



GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET

Department of Social Work

International Master of Science in Social Work

***A long journey towards citizenship:
district areas and social services in Goteborg***



International Master of Science in Social Work
Degree report 15 higher education credits
Spring 2008

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"A degree of democracy is characteristic above all of certain islands of association in the oceans of domination"

Ralf Dahrendorf

Abstract

The main purpose of the present research is to investigate the implemented decentralized model of administration in local areas of Goteborg City and its effects on local welfare, or what I associate with the concept of social citizenship. In 1990 in Goteborg City the social sector - together with some other sectors (i.e. school and leisure) - was split up in 21 administrative District Councils. At that time politicians said that the main purpose of the district reform was to enhance social services management and citizenship. Citizenship entails a combination of participation and rights. This study will investigate the ways the reform improved local welfare. More precisely, it may be said that this is a study focusing on social administration mainly concerning the development of collective action and improved administrative performances for the advancement of local welfare.

In Italy, instead of dealing with the increase of the complexity in social field through public intervention, the social services reform enacted by the law 328/2000 paved the way to partly privatize the Italian welfare state. This meant a much more massive presence of private actors in the social field. On the contrary, as it will be seen the Swedish government kept private subjects away from the management of social services by giving them the possibility to perform in political and cultural activities.

The methodological design for this study can be complicated, since the implementation process could be seen as a journey that in Sweden started since 1952 and it is still in progress. Thus, I had to limit my purpose mainly in three questions:

- (1) How did the new institutional frame of reference contribute to improve social citizenship?
- (2) How did the district reform affect social services with regard to the building process of the local welfare?
- (3) In which way is Goteborg's model to strengthen social citizenship distinguished from the Italian one?

Our data consists of ten semi-structured interviews conducted thanks to the availability of key persons working in the municipality as city or district managers and social workers.

The result is a clearer understanding of the district reform and its mechanism of functioning. For instance, it was possible to register the improvement of citizenship rights fulfilment due to the new local welfare model characterized by the institutional proximity to citizens, integration of different public services and sectors, coordination through decision-making decentralisation.

Key words: LOCAL WELFARE, CITIZENSHIP, DECENTRALISATION, GOTEBOG'S DISTRICT REFORM, ITALIAN SOCIAL SERVICES REFORM.

Acknowledgements

It is an opportunity and an obligation to express my indebtedness to a number of people who helped me in many ways to prepare this final report. Nevertheless, I reserve my special and most profound gratitude to Annamaria Campanini and Vincenzo Fortunato who spurred me to keep on my study.

First of all, I really owe my gratitude to my family, the Department of Sociology at University of Calabria and all my friends who have been supporting me morally during this outstanding stage of my life.

My supervisor, Anita Khilstrom, deserves a special mention for her useful suggestions and criticisms, which guided me through the writing of this thesis.

I also want to thank Lennart Nilsson – director of the CEFOS (Centre for Research in Public Administration), at the Department of Political Science at Goteborg University – for giving me invaluable literature and research material. Once again thanks to Lennart, from whom I got the opportunity to have several meetings with some Swedish politicians as well as Italian politicians interested in Goteborg's local welfare.

I am equally grateful, above all, to Arne Heldtander and Osten Carlsson who are both general managers in the municipality, as thanks to their wise advices I have been able to better understand the district reform. They also put me in contact with many kinds of people working in the municipality as well as they showed me their present and future availability for any request coming from me. I am equally grateful to Marianne Bernhardt, Bjorn Gustafsson, Elisabeth Soderberg, Eva Sundqvist, Ulf Wallin and other people who helped me so much to get information about districts and local welfare and many other people involved in the district work.

Finally I do thank all my lecturers at the International Master Program of Science in Social Work.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Pre-understanding of the problem area

Since the beginning of the Twentieth century, along with the modernization and the building up of welfare state, in Sweden one of the main political questions has been concerning how to organize and manage the growing public sector. Almost all the public sector expansion during the latest 30 years has taken place on regional and local levels. What everybody should ask her/himself to better understand how to provide social services within the society is: "which levels in the institutional frame of reference should be the best to have responsibility for different functions provided by a modern welfare state?"

I think the *keystone* of the Swedish welfare state lays in local communities and on how people together with their institutions, and in order to exercise their citizenship rights, arrange the democratic and administrative system at local level. Selle (1991) is saying that "*the local level in all Nordic countries was often used as a means to achieve national goals, creating a kind of local welfare state*" (in Szucs, 1993: 7). Further, Rose (1989) confirms the importance of local level in Sweden admitting that it became crucial for the economic development in Nordic Countries (*ibidem*).

In relation to the local level of administration Sweden has got a new reform off the ground which was carried out between 1952 and 1974. The main objective was a reapportionment and amalgamation of the Swedish communes. Further to this action, from the 1970s until now, the communes increasingly have received more responsibility to manage the services on their own. The trend towards decentralisation of public services, from the national and regional levels to the local level, and from the local level (City Council) to the sub-local level (District Councils), has dominated much of the public sector changes from the 1970s until now. A central stage this study is going to focus on is the reform which occurs between 1987-1990 in Goteborg. Policy makers in 1990 have split up the city in 21 district areas and I am interested in the reason of those and the effects on the local welfare after the Goteborg's district reform. Once again, Selle (1991) suggests that the two main arguments for decentralisation were:

- to increase democracy and participation;
- to decentralise instruments for improving and renewing public services (in Szucs, 1993).

According with some earlier researches in this field, it can be said that the reform reached its two objectives (see Andrén 2007, Jonsson et al. 1999). Andrén in his research shows what happened after the reform in a district area, precisely Majorna, and Jonsson, Nilsson et al. confirm the

success of the reform – at least for what regard the political citizenship - by analyzing the democratic and administrative structure at local level (1999).

What about the impact on local welfare and then on social citizenship? This is what I will be trying to understand in the following pages.

In Italy, a similar kind of reform has been attempted with a frame law n. 328/2000. The act assigns a new role to local actors - like municipalities, counties, third sector - as well as trying to renew the way of making social policy at local level. Taking a look at Goteborg's model of local welfare may be fruitful to improve some parts of the Italian reform.

In the wake of these arguments – democracy, participation, improvement and renewal of social services, adding up citizenship – this study is going to focus on how the decentralisation reform has affected social services in Goteborg in order to build up a new local welfare. I am going to understand how the institutional frame of reference contributes in improving social citizenship, bearing in mind that the Swedish context has been classified by Esping-Andersen (1990) as a *social-democratic* welfare regime. On the level of explanation I can state that the reform can be considered the enactment of a new form of democratic practice looking at citizen's participation. I am going to see this process of building up a new local welfare as an issue of citizenship after the reform. The description of citizenship as local is a truism from a long-term historical perspective; it was local in ancient Athens and northern Italy's trade cities during the Renaissance (see Andr n, 2007).

The thesis I am investigating is the belief that the reform, occurred in 1990 in Goteborg, has combined to bring about a positive impact on social services provisions and arrangements as well as an improvement in social citizenship fulfilment. I believe that social citizenship - including participation, the exercise of locally based rights and responsibility - is a main principle upon which a new local welfare can be found, and Goteborg's reform represents an example of this.

I am going to test my general thesis by adopting a qualitative research method that consists of administering semi-structured interviews to people involved in key-roles in the municipality as city or district managers and social workers.

In conclusion, by analyzing both Swedish and Italian context over the last decades, I would have more knowledge about how the principals of welfare organisation have changed, for instance in term of social policy and social services arrangement at local level. In my opinion, the local level is more and more responsible for the development of welfare, and this represents a common trend in Sweden as well as in Italy.

1.2 Research questions

As Gilbert says (2001) "*social research involves detective work*" (p. 86). I totally agree with this point of view trying to catch the best

information on the topic I am interested in, even though there is the awareness that this is a study that brings up different questions. It involves concepts such as decentralization, citizenship, local welfare (social services), which tends to be interpreted in different ways. This is also what I will investigate over the next chapters by studying laws, cultural differentiation, historical background, relations among local actors (communes, civil society, social services, etc.).

The main purpose of this study, thus, is to investigate how the reform has affected the local welfare in Goteborg, contributing to a new building process in itself. The following research questions will be focused on:

- (1) How did the new institutional frame of reference contribute to improve social citizenship?
- (2) How did the district reform affect social services with regard to the building process of the local welfare?
- (3) In which way is Goteborg's model to strengthen social citizenship distinguished from the Italian one?

1.3 Definitions

Readers will get a better understanding of the core concepts which are discussed and presented throughout this study, therefore I am going to present the definitions of the main used concepts. This cannot be considered as a fully explanation of the meaning these words assume because every concept – either citizenship, local welfare or decentralization – tend to assume its own meaning over the time and depending on the field of study they are adopted.

SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP

The word '*citizenship*' refers to the status of being a citizen, usually determined by law. Generally, the term citizenship denotes full membership in a political community and qualifications for citizenship are associated with particular rights and duties of citizens. Although the concept of citizenship may refer to a status conferred by law, it may also be deployed to argue that persons have entitlements as a consequence of their position within a community. Membership of a community may be asserted as a qualification for citizenship; the '*common good*' may be seen as what gives value to both community and political organizations. As originally shaped by the values and experience of ancient Greece, citizenship is defined by forms of individual engagement in the political life of the community, such as voting, eligibility for public office, and participation in militias or the military. In the modern system of nation-states, citizenship has become what Hannah Arendt called "*the right to have rights*" (in Dictionary of the Social Sciences, 2002).

Over the following paragraphs, according to T.M. Marshall's analysis, it will be analyzed the concept of citizenship through the perspective of social citizenship. As it will be shown, he declined this concept in *political*, *civil* and *social citizenship*, defining *social citizenship* as:

"[...] *the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society*", he kept going saying that "The institution most closely connected with it are the educational system and the social services" (in Bulmer and Rees, 1996: 5).

LOCAL WELFARE

Social citizenship is the core idea broadly of *welfare state*, especially of *local welfare*. Both systems are involved in granting social rights (job, education, health care, social insurances etc.) by securing basic modicum of welfare for citizens. Explaining local welfare I should start from the term *welfare state*; according to the Oxford Dictionary of Sociology it is:

"[...] *a term referring to a form of capitalist society in which the state takes responsibility for a range of measures intended to ensure the well-being of its members, through providing education for children, access to health care, financial support for periods out of the labour-market, and so on*" (2005).

With the expression *local welfare* it is referring to the way in which the local institutions, like municipality and districts or smaller units, perform their tasks in order to improve the well-being of the community, for instance providing public as well as social services to people who live in every local district area spurring a good fulfilment of social citizenship.

DECENTRALISATION

Modern participatory democracies generally advocate the *decentralization* of power to localities where direct participation of citizens in the institutions is a possibility. Over the last decades, throughout Europe, occurred a process of *decentralisation* concerned the building up of region areas within the states. In a more fundamental sense, regions are the product of symbolic processes that render a certain territory distinctive in cultural, political, or ethnic terms, either from the inside or the outside. This process can involve districts within states, territories cutting across parts of multiple states and areas uniting contiguous states (see "regionalism" Dictionary of the Social Sciences, 2002).

As a matter of fact, in Italy this process occurred during 1970s (Putnam, 1993). Specifically, in Sweden a similar trend towards *decentralisation* of public services from the national and regional levels to

the local level, and from the local level (City Council) to the sub-local level (District Councils) dominated much of the public sector changes from the 1970s until now.

As a result, following a political decision in Goteborg's Council the city was decentralised and consequently 21 District Councils were appointed.

1.4 The structure of the grade report

This grade report consists of 7 chapters. Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter introducing the readers in the research area. Instead, chapter 2 focuses on Goteborg's district reform and an Italian reform of social services. Even though they are very different, it is possible to get some common hints. Over chapter 3 are presented earlier research in the area of the studies upon citizenship and democracy. In chapter 4 the theoretical framework and the Swedish institutional frame of reference are discussed. In chapter 5 the methodology of the study with the emphasis on choice of method, interview analysis as well as validity, reliability and generalization issues of the presented study are discussed. Ethical questions and limitations are presented as well. Chapter 6 focuses on the analysis of interview texts grouped in particular themes came up during the interview investigation. The paper is concluded with chapter 7, where the results are analyzed and discussed from the theoretical perspective adopted thanks to the help of the three research questions. In conclusion it was provided a wide spectrum of the citizenship and its current meaning.

CHAPTER 2 - THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SWEDISH AND ITALIAN MODELS: GETTING TWO POINT OF VIEW ON LOCAL WELFARE

2.1 Introduction

In this part of the paper I will show that Sweden is a decentralized welfare state where the municipalities have the main responsibility for public services. They have the possibility to levy taxes redistributing revenues through the district model. As a result the district model is being able to manage the most important services addressing people in order to fulfil their citizenship rights. In T.H. Marshall view social services – together with the educational system - are most closely connected with social citizenship and its right of living a life according to the standard prevailing in the society. Furthermore, following the reasoning of French sociologist Christophe Bertossi "*citizenship brings a dilemma concerning the inconsistency between the ideal and actual statement*" (in Andr n, 2007: 10). Indeed, in every society there is a discrepancy between the deeply rooted ideals of equality and freedom, as formalized in the Constitution, and discrimination in daily life. Assuming this, the concept of citizenship cannot involve only political participation, rather, it entails a combination of participation in the social and institutional life and asking for own rights. There should be a real tension between participation and rights. Meanwhile, the extent of participation depends on individual resources, which are based on access to education, jobs, health care, etc. Thus the dilemma concerns once again the gap between the ideal of participation and the reality of discrimination. This situation is particularly significant at local level trying to meet citizens' needs and fulfil their rights of social citizenship. It can be differently said that community is the place where citizens acquire their resources, abilities emerge and skills are put into practice. The local context is also where social exclusion and discrimination stand out as concrete phenomena.

In this chapter I will see how one of the biggest Swedish municipalities is trying to build local strategies in order to face social exclusion and discrimination. I will do it by referring to the district reform which has been enacted in the city of Goteborg in 1990. I will also make a brief comparison with the strategies adopted in the Italian context by analyzing a social welfare reform of 2000. This chapter is going to provide a wide spectrum about local strategies addressing to improve social citizenship, at least regarding the two countries under examination.

2.2 Brief history of the Swedish welfare state

As well known, the welfare state is rather a new phenomenon all over the Western world; the term itself gaining currency in the late 1930s. In Sweden a division of labour has developed, whereby the municipalities and counties provide services, the national level instead is responsible for the social insurance system as well as to administer income transfers.

Another characteristic of the Swedish welfare state is the combination of a high level of public consumption and sizeable transfers which gave Sweden the highest level of public expenditure relative to GDP (Gross Domestic Product) among the OECD countries (see Alcock et al. 2001, Jonsson et al. 1999, Rothstein 1996). I can sustain that in Sweden the public sector is both a major producer of services and a prime instrument of income redistribution built up above all at local level.

I should start my analysis of the Swedish political situation, being aware that the Social Democratic Party (Socialdemokratiska Arbetarpartiet - SAP) has led the government for fifty-two of the last sixty-six years (till 2008). I point out the fact that the Social Democrats, since 1919, have held more seats than any other party in the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag), and also the party participated in every government from 1932 to 1976, either alone or as the dominant force in a coalition government (see Rothstein, 1996).

As Lennart Nilsson (1999) remembers, in a speech before Parliament in 1928 Per Albin Hansson, leader of the Social Democratic Party, described the party's ambitions using a metaphor which has become a synonym for the Swedish Welfare State: *folkhemmet*, literally 'the folk home', which Hansson went on to define as "*the society – state and municipalities – which is our common home*" (in Jonsson et al., 1999: 11).

In Sweden, the government keeps an active role in securing the people's welfare, and as a matter of fact, since the earlier years of the mid-nineteenth century, with the gradual organization of the working class, existing welfare system were expanded and government – national and local – was drawn into the production of services. After the Second World War, between 1960 and 1970, there was a full expansion of the public sector, when both economic transfers and number of public employees on public payrolls quickly multiplied (*ibidem*).

During that period it came out what Swedish political scientist Daniel Tarshys has termed the "*revolution*" in the public sector. Further, according to Ringqvist (1996), it was at this juncture that Sweden become one of the countries with the highest rates of gainful employment among women – around 75 percent – above all employed in public sector (see Jonsson et al., 1999). Prerequisite to women's entry onto the labour market were adequate child care and care for the elderly, and a sizable share of the gainfully employed women were involved in the production of public and social services. In fact, Daniel Tarshys continues by stating that in the second half of mid-nineteenth, "*Sweden sharply expanded the public sector, building nursery schools, recreation centres, public swimming pools, hospitals and clinics, schools, and town halls all over the country. In 1978,*

the union representing local government employees surpassed the Swedish Metal Workers' Union, traditionally largest, in numbers" (in Jonsson et al., 1999: 14).

Thanks to this new institutional frame Rothstein (1994) went on saying that "*characteristic of the Scandinavian welfare states is the high degree of 'generality', which implies that both economic benefits and services are supposed to cover the entire population in different phases of life and that they shall be administered following essentially uniform norms and rules"* (in Jonsson et al., 1999: 14).

Throughout the era of the Swedish welfare state, one of the main political questions has been how to organize and manage the growing public sector. Almost all of the public sector expansion over the last 30 years in Sweden has taken place on regional and local levels (Szucs, 1993). From the 1970s until now, the communes increasingly have received more responsibility to manage the services on their own. As I will discuss in the following paragraphs, the trend towards decentralization of public services from the local level to the sub-local level in District Councils (Kommundelsnamnder), dominated much of the public sector changes during the 1980s. In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the development has gone one step further.

According to Petersson from the mid 1970s gradual change spawned a public sector dominated by centrally governed public institutions which gradually shifted towards a political system where responsibility was transformed from the state to, foremost, the local level communities, the communes (see Szucs, 1993). A similar strategy has been adopted in all Nordic countries as a means to achieve national goals, creating a kind of welfare state (Selle, 1991 in Szucs, 1993).

Besides decentralization, another process came along in the Swedish context, called *deregulation*. According to Elander and Martin (1990), the last decades has been characterized by *decentralization* and *deregulation* that have made national legislation regulating different public welfare areas less detailed. As a matter of fact national legislation was substituted by more general guidelines.

Both the two above-mentioned processes happened in Goteborg's new democracy with its local project towards citizenship. If political citizenship and social citizenship in Goteborg have been fulfilled by the district reform, is something I am going to investigate hereby.

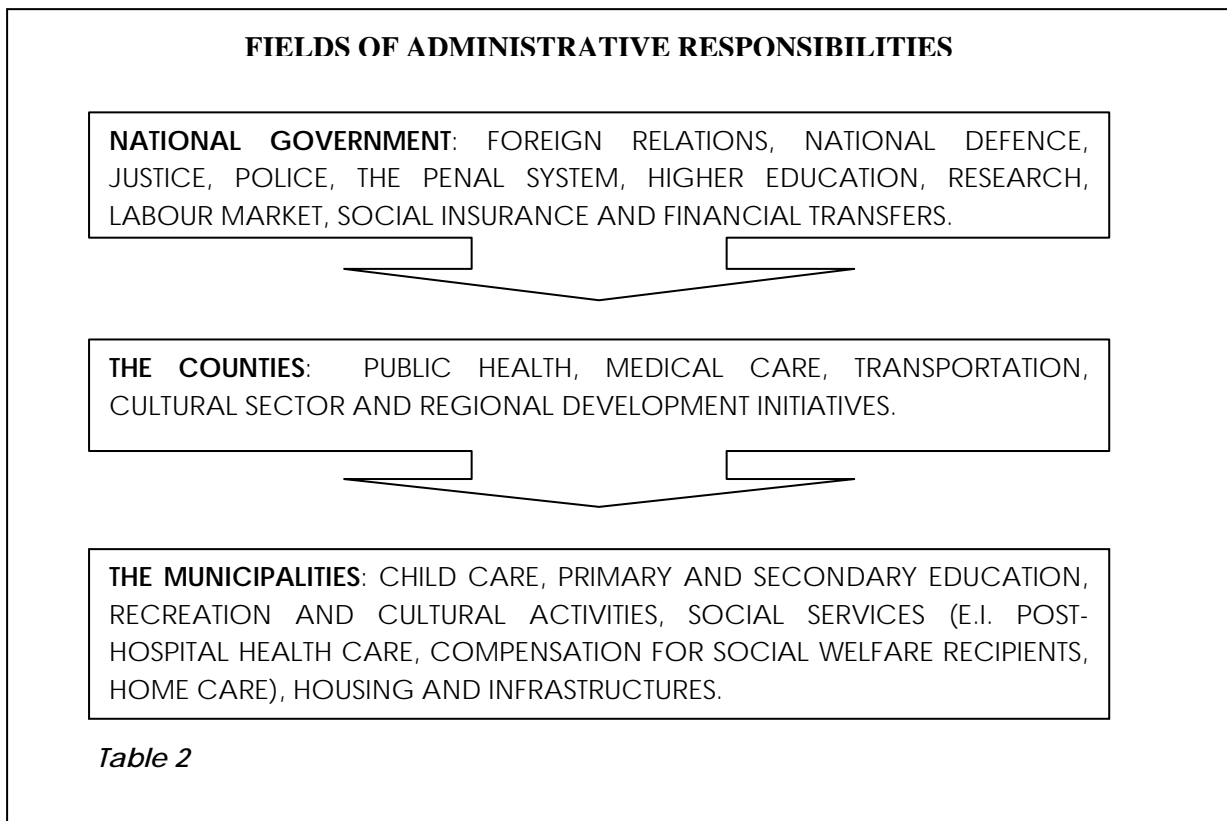
2.3 Towards Goteborg's district reform

I am attempting to describe Goteborg's district reform because the economic and organizational restructuring of the local welfare in that city offers a cardinal example of the metamorphosis Swedish society has undergone during the 1990s shortening the distances between citizens and institutions. I believe the introduction of this new local welfare arrangement,

aiming to decentralize the provision of welfare to different parts of the city, has improved the level of the social citizenship for all inhabitants of those areas. To do this I should take a look backward at history as well as at the present arrangement of the Swedish territory. As a matter of fact, of all the units of local government in Europe, Swedish municipality is the largest – in geographical terms averaging 1,437 sq. Km. Furthermore, Sweden is at once spacious and sparsely populated with an average of 30,000 units per municipality in terms of population and with 80 percent of the municipalities having more than 10,000 residents (in Jonsson et al., 1999).

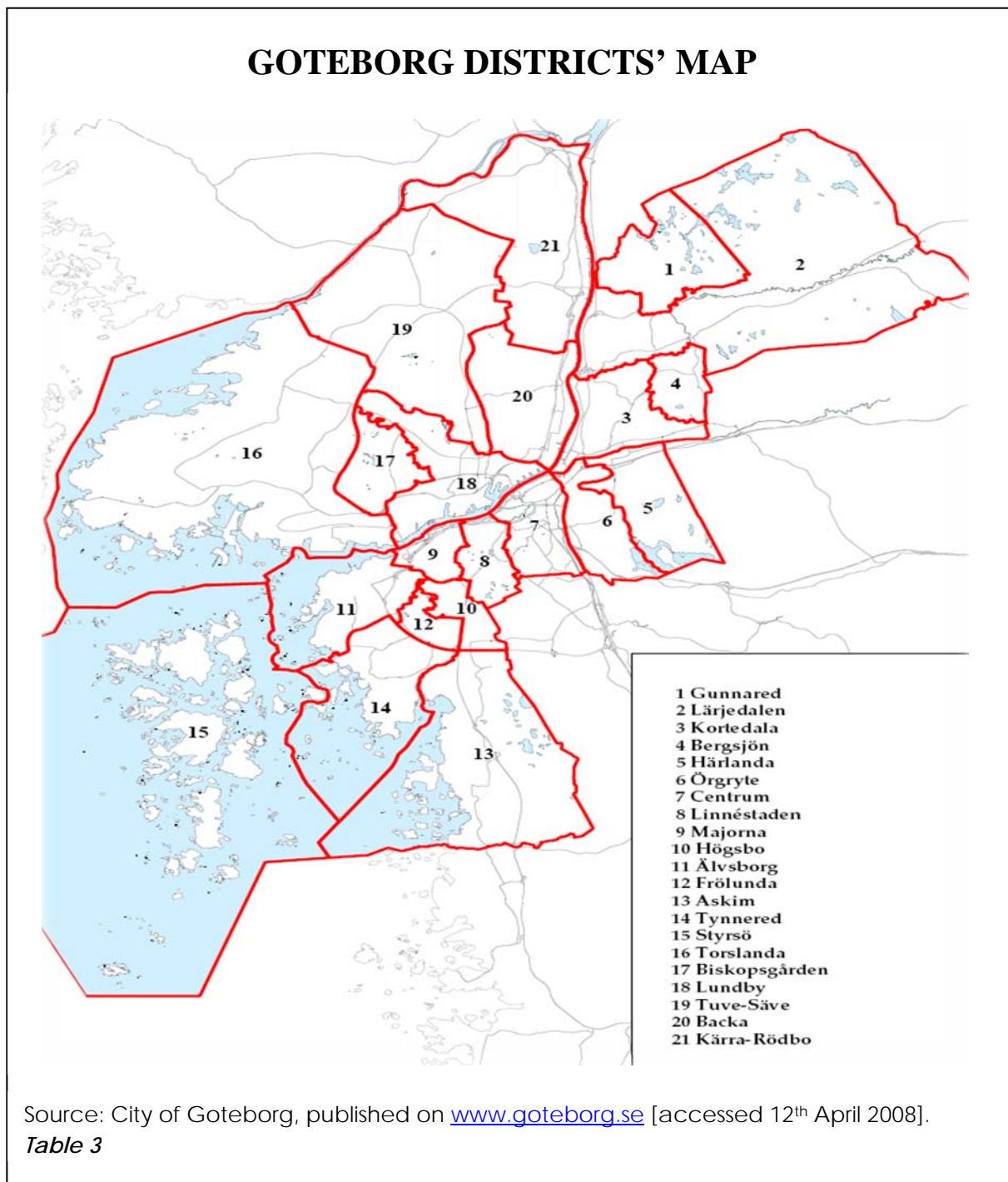
When Sweden, essentially medieval structure of local government, was standardized and codified in law in the Local Government act of 1862, there were roughly 2,500 units, some 90 of which were cities and 10 boroughs (*kopinger*) and the rest rural districts, more or less corresponding to the parishes of the Church of Sweden. In 1952 the government went in with a *reapportionment* (*storkommunreformen*) in order to amalgamate the smallest rural municipalities that reduced their number to just over 1,000 units (see Niemi, 1966). Only a decade later another wave of amalgamation were approved by the Parliament, so that between 1962 and 1974 the total number of municipalities was reduced to about 280. The 1962 decision in Parliament meant that municipalities were to be grouped together in blocs in order to facilitate collaboration as well as to provide common services. With that decision were also set limits for the provision of services, for instance primary education presumed a minimum of 8,000 residents (see Jonsson et al., 1999).

Going ahead thinking on the administrative process of units amalgamation, I can say by using the words of some social scientists as Nilsson and Westerstahl (1999), that concern for local self-government was hardly the Government's prime motive in proposing the amalgamation of municipalities. Indeed, it was the government's desire to build the Swedish welfare state and to use municipalities as instruments to carry out the necessary reforms. Local self-government was an instrument to social policy, in fact, a little at a time the municipalities have been given an increasing share of responsibility for services offered to its citizens, that is the local welfare state. The following table shows how the responsibilities presently are shared-out among different administrative levels (*Table 2*).



It has to be taken into account that since 1974 the city of Goteborg had experimented with different kinds of sub-municipal organs: advisory boards, boards for special municipal institutions, district board and district or neighbourhood councils. District Councils are the most advanced case among sub-municipal bodies developed in Sweden over the time. As Nillsson (1999) suggests, a step towards the decentralization within local areas was moved thanks to the new legislation that had been introduced in 1979. It made possible either to redistribute some responsibilities to the City Council or to delegate those responsibilities to sub-municipal bodies. Another important step in the same direction, as he highlights, was the *Free Municipality Experiment* undertaken pursuant to an act of Parliament in 1984. Its main goal was to allow municipalities a far-reaching adaptation of their organizational structure to local conditions (in Jonsson et al., 1999: 28-38).

In the mid-1980s, the interest in introducing District Council peaked up and, as a result, in 1987 Goteborg voted to introduce District Councils in full scale. In that occasion, the decision of partitioning Goteborg into 21 districts has been taken (*Table 3*).



On average, districts have a population of about 30,000 citizens. It was decided that each district would be under its political council as well as was abandoned the traditional sectorial organisation within the district councils sphere of competence. The District Councils were to be

appointed after the municipal election in 1988, with the reform taking effect the 1st January of 1990 (*ibidem*). Starting from a decision taken in the Executive Committee 16th April 1989, stating "*the need to improve efficiency and manageability of local government, and to adapt levels of service and other activity to the needs of the citizenry*", it is possible to guess the principal motives of the reform (in Jonsson et al., 1999: 157).

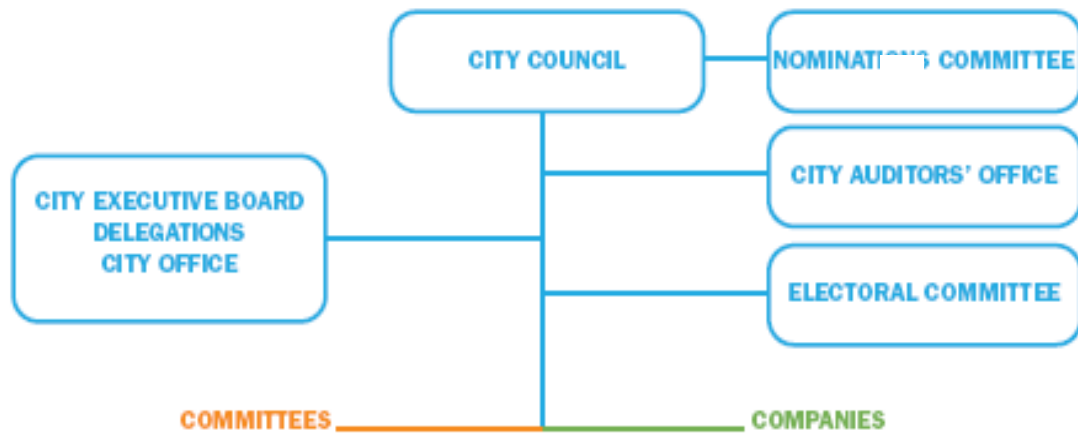
Following the description provided by Nilsson and colleagues (1999), the most comprehensive statement of the aims of the reform is to be found in an internal 'educational package' distributed in 1988 to all elected officials in the city with a view to facilitate its implementation. This package included as reform goal the attainment of four main objectives, which are:

- *the strengthening of democracy and influence;*
- *the realization of an holistic approach and collaboration;*
- *the decentralization and the building up of local solutions;*
- *the improvement of efficiency and the provision of better services.*

I think that the accomplishment of all of these objectives has contributed in improving the degree of citizenship and I consider these as pillars of a new local welfare model. What is interesting to point out is people involvement in the building up of this new model of local welfare, based on rights and responsibility, and enacted through the full participation of residents. In fact, with the implementation of the district reform in Goteborg citizens, for their part, come in contact with the City Hall in different capacities - as voters, as holders of office, in some cases as city employees and, much more often than before the reform, as users of public as well as social services (see Jonsson et al., 1999).

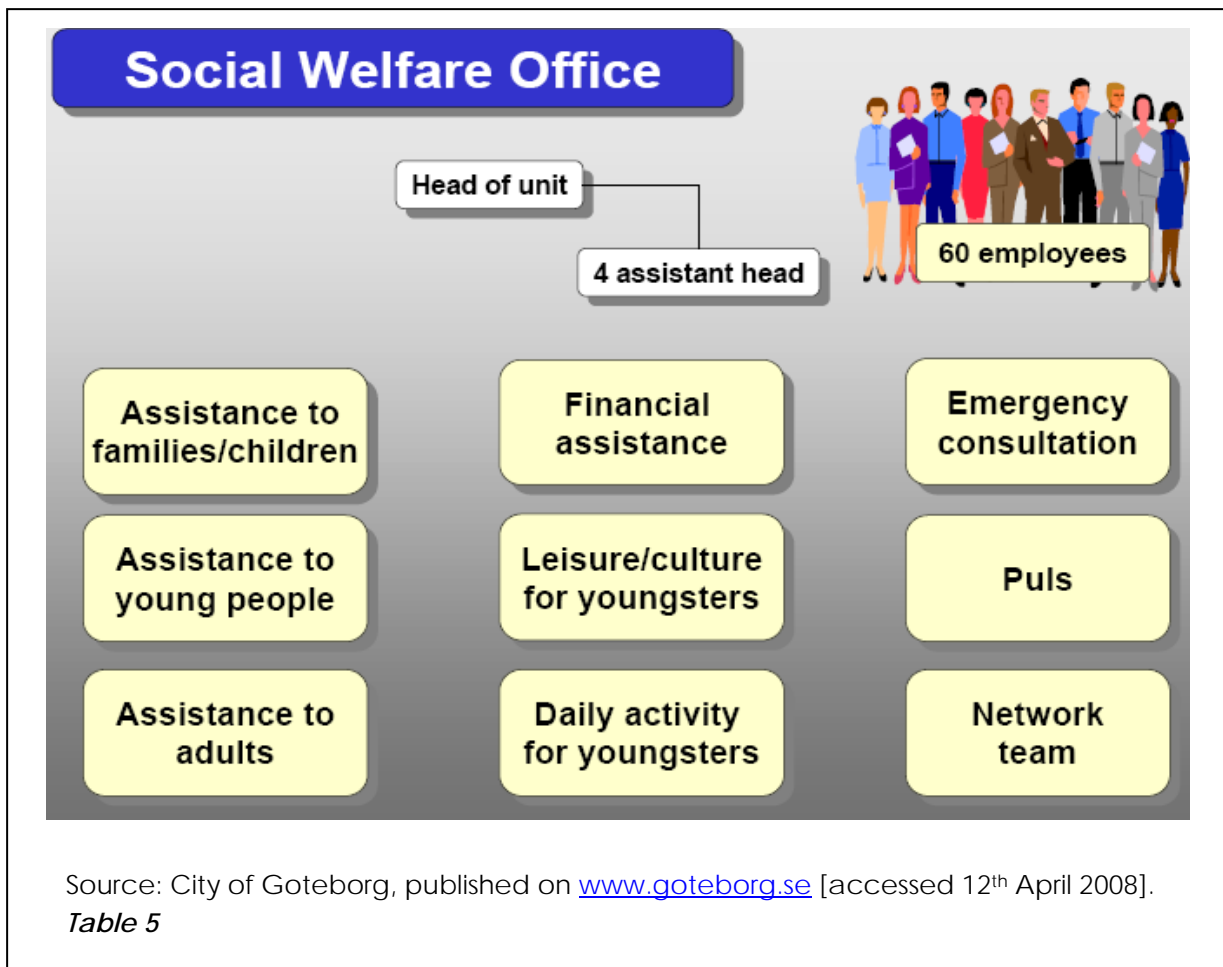
The main task and purpose of the District Councils is to devise appropriate local solutions – to set goals, volume and standards – for the provision of municipal services. They mainly have the responsibility for what, according to Jorgen Westerstahl, in Goteborg is called the '*soft sectors*', which includes: compulsory schooling, cultural and leisure activities, public libraries, care of people with functional impairments, child care services, caring services for the elderly, individual and family care (in Jonsson et al., 1999: 263). Below I show some tables regarding the organization of the city (*Table 4*) and one example of service office existing in all district areas under the respective District Council (*Table 5*).

Organization of the City



<p>21 DISTRICT COMMITTEES Pre-school, compulsory school, social services, community care, local cultural affairs and leisure</p>	<p>PUBLIC WORKS Eco-cycle Committee Water and Sewage Committee</p>	<p>PROPERTIES AND HOUSING Förvaltnings AB Framtiden Hantverks- och Industrihus i Göteborg AB, HIGAB Norra Älvstranden Utveckling AB Lindholmen Utveckling AB FrPoint AB AB Kärra Centrum Boplats Göteborg AB</p>	<p>PUBLIC WORKS Göteborg Energi AB Renova AB GRYA AB</p>
<p>EDUCATION Education Committee Adult Education Committee</p>	<p>TRAFFIC Special Transport Committee Road Traffic Committee</p>	<p>CULTURE Göteborgs Stadsteater AB</p>	<p>TRAFFIC Göteborgs Gatu AB Göteborgs Spårvägar AB</p>
<p>CULTURE Cultural Affairs Committee</p>	<p>ENVIRONMENT Environmental Committee</p>	<p>LEISURE Liseberg AB Got Event AB Göteborgsregionens fritidshamnar AB, GREFAB</p>	<p>INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE Göteborgs Hamn AB Göteborg & Co Kommunintressent AB BRG, Business Region Göteborg AB</p>
<p>LEISURE Sports and Associations Committee Parks and Landscape Committee Keller's Park Board</p>	<p>OTHER COMMITTEES Archives Committee Consumer Committee Services Committee Chief Guardians' Committee</p>	<p>LAND AND HOUSING Planning and Building Committee Property Management Committee Supply of Premises Committee Committee for Medicus</p>	<p>OTHER COMPANIES Göteborgs Kommunala Förvaltnings AB Försäkrings AB Göta Lejon Kommunleasing i Göteborg AB Göteborgs Stads Upphandlings AB</p>

Source: City of Goteborg, published on www.goteborg.se [accessed 12th April 2008].



Being deep-rooted in the territory, District Councils are kept abreast of resident's needs, views and opinions and, as a result, political steering transforms this input into policy. Citizens being much closer than before to the institution can exercise their social citizenship claiming for their rights above all when they come in contact with public and social services. They do that in many different areas of their day-to-day lives, and in different phases of their life-span - child care, the schools, old-age care, domiciliary health care, counselling as well as social and financial assistance. I want to highlight that each District Council – within the boundaries of certain requirements imposed both by the state and by the city council – can set up certain services according to the needs of its citizens. Proximity to citizens is one of the key features of the organizational model.

2.4 Goteborg's organization

The City Council consists of 81 elected councillors and each District Council comprises 17 members. In the District Councils, politicians are appointed indirectly through election to the city council and they

represent the political party that makes the majority. As soon as District Council's members are appointed they take part in council meetings making decision and policy that affect the residents of the district area. In the City Hall, the chairperson and the vice-chairperson of each District Council is chosen. These two persons, together with the district manager, are civil servants and they are the only council members receiving a monthly wage. Conversely, almost all politicians devote their spare time to politics on a voluntary basis.

Another really important civil servant role is that one of the district manager and, as a matter of fact, each and every district is lead by a district manager. A report on district managers in Goteborg (GHK 360 B) outlines the duties of the district managers as follows:

"As a rule, the district shall be led by a manager, who answers directly to the council. The manager shall be personally responsible for the translation of the intentions of the council in the policies and services of the district administration and for keeping the council abreast of relevant data and proposals as basis for their planning and steering" (Jonsson et al., 1999: 156).

It is also useful be aware that the most managers' educational background was a Bachelor's degree in Social Work and Public Administration, and the most common position at the time of recruitment was Director of Social Welfare.

But right now I should ask, from where do District Councils get the economic resources in order to set up the local welfare and social services as well? I mean, how is the system of services financed within the district areas?

Firstly, I have to say that in Sweden the principal sources of revenue are a proportional income tax, transfers from the national Treasury and fees attached to the use of services. In this country the amount of municipal tax varies approximately from 28 to 35 percent, depending on the municipality. Additionally, the right of the municipalities to levy tax is set out in the Constitution, even though a ceiling has been imposed from the government. In fact, Swedish government adopted rules for general transfers coupled with a strict system of redistribution among municipalities putting them in competition. Precisely, the system consists of both equalization of revenue (income redistribution) and compensation for structural differences. Actually municipalities, whose tax base or quantifiable structural differences is under par for the country as a whole, receive a subsidy out of the national Treasury. On the contrary, those ones having above average tax bases and manifestly better-than-average socio-economic structures pay a premium to the Treasury. It is clear that, relying on this administrative mechanism based on solidarity among municipalities, *"the Government keeps a steady grip on the municipalities' purse strings"* (in Jonsson et al., 1999: 25).

Regarding the District Councils, they receive funding from the city amount mainly in the form of lump sums - and according to a budgetary

process based on demographic criteria and needs present in that particular area– which they may allocate as they see fit. Some variables taken into account are the household incomes, the number of immigrants, the number of residents on social welfare pay rolls and generally of people in need. Both to keep costs under control and to avoid the duplication of the same services among districts in the Social Service Act (chapter 2 section 5) it is stated that:

"The municipality may conclude an agreement with another agency for the performance of municipal tasks within the social services. Through an agreement of this kind, one municipality may provide services for another [...]" (Social Services Act, 2002).

Such a mechanism, together with other ones like citizens involvement, are a great autonomy from the City Council, and render the district system really virtuously.

I will also make a brief comparison with the strategies adopted in the Italian context by analyzing a social welfare reform of 2000. This chapter provides a wide spectrum about local strategies to improve social citizenship, at least into the two countries under examination. Bearing in mind what has been said by now, I can pass to analyze another model, the Italian one, in which is present a certain level of decentralization as well as an attempt of building up a local welfare model. The Italian strategy I am going to present cannot be compared with the previous one not including the politics and cultural tradition.

2.5 The Italian context and the new reform

The period after the Second World War, from 1948 to 1993, Italy was governed by centre-right coalitions under the dominant influence of the Christian Democrats. With constant instable majority and frequent elections a highly polarized and particular-clientelistic welfare state became established. It offered generous protection to privileged groups whilst excluding those without political access and influence.

In Italy the decentralization process has had a variety of origins. Actually, mutual aid associations and particularly co-operatives had always been a strong feature of Italian life and the political demands for participation were articulated both from radical sources such as Marxism and feminism and from catholic social teaching. A previous Italian's law n. 833 of 1978 gave rise to the National Health Care System (Sistema Sanitario Nazionale) and launched a radical organisation of health services, further designating the local 'district' or borough (*comune*) as the political and administrative level for the provision of services. The over 8,000 *comuni* with usually 20,000 to 50,000 inhabitants (but sometimes less than 1,000) set up local units (Unità Sanitaria Locale, USL) each one combining health and

social welfare responsibility. Unfortunately, this strategy failed to address properly citizens' needs because of its dependency on bureaucrats and professionals (Cigno, 1985 in Lorenz, 2006). In fact, local services committees confronted politicians, who were proportionally represented by them, with the practice dilemmas caused by politics. As a result the government went back to local initiatives burnishing the care images of the state (*ibidem*).

The state thus began a slow and gradual transformation process which resulted in a quest for ways and models that allowed for the effective expression of new questions such as the new poverty; social exclusion related to transformations within family models and labour organisation; new forms of juvenile discomfort. All these phenomena, or any feasible combination of them, are pushing up a more and more differentiated demand, and declare raising and targeting the needs of protection against various kinds of social risks. At the same time, this growing and articulated demands of welfare still remains unsatisfied because of fiscal constraints. The dominance of the political culture impeded actual progress in public services and the outcome of the processes of change was realised with the significant increase of those collective subjects (e.g. charity groups, social co-operatives, foundations, non-profit organizations of social utility - Onlus, self-help groups, and social associations) which fall within that category known as the 'third sector' (Donati, 1996; Colozzi and Bassi, 2003). The recent reform of the social services in Italy was provided by law in 2000 by the previous centre-left government and I am trying to attempt a brief comparison between two different strategies at local level: the Swedish one and the Italian one.

The Italian reform has been so long awaited in these last few decades such as to become a kind of "myth" for social operators. The title of its introductory Act is "*Frame rule for the implementation of the integrated system of interventions and social services*" (Act 328/2000). It is actually perceived and implemented by many sub-national authorities, such as regions, provinces, municipalities, and aggregation of municipalities (comuni del distretto) and third-sector organizations. In order to get its meanings I can straightforward refer to what some observers sum up. As a matter of fact, Bifulco - a social scientist who has been for long time interested to the Italian reform - sustains the original intentions of the reform law as follows (2003):

- *definition of an 'essential level of social services'* which welfare institutions have to provide all over the country (universalistic aims);
- *overcoming the traditional limits of the Italian welfare system* (treating recipients of services as passive subjects; fragmentation of service access according to pre-defined categories);
- *stressing the 'aim of the citizens' in terms of general well-being'* (identified according to four priorities: empowering and sustaining family responsibilities; strengthening minors' rights; strengthening

measures against social exclusion; sustaining not self-sufficient persons through domiciliary services);

- *realizing the principle of 'integration of services'*, to overcome the division into separate category-based compartments of services and the separation of sectors of social policies (social assistance, health care, education, training, labour);
- *involvement of a 'plurality of different social actors'* (i.e. state, regions, provinces, municipalities, third sector organizations, citizens' associations, local communities), unified by the principle of *'solidaristic federalism'* in the planning and delivery of social policies.

This law confirms the primary role of local administrations, which have now competencies of planning and projecting social programmes at the local level but with the limits that will be seen.

Furthermore, on the organizational level the law suggests mainly three tools that help different actors to coordinate their work in social fields. The first couple a higher level is composed by the *National Social Plan* (PSN) ready-made from the government and the so called *Regional Social Plan* (PSR) ready-made from the county's executive committee. The latter are namely the planning tools of public policies in the field of local welfare. They are useful to promote networks able to balance autonomy and equity, and that will take place through a spreading organisation of supply of social services from the non-profit organizations (such as ONLUS, voluntary organizations, social foundations, social cooperatives either that provide services or that try to integrate people into the labour market, etc.).

Another important tool is constituted by "*piani di zona*" (or district plans), which geographically should be fitted in with the public-health districts, established by the previous public-health reform (Act 833/78). "*Piani di zona*" are administrative tools or the outcomes of a process of negotiation among different public local actors as municipalities and third-sector organizations. Whereas the *National Social Plan* (PSN) and the *Regional Social Plan* (PSR) can be considered as the vertical dimension of planning, instead these latter are the horizontal dimension of local welfare planning.

Since the last two decades, the growth of the third sector (including non-profit making organisations) has been in fact followed by an increase in relations between these organisations and the public sector. In further and more sophisticated analysis this model has also been defined as *negotiation model* (Pavolini, 2003) or even *social market of services*, "*based on a reduced financial effort of the state and on its capacity/ability of identifying families' needs of services in order to orient them towards a private offer coming from accredited organizations, always more and more structured and formalised, in competition with each other*" (Paci, 2005: p. 140).

To sum-up I can argue that the main effects of the reform have become immediately visible in terms of:

- new duties and responsibilities for the regions (planning, coordination and definition of general aims of regional social policies);
- an increased role of municipalities (defined as the directors of the local system of services, causing frequent conflicts as regions and municipalities denounce the large gap between growing peripheral duties and persisting strong centralization of economic resources);
- a new and wider involvement of private actors (mostly non-profit organizations) in the delivery of services.

2.6 Brief reflections on two different realities

Through a brief comparison it is possible to highlight the main differences between the two models at least for what is their impact on local level. I will focus the attention on the local level and social services without making a deep analysis of neither of the Swedish nor of the Italian administrative system.

Whereas Sweden is trying to preserve a public dimension to the services putting in place a complex municipal strategy coming out in the district areas, instead Italy is trying to draw a strategy which allows other subjects (in this case belonging to the third sector) to identify needs in the communities and to cooperate with local authorities in planning and providing services. The latter ones with the responsibility of financing and supervision of the previous ones.

Differently of Sweden, in Italy there is a strong administrative hierarchy to be respected either in the implementation process of a law or of the social policies, all levels are arranged into chained list, so that the re-definition of the role of the State with respect to peripheral local levels and the crucial political-institutional problem consists in 'an equilibrium between a growing regional autonomy and the guarantee of uniform levels of essential social services among regions' (art. 117 of the Italian Constitution; art. 2 L.328/00).

Related with the growing autonomy of Italian regions, another challenge come from 'the capacity to balance at local level the commitment of municipality as well as the participation of private subjects in building up local welfare strategy'. In fact, I think that if the weight of private subjects keep going to rise at local level it might lead off from the principle of 'solidaristic federalism' and the Italian local welfare might deviate more and more from the universalistic model. In other words, the provision of social services might depend much more on the availability of economic resources; further, by considering the new political frame

stressing on fiscal federalism, it might yield a more differentiated situation than the already stressed one.

It is also important consider that Swedish municipality, unlike Italian municipalities, have the possibility to levy taxes which will be used either at central or sub-municipal level providing services for citizens. With regards to Italy I can say that in the majority of the biggest Italian cities, there exist small districts having limited power and with a very small amount of economic resources borrowed from the central municipality. Furthermore, the decisions of municipalities are subordinate to the availability of money or to the proper ability and possibility to accede to other kinds of funds from the regional, governmental and European level of administration. The decentralization of power to regional levels is conditional. The Italian regions, and the municipalities the like, are a cases in point because they have limited or no power to levy taxes. Consequently, are totally dependent on funding out of the national Treasury. I think that is a distortion of the decentralization process and it seems to be a peculiarity of the Italian administrative system.

Furthermore, also Putnam (1993) in his research on the Italian process of enacting regional level noticed that in an initial phase regional decisions also required confirmation by national authorities. So, I guess that the control on sub-level in Italy emphasizes a vertical dimension of the power and in the facts is much less based on assessment procedures. In spite of the possibility assigned by the Italian social reform (Act 328/2000) to local administrations - which have now competencies of planning and projecting social programmes at the local level - they have many autocratic constraints on how to address the financial transfers received from other administrative authorities (state, county, European institutions).

As I am stating throughout this report, Goteborg's district reform has made it possible to fulfil a new citizenship linked to participation and decision-making, together with financial responsibility at local level. It has been possible to make citizenship at work thanks the realization of the District Councils. In this context Swedish public authorities, municipality by means of their District Councils, are tailoring on local communities the provision of social services and broadly speaking of local welfare. This also means an ongoing work towards citizens' rights. District Councils, together with their politicians, try to plan what they call the '*soft sectors*' with the purpose of meeting needs in local areas. That is to say, they try to start up public services fitting on needs and rights in the district areas.

The same situation has not occurred in Italy, where the state is steadily delegating the management of social services to other organization belonging to what is called third sector. I am not going to read this situation as neither full privatization nor as a complete process of discharging responsibility from the public actors. Instead, I would say it is just a new way of leading with the complexity in the social field trying to build up solutions from the ground of the community. The new Italian reform may be considered as an attempt to build horizontal solidarity among various actors working at grassroots level in the communities and giving them the

chance to negotiate with the public actors. It is up to the public actors to show their capacity to manage with their new role in order to answer the citizens' needs. Without a strong technical capacity of needs' analysis from the municipalities the real risk for this process is that it might be leading to a high differentiation among citizens who live in particular areas over all the country. This could be considered the crucial point where professional social work has to play a strong role.

I am trying to get a deep understanding of the Goteborg district reform. Goteborg's municipality, in order to face the new challenges in social field, has instead of delegating to others the subject of social services, has committed itself in the arrangement of a new organizational model, which is the district reform. With the Italian Act 328/2000 citizenship should be better fulfilled because it has been an attempt to build up a new strategy of local welfare involving different local actors, above all private subjects. With this new strategy social services should be provided as a right and citizens may give their own contribution taking part in different organizations also belonging to what is called the third sector. On the contrary, in Goteborg every social service aims to fulfil social citizenship - with the exception of the health care provided by regions - is set up as well as provided at a grassroots level by the municipality through the district areas. As a matter of fact, the participation of private subjects has always been kept out of social services in planning and managing social services.

As Wijkstrom (2000) sustains, "*in Sweden it was seen as the result of a historical division of function between the welfare state and the voluntary (third) sector that the latter should focus on cultural and political activities, whereas the provision of social services should essentially fall to the public sector (to be carried out by public/municipal personnel)*" (in Andrén, 2007: 170).

Definitely, it is possible stating that until now the majority of social services are still performed by the municipalities (and counties) themselves, that is by the proper personnel. This is the main difference between the Italian and the Swedish context influencing the welfare provision and, as I will show, the local-welfare strategies.

CHAPTER 3 - EARLIER RESEARCH IN THE AREA

3.1 Previous studies

A number of studies in this subject area captured my interest and as a consequence I decided to undertake this research on the district reform. However, those previous studies had not specific focus on the current topic, which is the district reform in Goteborg and how it affected social citizenship and social services. Instead, they focused on citizenship from the point of view of the political element intertwined with citizens participation. Mats Andrén pointing out the relationship between local communities and citizenship from the point of view of democracy and the local citizenship has conducted one study. He is a professor in History of Ideas and Sciences at Goteborg University. He and others his colleagues studied local citizenship from a theoretical standpoint, starting from some hints on the history of the concept of citizenship (see Andrén, 2007).

Furthermore, a research I will refer mostly to is a study of the ten-year experience of the district reform in Goteborg conducted by several members of the Center for Public Research at University of Goteborg (CEFOS). That study commenced in 1989 as a request from the City Hall of Goteborg, which desired an independent multidisciplinary analysis about the district reform. Following the request of the municipality, a team of researchers presented an outline of an evaluative programme and offered their services to stimulate, coordinate and, together with others, perform the research envisaged. The proposal was accepted by the municipality and, after this first attempt, several subsequent studies have focused on the reform process, its organization, progress and outcome. The team that made the first research at Goteborg University was composed by Professor Sten Jonsson (Business Administration), Professor Lennart Nilsson (Political Science), Professor Sigvard Rubenowitz (Psychology) and Professor Jorgen Westerstahl (Political Science). Following this first research the team work widened to sixteen researchers from seven different departments of Goteborg University whose results of their studies were published in a volume entitled *Decentraliserad kommun-Exemplet Goteborg* (SNS Forlag, 1995). I also took my inspiration from another book which has been translated in English entitled *The decentralized city* (1999) which focuses on representative democracy and some aspects of the district reform's new organization. The outcome of the research partly helped me in this study because I am interested on the effects the reform has had on local welfare and social services in the light of the concept of social citizenship.

3.2 Talking about local citizenship

As I said above Mat Andrén and his colleagues were interested in the relationship between local communities and citizenship from the point of view of the local citizenship. Andrén sustains that "*the modern state exhibits many examples of important relationships between the local community and national citizenship*" (in Andrén, 2007: 5-15). In order to better explain his statement he refers to the articulation of local identity in connection to national citizenship and how local citizenship develops under the impact of global society and even exceeds the framework of national citizenship, ending with the dimension related to how questions of democracy are dealt with on the local level (*ibidem*). Substantially, by investigating such dimensions they wanted to explore new historical and contemporary perspective on how local citizenship is constituted. In his book entitled *Local Citizenship*, Andrén and colleagues quote in the first part of their research citizenship as a local dimension in a long-term historical perspective from the ancient Athens, through the Italian Renaissance, to the contemporary society. It is interesting to reproduce exactly what André says about citizenship and its territorial character.

"During the 19th and 20th centuries, the idea of citizenship was tied more unequivocally to the nation state. As a result, citizenship tended to disengage from the local community. In our times, it is again relevant to identify citizenship as local. [...] The distinctive character of being local is added to national or European citizenship. Locally based rights, responsibilities and participation characterise more universally citizenship" (in Andrén, 2007: 6).

I quoted these short sentences to represent the ancient, multidimensional and more than ever into action citizenship's characteristics. It should be taken a longer discussion about those, but my interest is on what Andrén says about the Goteborg's district reform and local citizenship. In this regard, he notices that local citizens participation is increasing under the impact of cutbacks in welfare programmes. As evidence of that, in his book there is a chapter which deals with activist groups and their relation to the media after the District Council of Majorna, together with many other districts overall the city, announced cutbacks for the schools owing to budget deficits. In it the process of participation and citizens mobilizations is described in details.

The researcher noticed the adoption of District Councils, along with cutbacks in public expenditures, galvanised public protest in Majorna's district area (in Andrén, 2007). In fact, different waves of protest rose after the District Council adopted its first big austerity package in 1991. The goal was to save SEK 70 million over three years announcing cutbacks for the schools, child welfare services, cultural appropriations and other areas due to budget deficits. This situation led to a widespread discussion of new ways for citizens to exert influence and participate in the decision-making

process. After citizens did not get any valid answer from the political body they started up a grassroots movement ignoring party politics in the traditional sense of the term.

It is also necessary to say that in Goteborg, citizens support the public sector because it employs many of the districts' inhabitants. Andrén points out other characteristics which make of Majorna a peculiar district, such as the high education of the population, the frequency of single households (often single parents) and the widespread unemployment in the mid-1990s (*ibidem*).

The civic movement was nourished by countless informal gatherings at street corners, shops and other public places. Local commitment was fuelled by anger and despair about political decisions. As some interviewees said the initial cutbacks were small enough to be manageable, but that has changed since 1997. So, more and more decisions were made over the heads of citizens and it was a period of constant cutbacks. This spawned recurring protests by civic movements which began firmly to oppose welfare cutbacks. For instance, when politicians in 2001 announced to close some schools hundreds of citizens gathered arranging the biggest action. So that, in the spring of the same year parents decided to keep their children out of school for a nine-weeks period. It is really interesting to highlight that "*parents whose children were not directly affected also got involved, not only in the spirit of solidarity, but because they knew that they would have to confront the same situation eventually*" (in Andrén, 2007: 62). When nobody seemed to pay any attention, they raised a black flag in the schoolyard.

They were very disappointed in their politicians, and those people tried to make a difference at local level by claiming for their social rights. They made contact with similar groups and networks in other Swedish districts; and they started phoning politicians at home, when they were eating or in the bathroom. They would not stop until politicians were willing to explain their decisions. The protesters used the media to get their message out to a wider audience, either by sending op-ed letters to the editor of the city's main daily newspaper or through radio. They even organised a torchlight procession from Majorna. People stopped trusting their elected representatives and, as a result of all these actions, the parents obtained a promise that no children would be transferred during the autumn of 2002 and everything was allowed to remain where it was for the foreseeable future (in Andrén, 2007: 61-85).

I think that through the above mentioned process citizens exercised local citizenship fighting for the linked social rights. Showing the situation in Majorna, Andrén suggests that local citizen participation cannot be restricted to the traditional forms of representative democracy that I would call the classic political citizenship. People have a natural inclination to act both within and outside of those forms. Further, he highlights that "*one fascinating impact of the civic movement, in its response to District Council reform and the formal autonomy of local politicians, was the 'politicisation of issues' – both among the various parties and in terms of everyday life –*

such as education, health care and social welfare" (in Andrén, 2007: 82). Citizens exercised their citizenship rights with a deep awareness improving their claim for social citizenship.

As Marshall (1938) intended, citizenship primarily involves rights. It also implies action or at least a conscious process. In other words, it is a matter not only of what you can get but even what you have the desire and the ability to give, in terms of how you can contribute to the emergence of a more democratic society.

This is one of the researches which has lead my interest towards the study of the district reform and its effect on citizenship. The following paragraph is about another research in Goteborg city, and both researches help me to understand the frame of reference in which, roughly speaking, citizenship occurs.

3.3 The decentralized city

A ten-year research has been done by several researchers from Goteborg's University whom, through periodic public opinion surveys of the city, found that *'people in the city are protective of the public sector and want higher quality services'* (see Nilsson & Persson, 1996 a, b, c, 1998). According to the findings of those same surveys, citizens also think that privatising municipal services is wrong and that rising local taxes is preferable to cutbacks. Furthermore, since the District Council is appointed by the City Council, they would like to have the opportunity to vote directly for the members of District Councils (*ibidem*). I can already notice the phenomena that makes democracy or citizens participation, likewise social citizenship and their rights of education, health and to be protected against sudden needs, are very complex in nature.

It is amazing to see that these findings captured the main characteristics of citizenship, such as participation, rights and responsibility. If I consider that according to this research *'people disagree with privatisation of public services, in the meanwhile, considering preferable rising local taxes instead of cutbacks in social rights'* I can interpret all of this as a very good example of awareness of citizenship rights and duties.

In my purpose I do have to emphasize that citizens are protective of the public sector and desiring to maintain high quality services - for instance in the case of Majorna with regard to educational services - it is fundamentally a matter of awareness of your social citizenship and its linked rights.

3.4 One step forward

Neither Andrén, by describing the process of participation and citizens mobilizations in a Goteborg's district area named Majorna, or other researchers (Jonsson, Nilsson, Persson, Sigvard and Westerstahl), through their careful work on the dimension of democracy and citizens participation across Goteborg's district areas, have worked directly both on social citizenship and on the strategies to build up a local welfare. To sum up, whereas the former highlights a different way to put into action citizenship - noticing that local citizens participation is increasing under the impact of cutbacks in welfare programmes at local level and pointing out the politicisation of issues such as education, health care and social welfare - the latter shows that Goteborg's citizens are protective of the public sector and want higher quality services. Those researchers also stress that citizens consider that privatising municipal services is wrong and that rising local taxes is preferable to cutbacks.

In my purpose, these earlier research constitutes the cornerstone to move a step closer towards the understanding of the frame of reference in which the reform has occurred and local welfare has been affected. By doing this I clear some doubts from the road towards the understanding of the district reform and several strategies on the fulfilment of social citizenship at local level.

CHAPTER 4 - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 What is a social-democratic regime of welfare state?

Theories in social research can equip the researcher with abilities to explain and understanding the findings of research within a conceptual framework that makes sense of the data (see May T, 2001). The following theories would guide my analysis, explanation and understanding of processes of building up local welfare where citizenship and welfare are really intertwined phenomena. It can be very useful to find out which frame of reference underpins the entire evolution broadly of the citizenship and, specifically, of the local welfare in Goteborg city. It means to describe the Swedish context, which has been authoritatively defined by Esping-Andersen - by other social scientists too - as one of the best model of welfare state underpinning on citizens' rights (see Lebeaux and Wilensky, 1958, Titmuss, 1974, Esping-Andersen, 1990). The core idea of welfare state, after its evolution over the Twentieth Century, is based on the possibility to guarantee, in some way and to a certain level, social rights to every citizen. The traditional social rights were linked to actions from government like guaranteeing a job, public health, education, social assistance, insurance against illness, disability or old age.

Esping-Andersen (1990) argues that what delineates his typology edifice are 'regimes'. By these, he refers to "*the ways in which welfare production is allocated between state, market and households*" (in Esping-Andersen, 1990:73). His triad analysis axis bases on:

- the private-public blend;
- the degree of de-commodification;
- modes of stratification or solidarity.

Additional explanation needs to be provided at least for the concept of *de-commodification* which characterizes peculiarly his welfare analysis. So that, he sustains "*'de-commodification' is something that occurs when a service is rendered as a matter of right, and when a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market*" (in Esping-Andersen, 1990: 157). He argues that his theoretical models derive from classical European political economy. A social-democratic regime of welfare state may then be caught by taking a look at the three models of which Esping-Andersen (1990) speaks about, which are *social-democratic regime, conservative/corporatist regime, liberal regime*.

The *social-democratic* regime is fundamentally synonymous with the Scandinavian countries. Esping-Andersen says that it is '*an international late comer*' (1999:78). Universalism is the cornerstone of social democratic risk pooling together with a firm commitment to a comprehensive risk

coverage, generous benefit levels and egalitarianism (see Esping Andersen, 1990). In this regime, full employment, training and retraining are stressed; process which has been interpreted as a product of the labour movement and also said to be 'more child-oriented' (see Bak and Kabasinskaite, 2006). Sweden represents this regime par excellence; it is the leading country among those that are eligible candidates (Netherlands, Finland, Denmark, Norway) to be included in this kind of welfare regime and thus, social rights are guaranteed according to the standards prevailing in the society.

The other one I am interested in is the *conservative/corporatist* regime which prominently has a background in social insurance reforms in Germany, during the end of the nineteenth century, when Bismarck intentions were far away from the creation of an egalitarian society but a segmented society that would easily be managed. It is epitomised by segmentation, subsidiarity and familialism. The principle of subsidiarity entails that the family should support its members and the state can only intervene when the family has failed, with a special focus on the male breadwinner. People's position on the labour market defines their access to entitlements, benefits and provisions, which are mainly financed by wages. This mechanism reproduces inequalities and the *status quo* and lowers social mobility opportunities. The target of interventions is usually the male breadwinner. Germany, Italy, France are examples of this regime. Particularly, the Italian culture is deeply oriented towards social solidarity (typical of the so-called 'caring societies'), along with the key role played by families that in Italy represent the main care givers (Naldini, 2003; Ferrera, 2006).

Despite the crucial role of the family in providing protection to its members and even despite the rhetoric reflected in social policy programmes identifying the family as the first stronghold against social exclusion, the state does not provide the family with adequate support to facilitate and improve its role in social protection. Social policies towards family are weak and in a prevalent way addressing the male-breadwinner family's model. Owing to the combination of these aspects, with other administrative and socio-economic factors, areas of social vulnerability result to be strongly pre-structured by a specific institutional and policy framework. In this frame social rights cover residual fulfilment in local areas.

But, I want to draw the attention to the fact that in Italy a corporative model come out both from a different historical background and from different needs. To provide individually welfare and social policy is very expensive and above all, I think it requires a strong social contract basing on rights and responsibility to each citizen. However, speaking about Italy it has to consider that it is not as an homogeneous society as many others instead are. This means that across its territory, social policy and the enactment of many laws reach different degrees of implementation producing different standards of living.

To complete the theoretical frame of Esping-Andersen's typology, besides the two previous models there is another one which characterize

above all the Anglo-Saxon context. I am referring to the *liberal* regime which is characterised by minimum state intervention and therefore individual and market solutions. Citizens' entitlements are not favoured in this type of regime which presents three core characteristics: firstly, it is residual in the sense that the state intervention only comes in when the family and market fail, 'bad risks'; the benefits therefore are modest income or means tested and invariably. Secondly, it is liberal, that is, needs-based as opposed to rights-based approach to social assistance. The third characteristic is constituted by the leading role played by the market. De-commodification in this regime type is minimized and an element of dualism manifests – self reliance as well as welfare dependence when the former fails. According to Esping-Andersen (1990), the UK, USA, Canada, Australia approximate this model. However, it should be paid attention at some differences even among states that approximate this regime. For instance Canada and Britain have universal national health insurance while private health care system dominates in USA (see Alcock & Craig, 2001).

4.2 Towards citizenship

Generally speaking citizenship describes the rights and obligations associated with membership in a social unit and also it affects people's identity by defining where they belong to. As I said above by using Marshall's words (1963), citizenship can be declined in three different dimensions. To begin with, the concept of citizenship is related to citizens' rights. It is not possible to be citizen without having any rights. Citizenship can be split up in three sub-concepts that are political citizenship, civil citizenship and social citizenship. Each one of these concepts exists inasmuch as are linked with different kinds of rights: civil, political, and social ones.

Going back to the history, citizenship is something which has been doing a long trip geographically and temporarily. According to T. H. Marshall, citizenship existed also in Middle Ages although "*its three strands*" – the civil, the political and the social one - "*were wound into a single thread [...] because the institutions were amalgamated*" (1963: 74). So that, adopting the theoretical Marshall's scheme different degrees of citizenship can be observed taking a look at different economic contexts in all ages and in different geographical areas throughout the entire world as well. This study focus on Sweden and so I will bear in mind what is defined as the Western world. In Marshall words "*[...] citizenship has been a developing institution in England at least since the latter part of the Seventeenth Century, then it is clear that its growth coincides with the rise of capitalism, which is a system, not of equality, but of inequality*" (Marshall, 1963: 87). In my purpose, it is also useful spend some words on citizenship and its different dimensions because many people very often refer to political

citizenship or sometimes to civil citizenship, but rather rarely at social citizenship. How did these dimensions come out over the time and what was in Marshall views the right meaning to put on each of them?

Marshall describes three elements of citizenship, which are the development of civil, political and social rights to the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Century respectively, but he also argues that each one was accompanied by the rise of a set of characteristics. They are described in the following table having regard to ages, linked rights and governmental institutions (*Table 1*).

Marshall (1963) states that social rights are connected with social services and educational system and the responsibility for these has always been divided between central administration and local councils. Therefore, this is also the way there is not any clear distinction between political and social rights in this respect (in Blumer and Rees, 1996: 5). Furthermore, it may be said that citizenship is a principle of equality, but it can also promote unequal rewards as well as equal rights; could be a case thinking about state scholarships to selective university admission and universal political franchise. More generally, it may be noted that no social goal, equality, efficiency, liberty, order or fraternity, may be regarded as absolute. In the end it is possible saying that within each welfare state public policies are perforce compromises aiming at optimal balance between desired ends.

CITIZENSHIP ELEMENTS	AGES	RIGHTS	GOVERNAMENTAL INSTITUTIONS
CIVIL	Eighteenth Century	-individual freedom of the person -freedom of speech, thought and faith -owning property and concluding valid contracts -the right to justice	civil and criminal courts of justice
POLITICAL	Nineteenth Century	The rights to participate in the exercise of political power either as a member or as an elector of a body invested with political authority	Parliaments and local elective bodies
SOCIAL	Twentieth Century	The whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to live the life of a civilized being according to the standard prevailing in the society	Social services, Public health care system, Educational system, Social insurance system, etc.

Tabella 1

Once again in Marshall view, "*equality of status is more important than equality of income*" (1963: 107). It is clear that the idea of citizenship

involves a range of rights which derive from that status and not from any other characteristics; for example economic position or family background, of the person in question. In accordance with the purpose of this study, social citizenship can be better fulfilled starting from a condition of equal rights acknowledgment.

The only welfare state model which fully respects this latter condition, being also the Goteborg's institutional frame of reference, is the social-democratic one. In fact, in Sweden every citizen has the right to live according to the prevailing standards in the society, this is an entitlement of status strictly connected with social rights. I am going to see if Goteborg's district model, in this frame of reference, helps local institutions in meeting citizens' needs, building a characteristic administrative model. In summary, I think some characteristics of citizenship are: equality of participation; equality before the law; equal opportunities; common floor of social status.

I firmly believe that the social citizenship fulfilment further strengthens the performance of civil and political citizenship. For instance, in the case under investigation a slow process of decentralization at local or municipal level has improved the latter condition.

CHAPTER 5 - METHODS

5.1 The choice of method(s)

This chapter presents the methodological characteristics of the report. Issues of methodological perspective, methodological design, ethical considerations, report limitation, as well as issues concerned with reliability, validity and generalizability are described and discussed. In order to better investigate my topic I resorted to the qualitative approach by using individual semi-structured interviews. Over the next chapters, I will show the outcomes of the semi-structured interviews which have been conducted. They were aimed to capture experiences and perspectives of people working in Goteborg's City Hall at different levels, either in the municipality or in the district areas.

Agreeing with Kvale (1996), when he says that "*the qualitative interview is a construction site for knowledge*" (p. 42) – I can say that this research constitutes just a first step towards a complete knowledge of the Goteborg's district reform. It is an attempt to make order to the wide area of citizenships pointing out to social citizenship and trying to understand the impact of the reform on the process of building up local welfare. Readers will judge this work, being aware of the limits of this research. By choosing a quantitative approach and by analyzing data collections I might have risked of limiting my research to some dimensions, but my ambition is to provide to the readers an as much as wide possible frame of understanding on local welfare and the strategy put in camp to build a high level of citizenship in local areas.

I chose to adopt a qualitative approach also because topics like decentralization, social citizenship, local welfare have not yet assumed an even meaning throughout Europe. Another reason is that many data and information about Goteborg's reform are not translated in English and most of the people interviewed did not have high English language skills. So, it is only through the relationship between interviewer and interviewee that what I meant could be better explained in order to get answer that fits as much as possible. This research is based on the experiences and perspective of Swedish civil servants, either social workers or city managers. Once again according to Kvale (1996) a qualitative research approach can be considered as the only sensitive and powerful method for capturing the experiences and experienced meanings, in this case allowing respondents to convey their view on Goteborg's district reform and its impact on local welfare, according above all with their own professional experiences. This madememuch more closer with a greater and in-deep understanding of the research topic.

5.2 Sampling design

In the process of formulating the research design a number of issues arose. Amongst them there was the selection of people as participants and the selection of a proper tool for collecting the data I need. From the beginning I put aside the possibility of administering questionnaires, considering its limits. I want describe a model of administration of local welfare and using questionnaires would be impractical, because its standardized questions might have avoided too many elements from come out during the survey. Further, I had a list but many units comprised in it might not have been able to understand it in the right way, as the questionnaires would be administered by using English as the only language. As a result the choice of not using questionnaires was confirmed.

Instead, I needed a flexible tool, and the semi-structured interview method matches up with my aims considering that within the qualitative approach its main characteristic is flexibility. By conducting interviews it is easy to follow up ideas, probing responses and investigate motives and feelings. Also a response in an interview can be developed and clarified. As a result, I decided to interview people working in the municipality since at least the 1980s, who have something to do with the district reform, either as professional social workers or other civil servants in high positions, such as district managers. I chose those two criteria – *being employed in the municipality for a long time* and *being either a social worker or a person in a high position* – supposing that only people with these characteristics had a complete overview on the process and on how the district system works. I also guessed they would have rendered their overview - having knowledge about the previous situation – by considering the evolution of that situation from the past to the present. Finally, the justification for the sample is that persons interviewed had wide knowledge and contemporary had been involved in the district reform for at least more than two decades. I decided not to interview politicians because they have a particular political view, so I supposed that many of them might have followed the indication coming from the political party they belong to.

Following these assumptions, as soon as I got a list of potential interviewees from the municipal website I went on contacting all people, both emailing and phoning them, to seek their approval to participate in the study. However, in the process of contacting interviewees, some of the potential ones withdrew, the reasons being mainly lack of time and language barriers. It is also interesting to report that in the course of conducting the interviews a snow-ball effect was experienced, and some respondents recommended other people whom they thought might be useful in this study.

I interviewed an overall number of 10 persons thinking that this number is enough to get a picture of the reform and on the local welfare strategy set up in Goteborg to fulfil social citizenship. I conducted 10 semi-structured interviews and the interviewees were asked to answer several questions about district reform and its present and future challenges (see

the interview guide - Appendix A). One more methodological note is that 4 interviewees out of 10 presently perform roles of high responsibility at central level in the City Hall. They are general managers recruiting other managers or dealing with the coordination of the seventeen departments of the municipality. The remaining 6 ones are social workers involved in executing managing and planning roles related to social welfare at a decentralized level within different district areas. As I have already specified, the obtained sample has to be considered a non-probability sample because each unit belongs to the population under investigation had not the same probability of being included in the resulted sample. It is possible to label the resulting sample as a purposeful sample in which the researchers selected participants who were considered to be typical of the wider population.

5.3 The interview: a means to collect and analyse data

The interviews were done in different setting and time, each one with the total time ranging from forty-five minutes to one and a half hours. Prior to the interview I sent an email to all interviewees explaining the aim and the purpose of the study, and this enabled them to familiarize themselves with the subject matter. The major intention was to make the interview interesting and useful. Furthermore, an interview guide (Appendix A) was used during the conversation to keep track and ensure that the probing was consistent and that sufficient information would be collected. The interviews were constructed over three key themes, that is:

- information on the district reform and its effects towards citizenship;
- effects of the reform on the process of building up a new local welfare;
- strengths and weaknesses of the district reform including future perspectives.

Most of the interviews took place at the interviewees' office and I preferred that in order to allow participants to resume their obligations soon after the interview and, above all, to ensure that the interviewee was comfortable, feeling that he/she was in his/her usual environment.

All the interviews were audio taped using a memory-stick recorder with the knowledge and consent of people involved in the study. All the interviews were transcribed verbatim including the expressions such as sighs, laughter as well as long silence or pauses. After transcribing all the interviews the raw data was edited and interpreted in order to ensure that they have meaning and are understandable.

To analyze interview texts I used the method of condensation of the meanings. It entails an abridgement of the meanings expressed by the interviewees into shorter formulations, in doing so the main sense of what is said was rephrased in a few words according to the beforehand

theoretical framework. As Kvale (1996) explains, five steps are involved in the empirical analysis labelled as condensation, briefly explained as follows:

- (1) the whole interview text is read through to get a sense of the whole;
- (2) the natural meaning units as expressed by the respondent are determined by the researcher;
- (3) the themes of those ones are stated as simply as possible as understood by the researcher, whom previously had attempted to read the subject's answer both putting away his/her prejudices and trying to be as much neutral as possible;
- (4) interrogating the meaning units in terms of the specific purpose of the study, dimension much more related to validity;
- (5) lastly, non redundant themes were tied together into a descriptive statement.

When I chose to present the interviews results I decided to group statements under some important themes that came up from the respondents' speeches. As a consequence, the transcripts were categorized into themes that have been used in the presentation of the results. Each one of those themes respectively titles the paragraphs of the next chapter.

5.4 Validity, reliability and generalizability

The procedures required in every research are related to a clear definition of the problem area, concepts, research questions, theory and hypothesis, research process in general. Those elements can make the research worthy or useless and can achieve the goals of validity, reliability and generalizability. In this particular study these goals were achieved by connecting the theoretical framework with the data collected through the semi-structured interviews. I am going to analyze the institutional frame of reference referring to concepts as welfare state regimes and citizenship.

Following the definition of Kvale (1996) I can grasp the meaning of *reliability* as referring to how consistent the results are; and *validity* refers to whether a study investigates what is intended to investigate. This study reached different levels of fulfilment of these criteria.

For instance, in order to reduce memory effect and enhance the reliability of data, the interviews were transcribed and typed on the same day of interviews. Additionally, I tried to reach reliability by grouping the most consistent meaning units stated from different interviewees. This dimension relates also to the process of collecting data in the attempt of making a questioning and probing work aimed to get consistence between the statements coming from the respondents and the aim of the research as well as avoiding leading interview questions. So, it is related

also with the choice of research method; as well known I previously (paragraph 5.1) explained why I adopted semi-structured interviews. Sometimes reliability and validity overlap and it is difficult to define if the choice of methods of interviewing or analysis is exclusively related with one or another dimension.

I also tried to respect validity basing the results not just on my subjective interpretation, but further putting them in a theoretical framework previously chosen. Validity refers to the truth and correctness of the findings of this study. So the readers may judge if findings respect my research questions and coherence with the thesis I want investigate. Relating to the internal validity it is useful to explain that hereby I consider as dependent variable the social citizenship fulfilment and as independent variable the institutional frame of reference built up by the Goteborg's district reform. This means that in my opinion if the City Council change there will be also changes in the local welfare strategy and thus to the extent of citizenship fulfilment.

But, the most difficult goal in this case is generalizability and I am not so astonished because I consider this study with all the limitations of the case. In fact, my analysis devotes to the particular case of Goteborg City. Of course some hints can be generalized to the entire Sweden and at least to the three metropolitan areas (Stockholm, Goteborg, Malmo) but readers should be aware of the limits of my research. This study emphasizes a contextualized knowledge, being aware of limits related to resources and a methodological choice as well. Comparing two different contexts I am interested on the heterogeneity and differences existing in those ones. I have a full responsibility of the statements related to Goteborg owing to the methodological process of research which was adopted and, for the rest of my statements, by referring on the bibliography pointed out.

5.5 Ethical issues

In conclusion I have to speak about ethical issues and how I deal with those over every interview. I may say that I adopted a standardized method in each interview, it forecasts that every interviewee receives oral information on purpose and procedure of the interview, explanation of the nature of the research and what was required from them as well. The preliminary information on the nature of the research was given over the acquisition of agreement to take part in the interview. Prior to start the interview the purpose was restated and abridged in more details. Thus, through briefing and debriefing the informed consent was obtained.

Additionally, the interviewees were assured that they would have received by e-mail the transcriptions of the interviews letting them to check the accuracy of transcription, the correct understanding what they mean and make necessary changes. I did this whenever it was possible depending either on the availability of interviewees or pressing time.

Moreover, in order to respect respondents' confidentiality over the next pages readers are not going to find neither the name of the people who make the statements during the interviews, nor any private data identifying the interviewees. The following findings will be anonymous since these latter are actual officials in Goteborg's City Hall. The data which are going to be shown were collected exclusively by interviewing people and they will help me to draw conclusions and to comply with this thesis corresponding at the belief that *'the reform, occurred in Goteborg in 1990, has combined to bring about a positive impact on social services provisions and arrangement as well as an improvement in social citizenship fulfilment'*.

CHAPTER 6 – RESULTS

6.1 District reform and its effects towards citizenship

With the purpose of introducing my subject and helping people in thinking about the reform, firstly I asked general questions and, then, by the technique of probing, I went on deeply into other related matters. I asked interviewees to describe the reform in general and this way allowed them to speak about their ideas as well as introducing new themes. An interviewee started off to describe the district reform specifying the political role of politicians and particularly of Swedish mayors, that is:

city manager A - *"I can start saying that we have 21 District Councils and 17 other departments which work all over the city in special areas (for example in environment, public work, traffic, etc.) with political body and administrative body. It is important to say that in Sweden mayors belonging to municipalities do not have the same power as in other countries. A mayor is only the head of the political group... he is just a member of the council. In other words, he is not the one who makes decisions, but he is the chairman of the collective body who makes decisions. That is a difference between Sweden and a lot of countries... we have not politicians who get votes through the job they are doing. They are politicians so that they can just decide as a group, not as individual members, not individually. For instance the chairman of the City Council, which consist of 81 elected member, has not personal power".*

This interviewee wanted to stress the impersonal power of the mayor who makes every decision as part of a political and collective body as well. Restating principles such as 'impersonality of power' or 'importance of paying taxes' in as many public occasions as possible, the politicians and the civil servants can help the overall system in working towards the direction of citizens rights and universal policies. The latter are policies addressed on the base of the people's rights regardless of the condition of need or the capacity of producing income. As you are a citizen you are entitled to the fulfilment of these rights and get services which are provided, in a certain way, before falling in a condition of need. Even during the different visits I made through services and other public occasions aiming to better understand the municipal organization, very often speakers referred to the above mentioned matters, that is 'impersonality of power' and 'importance of paying taxes'. After having clarified this point of view related to the political power, the same interviewee went on to describe the reform. I asked all the interviewees to speak about what were the motivations behind the reform. This way of proceeding can also guarantee the reliability of the study testing the

consistency of the different reported sentences. So, according to the respondents:

city manager B - *"In 1970s they started with an experiment of two district in order to reach more democracy, a higher efficiency, to cut money, and to improve the soft sector and its services. In mid-1980 they evaluate that and decided to adopt that model in full-scale. As a result, in 1988 in Goteborg it was organized a group to organise that the decision was taken in the city";*

city manager A *"[...]So, in 1983 we started an experimental process and we put up three district areas as test areas. The first period was in 1983 and we started three districts: one was Askim, one was Tynnered and one was Styrso. In these areas we tried to coordinate the social department, the school department and the others, but these departments still existed in the central organization of Goteborg municipality, so was very difficult to work... originally it was not a political reform, that meant to engage people more locally in their own local social welfare process. Instead, it was originated by our need to make the work more efficient. So, the political implications were not the original reasons starting this process, they came later, in the process of local democracy. The politicians had become to discuss about low democracy. Mr Goran Johansson arrived and started the political debate, he is a very powerful politician, and he decided that was the time to establish those district areas, the city is big and is hard to be administrated from the central square. In 1990 they took out all departments and, as a result, there was no social central department left, no education department and so forth. They were split in each 21 district areas;*

city manager C - *"The situation differs very much in wealthy areas and in poor areas, the one with big immigration, the one with wealthy people and the one with 50% of unemployment rate... The idea of the reform was to adapt the organisation and how to use the money to deal with these situations. The local rights for individual are the same across the city because we try to fight against inequality by put into camp resources from one area of the city to another".*

city manager D - *"One of the goal was to obtain better services among local services. With the reform they wanted obtain a better democracy";*

social worker E - *"I could say that was the need of coordination and efficiency to push the reform process. Before the reform to provide care for people... before was just one department within the municipality and then was divided in 21... when we introduced 21 departments... as a District Council you can get much more clear picture for yourself and assess how to deal in detail with every situation which come up in that area".*

As evidence, all respondents consider as prime motivations of the district reform the need of improving the efficiency within the social services, together with the realization of an holistic approach of collaboration, and the strengthening of democracy. In addition, despite the fact that one of those respondents (city manager A) maintains that originally the main intention of the reform was not the engagement of people on their local welfare area and the improvement of the provision of better services, the same interviewee recognises that, as a consequence, these implications came later in the process of local democracy. These are positive indirect effects making me to consider the reform as a virtuous process corresponding to a need of decentralization and building up of local solution. I also want to stress what one respondent (city manager C) claimed, that is to say they fight against inequality putting in place resources to make the society much more equal. The equality is an important principle more in Sweden compared to the other European countries. This reform happened in a social-democratic political context and it should be remembered, as it has been already claimed in chapter 4, that Sweden has also been classified as a social-democratic welfare state. I think that, the local process cannot exclude the national one and vice versa, but they are strongly intertwined.

city manager B - *"I think almost everyone is interested in the reform as parents, as workers in the district... they need more money, they want get a better service in the library, they have children in kindergarten and so on. I think many of our local politicians think that... here we are, we are near you and we want to discuss, for example, of social welfare, school and so on".*

Apparently, this reform has had strong and important effects in the local areas shortening the distance among politicians, civil servants and citizens. It is really interesting to see how each social actors is aware of his/her own role and the linked rights and responsibility.

social worker L - *"We as civil servant try to teach politicians to turn to people saying to ask us for their rights and provisions. If a person go to the politician telling him/her that he/she need something the politicians must address the person to social welfare services and we teach them how to do and what we can do for that person";*

social worker I *"People have to follow the law and get equal rights. If you go to the politicians you get unequal rights because you know the politicians. Only if we follow the law we can have equal rights. You have to go to the politicians just for general things".*

Paying attention to the respondents words above all to get the meaning of social citizenship. As I said above through the use of Marshall's words (1938), social citizenship involves social rights, action or at least a conscious process. Almost all respondents emphasize the close position of citizens to district politicians and thus to the institutions within the district. This

surely improved social citizenship in term of a better knowledge and awareness of their own rights as well as a much more activity to fulfil their needs.

city manager B - *"My opinion is... with the district reform rights are raised. There is more acknowledgement of social rights now, because... for example, in the former organization if parents wanted to talk to a politician about school they had to reach one politician in the central board for school and that one could not know any detail about the specific school that child was attending. But today parents can speak to a politician about their rights and politician together with civil servants can fulfil their rights for example improving the provision of services";*

social worker F - *"Politicians have become closer to people and civil servants alike. Most of politicians live in the area where they make decisions and rules... before the reform there was a long distance between the politician and the people in need conditions";*

social worker H - *"Now it is easier than before to come in contact with politicians also asking them how to get some allowances or how to improve individual rights".*

Another dimension of the phenomenon that allows speaking about an improvement of the fulfilment of social citizenship came up from the speeches of the interviewees, as they interlink rights and obligation with the local level. In fact, either interlinking locally with modern institutions - like social services, public health services, educational services and so forth - or being aware that through their own active participation (asking for rights) and responsibilities (paying taxes and making a conscious use of welfare provisions) people thanks to the district reform can improve their social citizenship and the linked rights.

city manager B - *"I think the point they wanted emphasize was rights and obligations associated with membership in a social unit and I think with decentralization we reached this goal".*

social worker I - *"People can either efficiently claims for their rights or understand their responsibility in the local unit. Absolutely I think there is more democracy now, than there was before!"*

6.2 The process of building up a new local welfare

I have identified a new model on how to administer social welfare provisions – much closer to the citizens in Goteborg than in other European cities – with new valuable elements that lead me to speak about a new local welfare model. Now, I will be speaking about the process of building

up Goteborg's model of local welfare by using the words of some interviewees.

city manager B - *"I am sure when the reform started... at that time we had a very large administration and a lot of employed people who worked with children and with groups of children who had problems in school, at home and so on. These situations called to the action practitioners belonging to different departments... social department, department of education, and also people from cultural department. These departments worked with the same children at different times. We had figures which showed that one child with its problem could met up by 17 practitioners working in the city of Goteborg and... that was the starting point for our attempts to coordinate the work of different departments. We wanted to minimize the number of employees whom met one child. We thought that it could be much more efficient children had one contact person and several assistants, but definitely not 17 persons around each child, they always stayed in a queue in their efforts towards that child".*

In the text above it is stated once again the need of coordination among different departments of the city. I think it is important to notice that they have carried on the change not by centralizing the departments, but instead by decentralizing both economical and human resources to the local areas. In this way administrators from Goteborg's City pursued the coordination of different geographic areas and different municipal departments. The same respondent say:

city manager B - *"[...] we started to try to coordinate the departments. There were high barriers between for example schools and social welfare, social welfare was something of bad reputation, not in negative meaning but... Practitioners working in the school believed to have a high and positive status, instead to work in social care at that time was not a high status job... this latter situation produced a lot of good job but from practitioners with a low status. This situation caused many big problems to work together above all to coordinate different professionals. Another dimension of this was that you had an administrative hierarchy in social care, one in school and so forth... but the bosses on top of each department had not interest to make their resources to work together... administrators on top were very opposing to this coordination! These two dimensions made the reform process very slow and very difficult as well as to coordinate the resources with the old organisations was hard".*

Then, one of the high barriers towards the implementation of the district reform was the need to balance the status of different practitioners, as it has been claimed, practitioner like teachers felt to have a higher social status than social workers and the head of the departments did not want give up their respective autonomy and power. Overcoming this step, other interviews witness the progress of the model after the reform as follows:

social worker F - *"[...] After the reform schools and social welfare has had the same organization in the district, the same political board, so it would be easier working together. For the social welfare it has been most profitable get into the school and to cooperate with schools and families and the entire territory. They became much closer. For instance we have been able to employ social workers and put them in the schools" .*

social worker E - *"The influence from the district reform to social services was that when as a social worker you have to take care of a person, after the reform, you have to look around... What other resources could I use? I could have contact with school at local level or with job office because they are in the same area. The idea is to build a network in a horizontal sense not only vertical. Every authority usually looks in its field. I think there is no problem for social workers to adopt that way of working, but not for all it is the same. For example the schools in Goteborg did not want their teachers and their head masters to be in a social net... not so much; whereas social workers are trained to think in network building. This also influence the individual work. Before the reform social workers had a vertical work but after the reform the horizontal work is stronger".*

So, after the set up of the District Councils practitioners worked in the same area by referring to the same institution. Despite of the opposition from teachers to work together with social worker, municipal administrators were able to employ social workers working within the educational system. Practitioners who, from now on, work in a horizontal network trying to increase the level of coordination is characterizing the new model. In order to govern the new local welfare some interviewees informed me about the enactment of new sharp tools, such as systematic and periodic meetings, training periods for newly employed people and annual budgets. The strategy adopted helps people who turn to social services based on duty and responsibilities in exchange for help.

social worker I - *"In order to teach politician to send users to us, we arrange meetings every month... we have to meet people legally... it shouldn't be like a person call a politician and get the benefit. We teach them how people can get welfare provisions legally. According to the law the politicians are not entitled to make an evaluation of the people's needs. We have monthly meeting with politician and every second week of month we have a meeting with social welfare board (committee), at district level, to discuss about individual case. They make decisions, for instance, if it is the case to take a child away from his/her family or allow somebody to live in an institution in the district, or for drug addicts, etc."*

social worker I - *"We try to make people more responsible stressing duty and responsibility and giving them help in term of benefit and social provisions. Definitely we try to see each person in his/her all life,*

improving his/her skills. To coordinate our work periodically we arrange network meeting to discuss on a singular case or about district strategies. If is it the case of individual network meeting user makes the choice about who has to participate in the meeting and, depending on the situation, can also take part members of police, school, and so forth”.

social worker H - *“When we hire people we train them for a long period towards the goals to be reached currently much more than it was before the reform. Every year when the political board make the goals we work with our employees trying to make the goals smaller and smaller, we try together to identify small tasks. When political board makes budget it makes also goals. Before the district reform the budget distributed to the residents of all districts was a big book and it was impossible for anyone to understand it, neither for employees. But, after the reform it changed, it is also a political change, it represents another way to communicate with people. Nowadays every year the budget is a small book, at maximum made entirely of 30-40 pages. It comprehends three headlines: priority, what we want achieve (goals) , and costs. Politicians want people know what they want to do and what they have done at the end of their political mandate”.*

As a result, also citizens achieved the new function of ‘participating in planning social services’, actually indirectly, through their complains as well as giving suggestions to politicians. They made that by setting up neighbourhood councils in local areas constituted by different users categories.

social worker G - *“Politicians have become closer to people and civil servants alike. Now it is easier to talk with politicians than was before the district reform. Citizenship rights and democracy are improved. Actually most of citizens can discuss with politicians about their problems, even if they want close down some schools or libraries they can arrange meetings with citizens and talk with them”;*

social worker I - *“We have councils of users organisations in contact with District Councils and they have meeting usually a week before the District Council occurs. Before the district reform there were few users councils at communal level” .*

City manager C - *“Council members are also sought out by citizens about various issues and have formal and informal contact by means of family, neighbours, colleagues, etc. They are contacted and visited much more than politicians in the city hall”.*

6.3 Strengths, weaknesses and future perspectives

Some interviewees have stated that, thanks to the district reform in Goteborg's City Hall, it was possible to cut costs. Most of them, through their words, make a positive assessment of the reform, even though they highlight strengths and weaknesses. Below I am going to show what they said about that and list firstly the strengths and then the weaknesses of the reform. About the former, the respondents said:

city manager A - *"There has been an increase of the efficiency in working together, so they have been able to save a lot of money because we do not have anymore a central social department, we do not need social welfare administration, we do not need leisure as well as education administration at central level... now there is only one local administration, so each District Council can use its own money in the best interest of citizens";*

city manager D - *"Nowadays each local district area has an executive manager (the district manager) and a political council. District managers have direct power over practitioners such as teachers, social workers, etc.; they have direct power to coordinate their daily work and for what regard money and other resources as well. Nowadays we do not have central social department to decide what to do and so this means a very decentralization. In the central staff there is a group of investigating officers who have knowledge about social services and social work. The central City Council does not decide what to do in the district areas, it gives to each district area a bag of money. They of course must perform their functions. They are the political mirror of the council".*

social worker E - *"I think there has been more democracy and also more efficiency in productivity and also... Politicians try to explain what is happening with their money by arranging a lot of public meetings".*

To sum up - according to the persons interviewed – the strengths of the reform are definitely:

- an increase of efficiency in working together;
- a saving of money thanks to the new local administrative structure;
- an improvement of democracy and social rights for citizens whom – as a result of the enactment of the reform - changed the way to relate to the new local institutions;
- much more transparency in public expenditure.

Besides these positive dimensions, from the interview texts came several weaknesses or, in other words, critical points of the reform. They can be abridged as follows:

- the District Councillors are appointed instead of being elected, and, as a result, sometimes citizens in the districts are disappointed by the way their local politicians deal with the issues;
- people say the reform transformed councilmen from sectorial-specialized politicians to generalists;
- because of the lack of central coordination in every district, there might potentially be a waste of resources the same services are provided repeatedly.

In conclusion, as always there are some districts where rich people live, who complain because of the amount of taxes they pay. They maintain that taxes are very high and, moreover, it is not right that so much will be redistributed over the poorer district areas.

city manager A - *“One weakness is surely linked with the loss of link between political body and citizens, because they do not vote directly the political local body. Political rulers or policy makers do not reflect politically people’s will, this because they are appointed by the city hall. Sometimes the way to deal with problems is different from what people would”.*

city manager D - *“The other opinion that many people have is that politicians who take part in the local committees are not specialist, for example in school; they are generalist... they are only my neighbours or like myself, they do not know so much about school.” (city manager).*

social worker F - *“I think a structural weakness of the reform is that all of the twenty-one districts could make the same services. For instance in the case of school, who decide that? Who should do a structural developing plan of services in the city? All the twenty-one districts should do that, but I think this is a vacuum of the legislation. We are discussing whether all of the 21 district should plan services (some of them do it sometimes), or ... should we set up one board for social welfare? We have to identify a responsible for that”.*

city manager B - *“We have also some districts that are complaining because they pay the more and get the less. There is an open debate on how much the community should distribute across the districts. Everybody knows that this is the result of our politic aiming to fight inequality, but... it is not easy to explain something to whom do not want listen!”.*

Lastly, interviewees were asked what they think about the future perspectives of the reform, if and how it is going to change. The respondents agree that even though the district reform has been positive, there will be some changes. Although the characteristic social-democratic frame of reference, officials are concerned about a possible privatisation of the services due to the high increase of public expenditure. They said this might lead to a reduction in the number of the districts because the system

works but citizens expectations are rising and the system is being stressed in providing more and more services in order to fulfil their rights. To conclude I want repeat what a respondent stated, that "public social services represent the only warranty for people to get equal treatment".

social worker H - *"Citizens' expectations have been high since long time with democracy, but in the meanwhile they are also disappointed. Politicians explain to people that democracy is not getting what you want... democracy is that you can say what you want and we have to decide how to use money and you have to elect us every four years. But, people think democracy is give me what I want!" ;*

city manager B - *"Our public sector is very efficient and the cost are very high. I think we are going to the same direction as other Europe and countries, to cut money and so on... but much slower. One of the main explanation of this resistance is our strong social-democratic tradition";*

social worker G - *"In the future politician might decide to reduce the number of district areas from 21 to 5 because this system is good but the expectation of citizens are rising. If people are very close to politicians they demand and demand";*

city manager C - *"Public social services will be more private because poverty is rising. I do not think this is good... they represent the only kind of warrantee to get equal treatment for people".*

CHAPTER 7 – ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

This study is based upon my starting thesis that is "*the belief that the reform occurred in 1990 in Goteborg has combined to bring about a positive impact on social services provisions and arrangements as well as an improvement in social citizenship fulfilment*". I tried to analyse and explain that through the help of the theoretical framework and empirical research mainly following three research questions which constitute the title of the following paragraphs.

7.2 How did the new institutional frame of reference contribute to improve social citizenship?

According to Esping-Andersen (1990) Sweden is par excellence a country classified as a *social-democratic* welfare regime. It has been developing since the early years of the Nineteenth century and is committed to comprehensive risk coverage, generous benefit levels and egalitarianism. Within this national frame of reference also local ones evolved over the time and Goteborg constitutes an example. I saw that it presents a local welfare model with a certain level of decentralization. The main role is being played by the municipality through their District Councils, at least regarding the metropolitan areas (Stockholm, Goteborg, Malmo). Goteborg's district reform represents a good example of how social policy and social services can be administered.

It is an example of governance towards social citizenship because people are much more linked to the local institutions than it happened in the past. Social citizenship, according to Marshall (1938), is "*the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to live the life of a civilized being according to the standard prevailing in the society*". Such a kind of citizenship can be fulfilled just in a social-democratic welfare regime as Sweden is, which implies a high degree of '*de-commodification*' (Esping-Andersen, 1990) - that occurs when a service is rendered as a matter of right, and when a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market - as well as '*universal policies*' addressed on the base of the people's rights regardless of the condition of need or the capacity of producing income (*ibidem*). As a result, this frame of policies together with the new institutional frame of reference in Goteborg spurs citizens simultaneously in asking for their social rights - linked to compulsory schooling, cultural and leisure activities, public

libraries, care of people with functional impairments, child care services, caring services for elderly people, individual and family care - and accepting their responsibilities. The new frame of reference improved social citizenship as some respondents said, mainly shortening the distance between citizens, district politicians and civil servants and thus to the institutions within the district areas. This surely improved social citizenship in terms of a deeper knowledge and awareness of their rights and responsibilities. As I said above, thanks to the district reform they interlink rights and obligation at the local level and, either interfacing locally with modern institutions or being aware that through their own active and responsible participation, citizens can fulfil a better level of social citizenship and its liked rights.

7.3 How did the district reform affect social services with regard to the building process of the local welfare?

Goteborg's district reform can also be interpreted as a process of building up a local welfare constituting a good example of governance on how social policy and social services can be locally administered. Assuming that the local area is the site of resources for citizens, the new characteristic features of the reform are constituted by 21 decentralized District Councils trying to meet people's needs and to fulfil citizenship rights. In Goteborg the municipality, by means of District Councils in local areas, is tailoring on local communities the provision of social services and broadly of local welfare.

Proximity to citizens is one of the most important key features of the organizational model. It can be considered as a new model to administer social welfare provisions, much closer to citizens. In fact, greater proximity between policy decisions and their execution improves the functioning of local welfare. In that way, changes in the environment can be registered more quickly and services are more easily adapted to local conditions and needs. For the first time, even if indirectly citizens were allowed to participate in planning social services. To do that they set up new neighbourhood councils in local areas made of citizens who share a particular need.

Further, I can say the District Councils are not only an expression of the desire to decentralize decision-making in local government, but they also paved the way for the integration of different services and sectors. Decentralizing both economical and human resources satisfied the need of coordination among different central departments. In fact, after the reform, it has been possible to strengthen the coordination among different areas of intervention such as between social services and schools. It has been possible to reach a balance among different professional status; certainly between teachers and social workers. It was built a horizontal network of practitioners focusing on the citizen and overall social life

dimensions (family, job, education, leisure activities, friendship and so forth). Different practitioners began to work relating to the same institution, exactly the District Council.

Besides, in order to govern the new local welfare new innovative tools were enacted. Other tools of govern were improved - such as public meetings, network meetings, training periods for newly employed - and new local budgets were set up and since then politicians have been trying to make consistency between the political statements and the policies put in place.

Taking into account this analysis of the district reform, it is possible to say that the outcomes of the district reform were positive for social services at least for the above mentioned aspects. Proximity, the decentralization of decision making, the strengthening of coordination among different sectors as well as the new tools of governance are sufficient to state that from the process of implementation of the district reform came up a new local welfare based on a more full social citizenship.

7.4 In which way is the Goteborg's model to strengthen social citizenship distinguished from the Italian one?

Differently from Sweden, Italy was earmarked as a *conservative/corporatist* welfare regime (Esping-Andersen, 1990). This means to be in front of a much more unequal society, with a medium level of '*de-commodification*', epitomised by segmentation, subsidiarity and familialism. In this situation the state partially, but more and more, draws away from a direct provision of social services delegating families and the third sector to take care of people in need. As it was previously stated, this mechanism reproduces inequalities and the *status quo* and lowers social mobility opportunities. As a result, Italy presents a local welfare model with a certain level of decentralization and with an advanced level of privatization in the field of social services as well. In fact, most of the management of social policy are being delegated by the state through the municipality to private subjects belonging to what is called third sector. In this frame social rights cover residual fulfilment in local areas relying, above all, on the financial and technical capacity of local authorities. Within this frame it occurs that in some local areas social citizenship is really fulfilled and in other ones its fulfilment is firmly limited.

In this context the relation between citizens and governmental institutions is of essential importance. The attitude of Swedish citizens to pay much more taxes provided that the level of public services keeps at the same level (see Nilsson & Persson, 1996 a, b, c, 1998) witnesses a high level of trust coming from citizens towards governmental institutions. Within the Swedish context the central and local roles of public institutions substitute the one's which both family and partially third sector instead play in Italy. Notwithstanding, despite the crucial role of the family in providing

protection to its members, social policies towards family are weak, essentially addressing male-breadwinner family's model.

Social citizenship in this context is being partly sacrificed because of a shortage of economic resources to cope with new phenomena such as ageing of population, transformation of family models, migration and connected changes on the internal labour market performances like delocalization and globalization. Social citizenship and consequently a universal provision of social and health services are being seriously threatened.

However, Italy is trying to set up new strategies, one attempt is the Act 328/2000, which allow other subjects (in this case belonging to the third sector) to identify needs in the communities and to cooperate with local authorities in planning and providing services. The latter ones bear financial and supervision responsibilities of the previous ones. Definitely, Italy might take Goteborg's model as an example regarding some hints. For instance, Italy firstly could cautiously introduce a major autonomy to levy taxes from the local authority; secondly some mechanisms related to the redistribution of resources aimed to fight inequality; lastly the way to strengthen the relation between citizens, politicians and civil servants at local level as well as to introduce the new tools of local governing.

7.5 Conclusion

I started the present investigation because I was attracted by the social services and the local welfare system of Goteborg. So far my interest was mainly captured by two previous researches focusing on citizenship from the point of view of the political element intertwined with citizens' participation (see chapter 3). One study was conducted by Mats Andrén, pointing out the relationship between local communities and citizenship from the point of view of democracy and the local citizenship; and, another one, by the Center for Public Research at University of Goteborg (CEFOS). The latter is a study of ten-year experience of the district reform in Goteborg started in 1989 as a request from Goteborg's City Hall, focusing both on representative democracy and new organization of the district reform occurred in 1990 which split up the "soft sector" in 21 district administrative areas. Even if this study cannot be generalized because it does not represent a quantitative research taking into consideration every unit of analysis, in this case each Swedish municipality, I can put it in the light of a post modern approach which emphasizes a heterogeneous and contextualized knowledge, with a shift from generalization to contextualization (Kvale, 1996). Therefore, this study can be used to get a better interpretation of previous research as well as to strengthen results coming from future research.

In these two analysis, I noticed that both local citizenship and democracy are firmly connected with Marshall's explanation of citizenship and its three strands – the civil, the political and the social one. Whereas democracy above all is linked with civil as well as political rights, once again my attention pointed out on the lack of a deep analysis about social citizenship instead linked with social rights. As a result this study was aimed to investigate the relationship between social rights and social citizenship in an institutional frame of reference as Sweden and particularly taking as an example Goteborg's district reform. Assuming this last situation, I also tried to make a brief comparison between the new local welfare model of Goteborg and the Italian welfare regime as well as its effect on the enactment of the Italian new reform (Act 328/00) likewise aiming to build up the Italian local welfare (see chapter 2).

Starting from my thesis - *the belief that the reform occurred in 1990 in Goteborg has combined to bring about a positive impact on social services provisions and arrangements as well as an improvement in social citizenship fulfilment* – I tried to strengthen it thanks to three leading research questions:

- (1) How did the new institutional frame of reference contribute to improve social citizenship?
- (2) How did the district reform affect social services with regard to the building process of the local welfare?
- (3) In which way is the Goteborg's model to strengthen social citizenship distinguished from the Italian one?

Results from my investigation are analysed in chapter six, but here I want to stress some dimensions about citizenship, Goteborg district reform and the Italian local welfare as well as the future perspective as follows.

First of all, even if I totally agree with Marshall when he suggests that citizenship was a triad in the beginning, exactly in Middle Age, then developing over the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Century respectively in civil, political and social dimensions, above all thanks to the differentiation of the institutions (see *Table 1*), I would invite readers to consider it as three intertwined dimensions. The theoretical frame splitting citizenship in three dimensions is useful in order to analyze the phenomenon, but I am absolutely persuaded that they are really intertwined. In fact, for instance in Goteborg district areas, decentralization and social services provision are improving the level of democracy and citizens' participation by enforcing the process of citizen's awareness about rights and responsibility.

It is useful to refer to Walter Lorenz (2006) when sustains the way social work practice comes across to service users depends also on a complex set of expectations and relationships between citizens and society, mediated by the state, which make instrumental use of social professions and social services. Therefore, a re-affirmation of an individualised casework approach, as that one provided by District Councils in Goteborg

through social services, balances individual action with a focus on the assembling of a comprehensive range of relevant welfare provisions which together constitute a practical form of social citizenship in Marshall's sense.

Additionally there are distinct welfare traditions at both the cultural and the political level, as it has been seen in the two cases under examinations (see chapter 2), which offer similar administrative process. As a matter of fact, within Italy and Sweden the administrative processes have been developing in a similar direction with the exception that in Italy the state is transforming its role delegating to other local subjects, either private or public; unlikely Sweden, thanks to its social-democratic tradition, continues to keep on a strong role detained by public local authorities. This means that without a fundamental change in the relationship between citizens and the state tinkering with administrative structures does not suffice.

At this last stage I can reaffirm that the local area is the site of resources for citizenship, as a result District Councils are the tools by which Goteborg's municipality tries to meet people's needs and to fulfil citizenship rights. As a result, the '*soft sector*' - comprehending compulsory schooling, cultural and leisure activities, public libraries, care of people with functional impairments, child care services, caring services for elderly people, individual and family care - is tailored on each of different district areas. To conclude, it is possible to claim that the district reform has made it possible to fulfil a new social citizenship linked to the participation and decision-making, all together with financial responsibility at local level. The reform has had certainly positive effects on the fulfilment of social citizenship. Even if through the interviews many future challenges came up, such as the probability of reducing the number of districts and to afford costs related to the provision of services, I can definitely assert that, thanks to the District Councils, it has been possible to make the citizenship at work and continue the journey towards social citizenship. The welfare state needs to be modernised not abolished, bearing in mind that a certain level of local public welfare represents the only warranty to treat citizens equally fulfilling their social rights.

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

Topic:
Goteborg's district reform and its impact on social services

This interview is part of my degree report, being enrolled in the International Master's programme (2007/08) of Science in Social Work at Goteborg University.

The Main Objective of the study is to investigate the implemented decentralized model of administration in local areas of Goteborg City and its effects on social services and social citizenship.

Areas of interest during questioning

- Personal information (educational background, period of employment).
- Working period in the municipality and role interviewees hold in the municipality.

- General information on the district reform (e.i., characteristic features, principles and motivations) and after asking for detailed information on the subject investigated.

- Thinking on citizenship and the different way it displays, such as:
 - Rights and obligations associated with membership in a social unit (e.i. community);
 - Relationship between individual and public authorities;
 - Political decisions which guarantee an agreed level of individual living standard irrespective of the individual bargaining power;
 - Stigma attached to the users of the services provided by districts
 - Social policy and its nature (selective vs universal);
 - Social policy in terms of democratic control and consumer participation in planning and administration.

- Effects of the reform towards citizens (e.i., relationship between citizens and the City Hall).

- Effects of the reform towards social services functioning and the process of building up of the local welfare, for instance:
 - Staff's commitment to the aim and line of the organization;
 - Loyalty to the ideological goals;
 - Ideological socialization of new personnel;
 - General commitment in altering the norms and behaviour of its environment.

- Strengths and weaknesses of the district reform;

- Challenges and future scenery of the local welfare including social services.

Appendix B

Informed Consent

The following is a presentation of how I will use the data collected in the interview.

The research project is a part of my education in the International Masters program in Social Work at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. In order to insure that my project meets the ethical requirements for good research I promise to adhere to the following principles:

- Interviewees in the project will be given information about the purpose of the project.
- Interviewees have the right to decide whether he or she will participate in the project, even after the interview has been concluded.
- The collected data will be handled confidentially and will be kept in such a way that no unauthorized person can view or access it.

The interview will be recorded as this makes it easier for me to document what is said during the interview and also helps me in the continuing work with the project. In my analysis some data may be changed so that no interviewee will be recognized. After finishing the project the data will be destroyed. The data I collect will only be used in this project.

You have the right to decline answering any questions, or terminate the interview without giving an explanation.

You are welcome to contact me or the supervisor in case you have any questions (e-mail addresses below).

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