

# Environmentally friendly, or friendly environment?

Exploring environmental sustainability as a motive for residential mobility

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## Abstract

Considering worldwide urban growth, and the challenges involved concerning sustainable development, the aim of this thesis is to broaden knowledge about the drivers and motivations concerning intra-urban residential mobility. With a specific focus on exploring environmental sustainability as a possible motive for residential mobility, the empirical data is gathered from fourteen semi-structured, in-depth interviews with residents in the Gothenburg metropolitan area, in Sweden.

Departing from both classical and contemporary migration theory, as well as time-geography, the results from this study both confirm and evolve conclusions from previous research. It is found that, first of all, family matters. The desire to assure a safe and comfortable upbringing for one's children seem to exceed all other matters. Secondly, proximity matters. However, proximity is first and foremost convenient in many aspects of life, and then as a bonus, it is also environmentally sustainable. While environmental sustainability is found have a rather weak influence on residential mobility, is still largely affects individuals' daily life through an array of mitigation strategies.

The findings suggest that planners and decision makers must take a majority of the responsibility in making sure cities grow sustainably, through supporting and promoting its population to make decisions that are environmentally sustainable and planning the physical environment in a way that supports a sustainable development.



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Rising levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere cause the global temperature to rise which alters the climate on earth. This is the fundamental reality that acts as a baseline for many academic efforts today (Houghton, 2005), and the aspiration is that this master's thesis will make a contribution to that effort. Since 2010, more people in the world live in urban areas than in rural settings. In 2020, 56 per cent of the world population was urban. In 2050, more than two-thirds of the global population is likely to live in urban areas, adding another 2.5 billion people to today's 4 billion urban residents. Therefore, urban areas will continue to be an important scene for fighting climate change and environmental degradation (Klopp & Petretta, 2017).

The global, national, and local struggle against climate change is without doubt ongoing, while at the same time, the strive for economic growth forces regions and cities to attract new citizens and keep the well-educated workforce within their labour market. As urban populations grow, cities expand outward for many reasons, usually known as *urban sprawl*. Higher urban land value, increased house prices and economic growth causing a desire for larger homes and faster transportation are some components in driving urban sprawl in Europe (Christiansen & Loftsgarden, 2011).

Sweden is firmly connected to the international economy and influenced by global tendencies. There is a perception among decision makers in Swedish cities that in order to attract an affluent populace, or to keep them from moving to other cities, you need to provide high-quality detached houses with a private garden, close to nature, away from air and noise pollution but still within commuting distance to the urban labour market (Waak, 2021; Johansson, 2020; Rosenhall, 2020). This happens despite the common fact that urban density has a strong correlation with lower energy use and less transportation (Jenks et al., 1996) and that urban sprawl is well known to cause increased greenhouse gas emissions, reduced air quality, loss of farmland and green space, habitat fragmentation and suchlike (Wilson & Chakraborty, 2013). The average Swedish individual's environmental footprint uses the energy and resources of 4 planet earths (WWF,

2018). Approximately 39% of the total Swedish energy is used by the housing sector and 22% by the transport sector (Energimyndigheten, 2021). Hence, the location in which people choose to live contributes to setting the prerequisites to a way of life that uses energy and resources within the planetary boundaries.

The basic assumption that it is easier for most individuals to maintain a low carbon footprint when living in an urban area rather than a suburban or rural area (Rohne, 2010), makes it meaningful to explore how individuals motivate their thoughts on environmental sustainability in residential mobility decision making. Residential mobility is the term that will be used in this thesis, simply signifying the act of moving one's permanent household from one place to another. The focus of this thesis will be on the *environmental* dimension of the sustainable development concept (Brundtland, 1987), and less on the social and economic dimension. This is due to the fact that the environmental dimension is the one concerning climate change and environmental degradation, which is seen by many as the most critical aspect and the one individuals can affect by making daily decisions to reduce their climate and environmental impact.

Within the environmental sustainability context, there is a need for a broader knowledge of the thoughts and motivations around residential mobility. For the organisation of society and to plan urban areas, planners and policymakers need to understand the motives and considerations among the population, including the influence of environmental sustainability principles within these motives. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to contribute by exploring how individuals and households reflect on environmental sustainability when performing intra-urban residential mobility. That is, when making decisions about moving within an urban area, and choosing between different residential areas. Interview respondents will be identified through a purposive sample survey, where they have the opportunity to explain if and how environmental sustainability has played a role as a motive for moving.

## 1.2 Aim and research questions

The *aim* of this thesis is to expand knowledge about environmental sustainability as a motive for intra-urban residential mobility and to increase awareness of the choices and prioritizations

people make when choosing a residential location. This will be done by thematically analysing data from fourteen semi-structured interviews with individuals residing in central and suburban areas of Gothenburg, Sweden. The following two research questions will guide the thesis:

- i. How is environmental sustainability involved in residential mobility decision making?*
- ii. How does the environmental sustainability motive stand against other motives for residential mobility?*

These overarching questions will be explored by conducting a reflexive thematic analysis on data from fourteen semi-structured interviews with individuals currently residing in Gothenburg and its surrounding metropolitan area. The respondents in this study will be chosen through a purposive sample survey. Five respondents live in suburban areas with mostly detached and semi-detached houses and nine respondents live in inner-city apartments.

Residential location contributes to setting the prerequisites for a way of life that is within the planetary boundaries. The choice between living in a dense urban area or in a sprawling, suburban neighbourhood has consequences concerning the ability to organise daily life in an environmentally sustainable manner. A wider understanding of motives for residential mobility can support planners and decision makers towards more sustainable land use in and around cities that can also provide for a high quality of life for its residents.

The exact topic of this thesis, which is accounted for in the two research questions, has not been previously examined. The closest that has been found, which will be mentioned in the literature review, has focused on people's motives when actively choosing to move to residential areas with an environmentally sustainable profile.

## 1.4 Disposition

This thesis includes seven chapters, where the first chapter has displayed the aim and research questions, as well as explained the societal relevance of examining environmental sustainability

as a residential mobility motive. In chapter two, the underlying theoretical framework is presented, including some background on migration theories and time-geography.

A literature review follows in the third chapter where relevant previous research close to the subject of this thesis is presented. The fourth chapter presents the methodology and data used to examine the research questions. Chapter five presents the results of the study through three overarching themes and a number of sub-themes. The findings are analysed and discussed in relation to the previous literature and theories in the sixth chapter, using the same manner of thematic presentation as in chapter five.

In the concluding seventh chapter, the main findings and their implications are presented, including suggestions for further research and implications for the wider society.

## 2. Theoretical framework

### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, some main theories on residential mobility will be introduced. There is also a need to clarify some central concepts. For example, literature on the topic of *moving* is described both as residential mobility and residential migration. Since the word migration brings many minds toward long-distance, trans-border migration, possibly due to hardships in the home country, the concept of residential *mobility* will be used primarily throughout this thesis. However, the concepts of migration and residential mobility are inherently intertwined, as a decision to migrate also means that a decision to “perform” residential mobility has been made.

In any case, the concept of residential mobility focuses on the mobility individuals carry out when moving themselves and their households from one place to another. In residential mobility literature, much research focuses on a certain kind of migration, such as transnational, transregional, internal, or intra-urban migration. This study will focus on intra-urban migration, given that all 14 respondents in the study did their latest move within the Gothenburg metropolitan area.

The chapter will start off with a general section on residential mobility, where some fundamental reflections on residential mobility will be presented. The chapter will continue presenting more specific themes within the research field that has evolved to further broaden the perspectives on human migration behaviour. These theories can be quite easily recognized as being exceedingly relevant when exploring individuals’ actions in the complex postmodern society. As will be suggested in this thesis, it is necessary to look beyond common theoretical approaches when exploring new aspects of a phenomenon, in this case, environmental sustainability as a motive for residential mobility.

## 2.2 Residential mobility

“Residential mobility can be conceptualised as an outcome of a choice process exercised under complex institutional and personal constraints” (Han, B., 2014).

There is a large body of literature on residential mobility which, as mentioned before, is also titled residential migration. Often mentioned (i.e., Falkingham et al. (2016), Niedomysl & Amcoff, (2012) and Halfacree & Boyle (1993) as early work on intra-urban migration, and in particular around life-course is Rossi’s (1955) study on residential mobility in Philadelphia. His research showed, somewhat commonsensical today, that individuals and households adapt to changing phases of life by moving to a new home (Rossi, 1955 in Niedomysl & Amcoff, 2012) while also developing a basic framework around reasons to move.

His categorizations of migration motives (Rossi, 1955) can be seen as laying the foundation for the theory around push/pull factors that is still commonly used as a basic framework in migration research to this day. Push factors and pull factors in migrations research is the basic division between factors *pushing* individuals *from* one place to another and factors *pulling* individuals *to* one place from another. However, decisions around residential mobility are many times a combination of both, and push-pull models have gained critique for being overly simplistic and deterministic. Typically, the classical assumption would be that migrants are pushed by low income in one region and pulled by improved outlooks in another (Lee, 1966). However, Radu & Straubhaar (2012) argue that the determinants of migration are influenced by a multitude of causes, such as various social interactions.

Research on the topic of residential migration or residential mobility has for a long time focused on the economic motives for moving. Researchers have been rather consistent in their conclusions that people mostly move because of economic or at least labour-market-based reasons. However, these theories, somewhat in line with the concept of *Homo Economicus*, have gained critique for their overly behaviouristic way of looking at migration. Thrift (1986) named this way of looking at the human agent as an intellectual fallacy and his thoughts are developed by Halfacree & Boyle (1993) who suggests more emphasis on the experience and context of migration (p. 344). Applying a more biographical approach toward residential mobility might

reduce the risk to come upon the intellectual fallacy or other overly simplistic theories. This will be introduced in the next section about life course migration theory.

As mentioned, for many years there has been quite a stable unity around the assumption that long-distance residential mobility to a large extent is connected to the labour market and that short-distance residential mobility is caused mainly by changes in the household composition (Lundholm, E., 2007). However, as society and perspectives have changed and developed, critique has grown especially around the macro-oriented classical economic theory, and the research field has seen an increased emphasis on the micro-scale such as individual, social and cultural points of view (Massey et al. 1993). Nonetheless, Niedomysl & Hansen (2010) finds that employment-related issues still rank high among many Swedish migrants, particularly among low-income households.

### 2.2.1 Life course migration

One way of challenging the traditional, neoclassical perspectives on migration is to look closer at the complex paths and milestones making up an individual's life. In different phases of life, individuals prioritise different aspects when aspiring to move. Looking around oneself, it is easy to see at least some patterns concerning how different age groups migrate during life. Life course theory is a principal theory in the study of lives (Elder, et al., 2003), and has spread into many academic fields. Sometimes characterised as a biographical approach (Halfacree & Boyle, 1993), the concept of life course or life cycle has become an essential part of migration research, and as mentioned in the previous section, Rossi (1955) laid an early foundation, which has since developed from a rather static view of the changes in life towards a more dynamic perspective (Kristmansson, 2011).

Studies concerning residential mobility have repeatedly found that moves are caused by transitions in the life course, in other words, certain life events such as (Clarke, 2013; Falkingham et al., 2016; Warnes, 1992) attending higher education, meeting a partner, having children, retiring and so forth. Possibly this is not seen as a big surprise, and for example, Niedomysl (2005) finds that common conceptions around popular attributes during different life phases are valid also in Swedish migration patterns.

Consequently, countless studies have found that a large share of residential mobility is conducted during transitions between phases in life (Karsten, 2020; Feijten et al., 2008, Kristmansson, 2011), particularly around family change. Researchers have for a long time explored the interrelatedness between family formation and residential mobility, and the adjustment of dwelling size to family size are common triggers of residential mobility (Kulu & Milewski, 2007).

Ultimately, and this was also an observation that led to the topic of this thesis, Kley (2011) concludes that urban planners need to stay conscious of life phase migration patterns. For example, residents in the family phase with young children are often searching for child-friendly residential areas, which are often found on the outskirts of cities. And as house prices surge in many urban areas around the world, more people look to neighbouring cities or municipalities that can meet the desired requirements.

### 2.2.2 Amenity and lifestyle migration

New perspectives have emerged within the field of residential mobility, to capture the complexities of contemporary society (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009), with a larger focus on the influence of different social and cultural principles. Hence, two other ways of looking into residential mobility, which are somewhat intertwined: amenity migration and lifestyle migration, will be introduced. Amenity migration is defined by Gosnell and Abrams (2009) as “the movement of people based on the draw of natural and/or cultural amenities” (p. 303). Despite the concept often being used to explain movement from urban to rural areas (counter-urbanization), there is clearly useful theoretical value also in the context of intra-urban mobility such as moving between inner city areas and suburban areas. A consequence of amenity migration in the near vicinity of urban areas is the transformation of arable land to new suburban areas, which has negative effects on food production, biodiversity et cetera (Enghag et al., 2013). Therefore, it is vital to understand the residential mobility motives within the population probable to these migration trajectories.

Considering the substantial economic development and stable welfare society that Sweden has experienced for many decades (Hjort, 2009), the shift from physiological and safety needs to self-actualization affects residential mobility. The increasingly mobile population, through the use of privately owned cars, also contributes to enabling a larger distance between the home and the workplace (Amcoff, 2000, Öhman, 2003), even though families' motives for an urban dwelling is often related to seeking short travel times (Jarvis, 2005). The affluent, highly educated, creative class, and their contribution to municipalities' tax income and business climate are a constant focus of regions and cities in order to grow and stay competitive (Hansen & Niedomysl, 2009).

The residential mobility patterns of this increasingly resourceful yet heterogeneous group are of interest to cities and regions (Florida, 2005) and the concept of *lifestyle migration* might help to comprehend different phenomena in current migration trajectories (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009). Similar to amenity migration, but with an even broader perspective on the sought qualities of the residential area. Central to the concept is the pursuit of a greater *quality of life*, which Torkington et al. (2015) point out as a highly individualistic and subjective desire to make changes in lifestyle through a change of environment. This can also be seen as a part of the movement away from neoclassical theories on economic and labour market-based migration towards more socially and culturally affected reasoning.

As the results of this study will show later on (5.2.3), it is also worth mentioning the influence of the environment people grew up in, as this might affect residential preferences and choices later in life. This was a key issue in Halfacree & Boyle's (1993) attempt to bring forward the biographical approach in the conceptualization of migration. It was partly an endeavour to advocate more humanistic methods for a broader understanding of migration behaviour, but also to expose the influence of previous experiences and ideas affecting residential choices. This has also been suggested in the Swedish context by Heberlein & Ericsson (2005) and Hjort (2009), who claims that the degree of satisfaction with urban or rural life depends on whether you grew up in an urban or rural setting. In other words, residential migrants may want to relive a certain lifestyle experienced earlier in life, and perhaps also offer the next generation this lifestyle.

All things considered, residential mobility is linked to a vast array of considerations, experiences and meanings. Environmental sustainability as a possible motive does not clearly conform to only one of the theories brought up in this chapter. However, bringing new issues to the table could generate additional clarification to previous theories, or perhaps simply conclude that there is a need for further development of theoretical concepts within residential mobility.

### 2.2.3 Time-geographical constraints and residential mobility

Life phases, amenities, lifestyle and biographical factors all influence migration patterns and residential preferences. They are attempts to show different coherent aspects that trigger residential mobility. However, there might be a reason to challenge the notion of the independent actor, with a concept that further seeks to interpret the consequences of limitations in daily life, and in this case the influence on residential mobility.

Space, place and mobility are central concepts in human geography. However, the fundamental dimension of time can appear as more abstract. As a reaction to this, Torsten Hägerstrand (1970) developed the *time-geographical* approach, which has been a very influential framework in geographical research, as well as in several other academic disciplines. His work consisted partly of an extensive descriptive clarification of his view on space and time and partly of the introduction of space-time diagrams.

In order to understand *groups* of people, Hägerstrand (ibid) sought to visualise and interpret the movements through spacetime and the undertaken activities and projects by *individuals*. As most people realise, and which is also valid for the respondents in this study, daily activities and projects are done at certain places at certain times, and different restraints need to be overcome to complete these tasks. People need to transport themselves from home to work, leave children at school at certain times, buy groceries at certain locations within opening hours and so forth. Individuals' strategies to overcome these restraints are important factors when considering performing residential mobility (i.e., move). Hägerstrand (ibid) recognised the importance of these restraints and introduced his theory on constraints, which delves into the different restrictions of everyday life. These constraints change over the life course and are still relevant in

understanding human behaviour (Ellegård, 1999), including realising the project of residential mobility, which consists of movements in time and space affected by constraints.

The way people make residential decisions is not solely based on opportunities or wishes, but also on the individual's limitations of everyday life. The three different kinds of constraints are capability, coupling and authority constraints. Capability constraints recognize the basic fact that humans have biological limitations such as the need to sleep, eat and drink. These are activities that largely affect day-to-day life and are done at a certain place, many times in the own home. Our abilities to act are limited and humans have come up with different tools to overcome these physical boundaries (Ellegård, 2019). The capability constraints are also related to distance. We have biological limitations regarding how fast and how far we can move. These limitations can be mitigated using for example a car or digital meetings, but nonetheless, they are constraints. Through this lens, it is possible to add valuable insight concerning residential mobility, as realising the project of moving to a new home provides opportunities to limit the constraints in daily life. Hägerstrand realised the future might bring new ways of overcoming these constraints, which we know even more of today, after having endured two years of a pandemic. This could finally also have implications on where people might consider moving.

*One hears the most divergent opinions about future possibilities of having television screens substitute for face-to-face meetings around a table. The amount of travelling undertaken by functionaries these days indicates that a breakthrough in terms of new behaviour patterns is still on the waiting list. (Hägerstrand, 1970, s. 12)*

The second constraint, coupling, refers to the interdependence of people and material that need to converge in the time-space. This interdependence leads to restrictions in people's manoeuvre space since they need to be at different places at specific times and sometimes also at the same time and place as someone or something else. This is quite naturally a highly present constraint among family households, with both parents working and taking care of children. Yet, the coupling constraints are highly changeable during the life course, it might change over one night the day people retire, or when children move out of the family home. This is an interesting aspect

to keep in mind in this thesis indeed, as the respondent's range between single households, young couples, families with four children and retired couples.

The third and final constraint is the authority constraint, which simply includes the formal and informal rules, laws and regulations put up by both institutions and moral agreements among individuals. People's everyday lives are constantly organised to adapt to these constraints. For example, you need a driver's licence to use a car, you normally don't pick up kids at the preschool after closing hours, you don't step in front of someone else in a line, and so on. In conclusion, Hägerstrand's time-geographical constraints are a useful tool when looking into the lives of individuals, and, for the scope of this thesis, when making choices about where to live. Large decisions in life are affected by a complex and interconnected array of circumstances, preferences and restrictions. The expanding issue of environmental sustainability adds to this complexity and the time-geographical approach could possibly provide a direction towards a wider understanding of residential mobility decision making in a complex and ever-changing society.

### 3. Previous research

This chapter provides a brief walkthrough of earlier research regarding environmental sustainability as a motive for residential mobility. However, without surprise, since the topic is rather narrow, very few such studies have been found. Numerous studies on residential mobility focus on traditional migration motives (Brown, 1983), such as moving for jobs, increased housing standards, or social reasons, such as proximity to family and friends. However, a Swedish bachelor's thesis from 2013 (Berg & Vo, 2013) examined whether a reduction in environmental impact was a part of the migration motives among migrants who had moved to "housing with sustainability claims". They also reviewed how the environmental impact motive stood up against other migration motives (p. 2). Using a limited quantitative survey (N=69) the students found that while choosing to move to residential areas that claimed to have an environmentally friendly profile, the migrants did not rank the reduced environmental impact as their main motive. Rather, the migrants, first of all, appreciated the characteristics of the house itself and the area's characteristics. (p. 39), whereas the "environmentally friendly" attributes were seen as a bonus.

Furthermore, there are two Swedish research papers, which also mainly focus on specific areas with a sustainable profile, that touches upon environmental concerns as a migration motive. First, Zalejska-Jonsson (2011) examined low-energy residential buildings, from both the investors and tenant's perspectives. She found that classical motives for residential mobility, such as changes in family composition, neighbourhood satisfaction, apartment size, and so forth were "highly valued" and 75% of those who moved to low-energy houses stated that fact had no impact on the decision to move to that apartment (p. 11). However, it was found that low energy consumption was an important factor, which is more easily interpreted as an economic rather than environmental rationale. Despite this, many respondents stated that they were proud to live in environmentally friendly buildings and that it "increased their environmental awareness" (p.13).

Similarly, Green (2006) found, in her extensive doctoral thesis concerning planning processes for sustainable urban development, that in the cases of two large scale urban development projects in Stockholm and Malmö, environmental concerns were not a main motive for the newly moved in.

This was also a case of areas with an environment or sustainability profile, but once again, more traditional motives for residential mobility were mentioned, such as changes in family composition, wanting a more comfortable apartment, or wanting to move closer to nature or the waterfront (p. 221). Urban waterfront development and similar high-end projects can be seen as cities' ambition to attract a talented, knowledge-based workforce. The majority of respondents in this thesis, as will be presented later, are highly educated and arguably part of the so-called “creative class” (Florida, 2005). Hansen & Niedomysl (2009) argue that a common presumption is that the “talented and creative people are perceived as highly mobile” (p. 192). However, they find that the difference in yearly migration in Sweden between the creative and the non-creative class is only marginal (p. 202). This marginal difference also mainly applies to migration motives, where only the “employment” category shows a notable difference, whereas education, living environment, housing, social reasons, and other reasons show no or minimal differences between the two groups.

Just as the study mentioned above, migration research efforts tend to use survey data when examining the complex essence of migration trajectories and decision making. However, how useful this is has been questioned (Niedomysl & Malmberg, 2009), maybe even more so when examining new possible motives (like environmental sustainability in this thesis) or other somewhat hazy concepts, such as “environmental reasons” (Vilhelmson & Thulin, 2016). Therefore, Vilhelmson & Thulin (2016) have explored, through in-depth qualitative interview data, the meanings and interpretations among potential migrants regarding the “environmental<sup>1</sup> motive concept” (p. 277). The authors found three main ways of thinking among the respondents. The first line of thought was around the wish to live in an area with particular attributes, preferably “an attractive living environment” (p. 280), and the second relates to dissatisfaction with the current living environment. These two are rather clearly possible to categorise as one pull-factor and one push-factor. However, the third line of thought is vaguer and does not easily fit into the dichotomy of push/pull theory. “The third concerns a change in environment and seeking the unknown as goals in themselves” (ibid. p.283), which the

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<sup>1</sup> Pay attention to the difference between the environmental reasons (as in “living environment”) studied in Vilhelmson & Thulin (2016) and the environment examined in this thesis (as in “I care for the environment”).

respondents discuss as possibilities for personal development or living up to the norm of mobility as a proof of life experience.

This section has briefly presented findings from four research papers and one student thesis. The student thesis and first two papers were included because their scope is somewhat comparable to the topic of this thesis, namely the question of whether and how sustainability acts as a motive in residential mobility. The last two research papers were presented because of their relevance to the scope of this study regarding the Swedish context, the focus on the creative class, and in the case of Vilhelmson & Thulin (2016), the similarity in method choice and exploration of meaning in “vague” concepts around residential mobility.

## 4. Methodology

The aim of this study is to explore the concept of environmental sustainability within residential mobility decision making. This chapter contains a description of the scientific approach and methodology considered most appropriate to achieve that aim, including a short presentation of the study area and information about the respondents.

### 4.1 Scientific approach

In this section, the ontological and epistemological foundation from which this thesis acts will be introduced. As done in this thesis, exploring meanings in individuals' stories and observing human actions in a postmodern reality with deeply rooted and ever-changing social constructs, one cannot rely on a positivist view of knowledge. Rather than the realist or critical realist ontology with a world possible to understand, as truth, this thesis stands more on a relativist foundation. In that way, one can completely forget the notion of a comprehensible truth separate from human structure (Madill et al., 2000 in Braun & Clarke, 2022) and instead see reality as something produced by human action and interaction (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Hence, doing reflexive thematic analysis (4.4) from this ground, rejecting the notion of objective knowledge about human action, provides a capability to comprehend the respondents' stories as located in the complex social context that is modern society (ibid.).

As previously mentioned, this thesis examines motives for residential mobility. Motives are something deeply individual and complex and therefore, reaching out toward a hermeneutic research tradition, a qualitative approach is motivated. Seeking to interpret meaning in human statements and actions means seeing the human as intentional. The intentional human acts because she *wants* something, and she does this after interpreting her surroundings (Starrin & Svensson, 1994).

Since the focus of this study has not been found to any great extent in previous research, and other theories on residential migration motives are not found applicable to the focus of this study (i.e., environmental sustainability as a residential migration motive), a predominantly explorative approach is used. When exploring a potentially unfamiliar aspect of a certain topic, a qualitative

approach can provide perspectives that otherwise might be lost, in a more quantitative research design.

Another motive for using a qualitative approach is the fact that previous research on the matter of residential mobility relies heavily on quantitative methods, specifically on survey data. Valuable as that may be, reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022) on interview data can hopefully contribute by adding insights into the phenomena and meanings that people express in their social reality (Dalen, 2015). Furthermore, a qualitative method in general and interviews, in particular, provide the researcher with a good chance of recording unexpected answers (Esaiasson, 2007), which is relevant in this study as the focus lies on exploring a concept within the topic of residential mobility that has not yet been thoroughly examined.

## 4.2 Study area

Observing the constant growth of cities, including a never-ending suburban sprawl, questions arise. Despite the threat of climate change and environmental degradation, young generations seem to possess a similar desire as previous ones regarding some residential preferences. The demand for energy-consuming detached houses in car-dependent suburbs or rural areas seems to be perpetual.

Consequently, the will to explore environmental sustainability as a residential motive influenced the choice of study areas in this thesis. The choice was made to approach respondents in two different types of areas. The areas are contrasting in terms of distance to the city centre, proximity to nature, and access to public transport. Through the sampling process described in the next section, respondents were collected from, on one hand, inner-city apartments and on the other, detached houses in the suburbs of Gothenburg, Sweden.

Gothenburg is the second biggest city in Sweden with 600 000 inhabitants in the urban area and just over 1 000 000 inhabitants in the metropolitan area. The city is growing in terms of population and land area. The city authorities have agreed in the comprehensive plan that the focus should be on strong growth in the inner and middle city and that new residential areas in

the outskirts of the city only should be built hand in hand with regional public transport development (Göteborgs stad, 2008).

### 4.3 Sampling

In order to find suitable respondents for interviews, a sample survey was sent to members in 6 Facebook groups for centrally located residential areas and 5 groups for suburban areas. The reason to distribute the survey was solely to gather interview respondents, and not to collect statistically significant survey data. Hence, a non-probability sampling technique such as this is clearly tolerable. The addressed Facebook groups are presented in the table below.

*Table 1: Facebook groups provided with sample survey*

<b>Urban areas</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Suburban areas</b>	<b>Members2</b>
BRF Doktor Lindh	124	Vi som bor i Björlanda	1600
BRF Jarlaplatsen	87	Furulund - Partille	609
BRF Lustgården	139	Vi i Låssby	338
BRF Norra Guldheden	375	Föräldrar i Torslanda	262
Vi som bor i Linnéstaden	656	Öjersjö Information/efterlysning	2000
Nya Masthugget	1200		
Sum	2581	Sum	5009

The sample survey consists of 15 questions (Appendix 1) including the question about willingness to take part in the interview study. It was distributed on the 19th of November 2021 with a reminder on the 22nd of November. The questionnaire was deleted from the Facebook groups on the 24th of November as the influx of participants had practically stopped and to reduce the risk of double or fake answers if the survey was left open.

421 answers were received. 64 participants shared contact information and interest to participate in the interview study. To identify respondents who could contribute with a meaningful narration of not just residential mobility, but also environmental sustainability, the 64 participants were sorted by how high (1-5) they ranked the following survey questions:

- *To what degree did the possibility to live environmentally friendly affect your choice of residential area.*
- *I try to live an environmentally friendly life.*

Only participants who had a combined ranking of 8 or higher were planned to be contacted, as this was a validation that questions of environmental sustainability were of interest to the respondents. This turned out to be 26 participants. An email or text message was sent to these 26 individuals, with a reminder after a week to those who did not answer. After another week, it turned out to be 14 participants who were ready to book an appointment and conduct an interview. Out of these 14, eight were women and six were men. Five stated that they live in a suburb with mainly detached or semi-detached homes and nine stated that they live in the inner city of Gothenburg. This was determined to be a satisfactory distribution that provided sufficient variation among respondents to provide purposeful interview data.

#### 4.4 Respondents

All names presented in this thesis have been changed for ethical reasons. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and gave consent about the interview audio being recorded.

Due to the Corona pandemic, out of 14 interviews, 13 were done using the video conferencing platform Zoom. The general impression of meeting virtually instead of physically was positive. The respondents were confident using the software, and many of them were very used to it after two years of working from home. Some unidentified negative influence by the virtual environment might exist, however the overall opinion is that the respondents felt highly receptive and articulate during the interviews. Yet, during one of the interviews, there were interruptions in the internet connection, and a telephone call was used during the second half of the interview. One interview was done through a physical meeting due to the respondent feeling uncomfortable using video conferencing. This interview was done in a calm public environment, chosen by the respondent. The interview lengths ranged from 35 to 55 minutes.

The respondents are shortly presented below. There are 8 women and 6 men. Five of the respondents live in detached or semi-detached houses in the suburbs of Gothenburg, and 9 respondents live in centrally located apartments.

Table 2: Presentation of respondents

"Name"	Age	Dwelling type	Partner	Children	Car?	Main transport mode
<i>Fredrik</i>	27	Two-room apartment, central Gothenburg	Yes	No	No	Bicycle
<i>Nadja</i>	46	Detached house, 16 km NW of Gothenburg	Yes	Two	Yes	Bicycle
<i>Gunnar</i>	68	Six-room apartment, central Gothenburg	Yes	Three, moved out	Yes	Car
<i>Alex</i>	32	Semi-detached house, 15 km NW of Gothenburg	Yes	Two	Yes	Car
<i>Katarina</i>	74	Detached house, 15 km E of Gothenburg	Yes	Three, moved out	Yes	Walking or public transport
<i>David</i>	47	Detached house, 15 km E of Gothenburg	Yes	Three	Yes	Moped
<i>Maria</i>	27	Two-room apartment, central Gothenburg	Yes	No	Yes	Walking or public transport
<i>Roland</i>	71	Five-room apartment, central Gothenburg	Yes	One, moved out	Yes	Public transport
<i>Marie</i>	58	Three-room apartment, central Gothenburg	Yes, lives apart	No	No	Walking
<i>Lisa</i>	49	Two-room apartment, central Gothenburg	No	One	Car-sharing	Bicycle
<i>Julia</i>	34	Detached house, 15 km E of Gothenburg	Yes	One	Yes	Car
<i>Vera</i>	43	Five-room apartment, central Gothenburg	Yes	Three	No	Bicycle
<i>Martina</i>	54	Three-room apartment, central Gothenburg	Yes	One	No	Walking or public transport
<i>Harald</i>	31	Two-room apartment, central Gothenburg	No	No	No	Walking or public transport

## 4.4 Analysis of interview data

In this section, the process from interview preparations to interpretable results, will be presented. The methodological decision to conduct semi-structured interviews was made early during the thesis planning process. It allows for an explorative research approach, where the research questions can provide for a flexible interview situation where the respondent's own perceptions are highlighted (Bryman, 2016).

An interview guide was carefully prepared, where seven overarching themes containing specific questions were formulated (Appendix 2). The flexible nature of the semi-structured interview allows for the themes and questions to be purposely rearranged during the interviews, depending on the progress of the interview. The progress naturally depends on the interviewer, but with an explicit recognition that the respondent is allowed to associate freely and thus alter the predetermined order of questions.

The interviews were conducted between the 6th of December 2021 and the 20th of January 2022. Only one session per day was done, and that interview was transcribed directly afterward, or in the morning after if it was done late in the afternoon. Written notes were taken during the interview concerning the respondent's state of mind and the overall feeling of the interview progress. All interviews were transcribed before the next started, to maintain coherent attention and reduce the risk of mixing respondents or thoughts together. Transcriptions are an important part of the familiarising phase of reflexive thematic analysis, where reading and re-reading the data immerses the researcher into the data, enabling a well-informed base for the analytical process (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

The succeeding phase involved coding the interview transcripts, which represent a methodical, open-minded process of finding relevant pieces of data in regard to the research questions. Coding was done in Microsoft Word, using the comment tool. Comments were later exported and summarised in a separate spreadsheet. The process included many insights into the data, even though it was early on in the analytic process. While the process of coding progressed,

patterns of shared meanings started to emerge, which organically led to the next analytical phase, theme development.

Braun & Clarke (2022) argue that researcher subjectivity “is an essential resource” for reflexive thematic analysis, in the sense that interpretation is a key methodological feature. However, recognizing one's own “assumptions, expectations, choices, and actions” (ibid., p.14), and being transparent about these, ensure the research has ample reliability (Bryman, 2016). Introspective reasoning and a basic reflexive journal were conducted throughout the process. While acknowledging the subjective nature of coding, and the researcher's own situatedness in relation to the data, three noticeable themes started to materialise across the dataset.

Working with the codes, finding connections, similarities, contradictions, and other patterns of meaning were done at first in Microsoft Word and Excel. However, the need for a better visual method was needed. Hence, all codes were written on two large whiteboard screens and subsequently clustered and categorised. This process is where the first possible themes started to emerge. Two more sessions of visual mapping were done to generate the final overarching themes and sub-themes. These themes capture the essence of the interview data in relation to the research questions and the thesis results will be presented thereafter in chapter 5.

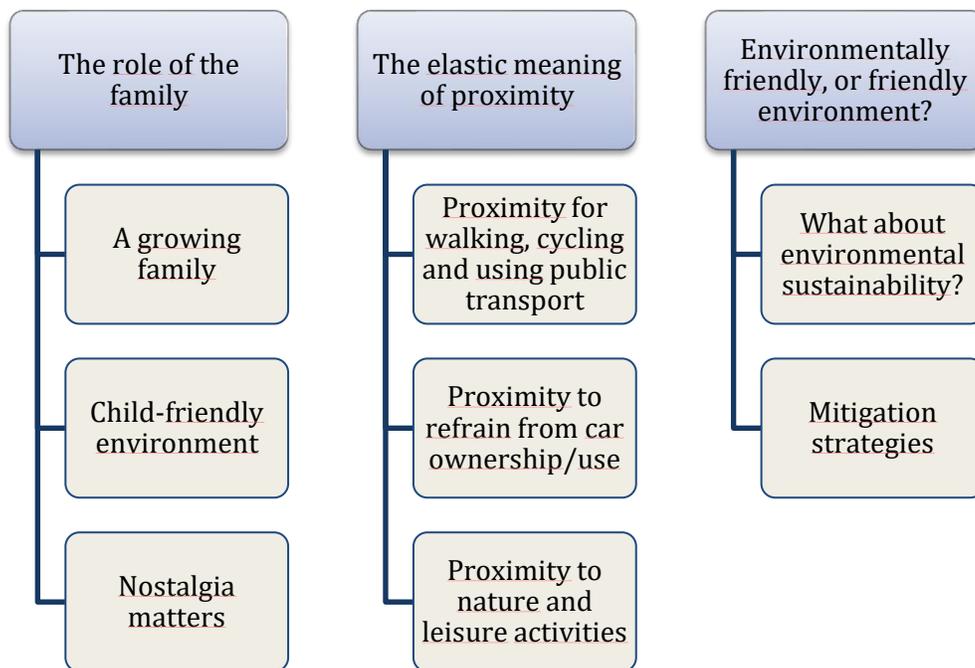


Figure 1: Themes and sub-themes

## 4.5 Method reflection

First and foremost, the aim of this thesis is to provide an in-depth exploration of residential mobility motives, with a specific focus on environmental sustainability as a possible motivation. The respondents were selected through specific criteria in a non-probability sample survey, to provide qualitative, interpretable interview data. Hence, the aim is not to produce results claimed to be generalisable to the wide population. However, through methodological transparency, the readers themselves are allowed to judge “whether, and to what extent, they can safely *transfer* the analysis to their own context or setting” (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.143). Yet, the ambition of this thesis is without a doubt that the conclusions are valid in a larger geographical and social context than those drawn from the 14 respondents in this study. The themes, the patterns of shared meaning between the respondents, are aimed to be transferable to a wider population. However, with a qualitative research approach in mind, the study does not aspire to declare to what *extent* the results are valid, or any differences between groups of population. That, however, could be the scope for further research using different methodology.

Through open-ended interview questions regarding traditional residential mobility motives, combined with questions around environmental sustainability as a motive, this study makes an effort in trying to avoid the difficulties of interpreting a vast amount of survey data based on predetermined, close-ended, options. The use of close-ended survey questions in migration research has been a dominant practice, yet Niedomysl and Malmberg (2009) argue that a more diverse methodological approach would broaden perspectives considerably and conclude that open-ended questions specifically would benefit the discussion on migration motives.

Thematic analysis of qualitative data is sometimes exposed to critique concerning subjectivity, researcher bias, and similar attributions. However, this is largely derived from a quantitative and positivistic view of knowledge production, where subjectivity is an obstacle on the road toward a universal goal of objective knowledge. Whether there exists an objective truth in the social reality, or if it is worth searching for, is left outside the scope of this thesis, nevertheless, in thematic analysis, subjectivity is an essential resource (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

## 5. Results

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter will present the results from the fourteen semi-structured interviews conducted in the early phase of this study. The findings are structured in three main themes with following sub-themes. The first theme highlights the importance of family-making in general, and children in particular, in residential mobility decision making. This has little to do with environmental sustainability as a motive in residential mobility but is nevertheless critical to point out due to the highly stated significance among a vast majority of the fourteen respondents.

The second main theme (5.3) also emanates from a distinct and strong focus among respondents, namely on the value of proximity. This aspect has emerged clearly through the interviews as a highly valued feature when engaged in the difficult process of choosing where to live. The concept of proximity, or nearness, is a well-known component of sustainable urban planning and is often perceived as enabling residents to adopt sustainable transportation strategies in their daily life. However, as a motive for residential mobility, proximity has diverse meanings, which will be presented through relevant sub-themes.

The third and last main theme (5.4) involves the plethora of strategies for environmental sustainability that individuals apply during residential mobility decision making. Also included are the arrangements people make in their daily life to mitigate the environmental impacts of their selected way of life as well as some different interpretations, or even misunderstandings, along the way.

### 5.2 The role of the family

The respondents in this study were selected because of giving high scores on the survey questions about caring for the environment and about environmental sustainability affecting their choices around residential mobility. At the beginning of each interview, the specific topic around environmental sustainability and residential mobility was introduced. Despite this, there is one

theme that has emerged as outstanding, when it comes both to affecting *the decision to move*, as well as considerations about *where to move*. That is the theme around family and children.

Hence, this theme is about the significance of family-making and the consequences of increased family size as a driver to conduct residential mobility. The theme is divided into three sub-themes, where the first has its focuses on the changes in life-phase as a reason to move, particularly due to the need for more living space when the family is growing.

The second sub-theme has emerged from the interview data as an important topic when choosing *where* to move. This has to do with the desire for a child-friendly environment. For instance, moving *out* towards the suburbs when having children. However, some respondents have chosen to live a family life in the inner city, and their stories are of equal importance to shine a light on residential mobility considerations.

The third theme is about the influence of nostalgia. Somewhat of an outlier, as it is not directly concerning the growing family or the welfare of the children. Yet, it is mentioned by many respondents almost in the same sentence, as a desire to offer their children the same kind of upbringing they experienced themselves.

### 5.2.1. A growing family

Out of 14 respondents, seven live in a household with children at the time of this study. Three others had children who had moved out, but they too spoke about their experiences of family-making and residential mobility motives. One respondent stated that they might have a child in the future and that would probably be what makes them move the next time.

For all of these respondents, an important factor in the decision to move is without a doubt the ambition to satisfy the need for living space. The perception of having “enough space” or “feeling cramped” is evidently rather subjective, but nonetheless a perception of significance. This change of perception was described by many as a consequence of having their first, or additional, child. Both Alex and Julia were living in centrally located apartments with their partners and moved to a house in the suburbs because of having their first child.

Alex: “Well, we were living in our first proper apartment [i.e., not student housing], and it worked out well before we had a child [...] So it was really the fact that we were starting a family that made us look for a house.”

For Julia, it was also a strategic decision to enable a simpler everyday life in the future. Even though they already had access to a garden and a garage, after four years they felt it was time to look for the ideal dwelling, where they could stay for many years.

Julia: “Well, it was partly that we wanted to leave... It was a bit inconvenient living on the second floor with a stroller and all [...] And then it was also long-term, we knew we only had two bedrooms and one room as an office. You could hardly use that as a kids' room. And then there was only one bathroom. So, we knew we couldn't stay too long.”

Vera, on the other hand, who also lived in a centrally located area with her partner and two children, never thought of moving to the suburbs when they had their third child. They were happy with the area they lived in, and they didn't want to move to a new area where they would have to find new pre-schools for the two first kids, but they needed more space. Vera also explains how they do not feel like “house-people” and have no desire to renovate or similar things that they associate with house ownership. Besides, Vera's husband does not have a driving licence, so they need good public transport nearby.

Vera: “We lived in a rental apartment with three rooms, but when we had our third child it got a little cramped [...] you know, three kids and two bedrooms, and the kitchen wasn't huge. At first, we looked to do an apartment swap, but it's hard to swap a small apartment for a bigger one, so we had to buy one [...] we wanted to stay because we like it [here], but at the same time get something more spacious.”

Even though the respondents who moved from an apartment to a house expressed how that felt like the obvious and necessary next step, Gunnar, who raised three children together with his wife, buying a house was not an option. He gives an account similar to Vera's.

Gunnar: “We weren't really inclined to buy a house since we are more apartment-people than house-people. You have to take care of both the inside, the outside, and the garden. It's more convenient with all-inclusive [laughs] [...] But we had a four-room apartment, and the kids were getting bigger so naturally, they needed some more space. And we found a six-room apartment which we bought.”

In contrast, Fredrik and his girlfriend recently bought their first apartment together, after living in a rental apartment for 1,5 years, which they thought was way too expensive. They saw it as temporary from the beginning and wanted to do what they felt was more economically sound, to buy an apartment together. However, the prospect of having children one day might lead to something different.

Fredrik: “We were thinking rather short-sighted I think, I mean it's a small apartment and all, [...] but if we have children some time, I think there is a lot more quality of life if you move to a house outside the city centre.”

### 5.2.2. Child-friendly environment

A majority of the respondents spontaneously bring up children when being asked about motives for moving and choosing residential areas. Second to providing enough living space for the family, preferring the area to be “child-friendly”, “safe for kids” and similar is very common among the respondents. What is considered to be child-friendly and safe for kids differs to some extent between urban and suburban dwellers but is often connected to the presence of cars in the area. For Fredrik, who does not have children yet, the sight of children playing on the car-free streets inside the area offered an impression of a safe and calm neighbourhood.

Fredrik: “There are no cars between the buildings here... so it's very child-friendly. When we were here to look [at the apartment] there were kids playing hockey on the streets.”

Alex and his wife moved to an area with predominantly terraced houses, where the cars are parked on the outskirts of the area, allowing for a sense of safety.

Alex: “There was quite a lot of traffic just outside the playing grounds where we lived before [...] and we wanted something child-friendly [...] and we liked [this area], there were no cars nearby, even. It’s quite a large area before you even get to the parking lots, and there’s not much traffic there either. So, it’s about safety, really.”

Nadja and her husband built their own house some 15 kilometres outside Gothenburg after living for six years in a three-room apartment close to the city centre. They moved because it started to “get a little cramped” and longed for a little more living space. Also, Nadja explains how they started to grow tired of constantly watching over the kids while they were playing outside.

Nadja: “[Before], we had a small courtyard we could be at. That was great, too. But you couldn’t let the [two] kids be there by themselves. Because [just outside the courtyard] was a busy bike lane and lots of people. And she was four years old, so she was totally unreliable. You had to observe them all the time [...] that’s something we discovered when we moved here. Now they can walk by themselves to friends, that would never have happened before.”

The thought of having your own garden is expressed by several respondents as highly desired. Many times, it is connected to the notion of providing a carefree environment for the children, which is also what can bring contentment to the parents.

Julia: “You just want to be able to open the door and let him out [in the garden].”

Katarina and her husband live in Öjersjö, 15 kilometres outside Gothenburg. They are both retired, and their children have moved out. Katarina expresses the children's welfare as the main motive during the two latest moves they undertook. The first was from an apartment to a townhouse in Ingared, a village 40 kilometres outside Gothenburg and the other was to Öjersjö.

Katarina: “Before [when we lived in the inner city] we thought it was so sad to see him running around on the city streets. So, we tried to find a house [outside the city]. And we did. We moved so it would be better for him. And a little closer to school and not so much traffic [...] you want them to thrive. That’s what you think about, that they are going to have a great upbringing.”

However, providing a child-friendly environment is not exclusive to the suburban house owners. The perception of what is child-friendly and not is to some extent subjective. Lisa and Martina, who both made active and long-term decisions to live in the central parts of Gothenburg, also describe their residential areas as favourable for children.

Martina: “It’s both practical and pleasant [living in the city centre], we never thought of moving out of town when becoming a family with children. We like the inner city; the kids can walk where they want to.”

And even though Lisa dreams of owning a house, and isn’t entirely happy with living on the first floor in a concrete apartment block, without a balcony, she has been positively surprised with the child-friendly aspect of her area:

Lisa: “I must say I have been positively surprised. Especially since I had a child. It’s a huge area without cars. So, you can just let the kids out to play. And there are 12 different playgrounds, which I don’t think you can get anywhere else this central.”

To this extent, the respondents have expressed a crystalline narrative of the significance of their children's welfare when making decisions both when it comes to the need to move and when deciding where to move.

### 5.2.3. Nostalgia matters

This final sub-theme of the family theme derives from the fact that several respondents related their current views on where to live to the way they grew up. The sentence “I grew up like that” stood out notably during the coding of the interviews. This accentuates the meaning of

biographical experiences in residential mobility decision making. Some, like David, related their upbringing with the ambition to offer their children a similar childhood to what they experienced themselves.

David: “It was like this, we wanted to come close to a feeling of safety for the kids. To have almost the same upbringing we did [...] I grew up in a calm neighbourhood with detached houses outside Borås, and we could roam freely.”

Others simply explained that how they grew up is the way they want to keep living their lives. Roland lived in a South American capital until he was in his thirties when he moved to Sweden. He currently lives in a big apartment in central Gothenburg and is confident about the way he and his wife want to live.

FSL: “Would you consider living in a house one day?”

Roland: “No, why? It would be far away from everything. We both grew up in a city, my wife and me. So, we’re used to activity and pulse. We wouldn’t want the opposite.”

Both Alex and his wife grew up in ways they felt they wanted to give also to their children.

Alex: “We knew we wanted to move out. Sooner or later.”

FSL: “How did you know that’s what you wanted?”

Alex: “We both grew up like that, actually. So that’s just how we feel. We liked our upbringings in that way. It felt safe having a little garden and being able to move freely and all that”.

Also, Vera, who lives with her partner and three children in a centrally located apartment, explained how they had many reasons not to move too far, and the strong sense of place for Vera's partner was one of them.

Vera: “My partner was born and raised [in this area] and he’s very fond of it. He doesn’t want to move away from here.”

Then, naturally, there are also those expressing the opposite. The common perception of young people leaving rural communities as soon as they have the opportunity was accurate for Maria. She lives in an apartment in central Gothenburg with her partner.

Maria: My partner is from Gothenburg and I'm from the countryside. I don't want to move out to the countryside, that's one thing that's certain.

Ultimately, the influence of the respondents' upbringing environment became apparent during the interviews. This will be discussed in (6.2) in relation to biography and life course theory.

### 5.3 The elastic meaning of proximity

Second to the theme concerning family and children, the concept of proximity was shown during the interviews to be next in importance. Proximity is often thought to be an important issue in urban sustainable development, however, as respondents tell, proximity is not solely an issue of being sustainable, perhaps even more, it is a question of managing the activities and projects in daily life. Whatever the reason, be it proximity to schools, work, friends, parks or grocery stores, it is omnipresent and deep-rooted. Overcoming the restrictions in daily life requires different strategies. Moving to a new area gives people an opportunity to set a new baseline for day-to-day strategies since a new place can have new characteristics in relation to the workplace, amenities, schools and so on.

The theme will be divided into three sub-themes. The first is proximity for being able to walk, cycle, or use public transport to work, which emerged during the interviews as a very important factor when choosing where to live. The second sub-theme is about the will to refrain from car ownership and/or reduce car use and the third specifically about proximity to nature and leisure activities. All of these strategies derive from a range of different perspectives. Whether it is walking to work because it is perceived as pleasant and healthy or avoiding car use because of environmental sustainability concerns, proximity is a decisive factor in residential mobility.

### 5.3.1 Proximity for walking, cycling and using public transport

Proximity to public transport is mentioned by nearly all respondents as highly valued. This applies to both urban and suburban dwellers. However, there is a slight difference between what the urban and suburban dwellers perceive as “good enough” public transport. Whereas the house owners express looking for residential areas with access to any public transport at all, the respondents in the inner city often express looking for areas with access to several different bus and tram lines.

Roland: “[Our apartment] is quite close to the city centre. And it’s easy to travel [by bus] in all directions. And it was suitable for both our workplaces, my wife works downtown(...) We wouldn’t have been satisfied with only one bus line.”

Living near good public transport, or being able to walk or cycle to work, grocery stores or schools is quite rarely mentioned spontaneously by respondents as something important for environmental sustainability reasons. Rather, it is the omnipresent strive for an uncomplicated daily life that is the prevailing focus, whereas the environmentally friendly aspect is sometimes referred to as “a bonus”.

Alex: “Well, we chose [this neighbourhood] because my workplace is located nearby. And then it was also that it wasn’t too far with public transport for my wife [to her work in central Gothenburg]”

However, Nadja and her partner expressed environmental sustainability and a “smooth daily life” as the main factors included when they were looking into moving from the inner city towards the suburbs. Access to public transport was considered the main precedent for an environmentally sustainable lifestyle.

Nadja: "My workplace has good public transport nearby, so my limit is 40 minutes. Maybe up to 45. That was an absolute requirement, having decent public transport [...] We wouldn't move to a place without it... So, we rejected several places due to [lack of] public transport and bicycle lanes."

Julia and her husband weren't in too much of a hurry to find a new home. They had many different aspects they wanted their new dwelling to fulfil and could take their time to find the most fitting house and neighbourhood. They mainly considered the eastern suburbs, as they both come from that side of town and there are large nature reserves that can accommodate their leisure interests. Additionally, one specific area stood out, where they would have cycling distance to her parents as well as good public transport opportunities.

Julia: "Well, we looked at how close the bus stops were. There might be public transport available in many areas, but for example, in Mölnlycke, you would be likely to live quite far from the bus stops. And you have to take the walking time into account too. So that was another advantage for Öjersjö. It's very easy to take the bus from here, so that was another reason we ended up here."

For some, moving to areas with public transport access is also about their children being able to use public transport. Using public transport from a young age is considered to encourage independence while it also relieves the parents from some tasks.

Katarina: So, I thought, if the kids are going to become teenagers in Ingared, then you have to drive them around by car all the time. Now they can take the bus and come and go as they want."

However, people from different generations and age groups might have different views on what is "walkable" or "nearby". She also explained how many neighbours have two or three cars in front of their houses and use them also for what Katarina means is a short walk.

Katarina: "We don't drive so much. We mostly walk. Or catch the bus. But... many others [in our neighbourhood] take the car to the grocery store. It's only a four kilometre walk. It takes 45 minutes [to walk]."

Even though some of the respondents residing in the suburbs mention walking and cycling opportunities, the inner city dwellers mention this to a much larger extent as a way of simplifying daily life. The possibility to walk to common destinations that comes with living in the city centre is mainly considered to be “convenient”, “a pleasant feature”, “time-saving” and next in order as an environmentally friendly feature.

Harald: “I like living in a city. I like being able to walk into town. And walk home. It’s pleasant. And you save a lot of time, too. And it could become more important to live like this now that we’re not supposed to use cars so much.”

In conclusion, walking, cycling and using public transport is considered by most respondents as something beneficial in several aspects, and something that affects residential mobility decision making to a large extent.

### 5.3.2. Proximity to refrain from car ownership

The will to refrain from car ownership is widely spread among the respondents. For all of the house-owners, having at least one car is seen as an essential requirement, yet all of them express a strong will to manage with one car. Having to buy a second car is seen as something they absolutely want to avoid, for several reasons. For inner-city dwellers, car ownership is also a matter that is widely discussed. However, the question for them is whether to organise daily life with no car at all, with one car, or with different car-sharing solutions.

Vera and her husband live with three children in a five-room apartment in central Gothenburg. They have actively chosen to live without a car and based their residential preferences around proximity to many things. Family, friends and the children's schools are nearby. They can buy groceries on foot and travel to work by bicycle and public transport.

Vera: “We don't want to be dependent on a car for daily transport, like school, work, shopping and leisure activities. We built our lives around public transport and the bicycle.”

Both Vera and Gunnar describe inner-city life as convenient from the fact that it's practical to do daily tasks on foot, and that most of the time, necessary amenities are just a short walk away. Even though Gunnar and his wife own a car, he appreciates the convenience and flexibility of living in the city centre, and that they rarely have to use the car.

Gunnar: "It's very convenient not needing a car all the time. You don't have to travel seven kilometres just because you forgot to buy some cream [...] I grew up in the countryside, so I know what it's like going to the store once a week."

Vera and her family have a large city park "just around the corner" which she explains is very convenient when you have three children. Even though they rent or borrow a car a few times per year, they have largely adapted to a life without constant access to one. Still, it is expressed largely in terms of being convenient, or practical, even though she also mentions environmental reasons tangentially.

Vera: "We often walk or ride bicycles to our destination... We can take bicycles to go swimming in the sea in summer. Or bring a picnic and go to (a centrally located nature reserve) and walk around in the forest. It's very practical."

On the other hand, the urban lifestyle was not a goal in itself for Marie. She lived in the countryside 50 kilometres outside Gothenburg until 2006, when she decided it was too much work to take care of the small farm she owned while at the same time working full-time in Gothenburg and spending almost three hours per day in her car. She primarily wanted to buy a house somewhere along the commuter train lines around Gothenburg but found her current apartment through contacts and decided to buy it. She never planned to live as centrally as this but has found she's quite pleased with her current situation.

Marie: "I wanted to live where I wouldn't have to use the car every day [...] I didn't plan to live this centrally, but I'm happy now, I can walk to work and back. I don't want to be car-dependent again."

As mentioned earlier, all of the house owners also talk about the will to refrain from car ownership when considering where to move. However, for all of them, it is about trying not to put themselves in a situation where they are dependent on two cars.

Julia: “It was a matter of economy that we ended up a bit outside the city. But still, we didn't want to live too far out, because we wanted to manage with only one car.”

However, Julia explains that their municipality has a deficit in preschool spots, and therefore, they have been assigned one about four kilometres away, making them dependent on the car for leaving and picking up their child. This fact has forced them to consider buying a second car.

Julia: “Now in this pre-school situation we might have to come up with a solution for a couple of years... but not permanently, we want to manage with one car.”

The motives and considerations made when choosing a residential area are to a high degree also connected to economy. Several respondents mentioned that house prices push them away from Gothenburg, towards the suburbs and neighbouring municipalities. The strong desire for a detached house with a garden has forced them to accept longer commuting distances and fewer amenities close to the home.

David and his wife compared the cost of having to buy a second car with buying a house closer to Gothenburg (to a higher price) and realised they could motivate the higher price for the house by living close enough to David's work so that he could use public transport or a bicycle. However, today he varies between a bicycle and a moped, with which he also does the grocery shopping on the way home from work.

David: “One reason that we bought [the house], or that we could buy the house in Öjersjö instead of Floda and places like that, was that we had already decided that we were going to have one car. We weren't going to have two. And I was the one who had to give up that comfort, but that's ok, I like it when things aren't too easy.”

Additionally, avoiding unnecessary car ownership through strategic choices of residential location is also combined by many respondents, both urban and suburban, by avoiding unnecessary use of the car. This is described as both a conscious decision to reduce environmental impact, but also as an economic factor, due to high fuel prices, congestion tax and parking fees.

Alex:” We’re trying to avoid the car, in fact. As I said, I know many parents around here who leave and pick up their kids by car. But we wanted to live close to the school and the grocery store, so it’s within walking distance. We were pretty picky about those things, that’s why it took quite some time to find this place.”

To conclude, trying to minimise car ownership and car use is a widely used strategy in residential mobility. There are many reasons for this. Among the respondents in this study, it can to a large extent be categorised into both environmental and economic rationale. Possibly with a slight prominence on the economic factors.

### 5.3.3. Proximity to nature and leisure activities

As is already clear, even though proximity gives an opportunity to reduce environmental impact, it is first and foremost a question of economy and managing the activities and projects in daily life. However, it also plays a role in providing the conditions to enjoy leisure time. Hence, proximity to schools, family, friends, nature and leisure activities are all described as factors affecting residential mobility considerations.

Katarina, Julia and David live in the same residential area, 15 kilometres from central Gothenburg. The area is dominated by a lake with a surrounding forest, which all of them describe as a decisive feature that played an important role in the choice of this specific area. Katarina and her husband are retired and spend a lot of their time in their garden, in the forest, and both on and in the lake. The rather familiar statement “they have to carry us out of here” was expressed by Katarina as a clear indication of satisfaction with the residential area.

Katarina: “I love being outdoors and so does [my husband]. We have a canoe, and we go swimming in the lake. We just walk straight down in the morning, you know. Almost all year round.”

David explains how a colleague told him to take a look at the area, despite thinking it was out of their budget. It was a beautiful spring day and he fell for the area. However, he didn't realise at that stage how important the proximity to the lake and forest would be for the entire family.

David: “Now we live quite close to a lake, so we fell for this area [...] the lake is very important for the whole neighbourhood. I didn't realise that at first. It's not only for summer, but in winter... we ice-skate, make hockey rinks, go skiing on it [...] and there are hiking trails and mountain bike trails, just outside the door here. It makes it hard to move from here one day.”

Julia, on the other hand, knew more about the area than before, and that the surroundings would suit her and her husband's interest in outdoor activities. That, and the fact that her parents live in the area, gave the area somewhat of an upper hand in comparison to other parts of the city.

Julia: “It was partly that we wanted to be near the forest. We have those kinds of leisure interests, orienteering and things like that. And then my parents live here too, so there were advantages with that too. They can help with the children and so on.”

However, living close to nature is not a desire exclusive to the suburban respondents. For Lisa, who moved from one central area to another, proximity to nature and leisure interests played an important role. She lived in a part of the city with no real park or “green areas” nearby and wanted to live closer to the main city park of Gothenburg: Slottsskogen. Also, that side of the city centre lies a few kilometres closer to the sea, which was another advantage. Yet, she had reasons not to move too far away.

Lisa: “I was also coaching a football team in [the previous area]. I couldn't move too far away from that. It can't be too inconvenient to go there.”

Similar to Lisa, other respondents living in the inner city also describe how access to nature matters a lot. Although, for Marie and Roland, it was not a primary motive in choosing a residential area, more of a highly valued feature they have become used to having nearby.

Marie: “It’s nearby, I walk to Änggårdsbergen [nature reserve], it’s 15 minutes the other way [compared to the city centre], and then I can walk there for hours without seeing any asphalt.”

For Nadja however, the longing for natural features was in fact one of the primary motives when they looked for a place to move.

Nadja: “I wanted to live where I could see the stars. That was important [...] You don’t see the stars when there are streetlights. So here I am now, looking out over a field. You wouldn’t think this is Gothenburg. But there are pheasants, roe deer and even a badger here. We go skiing on the field when there is snow [...] and I can see the starry sky.”

Except for the starry sky, Nadja described environmental sustainability to be another top priority, mainly represented by public transport access. Consequently, the next main theme will focus on the one topic underpinning this study, namely how environmental sustainability is involved in residential mobility decision making.

## 5.4 Environmentally friendly, or friendly environment?

The interview respondents taking part in this study were purposely chosen from ranking environmental concerns high in the sample survey, both in life in general but also within their considerations about residential mobility. Yet, the results presented so far have implied that most respondents, first of all, seek to fulfil other, predominant, aspects. First of all, concerning their families’ and children's welfare, secondly proximity strategies for a smooth daily life, and thirdly proximity for environmental sustainability concerns.

However, this theme, which is presented through two relevant sub-themes, will present the respondent's direct views on how environmental sustainability has affected their residential mobility decision making and the strategies they apply to mitigate their environmental impact.

#### 5.4.1 What about environmental sustainability?

During the interviews, the respondents were aware that the specific question of environmental sustainability as a motive for residential mobility would be brought up. The respondents had different approaches to this, some starting early on by explaining how their latest move was affected by environmental concerns, while some didn't mention it until the direct question was asked. The interview structure can be seen in appendix 1. However, after about half the interview, the direct question was: "You gave quite a high score [in the survey] on the question about environmental friendliness as a motive to move, could you enlarge upon those thoughts a bit?"

The answers to this question were quite consistent within two categories, which both are well known from the previous themes. The first concerns proximity, specifically to refrain from car use and enable the use of slower transport modes in daily life. Both David and Nadja highlight the resistance towards having two cars as decisive factors in the choice of a residential area as well as a will to reduce or maintain low environmental impact.

David: "Well, [...] that was actually... We decided that we didn't want to own two cars. We didn't want to cause more emissions. So that was actually what decided which area we moved to."

Nadja: "It is about not being dependent on two [fossil-fuel] cars to manage daily life. It has to work with public transport and to cycle. So, we can have an environmentally friendly daily life. We wouldn't move anywhere without public transport. So, we opted out of several places due to public transport and lack of bike lanes actually."

Julia drives to work because she starts early and drops off their child at pre-school in the morning. They are considering buying a second car to better manage daily life, but still, their

motivation when looking for a suitable residential area included a proximity-based strategy. They also looked at the building's energy efficiency, which is, like many other previously mentioned factors, both an environmental and an economic issue.

Julia: "I guess it's about minimising car use or at least trying to. For work, schools, groceries... and leisure activities. That you don't have to go somewhere for what you want to do during the weekends. And then I guess it's also about the house you buy, that it's energy-efficient."

Similar to some of the apartment dwellers, proximity is what comes to mind when explaining their environmental sustainability considerations for moving. Vera (5.3.2 quote) and Maria use the advantage of living in the city centre which makes it possible to manage without much car use.

Maria: "Well, we have a car, but it's not like we use it on a daily basis. Living in the central parts comes with not having to use the car everywhere... you can do daily chores walking, cycling or with public transport."

The other category, emanating from the direct answers to the question about environmental sustainability as a motive for residential mobility, is difficult to name, but simply revolves around the fact that other factors come first. For Lisa it was indeed a matter of proximity, but not for environmental reasons.

Lisa: "It was just a parameter among others. Having Slotsskogen nearby was the most important."

Fredrik and Harald both lived in rental apartments before. They, like many before them, felt the urge to "enter the housing market", to set the base for a future housing career. Fredrik and his girlfriend paid quite an expensive rent and saw the apartment purchase as the best long-term option.

Fredrik: “[laughter] oops... well, I think I want to see myself as a person who thinks this is important, but our most important motivation was just to enter the housing market, really.”

Harald: “The purpose was to make an economic investment.”

The conscious choice of living in the city centre, with very good public transport nearby, district heating, a well-isolated apartment, and good household waste recycling facilities meant for Roland that he could focus on satisfying the other, more important criteria.

Roland: “It was good enough. Of course, it mattered but other factors were more important. And considering the environment was already checked it was no problem.”

Taken together, the direct answers to the question about environmental sustainability as a motive for residential mobility confirms the previously emerged assumption that first of all, other factors matter. Then, if there is one factor standing out as affecting residential mobility decision making, and having an implication on environmental sustainability, it is proximity.

#### 5.4.2. Mitigation strategies

Even though environmental sustainability reasons are beaten by family and proximity for convenience, many respondents are eager to explain how they mitigate their environmental impact. This is done both by strategies in daily life and through plans for future investments in hybrid cars, solar panels, and other eco-friendly technology.

Several respondents expressed how they do as best they can, in relation to reducing their environmental impact. However, among the respondents living in central apartments, it was largely a notion of already having fulfilled the “environmentally friendly” part, by choosing to live a) in an apartment (which is more space- and energy-efficient), and b) by living in the city centre, where the need for “unsustainable” transportation is lower.

Various, the suburban house owners are aware that their choice of dwelling has probably increased their environmental impact, and therefore they reveal an array of measures taken. The respondent's strategies to mitigate their environmental impact are generally relating to transportation, food, house heating, and consumption: much in line with the Swedish doctrine on individual's measures to lessen their environmental impact "Bilen, Biffen, Bostaden"<sup>2</sup>.

Nadja: "Well, we're trying our best. If you would look at our climate impact today, we have a lot higher energy consumption now because of heating the house. And that feels a bit so-so. But if you look at transport, I'd think we have a lower fuel consumption now because of the hybrid car. Although, before, we could walk or take the bus to buy groceries. We can't do that anymore. But we're working more actively now on being environmentally friendly in our everyday life. But I'm not sure we're as environmentally friendly now."

David: "Altogether, [we want to] get as close to zero emissions as possible [...] even though I am not the world's best, I think like that [...] We ordered an electric hybrid car. I'm not a first adopter of those things, but as soon as I can. I'm not prepared to pay too much more, but a bit more [...] We buy ecologically and locally produced food, I'm prepared to pay a bit more for that. And we are trying not to eat too much meat. We eat less meat than we would if it was climate neutral... so we try to keep the emissions down without restricting our lives too much."

The respondents living in apartments are in a similar way aware of both their environmental impacts and the fact that they have chosen to live in centrally located apartments that require less energy and resources.

Marie: "I do what I can in my little way. I don't travel by air much and I eat vegetarian. I recycle my waste the best I can. So, I do my best, but then you don't know how much [difference] it makes..."

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<sup>2</sup> Meaning "The car, The beef, The house". Based on a Swedish Government Official Report (2005) with this title which became a somewhat widely spread slogan for where the general public should focus its measures on reducing their environmental impact in daily life.

Henrik: “Well, I recycle my household waste... And I don’t drive a car, I travel by bus and tram. And there’s triple glazing in my building.”

Several house owners mention an awareness of the fact that they probably had a lower environmental impact when living in their previous apartments. Focus still lies around building heating methods, transportation, food and household waste management.

Nadja: “Well if we’re thinking about carbon dioxide emissions, then it was really good to live in the apartment. When you have district heating, and you share walls with the neighbours... but here we invested in a geothermal heat pump, and we use the wood-burning stove... and we have a hybrid electric car [...] and we’re looking at installing solar panels on the roof [...] and we grow some food and we try to eat less meat [...] but transports and heating is probably our biggest [environmental] impact [...] but if we were really aiming to be environmentally friendly, we would still live in the apartment.”

David: Most likely, we had a much lower climate impact when we lived in the apartment, even if there was no household waste recycling there. I mean, energy-wise it must be smarter with district heating in an apartment [...] and then in a house... you consume a lot more things... there is more space. You need to do maintenance, painting, and renovations [...] So, I believe we had a lower climate impact in total.

Alex explains how they didn’t have a car when they lived in their previous apartment, but felt they needed one when they were having a child. Nowadays they try to reduce their environmental impact by sorting their waste (a very common and highly appraised activity among Swedes) and trying not to use their car too much. The notion of a car is an absolute necessity when having a child is also expressed by several other respondents.

Alex: “It’s hard to motivate the move from our previous apartment [close to the city centre] because it’s very environmentally unfriendly to live in a house [laughs]. But we want to live in a house and still care for the environment, so we try to make the best of it.

Among the interviewed house owners, Katarina (and her husband) are possibly the ones who have taken self-sufficiency and environmental sustainability the farthest. The fact that they are retired provides them with sufficient time to do so. They have their own greenhouse, solar panels, chickens, and make their own garden soil from compost and chicken manure.

Katarina: “We have our own compost, and we grow almost all the potatoes and onions we eat. We store them for winter in the garage. We are very careful not to use the [electric hybrid] car so much. We mostly walk or catch the bus. Many others here take the car to the grocery store, and it’s only a four-kilometre walk [...] sure, there are some exceptions, but [having] two, three cars are not uncommon here. They are surprised we only have one!”

Land and house prices are soaring in Öjersjö, as it is seen as an area where you live close to nature but still have good transport opportunities by car and public transport to Gothenburg. Katarina explains how the newcomers might not have the same view on sustainability she and her husband does.

Katarina: “Sometimes you wonder why they want a house and a garden, they don’t even want a lawn, they want pavers everywhere [...] and they cut their hedges and throw it in plastic bags... no wonder there are no insects anymore. And then the apples don’t grow... all these things [in the ecosystem] must work.”

An interesting feature that emerged during the interviews is the different meanings people attach to the concept of environmental sustainability. Thoughts on how residential location affects their environmental impact are occasionally blended together with strategies to *avoid the effects* of various negative environmental issues, such as having green courtyards for cooling on hot days or living on a hill for clean air.

Fredrik: Well, I have obvious expectations, such as efficient household waste recycling facilities and so on... but what to say... environmental friendliness and moving... well I

think it's very important with green areas and such, I'm very attracted by that kind of surroundings. I wouldn't want to live next to a highway, then I would want to move.

For Lisa, who moved from one inner-city area to another, the motive was largely affected by a growing dissatisfaction with where she lived. There was too much traffic, creating noise and poor air quality, and there were no parks or nature areas nearby. When asked how environmental sustainability concerns affected where she moved, she explains:

Lisa: "Well, now I have very good public transport options [...] and also, I wanted to live somewhere where there is less air pollution... and there is less air pollution if you live on the top of a hill [...] and the more greenery there is the less pollution... So having Slottsskogen [large park and recreation area] nearby was a contributing cause."

Several respondents living in apartments mention balconies, and other opportunities to grow some herbs and vegetables, as an important feature when finding a suitable apartment. Martina is "a devoted urban grower", and chairman of a local growers' association in her part of central Gothenburg. Marie, on the other hand, used to have her own small farm outside Gothenburg and does not consider her small-scale tomato cultivation on the balcony as enough.

Marie: "Well I do miss being able to grow my own vegetables... so that could be a motive to move. But that's not really from an environmental concern."

Ultimately, being environmentally friendly is perceived by most respondents as something meaningful. Whether it is represented by an interest in growing herbs, avoiding the car, carefully sorting household waste or other mentioned endeavours, it is still often associated with other useful factors as well.

Henrik: "I believe environment [sustainability] also connects to health, and that you can save money."

The results presented in this chapter are based on a reflexive thematic analysis. In conclusion, it's increasingly clear that residential mobility decision making is a complex, multi-faceted combination of motives and considerations, as earlier research shows. The results show a strong focus on somewhat classical migration motives such as living space and family composition changes, as well as a distinct focus on proximity. The involvement of environmental sustainability in the considerations is not as clear, but largely revolves around heating and energy efficiency, transportation and household waste management, as well as a long list of short-term and long-term mitigation strategies. In the next chapter, these results will be discussed in relation to the research questions, previous research, and theoretical framework, providing further knowledge on the meanings involved in residential mobility decision making, with a specific focus on environmental sustainability.

## 6. Discussion

### 6.1 Introduction

This thesis aims to explore the intricate spectra of motivations when doing intra-urban residential mobility, with a specific focus on environmental sustainability as one possible motive that has not been studied extensively before. The results illustrate how the respondents navigate through a wide array of perspectives, how environmental sustainability plays a role in the decision making, and how it stands against other classical residential mobility motives.

In this sixth chapter, the results from chapter five will be discussed in relation to the thesis' overarching aim and research questions, previous literature, and the theoretical framework presented in earlier chapters. The discussion will be organised using the three main themes from the results chapter: family, proximity, and environmental sustainability.

### 6.2 Family first

The respondents in this study were purposely chosen from their high survey ranking on environmental sustainability as a motive to move, with the hope of obtaining interesting narration about how this specific issue affects residential mobility decision making. Despite this, there is one theme that has emerged as outstanding, when it comes both to affecting *the decision to move*, as well as considerations about *where to move*. That is the theme around family and children.

Drawing from the findings in this study, the massive attention around questions of family and children in residential mobility decision making, cannot be underrated. These results, on one hand, show a rather apparent resemblance to the previous research presented in chapter three, where matters of life course changes and biography have shown a large impact on residential mobility patterns (Karsten, 2020; Feijten et al., 2008, Kristmansson, 2011). Nevertheless, earlier research focuses a lot on the life course as a driver affecting the decision *to move*. However, this study adds insight about the vast influence of changes in family composition regarding *where to move*. The extensive addition of capability and coupling constraints (Hägerstrand, 1970) in daily

life after the birth of a child evidently amplifies the list of requirements to the search for an adequate dwelling.

The ambition to satisfy the need for living space after the birth of a child has been found in many previous studies as a highly influential cause for residential mobility, including in the Swedish context (Green, 2006). The findings in this study undeniably confirm that fact. There is no clear difference in reasoning between the group of respondents moving to suburban houses and those who move to centrally located apartments. Providing enough living space for a big family in the central parts of Gothenburg is however described by some respondents as being somewhat difficult, as the stock of large apartments is quite low, and prices per square metre are high, which applies for many cities around the globe. The strong appeal from supposedly child-friendly residential areas in the outskirts of cities, contributing to urban sprawl, suggests urban planners need to raise focus on providing suitable options for a more diverse array of household compositions in the inner cities in order to meet the challenges of increased urban sprawl. Kley (2011) also concludes that urban planners need to stay conscious of life phase migration patterns. For example, residents in the family phase with young children are often searching for child-friendly residential areas, which are often found on the outskirts of cities. And as house prices rise in many urban areas around the world, more people move to neighbouring cities or municipalities, where they are more likely to grow dependent on the car for daily transportation. Yet, the result from this thesis shows a desire also among suburban house owners to maintain a low car use, and how they actively look for residential areas with good public transportation. This will be discussed further in 6.3.

Following this confirmation, the additional evidence from the results in this study does indeed tell us more about the very strong influence of providing a child-friendly environment in the search for a new residential area. The respondent's main focus when judging the child-friendliness of areas is about safety, and the main safety concern is unquestionably about the presence of cars. Both the respondents representing suburban and urban households all consider their area of choice as being child friendly. Naturally, one cannot objectively decide what is the most child-friendly environment, yet the absence of cars in the immediate vicinity is mentioned by most respondents as the most important factor for the perception of safety. This absence of

cars is according to the respondents possible to achieve both in an urban and suburban environment. The results show how the inherent subjectivity in residential satisfaction implies the value of a mixture of residential areas with different characteristics. It could also be valuable to promote the possibility of finding attractive and child-friendly areas also in the inner cities, to contest the widespread idea of having to move to the outskirts of cities in order to find child-friendly areas. Accordingly, the findings suggest how previous migration theory such as push/pull- or neoclassical theory might no longer be able to explain the complex drivers of today's residential mobility on their own. The results rather imply an interplay between life course, lifestyle and amenity migration, where individualistic demands and socially or culturally affected reasoning have a more important role, partially within the pursuit of *quality of life*, as brought up by Torkington et al. (2015).

Other than matters of living space and safety concerns, there was one other noticeable narrative that emerged during the interviews, which was brought up in the results. In this study, it is labelled as nostalgia. Although mentioned by Halfacree & Boyle (1993) as part of the biographical approach, the influence of previous experiences and ideas on residential mobility has been given comparatively little attention in migration theory and research. Possibly due to its diverse and personal connotation, it is difficult to examine the effects on decision making. However, given the coherent focus on this matter by the respondents, as an important influence on residential mobility decisions, this might be a question worthy of further scrutiny outside the scope of this study.

The results show that the complexity involved in residential mobility is indeed clear also in the group of intra-urban movers with an interest in environmental sustainability. Concerning the second research question of the hierarchy between environmental sustainability and other residential mobility motivations, it is indeed complex, but at the same time crystalline: they do possess a desire to live an environmentally sustainable life. They do undertake a number of measures in their daily life to mitigate their environmental impact. They do express that environmental sustainability affects their planning for residential mobility. There is, however, one thing that comes first: family. Finding a child-friendly environment which also supports the

handling of complex time-geographical constraints that is a big part of family life seems to exceed most other aspects.

### 6.3 Overcoming constraints through proximity

The next clear-cut focus found through the thematic analysis was that of proximity. The findings expand our insight into residential mobility decision making in different ways. First of all, the results show how their aim to overcome time-geographical constraints (Hägerstrand, 1970) is not handled solely through short-term strategies, but also through long-term, large decisions in life, such as in residential mobility. The respondents explained how planning strategies for daily life with little friction was a key part of their search for residential areas, and that proximity is the key component to enabling those strategies. Yet, proximity is described as a highly valuable feature in many aspects, not least as economically sound, greatly convenient, and as an absolute necessity to weave together the fabric of daily life.

The time-geographical concept of activities, projects, and constraints (ibid.) is often used to comprehend the complexity of people's movements through time and space, often so in a daily life context. However, it is possible to argue the value of this interpretative baseline also in residential mobility. Defining the move itself as a time-geographical project means it is also possible to understand the influence of constraints on the decision to move, which could be a useful perspective to apply in further studies on residential mobility. However, first of all, the decision to move is used as a strategy to overcome the time-geographical constraints individuals meet in their daily activities and projects. Consisting particularly of capability and coupling constraints (ibid.), the predominant issue brought up by respondents as influencing residential decisions was the transport to the workplace. The emphasis on proximity was consistent among the respondents, although the meanings attached to the concept were diverse. The undertaking of a “residential mobility project” invariably includes careful evaluation of possible transport solutions. Finding residential areas where walking, cycling, and public transport usage is possible, helps overcome the friction induced by distance in a way the respondents described as both economically sound, environmentally friendly, and healthy.

Strategic proximity to workplaces, grocery stores, nature, and other amenities bear resemblance to both neoclassical theories and more subjective reasoning affected by social and cultural factors. The results in this study show no obvious hierarchy between the economical and lifestyle motives, but rather how it is interwoven in a chaotic fabric of considerations. Effective use of time and economic resources through proximity is just that, but also a way of setting prerequisites for the desired lifestyle. Central to the concept of lifestyle migration is the pursuit of a greater *quality of life* (Torkington et al. 2015). This pursuit is to a varying extent visible among all the respondents in this study, not least through proximity to nature and leisure activities. The results show how both urban and suburban households value nature highly, regardless of whether it is an urban park or the wilderness of Gothenburg's surrounding forests.

Living near good public transport, or being able to walk or cycle to work, grocery stores, or schools is quite rarely mentioned spontaneously by respondents as something important for environmental sustainability reasons. Rather, it is the omnipresent strive for an uncomplicated daily life that is the prevailing focus, whereas the environmentally friendly aspect is sometimes referred to as “a bonus”. In some ways, this corresponds to both amenity and lifestyle migration theory, where the pursuit of a greater quality of life and lifestyle change encourages residential mobility (Torkington et al. 2016). These findings have some interesting implications for the understanding of residential mobility and possibly also urban planning and the wider organisation of society. Respondents value proximity highly. Whether it is walking to work because it feels healthy or avoiding car use because of economical or sustainability concerns does not really matter. The outcome is the same: it leads to a lower environmental impact from transportation. Therefore, it is vital to both continue and increase efforts to plan for “dense”, or “near” cities, not only because it is more sustainable, but also because people actively seek proximity for all its positive effects on life in general. However, proximity is relative, and the respondents who have chosen to live in suburban houses do to a large extent acknowledge the fact that they are in some ways very dependent on the car.

The findings do seemingly confirm what previous research has also shown, that even among people who actively choose “housing with sustainability claims” (Berg & Vo, 2013), or specific areas with a “sustainable profile” (Zalejska-Jonsson, 2011 and Green 2006), the reduction of

environmental impact is not the main motivation. While this study shows the preeminence of family and proximity concerns, they too find other similar motives as dominant and just as has been expressed by respondents in this study: environment is seen as a bonus.

## 6.4 Does environmental sustainability matter?

Thus far, the findings have shown a substantial focus on family reasons, children's welfare, and proximity for convenience or economy. But what do the results really show about the significance of environmental sustainability in residential mobility decision making? The neoclassical theories of people making rational decisions of maximising prosperity and minimising resistance are to some extent also valid for the respondents in this study. The aim to reduce friction in daily life through resource and time efficiency seems to exceed the aim to live an environmentally sustainable life. On the other hand, the results do in fact show a will and an aim for environmental sustainability, although for most it is not strongly affecting the residential mobility considerations, but more so the actions in daily life.

The will to maximise happiness for oneself and the family is a strong motive. Zalejska-Jonsson (2011) draws a similar conclusion, where classical residential mobility motives such as changes in family composition, neighbourhood satisfaction, and apartment size were highly valued, whereas three out of four respondents stated that the fact that their building was a "low energy building" had no impact on the decision to move there. However, low energy consumption was described as an important factor, which points more towards an economic rationale than an environmental one. Hence, as previously mentioned, environment is a bonus. Additionally, Zalejska-Jonsson (2011) found a sense of pride among the respondents, for living in low energy buildings, and that has also increased their awareness of environmental sustainability issues. Similar accounts are visible also in the findings of this study, although there are some interesting differences between those who have chosen to live in centrally located apartments and those who have chosen suburban houses.

For the inner city dwellers in this study, there is a general sense that the choice they have made of living in the inner city automatically comes with a sustainable lifestyle. The energy efficiency

of living a bit more compactly and sharing walls and district heating with neighbours is brought up as one important aspect of maintaining a low environmental impact. Living in the inner city comes with good public transportation, and workplaces and amenities within reasonable distance provide the opportunity for a life without owning a car. By all means, this is within a group of respondents with a high stated interest in environmental sustainability, and it is naturally possible also for inner city dwellers to drive large cars, travel by air or perform other activities with negative environmental impact. Except for what comes “into the bargain” for the inner city dwellers, there are still various mitigation strategies practised, such as recycling the household waste, eating less meat, buying locally produced food and buying second-hand clothes and furniture.

For the respondents living in suburban houses, it is seen as more of a personal responsibility to maintain a low environmental impact. The house owners describe that they are well aware that they had a lower environmental impact while living in their previous apartments. Therefore, they stand for a larger share of the list of mitigation strategies described during the interviews. The strong desire for their own house, their own garden, and the beautiful surroundings, within reasonable commuting distance to the labour market, makes the suburbs so appealing that even the environmentally conscious respondents chosen for this study are willing to veer towards a life with a higher environmental impact. Their environmental consciousness however causes them to apply as much environmental awareness as they possibly can to the new lifestyle. An illustrative epitome of the multiplicity of residential mobility decision making, especially when it comes to “justifying” the move from a centrally located apartment, is proximity to different features. To allow for not having to own two cars, some respondents describe proximity as a *decisive* factor when choosing a residential area. Still, this decisive feature is considered *after* the decision to fulfil other, dominant, features is done, such as sufficient living space and a child-friendly environment.

Regardless of finding residential areas with proximity to amenities and public transport, so that daily life can be managed with only one car, they are still highly dependent on that one car, relative to the inner city dwellers. The respondents are aware of this, and other consequences of their choice of residential area, and that is where the mitigation strategies materialise. This fact

was mentioned not only by the house owners but also by those who actively chose a life in centrally located apartments. The choice of moving to an own house is associated with higher personal responsibility. First of all, the aim of having to own only one car is brought up. The next step is trying not to use that car too much. Then, beyond the measures taken by the inner city respondents, the suburban dwellers also to a varying degree consider installing solar panels on the roof and changing to a hybrid or fully electric car.

The respondents taking part in this study were purposely chosen from ranking environmental concerns high in the sample survey, both in life in general but also within their considerations about residential mobility. Yet, the results presented so far have implied that most respondents, first of all, seek to fulfil other, predominant, aspects. First of all, concerning their families and children's welfare, secondly proximity strategies for a smooth daily life, and thirdly proximity for environmental sustainability concerns. This is in line with the previous research brought up in chapter three, which showed other aspects than environmental sustainability as dominant, even in the cases of moving to areas with different sustainability characteristics. Nevertheless, proximity matters, and it does make a difference. Being perceived as convenient, economical and an essential part of managing daily life, planning for proximity is the perfect measure for urban planners to meet the complex environmental sustainability challenges faced in urban regions.

## 7. Conclusions

Considering the significant sustainability challenges faced by societies today, there is a crucial need to address this certain topic in every area of society. We live in an urban world where the population is continuously growing. In the parts of the world where intra-urban residential mobility is common, decision makers and urban planners need an up-to-date understanding of the drivers and motives shaping residential mobility patterns to successfully shape sustainable, resilient, and attractive urban areas for the future. For this reason, the aim of this thesis has been to portray the meanings and interpretations among urban and suburban residents regarding environmental sustainability within residential mobility decision making, as well as to understand how the environmental sustainability motive stands against other motives.

To gain meaningful insight into the specific topic of environmental sustainability, a group of fourteen respondents was identified through a purposive sample survey where they ranked environmental sustainability as an important factor when moving. The interview data was subsequently coded and analysed through reflexive thematic analysis. The most important findings from this study condense to the following statements.

Finding a satisfactory place to live is a complex interplay of drivers and motivations, and the attempt is rarely completed without compromises. However, this study shows a convincing focus on two particular issues: family and proximity. First of all: changes in family composition are without any doubt a key driver in intra-urban residential mobility. These changes usually involve the birth of the first child or the birth of an additional child. This transition often leads to a perceived need for additional living space and consequently a need to move. The findings additionally show that this search for a new home is very strongly affected by factors connected to the perceived safety and welfare of the child or children. Regarding environmental sustainability, the importance of family and children in residential mobility seems more likely to cause an increased environmental impact after the move. Not purely because of the simple fact that there is one more person in the household, but because of the will among many families to move to a single family home with a garden, which to a high degree is located in the outskirts of the cities and thus often leads to higher transport demand.

Secondly, proximity, which is the other main issue found in this study as affecting residential mobility decisions, has positive sustainability implications even though it is not being described as being the main reason behind the proximity strategy. Proximity is attractive for many reasons, such as convenience, economy, and for overcoming time-geographical constraints and thus managing daily life. Some respondents also mention the sustainability reasons behind it as being the main reason. Regardless of the reason behind the proximity strategy, it has the same effect: less transportation. This is an important conclusion because of its possible implications on urban planning, by strengthening the role of proximity. Realising that proximity is highly attractive should provide planners and policy makers with the confidence to continue and increase the planning of urban areas with proximity as one of the main focal points in mind.

Thirdly, the influence of environmental sustainability on residential mobility is relatively weak, but it is not negligible considering the very strong focus on proximity. Yet, the influence of environmental sustainability on daily life is stronger. The mitigation strategies applied for lowering the household's environmental impact are manifold. The will to refrain car ownership and car usage is very consistent among both the urban and suburban dwellers yet associated to one very important feature: public transportation. These findings highlight the difficult yet important effort for planners and decision makers to provide a diverse and attractive living environment, while still making sure it is possible to live environmentally sustainable lives within these areas. The results accentuate the need for large apartments in the inner cities that can provide sufficient living space for families, to maintain and possibly increase dwelling opportunities for families, in order to decelerate urban sprawl.

The findings in this study are similar to what has been found in previous research, although they contribute with additional awareness of the multi-faceted meanings of residential mobility and the influence of environmental sustainability in the decision making process of urban households. Even among the environmentally conscious respondents in this study, environmental sustainability is not the top priority in residential mobility. This indicates how countries' planners and policy makers have the mass of responsibility when it comes to making sure urban areas grow in a sustainable manner. Additionally, the findings imply that this task is not

impossible, since there is evident coherence between what is seen as attractive areas and environmentally sustainable residential areas, primarily through proximity to amenities and nature as well as sustainable transport solutions for daily commuting.

The level of detail in a qualitative interview study can provide a more profound insight into the motives and considerations of urban households. However, additional quantitative research could be used to strengthen conclusions by providing supplementary statistical evidence to the topic, possibly by hypotheses testing on certain assumptions in this thesis. The study is based on data collected from respondents in Gothenburg. In order to safely apply the findings in this study to other cities, further studies are needed, proposedly on different populace in different regions.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Sample survey (in Swedish)

### Bidra till kunskap om flyttmotiv

Hej.

Jag heter Felix Stööp Lindgren och jag skriver just nu min masteruppsats i geografi vid Göteborgs universitet. Studien handlar om vilka faktorer som påverkar människors flyttmotiv och kommer att utgå från en jämförelse mellan olika områden i Göteborgsområdet.

Enkäten består av 12 frågor och tar cirka tre minuter att besvara. Du som medverkar kommer givetvis att vara anonym.

Tack för din medverkan!

/Felix Stööp Lindgren, student vid Göteborgs universitet

1) Hur länge har du bott i din nuvarande bostad?

- a) Mindre än 1 år
- b) 1-3 år
- c) 3-7 år
- d) Mer än 7 år

2. När du/ni valde nuvarande bostad, vad var avgörande för valet (förutom kostnaden)? Kryssa i de viktigaste anledningarna.

- a. Bostaden ligger inom ett lämpligt avstånd till min/min partners arbetsplats/studier
- b. Bostaden ligger nära vänner/familj
- c. Bostaden ligger nära service och aktiviteter som jag/vi besöker till vardags (t.ex. barns skola, köpcentrum, park/natur, hav/sjö)
- d. Bostaden har ett bra utbud av kollektivtrafik och/eller bra cykelvägar
- e. Bostaden har bra tillgänglighet med bil
- f. Ville byta boendemiljö
- g. Flyttade ihop/isär

3. I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde?

1      2      3      4      5

4. Vilken typ av bostadsområde bor du i idag?
- a. Innerstad
  - b. Villaförort
  - c. Annat
5. Från var skedde din senaste flytt?
- a. Inom Göteborgsområdet
  - b. Från en annan mindre stad
  - c. Från en annan större stad
  - d. Från landsbygd/glesbygd
  - e. Från ett annat land
  - f. Annat
6. Tror du att du/ni kommer att flytta inom de kommande 2 åren? (Ange endast ett alternativ.)
- a. Ja, jag har aktiva planer på att flytta
  - b. Ja, jag har lösa funderingar på att flytta
  - c. Nej, jag/vi planerar att bo kvar
  - d. Har inte tänkt på frågan
  - e. Annat
7. Hur transporterar du dig oftast i vardagen?
- a. Med bil
  - b. Med kollektivtrafik
  - c. Med cykel eller till fots
  - d. Kombinerar bil och kollektivtrafik
  - e. Kombinerar gång/cykel och kollektivtrafik
  - f. Annat

Nu följer 4 påståenden, där du svarar på en skala mellan 1-5. 1 står för "stämmer inte alls" och 5 står för "stämmer mycket väl"

8. Jag trivs i mitt nuvarande bostadsområde
- 1      2      3      4      5
9. De aktiviteter och den service jag behöver i min vardag finns inom gång- eller cykelavstånd
- 1      2      3      4      5
10. Det är viktigt att bo nära naturen
- 1      2      3      4      5

11. Jag försöker leva att leva miljövänligt  
1      2      3      4      5

12. Vilket är ditt kön?

- a. Kvinna
- b. Man
- c. Annat
- d. Vill inte uppge

13. Vilken är din huvudsakliga sysselsättning?

- a. Arbete
- b. Studier
- c. Arbetssökande
- d. Pensionär
- e. Annat

14. Hur ser din boendesituation ut?

- a. Ensamstående utan barn i hushållet
- b. Ensamstående med barn i hushållet
- c. Sammanboende utan barn i hushållet
- d. Sammanboende med barn i hushållet

15. Kan du tänka dig att ställa upp i den fortsatta studien om flyttmotiv? Det innebär en intervju på 30-50 minuter. Intervjun kan ske fysiskt eller digitalt och jag garanterar din anonymitet. Om du kan tänka dig att ställa upp, lämna mejladress eller telefonnummer nedan. Din medverkan är värdefull!

## Appendix 2: Interview guide (in Swedish)

**Introducera intervjun** - bakgrund till studien, inspelning och anonymitet.

Syftet med intervjun är att prata om flyttmotiv generellt och miljövänlighet som flyttmotiv mer specifikt. Vi börjar med att prata om lite bakgrund kring dig och ditt hushåll. Sedan går vi in lite mer på öppna frågor kring flyttmotiv och miljövänlighet, där jag också kommer att ställa en del följdfrågor. Om vi börjar med att du får berätta lite om dig själv...

### **Bakgrundsfrågor**

- Berätta lite om dig själv.
  - Yrke/sysselsättning
    - Respondentens och ev. partners.
    - Avstånd till arbetsplatsen
    - Flexibelt schema/distansarbete?
  - Familjekonstellation
    - Barn? Skola/förskola?
  - Typ av bostad
  - Transportmedel (gång, cykel, kollektivtrafik, bil m.m.)
  - Fritidshus

### **Den senaste flytten**

- Var bodde du innan din senaste flytt?
- Hur länge bodde du där?
- När flyttade du till din nuvarande bostad?

### **Motiv till flytten**

- Berätta hur tankarna gick när du började fundera på att flytta?
  - Hur menar du? Kan du ge exempel?
- Vad var den viktigaste orsaken till att du flyttade?
  - Andra orsaker? (Kompletterande motiv)
- Vad var den viktigaste orsaken till att du flyttade just hit?
  - Andra orsaker? (Kompletterande motiv)
- Berätta vad du tyckte var viktigt när ni flyttade hit (med avseende på själva valet av bostadsområde).
- Du har valt att bo centralt, vad var det som ledde fram till det?
- Du har valt att bo en bit utanför stan, vad var det som ledde fram till det?

### **Miljövänlighet som flyttmotiv**

- Berätta vad tänker du på när du hör *miljövänlig*?
- Du svarade (4:a eller 5:a) på fråga 3 om miljövänlighet som flyttmotiv, kan du utveckla lite hur du tänker kring detta?
  - Vad menar du konkret?
  - Hur viktigt var det i förhållande till de andra motiven du pratat om?
  - Ser du några konflikter mellan miljövänligheten och andra motiv som var viktiga för dig?
- Du svarade (4:a eller 5:a) på fråga 11 om att försöka leva miljövänligt: kan du utveckla lite kring hur du försöker leva miljövänligt?
- Utifrån möjligheten att leva miljövänligt, hur ser du idag på den plats du bodde på innan flytten?
  - Hur skiljer sig ditt liv idag, efter flytten (utifrån denna aspekt)?
- Kan det komma att göra det vid en framtida flytt?

- Beskriv/motivera

### **Utfallet**

- Efter att ha bott här ett tag, blev det som du hade tänkt (med avseende på att leva miljövänligt)
  - Utveckla
- Hur möjliggör/hindrar ditt bostadsområde dig att leva miljövänligt?
- Tycker du att ditt bostadsområde är planerat så att det går att leva miljövänligt?
  - På vilka sätt? Vad hade du velat ha annorlunda?

### **Framtiden**

- Hur ser du på framtiden, hur länge kommer du bo kvar i området?
- Du har svarat X på frågan om du funderar på att flytta snart, vad är det ni kommer söka efter i det nya området?
  - Realistiska/orealistiska önskningar? Motivkonflikter?
- Du har svarat X på frågan om du funderar på att flytta snart, vad kommer miljövänlighet att spela för roll då?
  - Motivkonflikter?
- Om du idag bor i ett tätbebyggt urbant område, skulle du kunna tänka dig att bo i ett glesare förortsområde?
  - Om ja/nej, varför?
- Om du idag bor i ett glest förortsområde, skulle du kunna tänka dig att bo i ett tätbebyggt urbant område?
  - Om ja/nej, varför?

### **Fritidshus / second home**

- Har du tillgång till ett fritidshus? (Egen ägo / släktens ägo / annat)

- Om ja:
  - Påverkades (motiven inför) flytten till ditt nuvarande permanentboende av din tillgång till fritidshuset?
  - Var ligger fritidshuset?
    - Hur tar du dig dit?
  - Hur länge har du haft tillgång till fritidshuset?
  - Berätta hur mycket och när på året du använder fritidshuset?
  - Vad skulle du säga att fritidsboendet främst bidrar med?
    - (natur, enkelhet, miljöombyte etcetera?)
  
- Om nej:
  - Påverkades (motiven inför) flytten till ditt nuvarande permanentboende av detta?

### **Avslut**

- Är det något ytterligare du tänker på som du vill lägga till?

## Appendix 3: Presentation of respondents

### **Person 1 Fredrik**

Kön: Man  
Ålder: 27  
Utbildning: Högskola och trafikpilotutbildning  
Jobb: Spårvagnsförare  
Intervjuplats: Zoom  
Datum: 6/12 2021 – Ca: 10.00 - 10:50  
Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

### **Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 4  
Försöker leva miljövänligt: 4  
Trivs: 5  
Naturnära viktigt: 5  
Typ av bostadsområde: Innerstad  
Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? Mindre än 1 år.  
Hur transporterar du dig? Kombinerar gång/cykel och kollektivtrafik  
Boendesituation: Sammanboende utan barn

### **English summary:**

Fredrik is 27 years old and an educated commercial airline pilot. He currently works as a tram driver in Gothenburg. He lives with his girlfriend and their dog in a two-room apartment in central Gothenburg. Fredrik cycles to work for 10 to 20 minutes and his girlfriend rides the tram and train to work, which takes 40 to 60 minutes. They do not own a car nor hold membership in any car sharing company.

### **Person 2 Nadja**

Kön: Kvinna  
Ålder: 46  
Utbildning: Högskola  
Jobb: Ingenjör  
Intervjuplats: Zoom  
Datum: 7/12 2021 – Ca: 11.00 - 11:50  
Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

### **Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 5  
Försöker leva miljövänligt: 5  
Trivs: 5  
Naturnära viktigt: 5

Typ av bostadsområde: Villaförort  
Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? 1–3 år  
Hur transporterar du dig? Med cykel eller till fots  
Boendesituation: Sammanboende med barn

**English summary:**

Nadja is 46 years old and works as an engineer, as does her husband. They live in a detached house about 16 kilometres outside Gothenburg, in a semi-rural area with increasing suburban development. The couple has two children in primary school. Nadja's work lies about 10 kilometres away and she travels there by bike or bus. Her husband travels about 7 kilometres to his work, using their electric hybrid car.

**Person 3 Gunnar**

Kön: Man  
Ålder: 68  
Utbildning: Högskola  
Jobb: Pensionär och HR-chef  
Intervjuplats: Zoom  
Datum: 8/12 2021 – Ca: 10.00 - 10:35  
Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

**Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 4  
Försöker leva miljövänligt: 5  
Trivs: 5  
Naturnära viktigt: 2  
Typ av bostadsområde: Innerstad  
Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? Mer än 7 år  
Hur transporterar du dig? Kombinerar gång/cykel och kollektivtrafik  
Boendesituation: Sammanboende utan barn

**English summary:**

Gunnar is 68 years old and works part-time as a human resources manager. Gunnar lives with his wife in a six-room apartment in central Gothenburg. He works partly from home but some days he drives the car to a neighbouring city about 60 kilometres away. Together they have three grown-up children who used to live in the apartment but have moved out.

**Person 4 Alex**

Kön: Man  
Ålder: 32  
Utbildning: Högskola  
Jobb: Testingenjör  
Intervjuplats: Zoom

Datum: 10/12 2021 – Ca: 10.00 - 10:45

Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

**Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 3

Försöker leva miljövänligt: 5

Trivs: 5

Naturnära viktigt: 5

Typ av bostadsområde: Villaområde

Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? 1–3 år

Hur transporterar du dig? Med bil

Boendesituation: Sammanboende med barn

**English summary:**

Alex is 32 years old and works as an engineer. He lives with his wife and two small children in a semi-detached house about 16 kilometres outside Gothenburg. Alex has a 15-minute drive to work and his wife travels by public transportation for about 40 minutes to central Gothenburg, where she works at a bank.

**Person 5 Katarina**

Kön: Kvinna

Ålder: 74

Utbildning: Gymnasium

Jobb: Pensionär

Intervjuplats: Café i Allums köpcenter (inga andra gäster)

Datum: 13/12 2021 – Ca: 10.00 - 10:45

Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

**Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 5

Försöker leva miljövänligt: 5

Trivs: 5

Naturnära viktigt: 5

Typ av bostadsområde: Villaområde

Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? Mer än 7 år

Hur transporterar du dig? Kombinerar gång/cykel med kollektivtrafik

Boendesituation: Sammanboende utan barn

**English summary:**

Katarina is 74 years old and lives with her husband in a detached house about 15 kilometres outside Gothenburg. They are both retired and have three grown-up children. Katarina used to work at a preschool and her husband as a sheet metal worker. The couple owns an electric hybrid car but mostly walk, cycle or travel by bus.

**Person 6 David**

Kön: Man

Ålder: 47

Utbildning: Högskola

Jobb: Ekonom

Intervjuplats: Zoom

Datum: 14/12 2021 – Ca: 10.00 - 10:45

Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

**Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 4

Försöker leva miljövänligt: 4

Trivs: 5

Naturnära viktigt: 4

Typ av bostadsområde: Villaområde

Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? Mer än 7 år

Hur transporterar du dig? Kombinerar gång/cykel med kollektivtrafik

Boendesituation: Sammanboende med barn

**English summary:**

David is 47 years old and lives with his wife and three children, aged 11, 16 and 18, in a detached house about 15 kilometres outside Gothenburg. David works at a large manufacturing company 11 kilometres away and travels there mostly by moped, and sometimes by bicycle. His wife uses the car to her workplace about 20 kilometres away.

**Person 7 Maria**

Kön: Kvinna

Ålder: 27

Utbildning: Högskola

Jobb: Kommunikatör

Intervjuplats: Zoom

Datum: 15/12 2021 – Ca: 11.00 - 11:35

Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

**Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 4

Försöker leva miljövänligt: 5

Trivs: 5

Naturnära viktigt: 5

Typ av bostadsområde: Innerstad

Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? Mer än 7 år

Hur transporterar du dig? Kombinerar gång/cykel med kollektivtrafik

Boendesituation: Sammanboende med barn

**English summary:**

Maria is 27 years old and lives with her boyfriend in a two-room apartment in central Gothenburg. Maria works as a communications strategist. She has a 15-minute walk and a short ferry ride to work. Her boyfriend's workplace lies 60 kilometres away in a neighbouring municipality and he alternates between car, public transport, and working from home.

**Person 8 Roland**

Kön: Man

Ålder: 71

Utbildning: Högskola

Jobb: Civilingenjör, skeppsbyggnad

Intervjuplats: Zoom

Datum: 20/12 2021 – Ca: 10.00 - 10:45

Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

**Enkätsvar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 4

Försöker leva miljövänligt: 5

Trivs: 4

Naturnära viktigt: 4

Typ av bostadsområde: Innerstad

Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? Mer än 7 år

Hur transporterar du dig? Gång och kollektivtrafik, inte cykel

Boendesituation: Sammanboende utan barn

**English summary:**

Roland is 71 years old and lives with his wife in a five-room apartment in central Gothenburg. They have one grown-up child who moved out. The couple has a holiday cottage 40 kilometres outside Gothenburg which they use all year round, but mostly during summer. Roland is an engineer and currently works from home as a consultant in shipbuilding. Roland primarily travels by bus although they own a car.

**Person 9 Marie**

Kön: Kvinna

Ålder: 58

Utbildning: Högskola

Jobb: Arbetsmiljöingenjör

Intervjuplats: Zoom

Datum: 20/12 2021 – Ca: 19.00 - 19:45

Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

**Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 5

Försöker leva miljövänligt: 5

Trivs: 5

Naturnära viktigt: 5

Typ av bostadsområde: Innerstad

Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? Mer än 7 år

Hur transporterar du dig? Gång och cykel

Boendesituation: Ensamstående utan barn

**English summary:**

Marie is 58 years old and lives in an apartment in central Gothenburg by herself but has a partner who lives in another part of Gothenburg. She works as a work environment engineer in an office three kilometres away and primarily walks there. She does not own a car but can borrow from members of her family if she needs one.

**Person 10 Lisa**

Kön: Kvinna

Ålder: 49

Utbildning: Högskola

Jobb: Regional samordnare

Intervjuplats: Zoom

Datum: 22/12 2021 – Ca: 19.00 - 19:45

Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

**Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 5

Försöker leva miljövänligt: 4

Trivs: 2

Naturnära viktigt: 5

Typ av bostadsområde: Innerstad

Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? Mer än 7 år

Hur transporterar du dig? Kollektivtrafik

Boendesituation: Ensamstående med barn

**English summary:**

Lisa is 49 years old and lives with her 8-year-old son in a two-room apartment in central Gothenburg. She works as a coordinator at the regional council which is located three kilometres away. She has always travelled there by bus or tram, but since the Corona pandemic, she has started cycling to work. Lisa does not own a car but rents one every second or third week to run errands or take her son to different activities. She uses different companies and applications for car-sharing and tries to choose environmentally friendly cars.

**Person 11 Julia**

Kön: Kvinna

Ålder: 34

Utbildning: Högskola

Jobb: Entreprenadingenjör

Intervjuplats: Zoom

Datum: 11/1 2022 – Ca: 09.30 - 10:15

Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

**Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 5

Försöker leva miljövänligt: 4

Trivs: 4

Naturnära viktigt: 5

Typ av bostadsområde: Villaområde

Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? Mindre än 1 år

Hur transporterar du dig? Med bil

Boendesituation: Sammanboende med barn i hushållet

**English summary:**

Julia is 34 years old and lives with her partner and 2-year-old child in a detached house about 15 kilometres outside Gothenburg. She studied logistics and economy and currently works at a large construction company. The location of her workplace can change from year to year, depending on where the projects are situated. Her partner works in central Gothenburg and travels by bicycle or bus while Julia uses the car.

**Person 12 Vera**

Kön: Kvinna

Ålder: 43

Utbildning: Universitet

Jobb: Gruppledare, läkemedelsforskning

Intervjuplats: Zoom

Datum: 11/1 2022 – Ca: 11.00 - 11:45

Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

**Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 4

Försöker leva miljövänligt: 5

Trivs: 5

Naturnära viktigt: 4

Typ av bostadsområde: Innerstad

Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? 3–7 år

Hur transporterar du dig? Med cykel eller till fots  
Boendesituation: Sammanboende med barn i hushållet

**English summary:**

Vera is 43 years old and lives in a five-room apartment in central Gothenburg with her partner and their three kids, aged 8, 13 and 14. She works as a research group leader at a pharmaceutical company and cycles 9 kilometres to her workplace. Her partner is a physician at a hospital in a neighbouring municipality, some 50 kilometres away. He travels by bicycle and commuter train. They do not own a car nor hold membership in any car sharing company.

**Person 13 Martina**

Kön: Kvinna

Ålder: 54

Utbildning: University

Jobb: Project leader, architecture and culture

Intervjuplats: Zoom

Datum: 18/1 2022 – Ca: 16.00 - 16:45

Inspelning: Diktafon (smarttelefon)

**Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 5

Försöker leva miljövänligt: 5

Trivs: 5

Naturnära viktigt: 3

Typ av bostadsområde: Innerstad

Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? Mer än 7 år

Hur transporterar du dig? Kombinerar gång/cykel

Boendesituation: Sammanboende med barn i hushållet

**English summary:**

Martina is 54 years old and lives with her partner and 15-year-old child in a three-room apartment in central Gothenburg. She is an architect and owns a company together with her partner that facilitates projects and exhibitions within architecture, design, arts and similar. They have an office 2 kilometres away and travel mostly by public transportation, walking or cycling. They do not own a car nor hold membership in any car sharing company.

**Person 14 Harald**

Kön: Man

Ålder: 31

Utbildning: Högskola

Jobb: Webbutvecklare

Intervjuplats: Telefon

Datum: 20/1 2022 – Ca: 17.00 - 17:40

Inspelning: Diktafon (Laptop voice-recorder)

**Enkät svar:**

I vilken utsträckning spelade möjligheten att leva miljövänligt in i valet av bostad/bostadsområde? 3

Försöker leva miljövänligt: 5

Trivs: 4

Naturnära viktigt: 3

Typ av bostadsområde: Innerstad

Hur länge har du bott i nuvarande bostad? 1–3 år

Hur transporterar du dig? Kollektivtrafik

Boendesituation: Ensamstående utan barn i hushållet

**English summary:**

Harald is 31 years old and lives by himself in a two-room apartment in central Gothenburg. He works with IT development at an office about 2,5 kilometres away and travels mostly by bus and on foot. He does not own a car nor holds membership in any car sharing company.