you become excluded. By demanding specific conditions, the welfare state decides about the rights to be included. Who gets the right to become included?

The second question concerns the scope and levels of welfare. What

kind of welfare does the state provide? What kind of life does the welfare provided by the state enable you to live? Is it a welfare, which really makes you feel included? Or is it a welfare which in effect serves to control the life of the socially excluded?

A useful analytical tool for answering questions like the ones above is the theory on welfare state regimes. It's been used by the URBEX project and in the *Elipse* report from Hamburg, the local researchers of our project, Simone Müller and Thomas Mirbach, connect to it as well. The theory is described by one of its authors, the Danish social scientist Gösta Esping-Andersen, in the book *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. There, he distinguishes between what he calls liberal, corporatist and social democratic regimes of the welfare state.[37]

The liberal regime refers to means-tested assistance on low and basic levels. A corporatist or conservative regime relates welfare rights to status and is based on social insurances more than taxes. The social democratic regime supports universal welfare rights connected to citizenship and is financed by taxes more than insurance. Every citizen gets the same assistance, also on high levels, regardless of class, status or earlier achievements.

Among the project's participating countries there are typical examples of all three regimes. The British welfare state has been identified as a liberal regime by Esping-Andersen and others. The URBEX final report criticizes such a classification for being insufficiently sensitive. It does not take into account the nature of state intervention in health, education and housing, which hardly could be regarded as liberal. Instead, it focuses on the British social security system and that surely deserves to be labelled liberal as it is less generous than elsewhere in Europe.[38]

Thus, the URBEX final report points to a need to qualify the theory of welfare state regimes. Such a regime does not have to cover a whole welfare state. Instead, the theory should treat regimes as systems operating within welfare states. More than one such system may operate within a concrete welfare state. That is obviously the case of the British welfare state.

That is also the case of the Swedish and Danish welfare states. Both used to be described as typical examples of a social democratic regime. And indeed they are. Opposite to the liberal regime of the British social security system, the Swedish and Danish welfare states provide high wel-

37. Esping-Andersen, G (1990).
38. Musterd, Sako & Murie, Alan (eds) (2002) p 50.

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fare benefits depending on previous income records, although in both cases limited by a ceiling.

For example, the unemployment benefit provides a substitute for a loss of income. However, if you do not have a previous income record, you are not entitled to the benefit. Moreover, it has to be a job income of certain duration. Furthermore, you must have fulfilled a membership condition for at least a year, in Sweden to an unemployment benefit society (in most cases run by the trade unions) and in Denmark to an unemployment insurance fund.

Thus, youngsters who become unemployed after leaving school are not

4. Distribution of income (S80/S20 ratio) 1998.
The share of entire national income received by the top 20% of the population to that of the bottom 20%.
At EU level, the bottom (poorest) 20% of the population received only 8% of total income in 1998, while the top (richest) 20% received 39% of total income, i.e. 5.4 times as much. European Commission (2002).
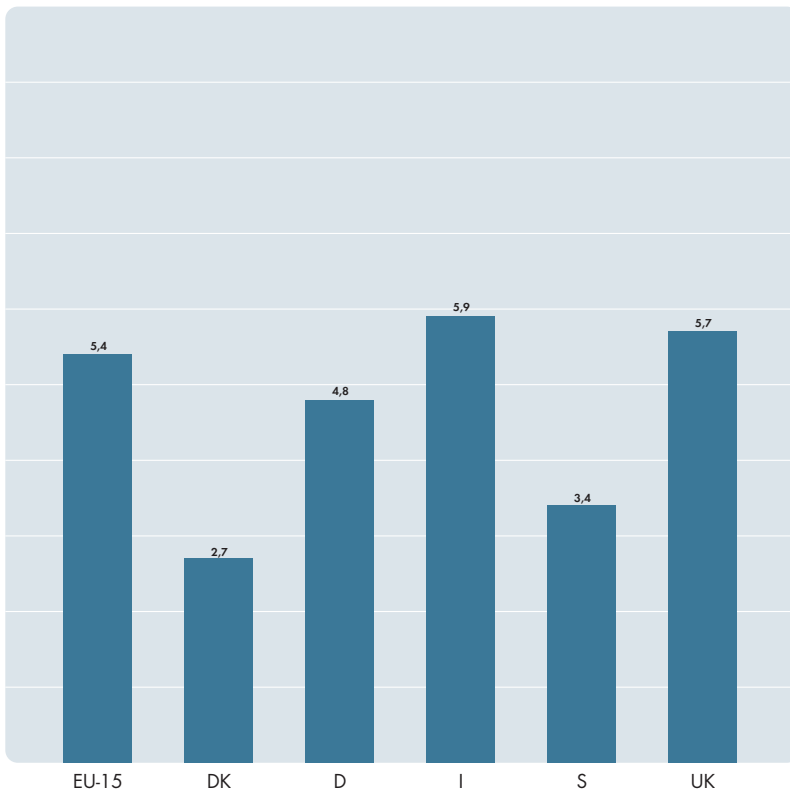
entitled to the unemployment benefit. As they have not had a job, they do not fulfil that condition. Neither do unemployed immigrants. As long as you do not fulfil the job and membership conditions, you are not entitled to the unemployment benefit.

Instead, you have to rely upon a means-tested social security on a minimal level which accords to liberal principles. Thus, the social democratic regime applies to people who have a job or a previous job record, indeed the majority. For many unemployed youngsters or immigrants the Danish and Swedish welfare states display a liberal character. To be sure, the social democratic regime dominates but some parts of the welfare states accord to liberal principles.

The German welfare state in its turn is dominated by a corporatist regime. The unemployment benefit depends on previous income records. The benefit amounts to a lower percentage level than in Sweden and Denmark, but has a much higher ceiling. Thus, in accordance with its corporatist character, the unemployment benefit in Germany favours the better off and engenders much bigger differences between the unemployed. However, the liberal regime operates within the German welfare state as well. It becomes visible for people who do not fulfil the job condition and have to rely on a means-tested social assistance.

The combination of welfare state regimes in Denmark and Sweden has engendered a kind of labour market waiting room. As long as you manage to take a seat in the waiting room, you are still part of social inclusion, at least in Sweden and Denmark. Certainly, a seat in the waiting room integrates you systemicly. But what about the fall down to the social security level? Is it possible for people who live on social security, such as youths and immigrants who have not yet got a job record, or the long-term unemployed, to be socially included?

In Sweden and Denmark, unemployment means social exclusion from being a producer in the market economy, but not necessarily social exclusion from the nation-society. It is prevented by the social democratic regime within the welfare state, the unemployment 'waiting-room'. The high level of benefits enable you to live quite a decent and respectable life. You are excluded from being a producer in the market economy, but not as a consumer.

The liberal principles of welfare even restrict you from remaining a consumer. The British unemployment benefit provides no income substitutes but straight away a means-tested basic security in accordance with mini-

mum norms. The same level of benefits apply to everybody, regardless of earlier employment records. Thus, unemployment may cause a substantial deterioration in living conditions. You become excluded from the legitimate market economy, both as a producer and as a consumer. Does that not indicate a social exclusion from nation-society, more generally?

It is doubtful whether a labour market waiting room exists in Germany. The German system looks more like a sliding scale, where you end up in exclusion more gradually. While the better off person gets a higher benefit than in Sweden and Denmark, mentioned above, the unemployed person with a low previous income record gets less.

But what about Italy? The Italian welfare state has been classified as corporatist due to the maintenance of work-related status differentials.[39] However, the URBEX project criticizes that classification. It does not take into account the particular role played by family and kin in Italy. The family is supposed to be responsible for welfare. "The State intervenes only when the family weakens, work performance are compromised, or one of its members, generally a minor or an older person, needs help."[40]

The URBEX final report suggests a classification of the Italian welfare state as a fourth regime, called familistic. That sounds a reasonable suggestion. It makes sense of the contemporary welfare problems in Italy. As the authors of the URBEX report on Italy point out, Italy is the only European country without assistance for those who exhaust unemployment benefits.[41] Moreover, the unemployment benefit does not have a universal character, as in Sweden and Denmark, but depends on the sector, size of the firm and the manner in which someone was made redundant (collective or individual dismissal).

That looks more similar to the German welfare state with its status related rights, yet a social assistance benefit exists in Germany. Also, the Italian welfare system lacks a coherence. It has been described as "clientelistic corporativism, fragmentation, incrementalism and heterogeneity without any criteria of provision, privilege of monetary benefits instead of services."[42] Thus, the welfare system is highly fragmented, with a "wide variation of both access criteria and benefit sets throughout the country."[43] A labour

39. Andreotti, Alberta & Benassi, David et. al (2000) p 21.
40. Ibid., p 22.
41. Ibid., p 23.
42. Ibid., p 21.
43. Ibid., p 27.

market waiting room open for all on equal conditions does not exist. Just as in Germany, you end up in social exclusion gradually, but instead of a sliding scale it has to be described as a steep slope.

The Italian state has continued to count on the family even in an era of an increased youth unemployment and ageing population. In the last figures presented by the EU, 33% of the young people (aged 15–24) were unemployed, compared to 9% in Germany, 10% in Denmark, 13% in Britain and 14% in Sweden (see diagram 2, p. 28). As the Italian labour market is imbued by status rights, young people find it hard to enter. In the absence of appropriate benefit systems, many young people remain living at home until quite old age. That further increases the burdens of the family. As a consequence, the fertility rate has decreased dramatically and Italy has now one of the lowest in the world. People do not dare to give birth to children because in the absence of state support, they cannot afford to raise them.

5 KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The politics against social exclusion is almost entirely based on official statistics. This source of knowledge is often deficient. Take unemployment statistics, for example. In Sweden, only people registered as being in search of work are included. This means that some people are excluded from the statistics. Immigrants are especially affected. In the statistics for Central Fosie, for instance, 11.3% of the inhabitants aged 18–64 are said to be unemployed. Previous research indicates that the unemployed, in fact, are twice as many, i.e. more than 20%.[44]

Statistics can also be too old. This is true, for example, of the Malmö city statistics regarding household size. It originates from the 1990 census. As if not a lot has happened since then. The statistics for Riverside West reported in the Newcastle report are almost as old. They are from 1996. This, of course, also makes comparisons between the cities more difficult.

In this project, we have chosen to rely on another source of knowledge: the knowledge of practitioners. Indeed, the first objective of the project is taking advantage of practitioners' knowledge about good practices in combating social exclusion. Based on comparisons, a shared knowledge about good practices will then be created. The creation of this shared knowledge is the second objective of the project. The comparisons must be local as well as international.

The first comparison to make is of the knowledge between practitioners working in the same single urban area, but representing different categories. Consequently, representatives of the social services, the compulsory school, recreation activities, pre-school, the voluntary sector, health care, the employment office, as well as politicians have been recruited to the project.

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44. Stigendal, Mikael (1999).

Central Fosie, Malmö.

But what kind of knowledge do the practitioners possess? How should it be understood and validated? How should the knowledge of practitioners engage with the knowledge of researchers and vice versa? This chapter will start by trying to answer those questions. The conditions for comparing the knowledge of practitioners, both locally and internationally, will also be explored.

The second part of the chapter will deal with the third objective of the *Elipse* project, developing an "action-oriented method for how to succeed with promoting co-operation and exchanges of information in ways which means taking care of existing knowledge and the engendering of a joint understanding." Step-by-step, the development of that method will be presented and explained.

5.1 Different kind of knowledge

The knowledge of practitioners is primarily practical. That is obvious already by the name, but an elucidation is still needed. It is a special kind of knowledge, characterised by its making action possible. The teacher, for example, has to be able to teach, the politician to carry through system changes, and the recreation leader to solve conflicts between young people.

Practical knowledge does not necessarily have to be formulated in words. It can be lodged inside you, as it were. As long as action, the same action over and over again, is made possible, it constitutes knowledge. The value of practical knowledge is seen in its applicability.

But practitioners also have another kind of knowledge, which could be called empirical. It's a matter of pointing out, labelling and describing. Empirical knowledge can be compared to maps or mirror images of reality (although not 'neutral' or unequivocal). Empirical knowledge is seen in the pre-school teacher's description of the children at the pre-school, how they feel and their situation at home. Statistics are also a kind of empirical knowledge. The value of empirical knowledge is seen in how well it appears to describe reality.

A third type of knowledge is theoretical knowledge. Theoretical knowledge is a matter of more basic principles and connections. The value of theoretical knowledge is seen in its inner sustainability. It is based on logical relations and deductions, connected to other theories. It is a kind of knowledge that the practitioner is probably less dependent on than practical and empirical knowledge.

This does not mean that the practitioner has no theoretical knowledge. Theory is included in all education. To what extent the theories become applicable in practical action is another matter. In their meeting with reality, practitioners rather transform the theories from their education to practical knowledge. In this way, their knowledge may lose in generality, but at the same time it will become applicable in an actual context.

Consequently, the knowledge of practitioners is practical, empirical and theoretical, but in different proportions. Scientific knowledge is also practical, empirical and theoretical, but in other proportions. Science isn't necessarily better than the practitioners' knowledge. Nor is it necessarily inferior. When comparing practical and scientific knowledge, you cannot use the same scale. They are two different kinds of knowledge.[45]

45. One of the important lessons of the newer sociology of sciences is a deep critique of the traditional description of the relation between "scientific science" and "practice" based on the view that only (academic) science represents objective, true knowledge. The main argument in this meanwhile broad discussion is that practitioners are far away from only applying scientific knowledge – they make use of it within specific situations; so practical knowledge is a type of knowledge with own criteria of sense. See for example Alvesson, Mats & Sköldberg, Kaj (1994); Wingens, Matthias (1988); Beck, Ulrich & Bonß, Wolfgang (Hrsg.) (1989); Nowotny, Helga (1999); Willke, Helmut (2002); Stigendal, Mikael (2002)

Scientific knowledge is often allowed to rule. People take for granted that scientists know best. Such an attitude should be criticized. Paradoxically, it resembles religion. If science is to be called science, it cannot take its significance for granted. Instead, science must deserve its significance, which means that the researcher will need to convince the readers or listeners.

The overvaluation of science has its counterpart in an undervaluation of the knowledge of practitioners. It is the opinion of this project that practitioners' knowledge and experience are taken advantage of to a much too low extent. This in no way means that practitioners are always right. One knowledge monopoly should not be replaced with another. Of course practitioners can be wrong. But so can researchers. Science is not a fundamental yardstick, against which all other knowledge can be measured. It is important to safeguard the differences between researchers' and practitioners' knowledge. Both forms of knowledge are important.

Bearing in mind the fundamental difference between scientific and practical knowledge, practitioners among themselves may also have very different knowledge. Such differences form the basis of the project's second objective, "to engender and establish a joint understanding". Too often, such differences in knowledge, approaches and attitudes hamper the attempts to solve the problems of social exclusion. They may even cause new problems. Thus, the comparability of the knowledge could not be taken for granted. On what grounds may the knowledge of practitioners be compared, given all the differences?

In this project, the prerequisite for comparing these practitioners' knowledge about good practices is their working with social exclusion in the same urban area. This lays the foundation for certain similarities in experience. But there are differences in experience, too, depending on what they work with and how; for example, whether they work with children or with adults. The voluntary sector, for example, has a different relationship to the area than the social services.

The differences can no doubt be quite significant, but the fact that the experiences originate from the same urban area still assures certain similarities. If nothing else, they share the experience of how the area looks. The practitioners' similar experiences make it possible for them to communicate. They have something in common that makes the differences comprehensible. The combination of similarities and differences makes the practitioners' knowledge possible to compare.

But comparisons are not to be made just between knowledge from

Nørrebro Park Kvarter, Copenhagen.

within one single urban area. Practitioners from five different cities parti-
cipate in the project: Malmö, Hamburg, Newcastle, Turin and Copen-
hagen. In each city, participants representing similar categories have been
recruited. After local comparisons in each city, the knowledge will also be
compared internationally. How is that possible? How comparable is, in
fact, knowledge originating in Malmö, Hamburg, Newcastle, Turin and
Copenhagen?

The international comparison appears to be more difficult. What simi-
larities would make it possible for practitioners from different countries
to communicate? Well, it certainly is not the similarities in knowledge of
the same urban area. Nor is it similarities in knowledge of the same welfare

5. Risk of poverty rate after social transfers 1998.
Percentage of the population below the poverty line after social transfers. Poverty line
defined as 60% of the median equivalised income, 1998. European Commission (2002).
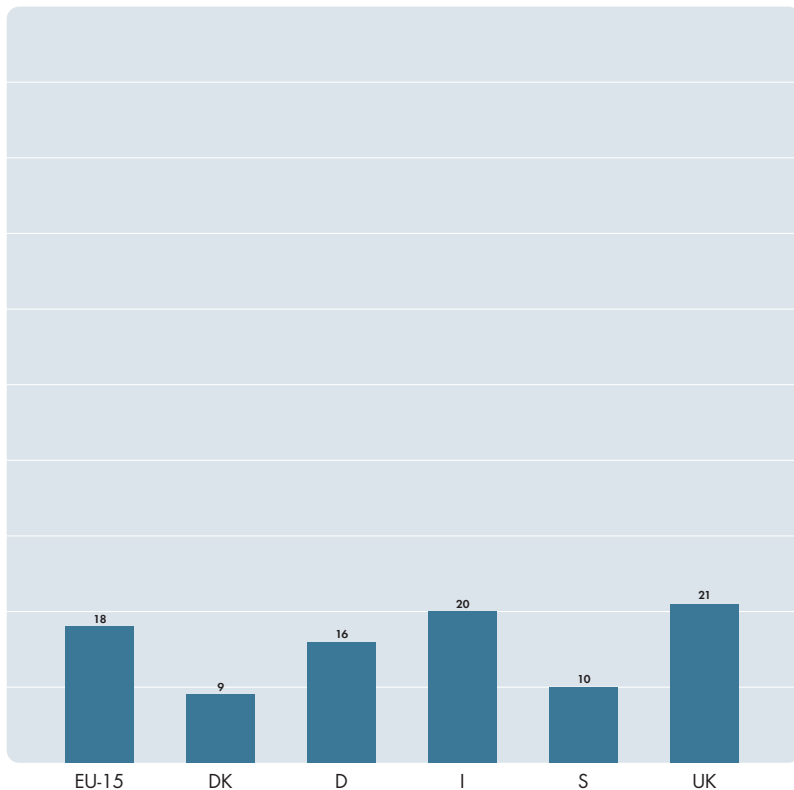
system. Practitioners from different countries cannot even use the same language. So, how are they to communicate? How will they be able to understand and value each other's good practices? Things that appear to be good practices in one country could very well be commonplace in another, depending on differences between the countries as regards, for example, living conditions and welfare systems.

In the project, we have aimed at a similarity by recruiting representatives of roughly the same categories. Practitioners throughout Europe working with young children, for example, probably understand each other to a certain extent. This also holds for people working with addicts or, say, local politicians throughout Europe. They probably also gain more or less the same experiences. These similar experiences are meant to provide an important foundation for the project's international exchange. But that is surely not enough. The foundation must be supplemented with knowledge about similarities and differences between the areas.

5.2 Methods Development

The first objective of the project is taking advantage of the knowledge of practitioners. How will you be able to succeed with that? What methods are the most appropriate? Interviews could be one way, but that is not enough. It is not only one single practitioner's knowledge we want to take advantage of, but several, and they should represent different categories of practitioners as well. In the project, we attach great importance to the differences between the categories. The differences are the bases for the second objective of the project, which is the engendering of joint knowledge.

Method requirements

At least three demands must be put on the method to be used in the project. Firstly, the method must be able to take advantage of the knowledge of practitioners. Secondly, it must make visible the differences between different categories of practitioners. Thirdly, it must make possible the engendering of joint knowledge. The method requirements can be summarised in a question: How can you take advantage of the knowledge that representatives of different categories of practitioners have in a way that, at the same time, make visible the differences and make possible the engendering of joint knowledge?

There does not seem to exist any ready-made method that meets the

Lenzsiedlung, Hamburg.

three demands put above. It has to be created, which is why we have made that the project's third objective. The first two objectives of the project are not attainable unless we also give as an objective to create a particular method. In other words, a method must be created that makes it possible for us to attain the first two objectives.

Maybe you could interview the participants individually and put the same questions. That would probably meet the first two requirements above. Knowledge would be taken advantage of and differences made visible. But how do you succeed with the third requirement, the engendering of joint knowledge? Will it be the researcher's task to engender this knowledge from the results of the interviews? That is quite a conceivable method, of course, but what kind of quality will that result in? Then, the practitioners will primarily only make known their knowledge. They will not get the opportunity to take part in the reflection. Thus, the project will not fully take advantage of the knowledge of the practitioners.

It is not possible to describe knowledge in purely quantitative terms. Just enumerations of years or names of cities do not constitute knowledge. Knowledge also contains an ability to take a stand and reflect over things you see and hear. Practitioners working in areas characterised by social exclusion must probably develop this ability more than many others. Everyday life turns many old ingrained truths upside down. Surely, this makes one think along new lines.

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The sixth ward, Turin.

But what if we went in for group discussions instead of individual interviews? Would that fulfil the method requirements, perhaps? Well, that would probably depend on what you talk about during the group discussions. If everyone is free to speak, maybe one or a few of the participants take over at the expense of others. Everyone may not have his or her say. But what if you make it the moderator's task to give everyone the opportunity to speak his or her mind? That would probably work, but how will it make possible the comparison between the cities? What if the participant groups talk about entirely different matters?

How to assess good practices?
It was against this background that the ideas of indicators appeared. Regard them primarily as a checklist. The indicators were meant to make the groups discuss more or less the same things. That would in turn make comparisons possible.

The indicators were supposed to be used on the basis of certain questions connected to the objectives of the project, i.e. to take advantage of the practitioners' knowledge of good practices as well as engender joint knowledge. It seemed logical to first put a question about which indicators on the list the participants' good practice examples related to. This is how the question was formulated: 'Assess the significance of the indicators in the table below with regard to the good example. What indicators

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does the good example relate to and how significant are they? Highest significance (3), significant, but not more or less (2), not significant at all (1) or you don't know (?)? More than one may be chosen as having the highest significance.'

The replies to this first question would make it possible to sort all good practices into categories and compare the categories separately. Everything according to the principle: Apples and pears will be compared separately. Then it was just as logical to ask how good the good practice was with regard to the checklist indicators. Thus, the degree of success could be specified. Instead of general assessments, the checklist made specific assessments possible. This is how the question was formulated: 'What is your impression of its success with regard to the significant indicators? How successful does it seem to be? Much less than expected (1), less than expected (2), just as expected (3), more than expected (4), much more than expected (5) or you don't know (?)?'

How you look at success is relative, of course. There are no definite yardsticks. It depends on the practitioner's own expertise. But, naturally enough, it also depends on the problem the success is related to. The success must be put in relation to a problem. Otherwise it won't be comprehensible. And which are the problems, then?

We can learn about this by having a look in the official statistics. But as mentioned previously, the statistics are far from reliable. Statistics can also be difficult to compare. That's exactly why this project has also wanted to take advantage of the practitioners' knowledge about social exclusion. Certainly, the objectives of the project concern knowledge about good practice against social exclusion, but to succeed, we also need knowledge about social exclusion per se. This is partly due to the deficiencies of official statistics, but partly also due to the fact that practitioners constitute a very important source of knowledge about social exclusion per se.

Area concentrations
In other words, two different discussions turned out to be needed, one on social exclusion and another on good practices. The plan was to start with the discussions on social exclusion. Thus, the problems that the good practices were related to would be made visible. The discussions on social exclusion would make the discussions on good practices comprehensible. Maybe the discussions could be broken up into two workshops, the first on social exclusion and the other on good practices.

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The idea was to use the same list of indicators in both workshops. That would make plain the relationship between the solutions of the good practices and the problems of social exclusion. Like in the workshop on good practices, the discussions on social exclusion were supposed to be directed with some questions. What would you need to ask the practitioners about to better understand good practices? Well, first of all a description of the area. That is the purpose of official statistics, but the results are often quite imperfect, for example unemployment. In official statistics, it is described as the share of unemployed people in search of work in relation to the total population in a certain age bracket. Unemployment is given in per cent, sometimes with one or several decimals, which seems a bit ridiculous given the poor basis of calculation.

Putting questions to practitioners about unemployment, for example, and demanding answers in percentage terms is quite pointless. To be able to answer such a question, the practitioners can hardly use anything but official statistics, and then the questioning stands out as nothing but a test on one's homework. Then, we could just as well turn directly to the official statistics. But we did not want to do that, which was because of its deficiencies. Instead, we wanted to take advantage of practitioners' own knowledge about social exclusion. The project is based on the conviction that practitioners possess a great deal of valuable knowledge about social exclusion and good practices. But if the knowledge cannot be expressed in percentages, how could we then take advantage of it?

Percentages and statistics are associated with quantitative research. The opposite is usually called qualitative research. It is a kind of research associated with analyses of texts, cultures or power. In a purely qualitative interview, the questions have not been specified in advance. In interviews performed according to quantitative principles, questions as well as response alternatives have been decided in advance. That will make comparisons possible, too. So many have answered this and so many have answered that. In purely qualitative interviews this is not possible. On the other hand, qualitative interviews are open to the unexpected and to response alternatives the researcher had not thought of.

This very openness to the unexpected has been an important ambition in our project. The project is based on the conviction that practitioners have something to contribute, knowledge of their own, which the researcher cannot figure out in advance. In other words, methods for taking advantage of knowledge must be developed, allowing free scope for the distinctive

character of practical knowledge. Consequently, the method must be qualitative. But it also has to be quantitative. Otherwise comparisons will be difficult. As previously pointed out, we cannot say what the result will be if we let practitioners speak freely. Maybe it will be comparable in some respect. Or it will not be comparable at all. Thus, the project method must constitute a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. That is how the method requirements can be specified.

The idea was to relate the practitioners' responses to the rest of the city with the aid of a few single response alternatives. The question was formulated thus: 'Assess the area in relation to the rest of the city with regard to the indicators in the table below. Does the area contain the highest concentration in the city (7), among the next to highest in the city (6), more than average but not among the highest (5), average concentration in the city (4), less than average but not among the lowest (3), among the next to lowest in the city (2), lowest concentration in the city (1) or you don't know (?)?'

This method does not require knowledge about the exact number of unemployed people, for example. The practitioners may, of course, base their responses on other knowledge, experiences and impressions. In this respect, the method is open to the specific character of the practitioners' knowledge. Whatever knowledge the practitioner has about the situation in the area, it should be possible to relate to the rest of the city. However, this knowledge does not have to be very exact or comprehensive. It should be good enough to choose one of the above seven response alternatives, and that is probably a knowledge many practitioners possess.

But the method does not stop at the filling in of a table. That is only the first step. In the second step of the method, practitioners were supposed to argue in favour of their assessments, which would consequently force the practitioners to make their knowledge visible. Why did they fill in like this and not like that? On what grounds have their choices been made? Based on what knowledge? The arguments in favour of filling in certain choices have been at least as important as the filling-in itself. The method allows the knowledge the filling-in is based on to be qualitative. The filling-in gives them a quantitative form, which makes comparisons possible. The argumentation, however, makes them keep their qualitative character.

The third step of the method means that the practitioner's knowledge will be subjected to a trial through the discussions with the other practitioners and the local researcher. The objective of the third step was meant

Riverside West, Newcastle.

6. Women in decision making Spring 2001 . European Commission (2002).
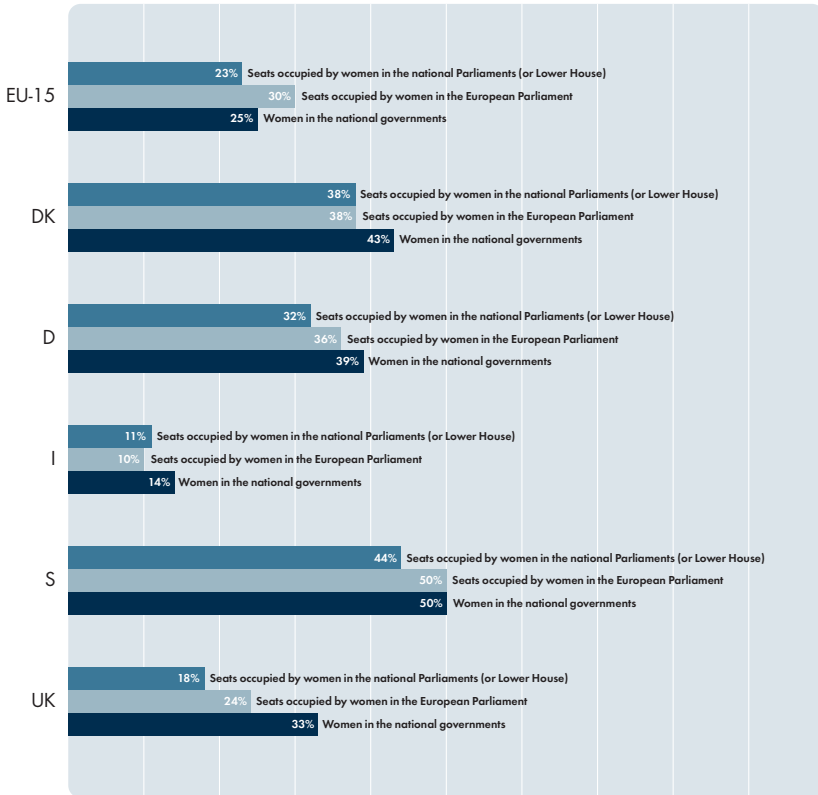
to be trying to reach an agreement. That objective would force the practitioners to sharpen their arguments and make visible all valuable knowledge. And if it was not possible to reach an agreement in the assessments, the reasons for this would be made clear. The hope was that the results would consist of a qualitative knowledge.

Choice of indicators
The result of course also depends upon the choice of indicators. The idea was to refer to the indicators that have been agreed upon within the EU. That would at the same time make a test possible. How applicable are the indicators the EU has agreed upon? What do they say about social exclusion? What conclusions can you reach about the indicators from another method

of application? Those were the kinds of questions our project would be able to answer by referring to the EU's choice of indicators.

On the list of a total of 20 indicators suggested, eight originate from the list of risk factors in the '*Joint Report on Social Inclusion*': Long-term dependence on low/inadequate income; Long-term unemployment; Persistent low quality employment (working poor); Poor health; Drug abuse and alcoholism; Disabilities; Poor qualifications and low level of education; Homelessness and precarious housing; and Ethnic minorities. Two more originate from the report conclusions regarding most affected groups: Youth, 16/18–25/30; and Single parents. Four possible indicators of social exclusion were supplemented: Low school performance; Crime – black economy; Low election turnout; and Bad housing conditions.

A big problem with the EU indicators is their problem orientation. They are all problem oriented. This means that possible gleams of hope in an area characterised by social exclusion will not show. Using only problem indicators paints such a gloomy picture. That is why the list was supplemented with a few indicators that might make possible gleams of hope visible. Previous investigations have indicated that it is possible for cultural life to flourish in areas characterised by social exclusion.[46] This also holds for various kinds of networks. Hence, the following indicators were added: Cultural life; Formal networks; and Informal networks. Two more indicators were added from the discussions with local researchers in the other cities: Middle aged inhabitants; Elderly.

The indicators on the list were deliberately mixed. The reason was to avoid creating preconceptions concerning which indicators should mean what. Belonging to an ethnic minority certainly must not necessarily be negative. The fact that the EU includes ethnic minorities in their list of risk factors requires quite a careful interpretation. It can be interpreted as if ethnic minorities by themselves create social exclusion. That ethnic minorities have themselves to blame. However, that is not usually the case. Rather, it is the societal systems, by their way of functioning, that make it more difficult for ethnic minorities to assert themselves.

The answer to the question of concentrations as regards all the list indicators, the argumentations and the testing through the discussion was meant to end in an area description, comparable to the other areas. Such descriptions can make clear the differences between the areas in a number

46. Stigendal, Mikael (1999).

of respects. All areas may not contain their respective city's highest concentration of long-time unemployed, for example. And if an area has the highest concentration of ethnic minorities of its city, that share could still be considerably lower than in another city.

In short, the description of the areas by means of concentrations does not say anything about to which extent respective indicators mean social exclusion in the different countries.

The border between inclusion and exclusion
Just being satisfied with the description would be the same as taking the meaning of social exclusion for granted. It would presuppose that social exclusion means the same in all the countries. But we know it does not. We saw that in the chapter on welfare states, for example. The prerequisites for unemployment may differ significantly between the countries. The question is where the border runs. In what situations do you risk ending up outside? When do you find yourself on the margins, as it were? And when do you find yourself outside? Criminality is an obvious example. That is something societies cannot accept, at least not their justice systems.

But where do the borders run in other respects? Practitioners working in areas characterised by social exclusion should possess a great deal of knowledge about this. They undoubtedly have to draw the line many times in their everyday working life. A Swedish social worker may, for instance, have to assess to what extent a family takes good care of its children. Swedish society does not accept child abuse.

School is another example of where the line between social inclusion and social exclusion is drawn. Sweden has a nine-year compulsory school system, starting at the age of seven. There is no marking until year 8, but then it becomes very important. The marks given in year 9 decide the students' further opportunities. After the nine-year compulsory school, everybody has to continue at a three-year compulsory upper secondary school.

Pupils without a pass from year 9 in the three core subjects (Swedish, English and Mathematics) have to be taught individually at a detention school. The aim is to re-learn the knowledge needed to get prepared for an ordinary three-year compulsory upper secondary school. However, many pupils and parents take the fail marks from year 9 as an indication of a more general uselessness and social exclusion. That is also how the mass media often reports it. Pupils without pass marks are associated with uncivilised behaviour.

Thus, schoolteachers decide about social exclusion. However, that may certainly not be their intention. And, indeed, individual teachers have not had any power over the creation of the marking system. However, they are part of a system, which in practice decides about social exclusion. Perhaps they lack the appropriate resources. Or they may wonder a lot about the knowledge that the pupils have to gain in order to get their marks. Is it really the right knowledge? Yet, at the end of year 9, they have to mark their pupils in accordance with the marking conditions and then in practice confirm but also establish social exclusion.

The idea was to use the list of indicators to make clear the borders between social inclusion and social exclusion. The results could later be used in a comparison between the cities. This is how the question was formulated: 'Given your assessment of the area, what does it mean in your society in terms of social exclusion? Does it mean that the people in this sense are definitely excluded (3), on the margins between inside and outside (2), definitely inside (1) or you don't know (?)?'

To be able to make up one's mind about this question, the indicators must be defined. Not all kinds of poor health, bad housing or drug abuse, for example, necessarily mean social exclusion. Specifications of what they mean are needed. One way would be to carefully write down definitions of all indicators.

In this project, however, the idea was to let the situation in the area define the indicators. When the practitioners were asked to decide whether poor health meant social exclusion, the health state in the area would be the deciding factor. 'Poor health' means the way health is poor in that area.

Peer reviews – locally and internationally
To sum up, the method means that four types of assessments are made, two of the area and two of the good practices. The first assessment of the area refers to concentrations and the other to social exclusion. The assessment of the good practices refers to significance first, and then to success.

In all four types of assessment, the same list of indicators is used. This also makes possible a comparison between the assessments. To what extent are the good practices based on, for example, the instances in the assessment that have turned out to be gleams of hope, i.e. the things that could be called the self-healing powers of the area?

The assessments of concentrations, social exclusion, significance and success are made in three steps:

1. *Assessment*: The participants make their own assessments and fill in the list of indicators. The assessments are based on the participants' own experiences and knowledge.
2. *Argumentation*: The participants argue in favour of their assessments in front of the others in the group.
3. *Testing*: The participants' assessments and arguments are put against each other, criticised and tested. This may result in common assessments.

The method was planned to be implemented at local conferences in all partner cities. The idea was to devote the first day to area assessments and the second day to the assessments of the good practices. This is how the plans were presented at the kick-off meeting with the local researchers in early April 2002.

The method is similar to what has been called peer reviews in the EU for the last few years. There is a special programme for peer reviews within the EU. It constitutes part of the European Employment Strategy. This is how the programme is described on its own home page:

> *The programme was launched by the European Commission in 1999 with the aim of promoting the transferability of good practice in active labour market policy throughout the European Union. In high-level expert meetings (reviews) and reports good practice in individual member states ("host countries") is analysed and discussed with specific regard to its transferability to other member states ("peer countries").[47]*

Participants in peer reviews are representatives of the member state governments, independent labour market experts and representatives of the European Commission. Each peer review is performed in a member state, hosting the event. One good practice is chosen and then presented by the host country. However, the host country is not responsible for organising the peer review. The EU Commission is responsible, but in co-operation with independent evaluation institutes. The arrangement includes the engagement of independent experts, who write reports on the practice and its prerequisites in advance.

47. http://peerreview.almp.org/en/ [accessed 24 April 2003].

Then, the idea behind the method is to critically review the qualities of the good practice by means of discussions and comparisons. The programme home page states four objectives with this method:

- *To identify, evaluate and disseminate good ALMP practices.*
- *To assess whether and how good practices can be effectively transferred to other member states.*
- *To follow-up and implement the ideas and objectives of the European employment strategy.*
- *To develop and propose a list of methodology criteria for the selection and review of good practices.*

The *Elipse* method can be compared to a peer review. Our project has also engaged experts, in our case practitioners with knowledge about good practices in the combat against social exclusion. Our project has presented good practices, too, but also knowledge about their prerequisites in their urban environment. This knowledge about good practices and urban areas were, firstly, to be made visible by the filling-in of the indicator lists, secondly, to be explained through argumentation and, thirdly, to be tested through critical discussions.

As a matter of fact, *Elipse* was planned to be composed of two peer reviews, the first local and the other international. These peer reviews were to be different in terms of the composition of the groups. At the first (local) conference, the group members were to represent different categories of practitioners, but from the same cities. At the second conference, the groups were instead to be made up of the same categories, but with members from different cities. The difference in composition was planned to make possible a more all-round testing of the knowledge of good practices as well as of social exclusion in the areas.

By using the same method at both conferences, the local conference could also function as a preparation for the international one. The participants would be given the opportunity to first learn the method in their own language before it was used at the international conference later. Then, we hopefully would not have to waste time on explanations in different languages and on possible misunderstandings. The common experience of local conferences would hopefully facilitate the realisation of the international conference.

Central Fosie, Malmö.

Central Fosie, Malmö.

6. SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN PRACTICE

In the previous chapter, the project method was described. This chapter will deal with the results of the first part, the one about social exclusion. The analysis builds on the local reports, presented at the Web-board in September 2002. Without doubt, the reports contain a lot of important knowledge about social exclusion.

Yet, they also show the difficulties in establishing a solid ground for making comparisons. The amount of time and funding available has put narrow limits on what we have been able to achieve. The detailed and sophisticated project method was interpreted somehow differently by the partners, due to difficulties in communication. The differences in language and cultures have influenced the project more than anticipated.

Perhaps even more important, the practitioners did not take part in the selection of the comparative indicators. That created difficulties later on in reaching a joint understanding of the project objectives and method. The next chapter will deal further with these difficulties, but also how we managed to overcome them. Thus, these problems should not overshadow the richness of the local reports. They do contain a lot of interesting knowledge about social exclusion, but which is not comparable to the extent envisaged at the start of the project.

The demands on deciding about indicators provoked intense discussions in all the local groups. And as a matter of fact, that was the main reason for using them. Quantitative assessments were not supposed to be the most important results. Just to give an account of the assessed figures would not be interesting. In this project, the assessments function as tools. The purpose of the workshops was to decide about who is excluded. However, all the groups have also cautioned against such decisions. Labelling somebody as excluded can easily contribute to the preservation and aggravation of social exclusion. That risk will be dealt with in the second part of this chapter.

6.1 Who is excluded?

The most general characteristic of social exclusion seems to be long-term unemployment. All the groups regard long-term unemployment as a core characteristic. The long-term unemployed tend to be excluded in Riverside West, Central Fosie, Lenzsiedlung, the Sixth ward and Nørrebro Park Kvarter. However, the assessments of the remaining indicators differ.

In Central Fosie, long-term unemployment, crime and drug abuse are the core characteristics of social exclusion. Also, the group classifies school failure and homelessness as social exclusion, but not belonging to the core characteristics in Central Fosie, due to not so high concentrations.

Long-term dependence on low/inadequate income is a risk of social exclusion, but not necessarily a fact. In Sweden, it is subordinated to long-term unemployment. It is because of long-term unemployment that low/inadequate income exists in Sweden, neither because of the relations at the labour market nor because of a low unemployment benefit. Due to the system of collective agreements, wages are not that low in Sweden. And in an international comparison, the unemployment benefit is quite high. However, people who do not qualify have to rely on social assistance, which certainly means a low/inadequate income.

Persistent low quality employment (working poor) means a risk of social exclusion, but not necessarily a fact. Laws and labour market relations (between unions and employers) maintain the regulations relatively high. Similarly, the Fosie focus group regards precarious housing, poor health, disabilities and single parents as potential risks, but not necessarily a fact. It is not a rule that, for example, people with poor health become socially excluded, as Swedish society contains much support.

The Fosie focus group found it even more difficult to decide about ethnic minorities. In general, ethnic minorities are not excluded systemicly, but 'structural racism' may engender an exclusion of certain groups. Social exclusion may also depend on popular opinion, but that does not exist to a high extent in Sweden, the group maintained.

In Newcastle Riverside West, long-term unemployment belongs to the core characteristics of social exclusion as well. In fact it overshadows the problems of crime and drug abuse. Interestingly, this assessment highlights different attitudes between Britain and Sweden to some crimes. Perhaps it confirms the differences mentioned in an earlier chapter between high-walls and low-walls economies. Low wages and weak labour rights pave the way for criminal activity. It blurs the borders between inclusion and exclusion.

What about poor health, then? That is mentioned by the Newcastle group as a core characteristic of social exclusion. The Malmö group classifies it as a risk, but not necessarily a fact. Does that mean that health may be poorer in Newcastle than in Malmö? Or does it perhaps mean that the English society have a lower acceptance towards poor health than the Swedish? The first alternative seems more likely, indicating a poorer health in Newcastle than in Malmö.

The groups in Newcastle and Malmö reach the same assessments of long-term dependence on low/inadequate income and persistent low quality employment (working poor). However, the reasons probably differ. In Sweden, long-term dependence on low/inadequate income is not an indicator of social exclusion in its own right. It is subordinated to long-term unemployment, which means that people may not have to suffer from a

Hamburg

Lenzsiedlung
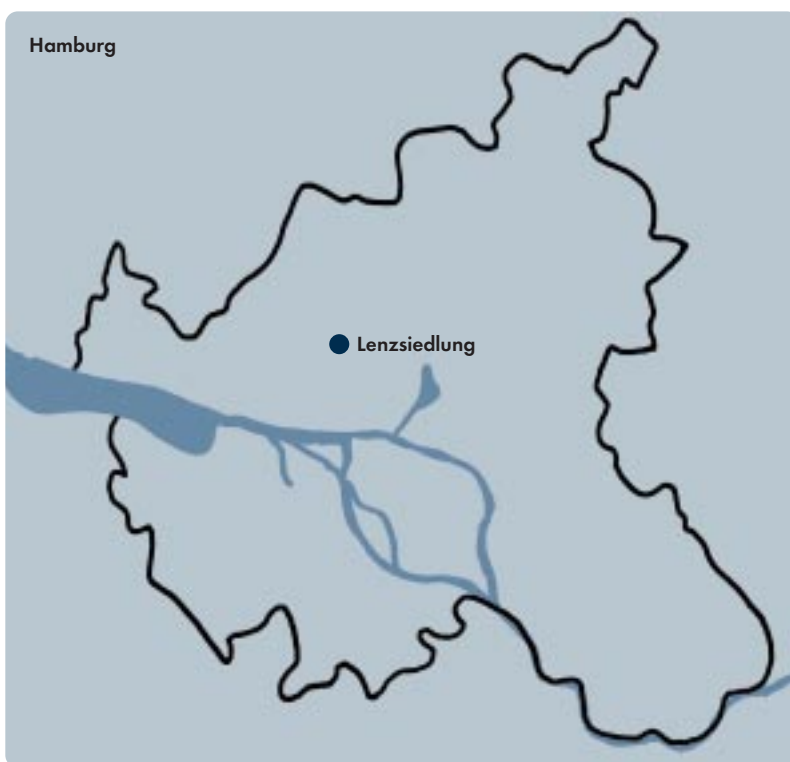
long-term dependence on low/inadequate income unless they are long-term unemployed.

In Britain, the low-walls economy indicates the existence of long-term dependence on low/inadequate income, independently of long-term unemployment. The low-walls economy means that society has accepted long-term dependence on low/inadequate income. It has been made 'normal' and socially included. The same interpretations could be made of persistent low quality employment (working poor). It is not regarded as the core characteristics of social exclusion, but for different reasons. In Sweden, the higher border towards social exclusion has made it more difficult for the quality of employment to become that low. In England, the low border means the incorporation and acceptance of employment with a lower quality.
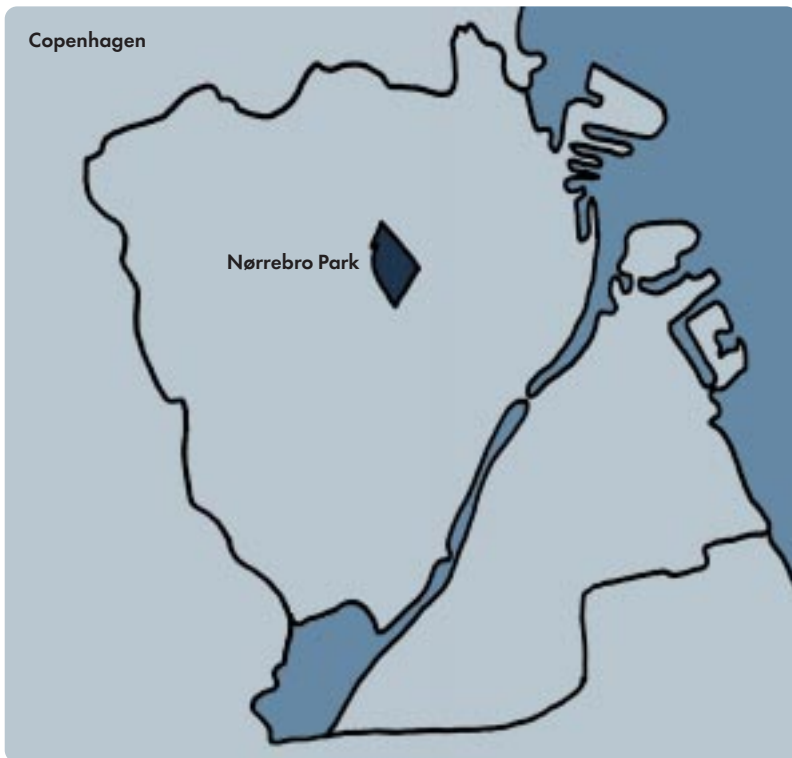
Riverside West, Newcastle.

It is interesting to notice the difference in bad housing conditions, homelessness and precarious housing. To the Newcastle group, it may contribute towards both social inclusion and social exclusion. They find it impossible to be unanimous about it. To the Malmö group, homelessness and precarious housing belongs to the core characteristics of social exclusion. Poor housing is not even mentioned, because it does not exist in shapes which could be regarded as poor. In Britain, poor housing definitely exists, but again it seems more accepted.

Both groups have found it difficult to classify ethnic minorities, but it would have been very interesting to compare the reasons. The reason probably differs quite a lot. Poor language skills exclude many immigrants in Sweden. Of course, the fault is not theirs. It is the Swedish society which has to be blamed and the fact that Sweden has not succeeded well enough with its imperial ambitions. Sweden conquered a great deal of Northern Europe in the 17th century but that ended when Charles the 12th was shot dead in Norway in 1718. Above else, a very tiny part of the world population has been forced to learn Swedish.

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That is obviously not the case in Britain. In that sense, immigrants in contemporary Britain benefit from the imperialist legacy. It has made it easier for them to become included, at least in terms of language. Thus, poor skills in the majority language are not such an important indicator of social exclusion as it is in Sweden. Yet, immigrants may be regarded, treated and themselves feel excluded for other reasons, for example skin colour. Of course. However, the big differences have to be highlighted. As a consequence, it makes the preconditions for good examples very different as well.

In Lenzsiedlung (Hamburg), the practitioners focus on income- and work related indicators in characterizing social exclusion (low income, long-term unemployment, working poor and poor qualification). Also, social exclusion in Lenzsiedlung is indicated by ethnic minorities. The group underlined how some ethnic minorities may choose themselves to remain socially excluded, due to language problems in particular.

There is a political discussion about this in Germany, referring to the emergence of "parallel-societies". However, the group prefers the expression "co-societies" and that is, indeed, a reality in Lenzsiedlung. However, drug abuse, crime, bad housing conditions or homelessness have nothing to do with social exclusion in Lenzsiedlung. Instead, the group maintains, social exclusion is characterized by the combined effects of low income, long-term unemployment, working poor, poor qualification, poor language skills and a foreign background.

That forms a sharp contrast to the situation in Nørrebro Park Kvarter (Copenhagen), where drug abuse, bad housing conditions and homelessness belong to the core characteristics of social exclusion. The practitioners describe the Danish society manifest at Nørrebro Park Kvarter as a hierarchy. Alcohol and drug abusers, homeless people, motorcycle gangs and certain immigrant groups find themselves at the bottom; 'those who are excluded from participating in the society', as Fie says. According to the practitioners, gypsies are the lowest ranked in Nørrebro Park Kvarter, but there are not many of them. The Somalis are considered to be in a somewhat higher position.

A typical example of social exclusion in Nørrebro Park Kvarter is the so-called 'The swamp', described in the Copenhagen report:

> *In a public park within the area, the municipality has established a fencing, which often is named "The swamp". It is a rather big enclo-*

Lenzsiedlung, Hamburg.
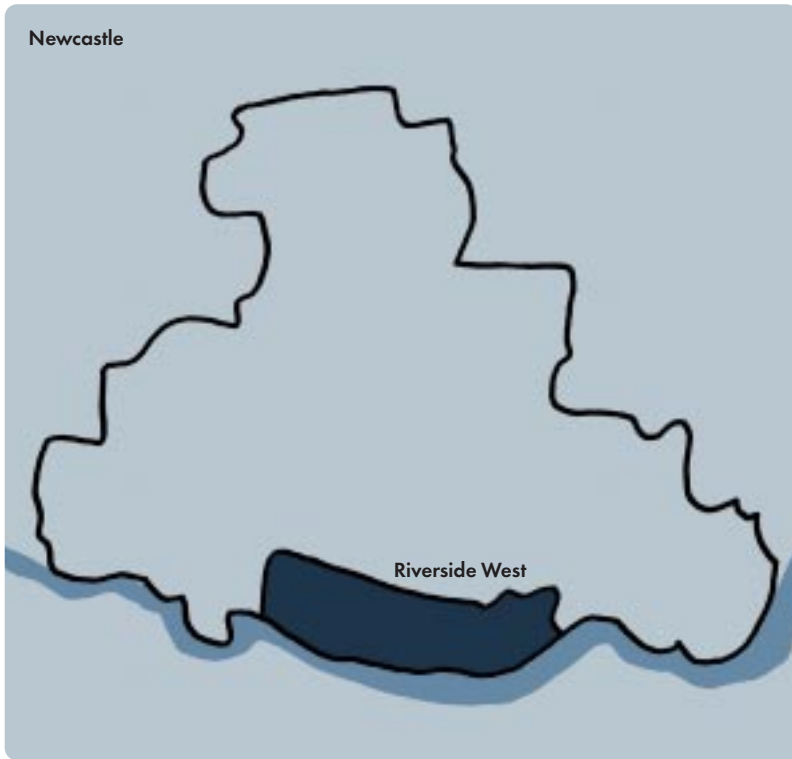
sure made especially for the alcoholics. It contains benches, tables, a
toilet and an outdoor grill. The alcoholics are "left in peace" and the
public is "left off seeing and listening to the alcoholics".

Social exclusion in Nørrebro Park Kvarter looks similar to the Sixth ward
in Turin. However, a major difference between Turin and the other cities
was revealed in the course of the *Elipse* project. Turin is not segregated to
the same extent as the other cities. Social exclusion exists in particular
houses or smaller neighbourhoods, but it does not characterize larger
housing estates. That is a reason why the partners in Turin selected such a
large area. The selection depended more on the interesting and innovative
tradition in social work that the Sixth ward is associated with.

In fact, social exclusion exists in smaller concentrations all around
Turin. The local report describes the situation as an increased vulnerabili-
ty facing the whole population. "More and more people – at least in terms

of risk – look at poverty, precariousness and lack of self-sufficiency as possible – even predictable - events in their lives." According to the author, this is not primarily because of a lack of money, but due to changes in family circumstances. Previously, the family was the most important safety net. Its importance has decreased, however, due to changes in composition, age distribution and state of health, but without being replaced by new safety nets. This has made many people vulnerable. "The element common to an increasing number of people is an emotional and patent perception of insecurity that influences their whole life-project."

Drug abuse, bad housing conditions and homelessness seems to be the most obvious characteristics of social exclusion in the Sixth ward, just as in Nørrebro Park Kvarter. However, ethnic minorities do not belong to the core characteristics, at least not officially. In the official statistics, immigrants (referred to as strangers in the statistics) amount to only 5% in the Sixth ward and 4,5% in the whole of Turin.

According to the local researcher and the group of practitioners, this is a serious underestimation. True, Turin and Italy in general do not have a lengthy experience of immigrants. In Turin, immigrants began to arrive in the mid 80s. In this sense, Turin looks similar to Newcastle. However, in spite of the low figures compared to Central Fosie and Lenzsiedlung, the partners in Turin call it a revolution. That is also because Turin and the Sixth ward harbour many immigrants illegally. The partners in Turin estimate the real amount of immigrants, the illegal ones included, as something between 10–15% of the population. That is more than double the official figures.

In spite of the large numbers (more than 50.000), the partner in Turin refers to this group of people as the invisibles. That's because they live an invisible life in the eyes of the authorities. Officially, they do not exist and that deprives them of all rights, like social security or health care. Thus, this group of illegal immigrants is definitely socially excluded. Probably it is the most clear-cut form of social exclusion existing in any of the cities.

6.2 Living behind the labels
In the Newcastle report a great deal is said about an important aspect of society's creation of social exclusion, which is made by singling out, labelling and designation. The talk about social exclusion alone could be forceful enough to create social exclusion. The author of the local report is referring to this force in his choice of title: 'Living behind the labels'.

Nørrebro Park Kvarter, Copenhagen.

The sixth ward, Turin.

Outside classification of the area is a big problem, as comments by the participants demonstrated. Julian noted how it contributes both to divisions within the area and social exclusion. According to Jackie, people living in the area have been described in terms of extremes, either as violent and criminal or as a romanticised working-class community. There are problems with both: the violence is an expression of desperation and the romanticism of working class communities belies the (often racial) abuse which she experienced.

The preconceived ideas about Riverside West so easily become self-fulfilling. People who hear others describing them as aggressive can certainly become so, says Alison. "There is resentment about the implication that people cannot feed their children… it is a threat to the perception of themselves as good parents – even if they may not be 'good parents' in middle class, professional terms." As a matter of fact, parents in Riverside West

Central Fosie, Malmö.

could very well care about their children, but in another way. "There are professional assumptions – teachers will sometimes imply that parents don't care about their children because they don't share what the school thinks is important… its values and assumptions."

The media often contributes to the creation and preservation of social exclusion. As Nigel says: "segments of the media sometimes use the West End as entertainment for its wider audience… any good news stories are in the context of a bad area." Manna agrees: "The media paint a negative image [of the area]… and encourage young people to act that way – but the media accept no responsibility for any impact." He gave the example that "people in Rye Hill don't perceive themselves as a high crime estate" – but this is how it is commonly portrayed in media coverage.

Then, when society tries to solve the problems with social exclusion, the solutions often become part of the problem. As Jackie says, funding of

regeneration schemes based on ward boundaries has contributed to segregation and worsened divisions within the West End. According to Julian there is a 'poverty industry', noting that some people had made careers out of social exclusion, but had little vested interest in the area. Under the pretext of wanting to solve the problems, the municipality also contributes to strengthening social exclusion, Margie says: "The Council make the area run down so they can come in and demolish it." Problems and solutions are transformed into a vicious circle. The solutions require that you let yourself be singled out as a problem, which in turn aggravates the problems. "People dislike how they are defined … as disadvantaged, illiterate … we are labelling them and the funders are labelling them – but you have to use the labels to get the funding", Claire says.

The force of singling out and labelling is so strong that several participants scarcely want to talk about Riverside West in terms of problems. They feel that they, by doing that, contribute to the creation of social exclusion. Claire repeated her warning that "constantly reinforcing how excluded people are, how ill they are is a self-fulfilling prophecy." Margie agrees: "I felt awful filling this in because I'm labelling the community that I have to stick up for." Kath had the same feeling: "I feel uncomfortable using these terms", but she admitted and recognised that "perceptions of higher crime, quality of schools and health services are very real, and do stop the area regenerating."

Also in Hamburg, the participants mentioned the force of singling out and labelling. Indeed, bad reputation has to be added to the list of indicators in the understanding of Lenzsiedlung, the Hamburg participants claim.

> *Like many discriminated quarters Lenzsiedlung is perceived from the outside as a ghetto or as a dangerous place. This shows when parents would not let their children play in Lenzsiedlung when they live outside or send their children to schools which are not attended by children from Lenzsiedlung.*

Many inhabitants perceive themselves as being on the outside:

> *This feeling manifests itself in their body posture and their way of talking. You could see it if someone feels excluded. This feeling would make men feel passive and hopeless.*

Turin

The sixth ward
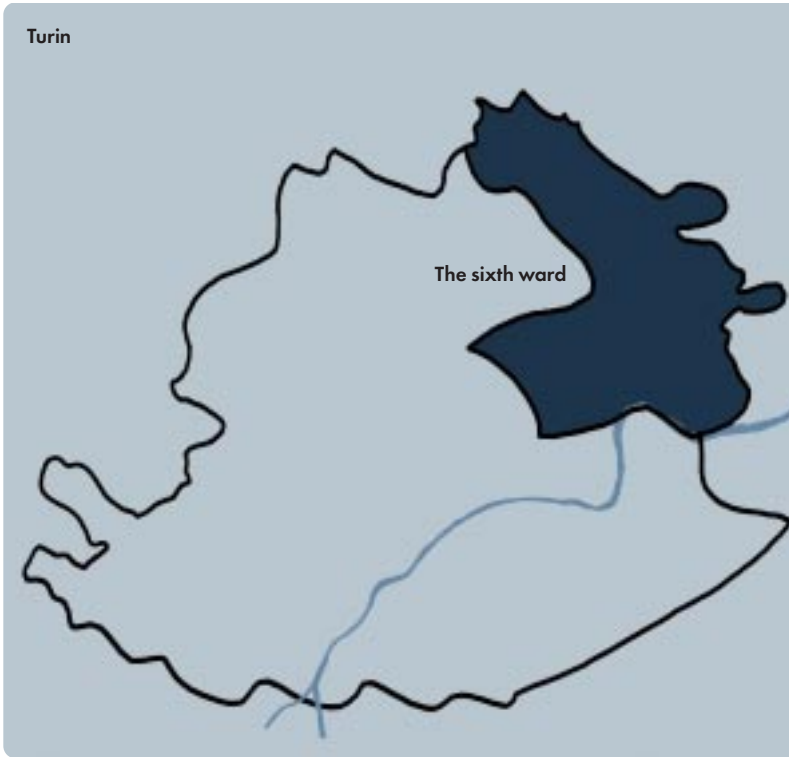
In Copenhagen, Fie underlines how those being excluded take part in the process of excluding themselves:

> They might even choose it themselves, because it might be the solution considered most safe or most familiar. … The Somali women see themselves as a group; it's a part of their identity and their perception of being a clan. That's how they function. As individuals they feel excluded. Somalis in general are proud.

Among children, in particular, social exclusion can easily develop into a self-realising force. "Once being excluded," Lisbeth states, "it tends to stick, like if it was written on your back."

In the Malmö group, a quite revealing discussion took place about what it means to label and on what grounds the boundaries are drawn:

Nørrebro Park Kvarter, Copenhagen.

RONNY: *I've got a friend who has been registered as unemployed for 5–6 years. But he lives a very good life. He hasn't got time to do paid work. He has so much to do. But he is taking part in society, to the highest degree, in many different ways.*

CHRISTER: *But society doesn't see it like that.*

RONNY: *It depends on what you mean by society. Do you mean the authorities?*

CHRISTER: *No, but is it a normal way of behaviour in society?*

RICKARD: *But what's normal then?*

CHRISTER: *Well, thank goodness it's a fact that the majority in this country work for a wage.*

RONNY: *But he works as well, and not being fully occupied is not a problem for him. On the contrary, he has a hell of a problem to find enough time. And he makes great contributions to society, on many different levels, despite being, per definition, unemployed.*

CHRISTER: *He regards himself as taking part in the societal community. We don't think so. That's where the difference is.*

RONNY: *Well, I don't know. He is the chairman of an association with around 600–700 members. And he handles everything.*

CHRISTER: *He may be accepted in the association but not by society.*

BARBRO: *But who provides for him?*

RONNY: *He has an unemployment benefit and probably also some contribution from the association.*

BARBRO: *But if that support is choked, he will be finished.*

RONNY: *Yes, and in that way he is dependent on some kind of kindness from the authorities.*

BARBRO: *But you are critical towards him?*

RONNY: *No, actually not, because I think he makes a contribution to society that corresponds to a full-time employment. For that he certainly receives a payment. Yet, I see a point in that.*

KENNETH: *But strictly speaking he gets his support in a way, which is not accepted by society.*

RONNY: *Yes, that's probably the right way to put it. But personally I can accept it. No, I'm not critical.*

The discussion shows the varieties in how to be socially included, but also the priorities. Everybody probably agrees with Ronny in his view on the voluntary work. Such a work belongs to society. The social inclusion of

society consists of much more than paid work and market relations. However, it is the relation between voluntary and paid work that becomes problematic. Nobody is allowed to work voluntarily at the expense of paid work. The Swedish society gives priority to paid work. In fact, paid work means so much in the Swedish society.

Ronny is prepared to tamper with that prioritisation. The others argue against him. The others are probably much more representative of Swedish society than Ronny is. His view is not really a part of social inclusion. However, at the moment voluntary work gains an increasing attention, for example in the discussions about the so-called social economy. Thus, in the slightly longer run Ronny's view may become more accepted and thus socially included.

The example from Malmö shows how social exclusion does not have to be equal to misery, helplessness and disadvantages. In fact, the disparaging classifications of the areas differ radically from the practitioners' experiences. The inhabitants are blamed for everything, says Alison in the Newcastle group, but, in fact, people are welcoming and generous. "People invite you into their homes for tea or coffee … in Jesmond where I live you'd just be kept waiting on the doorstep." Nigel is a member of the Newcastle city council. He represents the people of Elswick, one of the four wards in Riverside West. He describes the inhabitants as "extraordinarily friendly."

Alison bears witness to how well many parents take care of their children, contrary to the rumour. "A lot of parents are strong in quite a positive way … they are surviving, more than surviving … there is strength of spirit … an individual and community strength." The children can also be surrounded by strong networks, which Margie mentions: "People look after each other's children – there's that network." There is general anxiety about children's safety, Claire says and also emphasises the importance of the women for the common involvement: "Women have passion around their involvement in community issues … but this is never recorded, it is always looked at as a negative thing."

In Hamburg, the practitioners made it clear that they don't share the view of Lenzsiedlung as a ghetto or a dangerous place.

The practitioners working in the quarter do not share this opinion. Neither location nor infrastructure is that bad, nor are all of the inhabitants so-called "antisocial persons". Nevertheless, the quarter

suffers from a negative image. The practitioners explain the percep-
tion from the outside that the positive development within the quarter
did not have a positive impact on the image. The quarter has develo-
ped "faster than its image", so a concise statement.

Riverside West, Newcastle.

The sixth ward, Turin.

7. KNOWLEDGE AND METHOD PUT TO THE TEST

According to the project manual, presented at the kick-off meeting with the local researchers in April 2002, the local conferences were supposed to consist of two parts. The first part dealt with social exclusion in the areas and the second part with good practice. The result of both parts were presented in local reports, translated into English and published at the project Web-board in September.

In the previous chapter, the result of the first part, concerning social exclusion, was presented. In the next chapter, the result of the second part, the one about good practice, will be presented. However, before that, this chapter will focus on the two international conferences, where the knowledge and method of the project were put to test. The conferences have had a very significant impact on the project results.

The first conference was held in Turin, October 25–27 2002, with the purpose of having workshops about both social exclusion and good examples, on the basis of the local reports. In September, all these reports had been published at an Internet Web-board site set up at the Malmö University to be used by the *Elipse* project.

The Web-board is a forum program, which allows you to post information and communicate. All the information in the *Elipse* project has been posted at the Web-board. Also, presentations of the participants have been posted. It started with the leadership and local researchers. Added to that, 45 of the participating practitioners had presented themselves at the Web-board before the Turin conference. All these presentations, some of them short and others quite thorough were included in the conference programme.

The Web-board was used as well in the preparation of the second conference, held in Malmö, January 17–19 2003. The intention was to discuss and make judgements of the final report, published as a draft version at the Web-board two weeks before the conference.

7.1 The rise and fall of a matrix

The conference programme in Turin was partly decided already in the project application. There, it was stated that the conference 'will follow the same programme as the two-day local conference held in each city. Thus, the conference will start with a first workshop about social exclusion and then proceed with a workshop about good examples. However, the discussion will now be raised to the international level. The international differences will be superimposed upon the national and local ones between groups. The experience from having had discussions about the same issues in the local groups, using the same method, will strengthen the participants. The workshops will be led by the social researchers.' [48]

According to the original proposal, all the local groups were supposed to consist (preferably) of representatives for social workers, teachers (kids 12–15 of age), assistant nurses, pre-school teachers, employees at a development agency, youth leaders, voluntary workers and politicians. Then, each participant category was supposed to form groups at the international conference. Thus, the idea was to form eight groups, each with six members, i.e. one from each city.

In all the cities, the local researchers had succeeded very well with the recruitment. However, due to differences between the national systems and the choice of good examples, it really did not make sense to fully maintain the original demarcation lines. Instead, the participants were divided into six groups, focusing on politics, families and children, school, youth, social assistance – integration and voluntary associations. In the distribution of participants, we had considered both the category represented and the good example presented. Also, we tried to get at least one representative from each country in each group, including the chairman. Finally, we wanted the groups to become somewhat similar in size.

The main discussion topics had been stated in the project manual. The first workshop was supposed to proceed from two questions:

- Which one of the areas could be regarded as the most excluded from its urban context? If possible, establish a ranking of areas.
- Which one of the areas could be regarded as the most excluded in a European context, regarding the EU strategy towards social inclusion? If possible, establish a ranking of areas.

48. Project proposal p 3.

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Answering the questions was not the most important thing about them. The arguments were. Regardless of what the participants thought about the questions per se. If the questions were considered impossible to answer or even irrelevant, the point was to explain why. It was the arguments more than possible answers to the questions that were supposed to give expression to the views on social exclusion and the prospects of comparisons. It was the arguments for and against that was supposed to trigger a discussion.

In order to facilitate the discussions, the project leadership instructed the participants to use a matrix, originally suggested in the local report from Hamburg. Instead of presenting the indicators as listings, the report suggested the use of a matrix. The purpose was to make the information

7. Percentage of persons living in a household with ..., 2000. European Commission (2001).
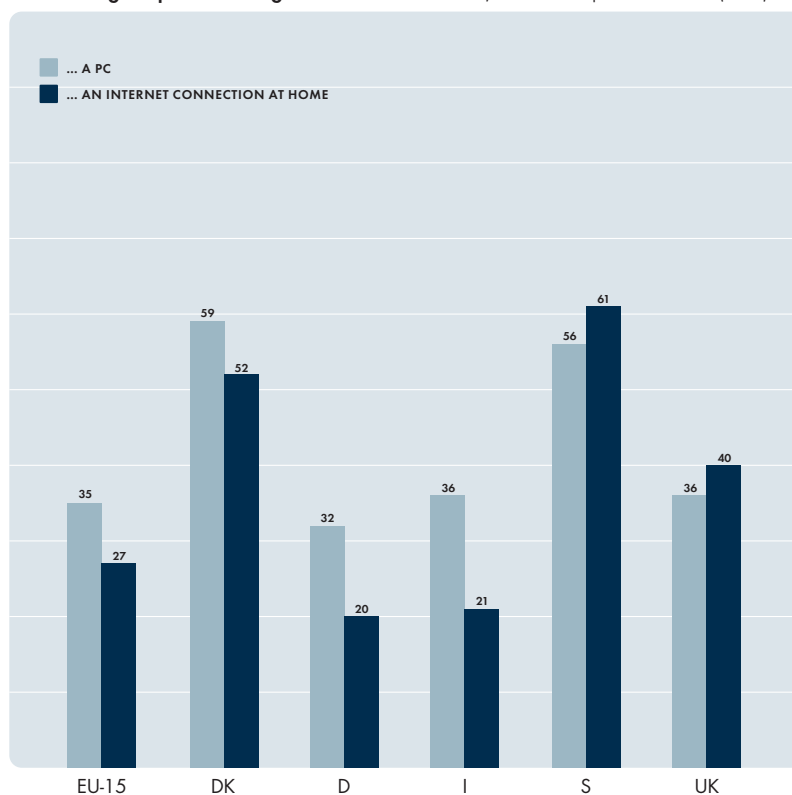
from the discussions more easily accessible. The matrix suggestion from Hamburg seemed valid, in particular for making comparisons. Thus, the leadership decided to use it at the Turin conference.

However, many participants reacted strongly against the use of it. The matrix suggestion was perceived as a way of labelling the inhabitants and further stigmatising the areas. Indeed, not one single participant seemed to think that the areas as a whole could be compared with respect to social exclusion. One area cannot be considered more or less characterised by social exclusion than others. Hence, all forms of rankings were rejected. The arguments were about the complexity. The complexity was pointed out as the reason why the areas as a whole cannot be compared. Social exclusion is too complex a phenomenon.

The strong reactions made it unclear whether the participants believed in comparisons at all. "Are we comparable at all, then?" The conference gave a very clear answer. Yes, comparisons are both possible and vital, but as a whole not of the ranking type. The comparisons must be made in defined respects, by aspect.

In one of the groups, the possibility of comparisons had been discussed in a more unbiased way. The presentation will be quoted in its entirety as it constitutes an interesting example of what can be spontaneously brought to the fore in a discussion between practitioners from different countries:

> We concentrated on a series of themes which we felt were common to all our areas. And we explored them in terms of their importance. The first area we talked about was associational life. And we felt that areas that have an absence of associational life had extreme difficulties, because associational life perhaps gave us the building blocks in order to build our way out of exclusion. But there are also problems with strong associational life. You can have strong associational life where people can form barriers against perhaps intervention. Strong associational life can protect criminals and criminal activity. Strong associational life can be negative as well as positive. And we need to keep that in mind.
>
> We also noted that in our different cities that we looked at, social exclusion quite often is about race. But it can also be about migrants and not necessarily about race. In Italy, you have a very strong regional division which perhaps is not so strong in other countries.

And it's also, particularly in Britain, quite often about that old fashioned word that we don't use very much these days. It can be about class. In many British cities we have a very poor white working class which forms the core of the socially excluded.

Another issue we looked at was poverty and the different definitions of poverty that we have in our countries, particularly in terms of the differentials in social security payments. In Britain it's very, very low. In Sweden it could be very high in comparison. And we do have major differences there.

We spent a lot of time and our colleague from Copenhagen was particularly eloquent on this point about how we perceive the excluded, how we see them. The fact that, quite often we also refuse to recognize their talents and skills. The socially excluded quite often have large numbers of extremely highly qualified people whom we do not use. Socially excluded quite often have people in their communities who are incredibly caring and could offer all sorts of services which we are the poorer in not using. So we felt that, how do we perceive the excluded. It really needs extra attention.

We looked at opened and closed cultures. Some cultures which can be open and can be welcoming can in a sense mitigate against social exclusion. Other cultures are closed and they are not very welcoming. And we tend to, when people come into our communities, put them into one particular area. The fact that people go into ghettos is a reflection of our closeness as well as the fact that we are enclosing them as well.

We noted a major problem, particularly in continental Europe, of language skills. Language in many, many cities has got to be the top priority in order of combating social exclusion.

Another area that we looked at and it was something which I find striking the differences , in the different cities that we looked at, was power and politics. There is a category on the matrix for political participation. How on earth can you participate politically in Germany when you don't even get citizenship for ten years? But it's different in each country. In some countries the access to political rights comes much earlier. So that's a major factor. If you don't have political rights, it's the government that is excluding you. Society is excluding you before we even start on any of these other issues.

Finally, we looked at, and it's a theme that runs through much of

The sixth ward, Turin.

our discussions and it's a theme that we will pick up after our break. It's the whole idea of qualitative and quantitative factors in our categories. For example, I'd like to see a lot of 0–16 year olds running around in the streets. They're gonna pay my pension. But we also think that they are going to scratch my car. So it's difficult. It's what we call in England, a two-sided sword. It's got good factors but also has a bad side.

The presentation lists nine themes: Associational life, race and migrants, class, poverty, perception of the excluded, cultures, language skills, political power and, finally, the whole idea of qualitative and quantitative factors. The result of the group's discussion can be seen as a first step in a comparison task. Perhaps we should have started the whole project by engaging all participants in the first step. Perhaps we should have started the project with a conference on identifying comparison themes. Instead, the themes were selected and called indicators by the project leadership, yet in consultation with the other local researchers.

The above presentation of the group work gives an example of how the participants could have been engaged in an identification of comparison themes. But the presentation also clarifies the limits for this first step. The

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Nørrebro Park Kvarter, Copenhagen.

group's suggestion for comparison themes can, of course, not be complete after just one discussion. Surely, one more discussion could bring other themes to the fore, for instance health, drug abuse or living standards. When identifying comparison themes, step one surely ought to consist of several discussions, in which different aspects could be spontaneously brought to the fore.

If step one is characterised by brainstorming, step two needs to deal with sorting issues and definitions. Several aspects may turn out to be about the same thing. Other aspects may need to be divided up and concretised. Comparability may become easier if we let certain aspects change names. Take the theme 'class' in the presentation above. This term could mean a lot of things. The comparison may be facilitated if we talk about 'Persistent low quality employment (working poor)', 'Long-term dependence on low/inadequate income' or 'Long-term unemployment' instead. All three aspects are among the project indicators and probably more appropriate for comparisons than class. The sortings and definitions in step two can also clarify what aspects were not spontaneously brought to the fore in step one. By that, step two makes possible a holistic view of the comparison themes.

However, it is not enough with two steps. A third step is needed to decide

8. Percentage of persons (dis)satisfied with life in general, 2000. European Commission (2001).
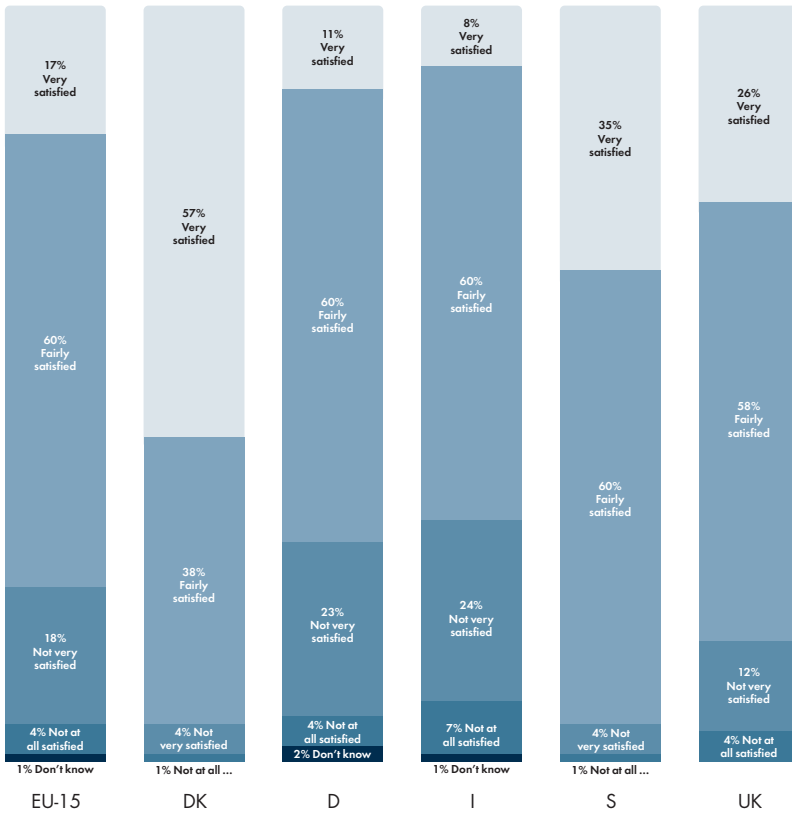
how the comparisons should be made. For example, how are we going to compare the presence of associational life in the areas? Associational life is included in the list of indicators with the designation 'Formal networks'. The suggestion in this project was that we should compare 'Formal networks' and the other indicators on the list with respect to concentrations and social exclusion. The construction of these two comparison methods makes it possible to take advantage of the practitioners' knowledge.

But then the condition is that we agree on what should be compared. Step two must lead to a decision on what should be compared. It's just as important that step three leads to a decision on how it should be compared. If these decisions are missing, we won't come any further. Then, we would constantly slip back to step one. And this is what happened at the

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Turin conference. The project took several steps backwards and started over with step one. This was probably partly because of the matrix. Because the acceptance of the matrix was so poorly secured, it made the participants wonder what the whole project was about. That created a need for getting to the bottom of the matter and to start from the beginning.

7.2 A much more open space

The Turin conference highlighted a big problem in the project. Many practitioners did not feel that they took part. Too much had been planned and decided in advance, in an erroneous belief. Indeed, the development of a favourable social context which everybody could take part in had been a very deliberate objective from the start of this project. However, the information and explanations had not been sufficient. Nor had there been a sufficient communication between the local researchers.

That became obvious when the local reports were published. They displayed substantial differences in interpretations of the project and its procedures. That made it probably quite awkward for the participants to understand the core content of the project.

Against this background, it was a mistake to put forward the matrix at the conference in Turin. In a situation when the divergences of the local reports, the differences in explanations of the project and the change of two local researchers (Copenhagen and Newcastle) had made it difficult to maintain a clear conception of the project and its process, the matrix made things worse. In contrast to the list of indicators and the workshop designs, the matrix had not been discussed and rooted at the early stages of the project.

Yet, or perhaps because of the animated atmosphere in Turin, the Malmö conference became very successful. The main aim of the conference was to discuss the draft version of the final report. In research projects, it is not very usual to let others apart from researchers comment on reports. Usually, researchers treat people as study objects. However, in the *Elipse* project the practitioners were supposed to take part as subjects, providing a substantial input to the final results.

But the main reason behind the success was the use of a particular method, suggested by two of the practitioners from Hamburg, Martina and Christian. The method is called Open Space. It was explained by a reference to the coffee break:

The most important time of any conference is the coffee break. There you can ask – not restricted by the official agenda – the questions that do really concern you. There you can get and give in a very effective way helpful information and new ideas. If you are tired of your discussion partner or the theme you say good bye and turn to the next. Why not use this form of exchange as method for conferences? – this is the basic idea of the so called Open Space Technology, developed some 15 years ago by Harrison Owen.

We were happy to use this method at the conference, although not in its full content. There was not time enough for that, because we also needed to get a response on the final report. Thus, the first part of the conference was devoted to the use of Open Space where the participants got the opportunity to choose themes as well as groups for discussions. From the perspective of the project, that first part got the main and very important function of making the participants feel that they took part.

At the second part of the conference, the leadership had decided about the themes. Two such workshops were held, where the practitioners were encouraged to discuss and assess the method of the *Elipse* project as well as the criteria of success, presented in the next chapter of this final report.

Regarding the workshop on the project method, everybody seemed to support the idea of collaboration between practitioners and researchers. "It is very important to have an academic focus and we can learn a lot of it", one of the groups stated. Besides that, another group underlined the need for an output tailored for the practitioners.

In general, the role of practitioners had not been made clear enough. Were the practitioners supposed to be simply point-of-references or co-researchers? That ambiguity led to a lot of confusion. "Many of us are very active within our work and yet the project appeared to require us to be passive. And that's been a challenge for many of us."

In order to solve that problem, all the groups suggested the involvement of practitioners from the beginning. "The *Elipse* project is a good try", one of the groups stated, but "if we had been involved in the beginning the project could have been even better." Then, a shared understanding of the roles and the methodology of the project could have been reached. However, that would have required more time. The timescale had been too short, one group claimed. "Some have said that it's only now we're getting somewhere."

One of the groups praised the local workshops held at an early stage of the project. They also enjoyed the Open Space at the Malmö conference. "It was good that the points made in Turin were taken on board and put to practice in Malmö." Another group paid attention to the problems of communication. "There seemed to be a problem from the very beginning of this project. There seemed to be different information or was it different interpretation of the information?"

"Are we in danger of forgetting about the people we work with?", one of the groups asked. That is obviously a very important point. The decision not to involve the socially excluded themselves will probably always leave the *Elipse* project vulnerable to criticism on top-down perspectives.

In fact, that point was also brought to the fore by the Vice Chancellor of Malmö University, Lennart Olausson, who had been invited to give his review of the final report. He pinpointed and criticized the top-down features of the project, but found them difficult to avoid. Yet, he praised the way the draft version of the final report highlighted those problems and tried to learn from them.

> *It's very seldom that you write in a report that we haven't succeeded in what we were trying to do, but we have learned a lot from the different kinds of problems and failures that we have been going through. And that's more interesting than try to put it under coverage or hide it.*

The sixth ward, Turin.

Nørrebro Park Kvarter, Copenhagen.

8. GOOD PRACTICES

Altogether 30 examples of defined projects and efforts have been presented under their own headings in the local reports. The examples are the participants' own. They have chosen them themselves. Certainly, they've had special reasons. The choice is based on each participant's perception of what is meant by good practices. This perception surely consists of one or more criteria. The good practice example meets these criteria. Otherwise, the participant would not have chosen it. These particular criteria explain why the participant has chosen one practice rather than another.

The individual participant's criteria are probably not based primarily on theoretical knowledge, but practical. Perhaps the criteria cannot be put straight into words and enumerated; at least not all of them, or at least not in a particular order. The criteria are probably partly of a more intuitive character. The participants have intuitively started out from their knowledge about what has proved to work and not to work in practice. As regards an experienced practitioner, this knowledge has been developed and refined over many years.

This practical knowledge about good practices is precisely what the project's first objective is about. This knowledge is precisely what the project aims to make visible and take advantage of. It is knowledge that is greater, more stable and with better acceptance than the knowledge about each single good practice. It's knowledge with a value beyond the practical application in an individual project. Hence, the objective of the project isn't primarily detailed knowledge about individual projects. The project was not supposed to be a competition aimed at ranking the projects. Absolutely not! It was not primarily as representatives of an individual project that the practitioners were to participate in the project.

No, the project aims to take advantage of knowledge about what makes the practices good. The distinguishing characteristics of the good. The

criteria of goodness. The criteria that make it possible to distinguish one good practice from a less good or perhaps even a bad one. Which are those? That is the particular question the project aims to try and answer. And this by starting out from the participants' practical knowledge about what characterises good practices. It's as representatives of this knowledge that the practitioners take part in the project.

The participants' criteria appear in the choice of good practices, although perhaps not expressly and not in a particular order. But the criteria can still be visible in, for example, whom the practice is addressed to, what you want to achieve and the characteristics of the methods used. Perhaps it is the choice of target group that makes the practice good. Perhaps it is the aims and the methods. Perhaps the goodness criteria consist of a particular combination.

This chapter aims to discern the criteria. That objective was on the agenda at the Turin conference as well. Thus, the chapter starts by summarizing the results of the Turin conference concerning criteria of good practice. Building on the result, six criteria will be presented in the second part of the chapter. The examples of good practice presented in the local reports will be used as illustrations to what these criteria mean. That makes it possible to present each good example, yet very succinctly.

8.1 Engendering criteria

The second and concluding workshop of the Turin conference dealt with good practices. The same groups as in workshop 1 were used. The themes of the groups were politics, families and small children, school, young people, social welfare and integration, and voluntary organisations. The plan was to use the local reports' presentations of good practices as bases for the group discussions. In what respects are the practices innovative? That question was planned to guide the discussions. After the group discussions, all conference participants gathered. Each group leader presented the results of the discussions.

Voluntary organisations: Generally speaking, the group said, the work of the practitioners must "make the people feel that they can do something – they could participate only if it is their own wish." They also wanted us to talk more about opportunities and not only about problems. Most of the group's conclusions centred on the significance of voluntary organisations and voluntary work, which they thought "is innovative in itself". Instead of getting paid, the engagement strengthens one's self-con-

Nørrebro Park Kvarter, Copenhagen.

fidence and self-esteem. In the voluntary organisations, people learn to shoulder responsibility. The group recommended larger investments in the voluntary organisations. You benefit more from that than if the money is invested in social programmes.

Welfare and integration: The group had arrived at six principles in their discussions. Firstly, they emphasised the importance of communication, "using people's curiosity to bring down barriers". Secondly, one shouldn't take for granted that the results of the good practices will benefit people. That is why creating accessibility must be included in all good practices. Thirdly, they advocated empowerment: "The really good examples are those projects that empower the clients." Fourthly, they opined that many investments do not have to be very expensive, "for example, curiosity is free". Fifthly, infrastructure needs to be improved. Otherwise, people can hardly take power over their own lives. Sixthly, and primarily, the combi-

nation of principles constitutes a touchstone. A multiplicator effect will be achieved. "You put a little in and you get a tremendous amount out."

Young people: This group also arrived at six principles in their discussions. Firstly, the people affected by the projects and investments must be allowed to be regarded as experts on their own solutions. Secondly, the location is important. "It is important to do jobs in the streets, people don't have to go to the services." Thirdly, people working with social exclusion must be given the opportunity of further education. Fourthly, working groups with representatives of various professions and societal sectors need to be created. Fifthly, long- and medium-term funding is very important. Sixthly, it's also very important to increase the cultural activities.

School: The group had an overall feeling that the problems in the cities are similar, while the situations differ. The group had arrived at seven common themes that are included in all good practices. Firstly, the group held up adults in the local community as a new resource. Schools must open their doors to this resource and use it. Secondly, it is necessary to create networks for the children. Thirdly, it is important to regard the children themselves as part of the solution, "raising self-esteem, empowerment". Fourthly, the good practices show how school is in the process of change. It is opening up to parents and local communities. Fifthly, education must not only be about skills. Character and values must also be developed. Sixthly, existing systems do not further the development of character and values particularly well. That is why good practices are needed. Seventhly, insights into how children's home situations and local environments have changed are important.

Families and small children: The result of the group discussions was presented by the group members themselves. During the discussions, the group had arrived at one or a few innovative aspects of each of the good practices. Kath from Newcastle was first. Her good practice, "Sure Start", was characterised by parent participation and the learning process that had been built into the project. The parents were used as peer educators. Lisbeth from Copenhagen presented a project called "Group for mothers of Turkish and Somali Background in Mjølner Park". In this project, great emphasis has been put on asking what the women want themselves and on supporting local leaders. In Hamburg, Siegrun is engaged in the project "Basic Language Teaching". There, volunteers have been engaged to try bridging the gap between generations. Pensioners are invited to tell fairy tales, for example.

Mia from Malmö is the driving force in the project "The Baby Café". Her good practice is primarily characterised by placing a voluntary meeting place at people's disposal. "You come if you want, when you want and as long as you want." Karin comes from Malmö, too. There, she is engaged in the project "The Sesam Family Centre". It is primarily characterised by co-operation between various occupational groups and a holistic view. Vanda from Turin represented "AutoROMia", a project centred on Roma people. She believes it is important to work close to the ethnic group, to avoid imposing guilt on them and labeling them, as well as to preserve their cultural identity.

Politics: The result of the discussions was presented at the conference by Claire from Newcastle, and has later been sent in writing by Thomas Mirbach. The group had reached six conclusions that were briefly itemised thus:

1. Voluntary participation needs to go hand in hand with delegation of decision making
2. Measurements against exclusion demand a long lasting process of regional development with a horizon of 10 years minimum
3. This initiatives should be seen as a process of two stages:
   • *first phase*: discussion and building up network capacity
   • *second phase*: implementation (with starting money)
4. Problems should not be defined beforehand, before funding, should not categorise individuals by labels
5. People have to be involved in the process, but there is not just one solution of representation, need of different ways. We have – regarding different conditions of institutional framework in the countries – two models:
   • collaboration of politicians and residents with shared decision capacity (participation by representation of interests)
   • establishing specific committees only by residents (no politicians inside) with decision capacity (participation by delegation of power)
6. We build cities by humans and human activity, as well as with buildings

8.2 Criteria of good examples

As is evident above, the group discussions resulted in many suggestions for criteria. Some of them turn up in several groups. They may be formulated differently, but the meaning is nevertheless the same. Then, there are

other suggestions that differ between the groups. But which are similar? Which go together? Which can be sorted in the same category? And if you sort the suggestions, how many categories will it result in? Which are the main criteria?

We did not go that far at the conference in Turin. There was not enough time to summarize the suggestions, sort them, relate them to each other and identify the main ones. Instead, a suggestion was launched in the final report to divide the criteria into six categories. At the Malmö conference, a particular workshop was devoted to a discussion about this suggestion. It turned out in the group presentations that an adequate majority of the practitioners were pleased with the choice of criteria. However, it was also made clear that such a discussion has to proceed, leading to a further refinement of the criteria and perhaps adding new ones. Indeed, the readiness to carry through a comprehensive discussion about criteria should be regarded as a major criterion of every good example.

Riverside West, Newcastle.

Each one of the criteria engendered by the *Elipse* project will now be illustrated by using the examples of good practice presented in the local reports. Every such example will be mentioned, however briefly and just once. As all of the examples illustrate more than one of the categories equally well, and it has sometimes been difficult to decide where to present them.

I. TO DEFINE THE PROBLEMS AS PART OF SOLUTIONS

"Problems should not be defined beforehand, before funding, should not categorise individuals by labels", one of the groups in Turin stated. As solutions need to depart from problems, letting people taking part in defining them will be regarded as the first criterion of good example.

An example of this is the health study in Newcastle, a part of the government programme "New Deal for Communities". Instead of taking needs for granted, the study aimed to find out which issues young people regarded as important to throw light upon. Moreover, the study was not carried out by educated adults, but by young people themselves, particularly trained for the task, using aids such as timelines and mapping. Referred to as 'peer led', the method takes advantage of young people's experiences and knowledge about their own life situation. Such an engagement might also make young people more interested in solutions to the problems. They might even develop their own solutions.

In Copenhagen, the project called "Integration of Refugees and Immigrants into Sport" shows a sensibility towards how people themselves experience their problems and needs. Instead of using the traditional organisations, the project gives the target group the responsibility for the activities. As a first step, a 'door opener' is employed to establish a network from below. The 'door opener' has to be respected by the target group and know its culture. As a second step, a 'bridge builder' is employed in order to bridge the distance between the target group and the local authorities. As a third step, the Danish Folk High Schools gives courses to qualify members of the target group as organisational leaders, coaches and referees. "The central point in the program is that the refugees and immigrants should be able to take on the responsibility as leaders, coaches and referees in the new organisations."

In Hamburg, buildings and green spaces are being regenerated with the participation of the inhabitants. "The opportunity of the inhabitants to take part in the process is meant to ensure that the needs of all inhabitants are respected and that room to enjoy the greens for everyone is made."

Also, it has become a part of the solution as the inhabitants have started to identify themselves with the area. Engaging the inhabitants has contributed to a destigmatization of Lenzsiedlung.

2. EMPOWERMENT

Good practices must make participation possible, or as the group on politics says, "make people feel that they can do something". The key concept for this criterion is empowerment, e.g. of parents, pensioners (invited to share their life wisdom), adults in the local community or children ("Children themselves are part of the solution").

Quite a few of the 30 presentations include interesting examples of empowerment. One of them, called "Kamratstödjarna" (The Schoolmate Supporters), concerns pupils at a school in Malmö. Launched as a response to increasing vandalism and drug abuse, it constitutes a new form of participation for the pupils at the school. Instead of treating pupils as objects, subjected to the plans of authorities, the pupils are treated seriously as subjects with a capacity to take part in a solution process. Pupils who want to take part in the project have to apply.

The selected ones are sent away for a couple of days in order to get a special education about the impact of living conditions, who decides about one's life and how to increase the control of life choices. The schoolmate supporters learn how to handle conflicts. Then, they have to sign a contract, promising to serve as a good model at the school. That includes treating others as they themselves want to be treated. They also have to help and support by daring to speak out. Finally, they have to take a firm stand against tobacco, alcohol and drugs. The contract gives the individual pupil a certain authority, but at the same time confirms the authority of others to take measures if the contract is broken.

In Hamburg, the project "Foreign mothers learn German" shows the importance of language skills in every process of empowerment. The project offers language courses in German, particularly addressed to mothers of children at the local kindergarten or elementary school. The mothers are also offered childcare while attending the course. The project has been successful in raising self-confidence among the mothers and making them able to communicate with each other as well as getting involved in the classes of their children.

Another example of empowerment, called "Medina" and located in Turin, addresses drug addicts, encouraging them to take responsibility for

Lenzsiedlung, Hamburg.

their own treatment. The centre offers various support and assistance, however not imposed by the professionals. Instead, "everyone can share his/her opinion on the way treatment and doses are administered. The person under therapy has the right to talk about, discuss and negotiate his/her dosage and the period of treatment."

In Newcastle, the experience from the "Sure Start" programme shows how parents may become empowered. Sure Start is a cornerstone of central government policy, with the key aim of ending child poverty by 2020. It aims to work with parents to improve the emotional and social well being of children.

One of the projects belonging to Sure Start is called Family Learning. "Parents are children's first and probably most important educator, but have sometimes had a very bad experience of education themselves – often their first experience of failure or rejection. Family Learning is trying to support parents and give them power back." Informal processes of learning are linked to school activities, among else by promoting play.

In Hamburg, the project called "Basic Language Teaching" aims at helping immigrant pre-school children to learn German. Similar projects can be found in Malmö, where they are called language pre-schools. The characteristic feature of "Basic Language Teaching", however, is the roles that have been created for volunteers. Pensioners in the area are invited to tell stories, for example. It may enrich the children's life, but it also empowers the pensioners and strengthens their self-esteem. They might sit alone otherwise, but in the project they can play a part. In this way, "Basic Language Teaching" also contributes in bridging generation gaps.

In Copenhagen, organising residents in a housing area has resulted in a lot of various club activities. Crucial in these efforts ("The Establishment of an Organisation of Residents in a co-operative Housing Complex") has been "a direct and personal contact, taking time to listen to the residents needs and wishes, involve them in the activities and make them responsible for the solutions."

Another example from Copenhagen is called "Group for mothers of Turkish and Somali Background in Mjølner Park". The shared experience among these mothers of having small children were taken as a point of departure for offering them lessons on child development, raising children, social services, family life in Denmark, institutions for children, doctors, dentists etc. The idea was to make the mothers more confident, secure and certain in their role as mothers within a society alien to their original culture.

Empowerment was also the key purpose of a project in Hamburg called "Rolling Balance 2000". In order to prevent drug consumption and violence, the project was aimed at boosting the self-esteem of youths by engaging them into sport activities, providing them with a nutritious lunch once a week and offering them someone to talk to. Also, another example from Hamburg, called the "Soccer project", shows how sport activities can be used to strengthen the self-esteem of youths and teach them how to channel their own forces in constructive ways.

3. HOLISTIC VIEW

There's a broad agreement that the projects and the efforts against social exclusion must be permeated by a holistic view. In most of the 30 presentations, a holistic view is mentioned as an important characteristic feature. This means, for example, that school must address issues on character and values, not limit itself only to the training of skills.

In Hamburg, an example of a holistic view is "Talks on Health by Women for Women". In this project, the holistic view is expressed in a broad view on health, but also in the connections between poor health, lack of information, a sense of uncertainty towards doctors, and poor language skills. The project also aims at strengthening women in their engagement with the spirit of community in the area.

In Malmö, the Sesam family centre shows how authorities and professionals serving families with small children can co-operate. Currently, Sesam integrates health care, an open nursery, social counselling, a language nursery, teaching in Swedish and supportive action towards women with small children. The co-operation is linked to the adoption of a holistic view of the families and their life situations, which the professionals need to share in order to become successful. That makes it possible for them to specialize in their own skill, while at the same time relying on the expertise of their colleagues.

In Newcastle, a holistic view on health guides an initiative within the framework of the 10-year New Deal for Communities strategy, a government initiative targeting the small area renewal of four thousand households in Newcastle Westgate. In the past "health has always been kept out of regeneration … health is always seen as health services – as being about illness." However, the initiative has been successful in bringing health issues into the broader picture of regeneration.

Nørrebro Park Kvarter, Copenhagen.

In order to make an example good, it is important to create networks and new ways of co-operation. Authorities, administrations and voluntary organisations, as well as representatives of different professional groups, have to co-operate.

In Hamburg, the Computer Club shows how a co-operation can be developed between the public, voluntary and private sectors. The project aims at teaching residents at Lenzsiedlung to use computers. The initiative has been supported by two voluntary organisations. The public housing company provides the localities. The multinational company Philips has sponsored the hardware by putting a number of used computers at the project's disposal. Moreover, the company has taken care of the software installation as well as the maintenance of the hardware. The Computer Club has offered a variety of opportunities ranging from uses for qualifying (i.e. writing job applications) to language courses, studying programs and improving software skills as well as every-day communication among the inhabitants.

Another example of co-operation between different sectors is "Bryggeriet" (the Brewery) in Malmö. In the old brewery building, a voluntary association runs an indoor skate park, probably the largest in Europe. It is open everyday for everyone who wants to do some skating or just meet like-minded. The skate park has been built by the skaters themselves, supported by two well-established voluntary associations. Financially, the Brewery association has been supported by council subsidies, labour market measures and the EU URBAN programme. It is also sponsored by a couple of big companies. On average, the Brewery has around 1,000 visitors every week (except for the summer months). During daytime, many schools and administrations make study visits. Behind all the skating, the Brewery contains a vision about how to develop democracy and give young people opportunities to speak for themselves.

Co-operation and creating networks is very much about breaking barriers. That is clearly shown in an example from Newcastle called "Dispersal Policy/Anti-racism". When asylum seekers were about to arrive, some local people expressed fear and even racist views. The British Nationalist Party (BNP) organised a campaign against the asylum seekers, fuelling the fear. Then, the asylum seekers' team of the City Council started to co-operate with the local church, "who delivered a leaflet to every household likening Jesus to an asylum seeker – after which there was no more BNP activity."

In Malmö, the "City project" aimed at breaking the barriers between staff and clients, suffering from a lingering but yet not too heavy drug abuse. During three months, a group of 6 to 8 clients spent every weekday between 8 and 3 in the localities. They took part in a lot of activities, working together with the staff as a team.

In another example, taken from Copenhagen and called "Integration Advisor", a young plumber with an Arabic background has been employed part time at a school in order to deal with conflicts. Due to his background and age, he has a particular capability to understand the pupils. Besides, he is crucial as regards breaking the barriers to the neighbourhood and creating network.

5. VOLUNTARY MEETING PLACES

The importance of where the meetings take place is often forgotten in the combat against social exclusion. People who have visited a social welfare office or a police station, for example, know how small the place itself can make you feel. To further a sense of participation and openness, the meeting place itself must be characterised by 'voluntariness'. It is one of the criteria of good practices.

In Malmö, the Baby Café represents such a voluntary meeting place, where you may come "if you want, when you want and as long as you want." It highlights a problem that may emerge in a society with a lot of migration, where the bonds between generations have weakened and domestic work become professionalised. The Baby Café shows how other bonds can be created by using an open nursery as a meeting place. It turns to families with children under the age of one. Nobody has to pay. Nobody becomes registered. It is described as a 'melting pot', because people with so many different backgrounds meet. The idea is to build on the very natural interests that arise among parents and strengthen the networks in the neighbourhood.

Another example of a voluntary meeting place is "The Service Shop" in Copenhagen. It belongs to the municipality, "a shop on street level where citizens can turn for advice concerning all sorts of problems: family, health, educational problems and so on." The Service Shop aims to support and nurse initiatives, without taking over the command, informally and, when needed, anonymously.

One of the projects developed on the basis of The Service Shop is called The Coaching Programme. It takes place in a basement of the residential

area Mjølner Park. In two larger rooms 60 volunteers spend two hours a week, coaching mainly children from immigrant and refugee families. The volunteers, mostly women and many of them students themselves, help the children to do their homework. A voluntary appearance characterises the method. The children can come and leave as they wish. The Coaching Programme offers an opportunity to do homework together with other children and experience a social place with a positive attitude towards learning.

An entirely different type of voluntary meeting place is represented by the project "CAN GO" in Turin. Here, a bus travels round helping people in need, for example street addicts, homeless, prostitutes, mentally ill, former prisoners and drug abusers. The project aims at reducing the risk behaviour among the drug using population and to reinforce the drug users' motivation in order to encourage an enhanced social integration. CAN GO reaches many areas in the Turin city. Each stopping place is characterized by specific users. The bus service offers opportunities to talk, information and guidance; treatment of abscesses and small injuries; provision of prevention materials; reading and entertainment; distribution of drinks and refreshments.

In Sweden, recreation centres have existed since the war, stemming from concerns about juvenile disorder. Such a centre has been selected as a good example. Perhaps above else, it shows the importance of establishing a meeting place where youngsters can come and go as they wish, although not unconditionally. The centre does not accept drugs, violence or bullying, and the recreation leaders, employed by the city council, serve as role models. At the recreation centre youngsters may socialize and learn how to become responsible citizens.

6. LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE

Good practice is also characterised by duration in time. Long- or medium-term funding is very important, according to several of the groups. "Measurements against exclusion demand a long-lasting process of regional development with a horizon of 10 years minimum", according to one of the groups.

In Malmö, the regeneration of the Nydala area exemplifies what such a long-lasting process can achieve. In the mid 90s, Nydala was a depressing part of Malmö with a lot of drug abuse and health problems. A tragic murder highlighted the situation, leading to various kinds of activity. At

the same time, the URBAN programme was launched which made funding possible. Subsequently, the national metropolitan policy has continued to support the regeneration, funding resident initiatives, the establishment of networks and new ways of co-operating. The result is visible in many ways, perhaps above else in a dramatic improvement of the area reputation.

Another example of how a long-term perspective can be used in order to achieve success is the Kvarterloeft, Noerrebro Park Area in Copenhagen. It aims to regenerate and revitalise the area within a 7-year time span. Citizen participation is a key word of the project. Everybody living in the area should have an equal opportunity to nominate a candidate to the board, directing the project. Moreover, residents take part through activist groups focusing on renewal, traffic, environment, parks and squares, cultural empowerment, job creation and communication. The first two years have been spent on organising and planning. It has resulted in a master plan for urban revitalisation, forwarded by 250 zealous citizens.

In Newcastle, the West End Housing Co-op was established in the late 1970s as a result of the Labour government housing policy, with 12 units of accommodation. Compared to most housing co-ops, it has functioned and managed to survive for a long time. Still the tenants govern themselves, being the co-op members. Within the wider orbits of West End, the co-op has been described as an "anchor of stability".

Another long-lasting example of good practice is the sports and cultural association Centrocampo in Turin. It has existed since the late 1970s offering people of all ages opportunities to practice some kind of sport and participate in cultural events. It is a non-profit association that has developed into a site where young people and parents can find support on issues concerning educational problems, upbringing and adolescence.

9. SIMILAR SOLUTIONS BUT DIFFERENT PROBLEMS

The six criteria may look quite universal. They seem to be valid in all the cities and countries. And indeed, a great majority of the *Elipse* examples of good practice seems to fulfil most of the criteria. This is actually quite an interesting conclusion to be drawn from our *Elipse* project.

It becomes even more interesting in the light of the profound differences between the problems. To take an example, at the Turin conference a question was raised about the problems of social exclusion in the Fosie area. Where are the problems in Central Fosie? And what are they? Everything looks so well kept and organized in Fosie. There are no problems to be seen. No, but that is because the problems of social exclusion may appear in other forms than more visible ones as bad housing conditions, degenerated areas or deprived people in the streets. That is because the problems are different, described earlier in terms of growth models, labour market divisions, regulations and welfare state regimes.

Despite these differences in problems, the participants tend to support similar solutions. In order to be regarded as good, the examples have to fulfil the same criteria. That is an interesting and important conclusion of the *Elipse* project. However, it concerns the criteria, not necessarily the concrete methods. Due to the differences between the problems, similar methods may not perhaps be used in all the cities and countries. Moreover, it means that the results of the solutions may differ as well.

It seems that we have reached an agreement in the *Elipse* project about the criteria of good practice. However, these six criteria concern the process of good practice and not necessarily the result. Thus, they have to be called process criteria. These process criteria have to be similar. Yet, the concrete methods in which the six process criteria are fulfilled may be different. And that is because the problems are different. As a consequence, we have to expect different results from good practice criteria. To sum up, the process criteria of good practice have to be similar, but the problems, concrete methods and results will probably be different.

In order to understand the differences between the results, we have to explore the differences between the problems. That is why we need to know about the different growth models, labour market divisions, regulations and welfare state regimes. Otherwise we will not understand how and why the results of the good practice differ. Even if they fulfil the same process criteria. Without the understanding of the problems, we will not understand why a particular practice could be judged as good in one city even if it doesn't achieve the same result as in another city.
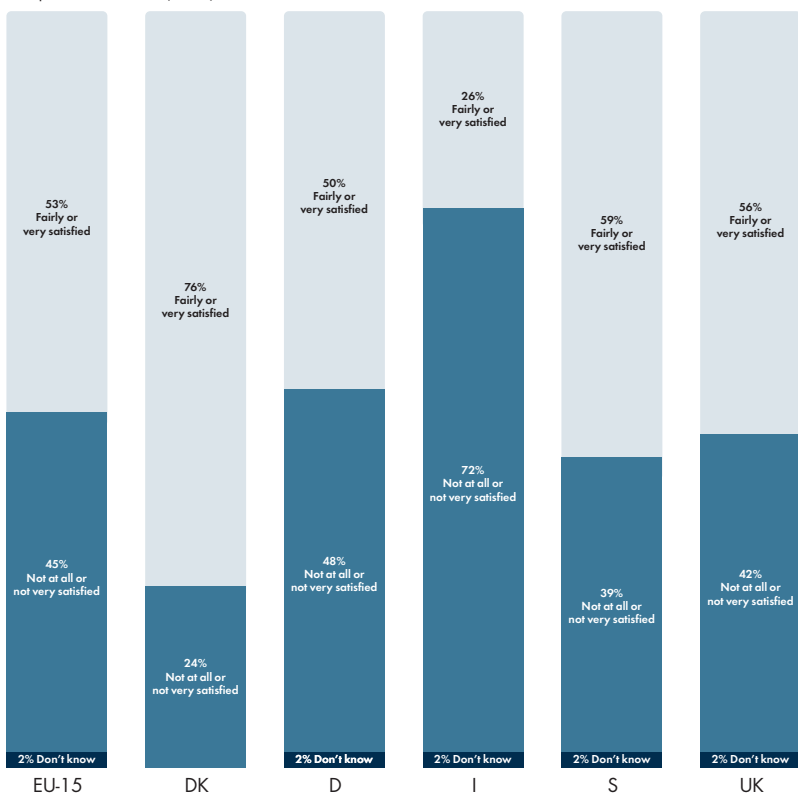
In the earlier chapters we have seen how an area like Central Fosie in Malmö may be loaded by social exclusion, yet not visibly as bad housing conditions, degenerated areas or deprived people in the streets. Instead, an extraordinary high share of immigrants with insufficient skills in the majority language and to a high extent also long-term unemployed indicates social exclusion. They do not show their deprivation in the streets. Instead, their family bonds often remain quite strong which then also tend to reproduce a sense of pride. Also, the system of housing regulation in Sweden includes their houses as well, which make it possible for them to live quite comfortably, at least in an international comparison. Still, they are socially excluded and it is a big problem, both to the individual and to the Swedish society.

As claimed above, the differences between the problems mean that we may expect differences between the results of good practice. For example, adopting a holistic view does not necessarily mean that we get to the same result, simply because we solve perhaps different problems. Take for example "Talks on Health by Women for Women" in Hamburg. It adopts a holistic approach in order to solve a problem which practically doesn't exist in Newcastle (Immigrant women with a minority language). Yet, the way the project in Hamburg fulfils the criteria ought to be interesting even in Newcastle, although in order to solve other problems.

To take another example, the problems addressed by the CAN GO project in Turin do not really appear where the welfare state is dominated by the social democratic regime. But if such problems do appear in a country like Sweden, the social democratic regime does not dominate any longer. Thus, it is not because such problems have to be solved in Sweden, that Swedish practitioners may learn from the CAN GO project. Instead, it is the way it fulfils the criteria of the voluntary meeting place by moving to where people live their own every-day life.

Another example is the prospects for empowerment. To make an immigrant in countries like Germany feel empowered must be quite hard

9. Percentage of persons (dis)satisfied with their country's health system, 1999.
European Commission (2001).

	EU-15	DK	D	I	S	UK
Fairly or very satisfied	53%	76%	50%	26%	59%	56%
Not at all or not very satisfied	45%	24%	48%	72%	39%	42%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%

because it takes so many years before they are entitled to a citizenship. How is it possible to make immigrants realize that they count when they actually do not count in the most fundamental role, that of citizenship? And if practitioners in such a situation succeed in making immigrants feel that they count, in a way it has to be regarded as a bigger achievement than in a country like Sweden where immigrants get citizenship much easier.

And what about empowering the parents to improve the emotional and social well being of children? It matters very much if the parents belong to ethnic minorities or the majority population. It is about solving different problems. And what about work with groups of parents belonging to many different ethnic minorities? Again, that is about dealing with different problems, even if all the cases concern parents. That is certainly a similarity, yet embedded in differences.

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Lenzsiedlung, Hamburg.

10. CONCLUSIONS

The title of the report expresses in a general way the main conclusion of the project. The problems of social exclusion have turned out to be very different. Yet, the project managed to achieve a broad agreement on the solutions. In this final chapter, the implications will be pointed out. Also, conclusions about the methodology will be drawn.

Social exclusion

1. The content of social exclusion differs substantially between the urban areas. That conclusion was expected on the basis of a multi-dimensional approach and findings of earlier research, presented in chapter 3 of this report. However, the confirmation of it by the practical knowledge taken advantage of in the *Elipse* project makes the conclusion even stronger.

2. The nature of the market economy and the welfare state has a fundamental influence on patterns of area differences. This is also a conclusion anticipated on the basis of earlier research. However, it has been confirmed and thus strengthened by the comparisons of knowledge within the *Elipse* project.

3. Among the causes of social exclusion, the *Elipse* project has underlined the force in labelling people, which can aggravate social exclusion and prevent solutions. The development of urban policies has to be based on awareness about that risk.

4. In contrast to the problem-oriented labels, the *Elipse* project has also underlined the potentials in social exclusion. The socially excluded life doesn't have to mean misery or helplessness. Behind the labels there is a broad variety of coping strategies with the excluded situation.

5. The *Elipse* project points to the need to develop theories on different forms of area-based social exclusion. In Riverside West (Newcastle), social exclusion is characterized by the breaking up of old communities.

In contrast, the insufficient integration of new communities, dominated by immigrants, characterizes Central Fosie (Malmö). Lenzsiedlung (Hamburg) looks similar to Central Fosie, while Riverside West and Nørrebro Park (Copenhagen) seem to represent another form of social exclusion. Moreover, the sixth ward in Turin represents a third form, characterized by a substantial amount of people with no rights at all, invisible in the eyes of the authorities.

Good practice

6. The many successful examples presented within the *Elipse* project, show the possibilities of combating social exclusion at the micro level. It is possible!

7. The examples of good practice show how assets inherent within the local communities can be taken advantage of, for example people's curiosity.

8. The examples show the importance of using the skills and initiatives of practitioners dealing with social exclusion. Furthermore, the systematic exchange of good examples has made visible the specific knowledge of practitioners. Indeed, that was also shown within the process of the *Elipse* project where the boundaries of our problematic were constantly probed.

9. The *Elipse* project has managed to achieve a broad agreement on specific criteria of good examples, which means that we have gone beyond just presenting a catalogue of good examples. In the end of the process the *Elipse* project could legitimise the chosen methodology by applying these criteria to the project itself.

Methodology

10. The opportunity for different practitioners to meet and discuss has been very much appreciated.

11. The attempt to establish a closer collaboration between practitioners and researchers has been regarded as praiseworthy and desirable.

12. It has turned out to be possible for practitioners and researchers to make joint assessments of social exclusion on the basis of comparative themes treated as indicators. However, everybody should have been engaged in the selection of such indicators and that is an important lesson to be learnt from the *Elipse* project.

13. The co-operation between different practitioners and researchers, also

Central Fosie, Malmö.

The sixth ward, Turin.

Central Fosie, Malmö.

from different countries, have made visible many difficulties in terms of language, understanding, culture and preconceptions. Some of these difficulties have been successfully overcome and managed, but in general, the *Elipse* project has created a greater potential which would have required more support – both in terms of time and money – in order to achieve full advantage.

14. The implementation of the project was affected to a degree that was not anticipated by the dynamic interaction of all those involved. The project achieved a surprisingly high level of critical mass. This was largely the product of the participants approaching the problems, albeit often in different circumstances within the framework of a shared European tradition. The European background became an added value, above else visible in the achievement of reaching a broad agreement on the criteria.

15. As Europeans the context and conditions of our everyday life may look very different, but yet we seem to think about solutions in similar ways. In a Europe, which struggles to establish a joint future, this result of the *Elipse* project ought to be regarded as very promising.

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