With Utopia in sight:

Strategists of social development at the local level

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Introductory dissertation chapter
1. Introduction

In autumn of 2009, I did an internship for a consultancy agency in Stockholm, Sweden. My main task was working with municipal auditing, concerning the municipalities’ implementation of the UN convention of the rights of the child. The audit group I worked with conducted interviews with all public managers in the different sectors of the municipalities, in order to investigate whether or not the rights of children had been implemented thoroughly in the organization. One manager sighed a bit when we asked the question about the rights of children, and said:

Well, we try to work actively with diversity, the environment, gender equality, public health and rights of children. But we also have a business to run.

(Public manager, somewhere in the Swedish municipal administration, 2009)

This utterance captured well the problem that many of the respondents from the audit felt. It’s a humble quote, made from a manager’s slight tiredness of constant lack of time and resources. But in its simplicity, it captures an important tendency within the Swedish public administration, namely, the vertical organization that meets the expectations of integrated sustainability values as a steering mechanism for a better and more equal outcome. It is this tendency, and the actors associated with it, that is the focus of this dissertation.

The origin of the notion of sustainability and equity can be traced back to the enlightenment. With the concept of sustainability, brought forward by the UN in the 1980s, the environmental, social and economic factors were put together as units of one whole, and this concept became ideationally paradigmatic for both public and private sector round the globe, as the main strategy to form an sustainable and equal society. On the policy-level, and on the political-philosophical level, much has been written about this phenomenon. There is also quite much research covering the organization of the “wicked” problems that comes out of rise of it. But in the study of implementation and steering of sustainability and equality work in the public administration, the actor-level has been pretty much neglected. Who are the people performing the work of sustainability and equity, and what do they actually do? Another level of analysis that hasn’t been put under much scrutiny, concerning the implementation of sustainability and equity phenomenon, is the local level; the level of steering that is furthest away from the global arena where the macro-phenomenon is defined. This is indeed a relevant aspect, what happens when the globally defined normative strategies reach the local level. Swedish case provides us with an interesting example to examine both these aspects, the actor and the local, since the Swedish local public administration as method of implementation has chosen to assign the task of sustainability and equity to specific public bureaucrats, special “sustainability officers”, or
“value strategists”. In practise their titles may be gender equality strategists, public health strategists, democracy strategists, development strategists, environment strategists, and so forth, are all examples of this kind of public bureaucrats. Their job is to work horizontally, that is, to monitor and promote the sustainability aspects across the sectors in the local administration where they are employed. This horizontal or cross-sectorial mainstreaming approach, stems from the national level, and is an outspoken strategy from the Swedish government. What characterizes the sustainability work is that it’s defined as both value-driven, and horizontal. Values create political complexity because they are defined by norms that may not be the same for all individuals. The fact that these values are defined as horizontal creates organizational complexity. The public organisation where these sustainability and equity values should be implemented is vertically organised, and the idea of steering with horizontal values creates breaking points between the vertical and horizontal steering and organisation. In this breaking point, we find the “sustainability officers”. During the recent years, there has been an increasing amount of horizontal value-steering towards the public administration in Sweden (Statskontoret 2006:13, Regeringsuppdrag Ju/2002/83/72/F 2003-09-15). What is being referred to is the expanding group of policies that are supposed to be a part of all sectors of the public administration.

This is the opposite to the organization of the modern administration, which is divided in sectors to reach the most expertise in each field. Sectorization is an old organizational phenomenon, and is usually done according to function, not to purpose (Simon 1946). What has caused the increased horizontal steering towards the public administration is a recognition that aspects that are difficult to measure and to fit within on sector get lost in the sectorized organization. Therefore, one solution is to make it a policy that all parts of the organization should take their responsibility for these aspects. That means that one sector should, just as is shown by the quote in the beginning, not only work with their own field of expertise, let it be education, social work or road-building, but also with perspectives such as gender equality, public health, human rights, rights of children, or environment. These perspectives are in practice called “cross-sector demands” or cross-sector perspectives” (Statskontoret 2006:13). One steering solution chosen at the local level, is to employ specific public bureaucrats with responsibility for one or many of these cross-sector perspectives. And these servants are the main objects of this study. The purpose of the study is:

*contributing to an increased understanding of the extensive global macro-phenomenon of value-driven sustainability paradigm, by studying the actors performing value-driven sustainability work at the local micro-level.*
2. The setting, the scene and the actors - the search for Utopia in a global world

A global tendency
We have, briefly from time after World War II, seen a rising concern of where the world is heading. I started this paper with a short experimental fictional story of a utopic society, in order to play with the idea. The value-strategists are fruits of this paradigm, and it constitutes the setting of their work. Their positions are used as a steering mechanism for promoting the values of the paradigm, and to shape society according to it. How they actually do this, how it shapes their role as public bureaucrats, and finally, how their positions and their work can be seen as an expression of steering of this paradigm, are the questions under scrutiny in this study. But in order to investigate this, it's necessary with a more systematic understanding of how the paradigm arose and how it's shaped.

In 2009, Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett published the book *The Spirit Level: Why more equal societies almost always do better* (Wilkinson & Pickett 2009). What was striking with the study was that it was one of the first, with very clear scientifically generated arguments for equity. The argument in the book was simple: there is a correlation between income inequality and health. And in countries where the income inequality is lower, people are healthier and happier. The researchers constructed this argument by using extensive statistics. The book generated various responses, both from academia and politicians. Some considered this book to be the best and most revealing study for decades; others questioned the statistical methods and the reliability. The book was obviously by many perceived as a provocation, since the ideas of equity relate directly to varying political ideas and varying welfare models. That states have differing views on equity, and that the view of the role of the state in creating equality differs, is fundamental in analysis of welfare states (e.g. Esping-Andersen 1990). But since the mid-1990s, a new paradigm has started to emerge in the welfare states of Europe, which could be called the social investment paradigm (Morel, et al. 2009, Morel et al. 2012). Very broadly, this paradigm is defined by a focus on increased social cohesion and inclusion, minimizing of intra-generational poverty, and preparation for a changed labor market and life-long learning for all individuals (Jensen 2009). The social investment paradigm is a new concept aiming at capturing the politics of the sustainable state. But even though the concept in itself is new, it builds on older ideas. The most commonly known concept both for grasping an existing normative movement, and to prescribe it, is sustainability. It has become the catchword of all sectors, public and private since briefly the mid-1990s. The concept was launched in 1987, by the World Commission on Environment and Development, led by the former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtlandt (The
Brundlandt Report), and the visionary definition of it is very frequently used: “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (A/42/427. Our Common Future. Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development). The concept of sustainability consists of three pillars, ecological, economic and social sustainability, but the term has mostly been used to frame the environmental work. On reason for this, is that the social aspect of sustainability contains a lot of ambivalence regarding the definition and content, and there are many coexisting notions that are used to describe aspects of social sustainability (Murphy 2012, Littig & Griessler 2005). Ecological sustainability has become more institutionalized as founding principle, and the definition of it has stepwise, turned into more and more of an issue for experts, and less dependent on political framings. That is not to say that there is unity regarding how it should be framed, but there is more unity in this than in the social aspect of sustainability.

One such concept that is used parallel to social sustainability is social equity. It is clearly reflecting the definition of social sustainability, since it’s focusing on social justice, fairness in distribution, and equality of conditions (Dempsey et al 2009). Social equity is the starting point for Wilkinson & Picketts study. On a more general level, the human rights concept can be used in order to focus on the ethical side of equity, and to capture the normative idea the social sustainability. Another concept, that is commonly used to describe the work with a sustainable and equal society is Corporate Social Responsibility. It emerged in the 1960s, to describe the role of business in society, and today, it’s commonly used by companies when they are describing how they take responsibility for a sustainable society, both in terms of environment and social inclusion. The concept CSR is commonly used also by the public companies in Sweden, eg. housing and electricity companies.

All these concepts have both multi-level and cross-sector characteristics: they relates to the global arena, the nation states and the regional and local level, the private, public and non-profit sectors, and all the policy fields within these levels. It’s difficult to find one concept that in itself captures the full paradigm of a sustainable and equal society. The first reason for this, which has been already pointed out, is that this paradigm is a complex field. Another reason is, that the coexistence of notions in itself captures that we are in fact speaking of one paradigm, although with various framing and focal points. To frame the paradigm of sustainability and equity, and in particular the social sustainability is, as Murphy points out (Murphy 2012), both a very complex and ambivalent matter, because of the coexistence of definitions, and at the same time, for the same reason, not a very problematic endeavor. This study focuses on the social aspect of the sustainability concept, for three reasons: 1) the history and development of it is closely intertwined with the history of the welfare state and citizenship, and if the overall goal is to study the current development of the welfare state, this focus is the most fruitful. 2) the social
aspects of this paradigm is, as was mentioned before, more loaded with complexity, ambivalence, normativity and politization, and it is thus a fruitful object for investigating how the global paradigm come into expression in the local level. 3) The people who are performing the work with different social aspects have never been studied as one group before. Since the social aspect is as vague as it is, with overlapping definitions both in theory and practice, there is reason to frame a study with focus on their work specifically. This vagueness, normativity and politization that characterize this part of the paradigm, is why the common term value-strategists is used to describe the group of strategists as a whole. The purpose of this study is to study the actors that are performing the work related to the social aspects of the paradigm of sustainability and equality, and since their positions start in various definitions, sometimes several at the same time, and aren’t always consistent with the theoretical distinctions, the approach taken to frame the study is pragmatic. The main argument is that the positions of the various value strategists in the Swedish municipalities have the same normative a normative ground, even though their work focus varies, and that there therefore is a reason for studying them as one group. The purpose is not to construct another comprehensive concept to add to the already existing. Instead, these actors will be studied as a practical expression of the global paradigm of social sustainability and equity, and the argument is that we by understanding their role also will be able to better understand how this newer paradigm relates to and coexist with older public administration paradigms. The study thus argues that this is a part of the contemporary normative development of the welfare state. To do so require an understanding of how the paradigm emerged and is shaped, and the purpose of going through various concepts and definitions is to give an overview of the setting in which the work takes place, and different ways to theoretically describe this setting. This is necessary, because, as Hall states, a new paradigm changes “not only the goals of policy and the kind of instruments that can be used to address them, but also the very nature of the problems they are meant to be addressing” (Hall 1993:279). This chapter is focusing on the setting of the study, the global framing of the new paradigm, and then continues to give an overview of the scene picked to shed light on the realization of this, the Swedish case and the Swedish local government. Finally, a first presentation of the actors that performs the work of the paradigm of social sustainability and equity in Swedish local government are given a first presentation.

2.1 The setting- a paradigm of sustainability and equality

The idea of equality of man goes back to the enlightenment, and the social element of equality has been stressed briefly since the early 20th century (XXX). One of the most commonly known definitions is the one by Marshall in 1950:
By the social element I mean the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society. (Marshall 1950)

What Marshall is referring to is the social citizenship, as one of three elements of citizenship. Marshall starts with the civil citizenship, which means rights necessary for individual freedom. In this, liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property, the right to justice, and the right to conclude contracts are included. Political citizenship means the right to get elected and to execute political power. And the social citizenship, as the quote points out, is capturing the right to economic welfare, security and the possibility to live a civilized life in the society. Marshall also discusses the emergence of these three citizenships as a part of democratic development from the beginning of the 19th to the middle of the 20th century, with the social citizenship as the foundation of the modern welfare state (Marshall 1950). Since the latter half of the 20th century, the implementation of the social citizenship has been penetrating politics as a normative global norm, although not always explicit. With the recognition of social sustainability, in relation to ecological and financial (Our common future, WCED 1987), the social citizenship was clearer acknowledged as a formal part of a necessary global enterprise. And since the 1990s, the idea of social citizenship, in terms of equality, inclusion and social investment has grown as a defining normative policy paradigm. The definition of it varies, and so does the framing of it. In order to frame this paradigm, to understand the setting of the work with social sustainability and equality, four concepts will be described. Social investment, sustainability, corporate social sustainability and human rights are concepts that all relate to the development of the welfare state, and that are useful in order to grasp the overall paradigm that frames and are framed by the work of the value strategists.

One paradigm?
The reason for elaborating of the paradigmatic concepts of social investment, sustainability, CSR, and human rights is that the evolution of these concepts is necessary to understand the fundamental setting in which the object of the study, the value strategists, are operating. The idea that it might be good to have strategists assigned the task of working strategically with varying sustainability and equity perspectives didn’t arose out of the blue, rather, it’s a part of an overall paradigm development. This study argues that in order to study the actors working as strategists for social perspectives, we have to distinguish their works’ the connection to this overall paradigm. This is why it’s also necessary to go through the paradigmatic evolution, and when doing so, the concepts of social investment, sustainability, CSR, and human rights are appropriate focal points, in that they are concepts that all balance between theory and practice,
and they all hold a clear normative position. The following table summarizes the evolution of the concepts, and the contemporary societal development.

Table 1. The development of the paradigm of social investment, sustainability, CSR and human rights.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Definition of the eras</th>
<th>Overall paradigm</th>
<th>Development of concepts</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Goal: social protection</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Equality vision: “equality of condition and equal opportunities” (Jensen 2009:36)</td>
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<td>Time horizon: “Present, so as to avoid the past” (Jensen 2009:39)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Preferred forms of governance: “Weberian hierarchical/bureaucratic” (Jensen 2009:39)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
<td>Recession</td>
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<td>1960s: CSR becomes a used term for describing, prescribing and discussing the role of business in society</td>
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<td>1980s</td>
<td></td>
<td>Neo-liberalism</td>
<td><strong>Sustainability</strong> as foundation for politics, with three dimensions taken into consideration: economical, environmental and social sustainability</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Goal: Avoid policy instruments that foster dependency</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>“Equality vision: in-equality is inherent in markets and necessary to motivate economic actors”(Jensen 2009:36)</td>
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<td>Time horizon: “Present, so as not to hobble the future” (Jensen 2009:39)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Preferred form of governance “Corporate models plus privatization” (Jensen 2009:39)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>The Asian Crisis</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The Social Investment paradigm</strong> starts to</td>
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The World Bank, OECD, UNICEF and the EU: Social Cohesion as key word

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Position created in 1993. Responsible for promote and protect human rights through dialogue and advice to the member states, and through coordinating human-rights related activities within the UN.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>2000s</th>
<th>Crisis, revitalization and visions</th>
<th>Social investment paradigm?</th>
<th>Expansion of the human rights paradigm in the UN and the EU:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial crisis</td>
<td>Goal: “invest in prevention and human and social capital, in order to ensure growth and prosperity” (Jensen 2009:36)</td>
<td>-Set up of The United Nations Human Rights Council 2006</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Identification of new social risks</td>
<td>Equality vision: “Equality of opportunity” (Jensen 2009:36)</td>
<td>-Establishment of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-fertility rates</td>
<td>Time horizon: “Future, which requires action in the present” (Jensen 2009:39)</td>
<td>-Legally binding Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, under the Treaty of Lisbon</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-women in the labour force</td>
<td>Preferred form of governance: “Networking and partnerships” (Jensen 2009:39)</td>
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<td>-social exclusion</td>
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<td>Increased focus on environmental sustainability:</td>
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<td>-UN reports on global warming</td>
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<td>The Lisbon Strategy</td>
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<td>“The knowledged based economy”</td>
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Author’s diagram

What the table shows, is that during the second half of the 20th century, the discourse shifted. From the optimistic golden age of post world-war-two, that stressed growth and strong Keynesian social measures in the present; to the crisis years of the 2000s, with an increasing awareness of effects of social exclusion, global warming and financial instability, and a future oriented and more holistic and investment-based perspective on spending. The acknowledgement of environmental risks and of the fragility of the financial system; in combination with the expansion of the human rights perspective and identification of social risks such as social exclusion and poverty; plus the changed ideas of spending based on this acknowledgement, represents a shift of overall paradigm. Exactly which term that should be used to capture this is unclear, since it consists of several similar complexes of ideas and theories. So far I have used the term “paradigm of sustainability and equity”, in order to grasp both the overall sustainability concept, and the extra focus on the social aspects that are
important in social investment, CSR and human rights. However, this is a rather ungainly term. The term that will be used in the study is the paradigm of visionary work. I consider this to be the most suitable term, since “visionary” has bearing both on the future, of social investment and sustainability, and on ethics and rights. The main argument of this study is that the empirical phenomenon of value-strategists also is a part of this overall paradigm, and that we by studying them, can learn something on how this paradigm takes shape in the public administration reality. After going through the rise and framing of the paradigm, that constitutes the global setting, it’s time to take a closer look at the scene on which the work of the Swedish value-strategists takes place. The following two sections describe the visionary work in the Swedish context, and then zoom in on the local level.

2.2 The scene- the Swedish case
In contemporary welfare theory, most commonly represented by Esping-Andersen, the Swedish model is put forward as the typical example of the Scandinavian, or social-democratic welfare state, that is as an extensive welfare state that is connected to all strata in society, with high taxes, universal benefits, and also with a general acceptance and recognition of the welfare state mode. The explanation given behind this is that the Swedish welfare state project became the project of an entire nation, not only of certain groups (Esping-Andersen 1990, Daly & Rake 2003). Esping-Andersen did, with his division of western welfare states in three categories, create the most well-known model of welfare state analysis, with the states sorted into liberal, conservative and Scandinavian welfare models. He based this division on earlier work, in particular, the model of residual and universal states, created by Wilensky and Lebaux (1958). Although this universalism has been questioned by conservative politics, the idea of welfare state project as a national identity remains a clear feature of the Swedish political landscape. This also makes Sweden an interesting case to focus on, when studying the development of the current social citizenship-discourse, and the actors working with it. Sweden has normally been rather quick to adapt regulation on social citizenship, and has also been embracing a lobbyist role on some occasions; one example is in the work with gender equality within the European Union. Sweden together with the Netherlands is pointed out as precursors, who were lobbying for putting gender equality and the method of gender mainstreaming on the agenda (XXX). Mainstreaming basically means a principle for and method of organizing policy procedures, in order to change norms and values embedded in these. It was first created to make sure that a gender perspective is included on every decision. It was also early used as a principle of steering for the environmental sustainability. However, the concept of mainstreaming and value integration has expanded, and scholars are reasoning about whether and how it can be related to other power aspects, such as diversity (Squires 2005). The concept of mainstreaming has to a
high extent been adapted in the Swedish public administration, not only when it comes to gender, but also when working with other topics that relate to the paradigm of visionary work. The concept of mainstreaming is thus widely acknowledged, from the global to the Swedish national level, and the evolution of it can be related to the development of the paradigm of visionary work. This is also valid for the local level. What is happening at the global and national level should be implemented at the local, in a combination of international and national acts and goals, and local decisions. This creates a complex environment, which has strong implications for the public bureaucrats responsible for the visionary work:

![Diagram of UN, EU and Council of Europe, Swedish state, and Municipalities](Source: Author’s diagram)

However, the terminology used to describe this phenomenon is somewhat messy. Mainstreaming, horizontal steering, general demands, joined-up government, multi-level governance, networks, etc., are all notions that are used simultaneously and parallel, to describe the steering of visionary work. Therefore, in the following section, the concepts of cross-sectorial steering and mainstreaming are clarified.

**Mainstreaming and cross-sectorial steering**

The origin of the mainstreaming concept is thus gender mainstreaming, defined by Council of Europe in the following way:

> Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organization, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages (Council of Europe 1998:16)
Mainstreaming is a form of steering, that has been used from the 1990s and onward in the Swedish state administration, and as such, it has expanded to grasp other target groups, like immigrants, children and disabled. In this way, it gets a clear connection to the human rights perspective, and increasingly, the concept of human rights has become an umbrella term for embracing various forms of discrimination. To use mainstreaming as a strategy for the work with human rights has been stressed for a long time (Oberleitner 2007, SOU 2010:70, bilaga B). The basic idea is that these perspectives are of such importance that they should be dealt with across the whole organization, also because they are depending on a variety of sectors to be comprehensively approached. Therefore, every sector should be responsible for them. The risk that is pointed out in a report from the delegation of human rights in Sweden is that claiming the responsibility of everyone might lead to the practicalities of no one. It also has implications for evaluation and accountability, in relation to the model of management by objectives, where the political bodies are deciding upon defined objectives that should be carried out by the administration, and evaluated against these clear objectives. This has to do with the process-oriented approach of the human rights-work, which is difficult to measure quantitatively (SOU 2010:70 bilaga B). Mainstreaming thus is a method for reaching a shift in values and norms, in terms of processes. It is both a mean and an end, in that it is seen as both the method for, and the result of, something. This something is basically what was described above as the visionary paradigm, the equal and sustainable society. Mainstreaming can be divided in integrationist, transformative and de-coupled mainstreaming (Squires 2005). The integrationist mainstreaming means an addition of something that wasn't there, where the added idea is subsumed within the existing frames. Examples of this kind of mainstreaming are anti-discrimination laws (Andersson 2011). The transformative mainstreaming means a more profound change, where previous structures are changed in order to include the new perspective. The de-coupled mainstreaming means the effect of several parallel logics in the organization, for examples when an organization symbolically claims that it's participating in the work for sustainability, but in practice, everything works the way it always did (Meyer & Rowan 1977). The definition of transformative mainstreaming is mostly the one referred to in political steering. In terms of steering, mainstreaming is, as was mentioned above, used simultaneously with several other concepts. To some extent, they are alike, in that they describe a horizontal approach to steering. On the other hand, all of the concepts don't have bearing on a normative change, which is embedded in the commonly acknowledged form of mainstreaming. In the Swedish context, mainstreaming is used together with the term “cross-sectorial perspectives” to describe the idea that one policy field is dependent on its integration with others in order to be successful. But the policy fields that are identified as cross-sectorial vary in order to what extent they are focusing on integrationist or transformative mainstreaming. There is also no clear
definition of what constitutes a cross-sectorial policy field. However, in a report from The Swedish Agency for Public Management (Statskontoret) about cross-sectorial steering, an attempt of definition is made:

There is no standardized definition of what should be considered a cross-sectorial issue or a cross-sectorial field. Most policy fields are to some extent cross-sectorial. The basic thought, however, is that cross-sectorial fields are of such a character that in order to reach the desired goals, they require contribution from several different authorial fields and rule complex, that in turn are situated within other policy fields. Sometimes the term horizontal issues are also used (Statskontoret 2006:11, author's translation).1

The Swedish state budget consists of in total 48 defined policy fields. The Swedish National Financial Management Authority (Ekonomistyrningsverket), The Swedish Agency for Public Management (Statskontoret), and The National Council for Quality and Development (Statens kvalitets- och kompetensråd) have in a study about the general demands, that is, the cross-sectorial fields, that Swedish authorities face, defined 12 policy fields, that should be implemented in all activities within each organization. These are children's rights, public health, global development, rights for disabled, sustainable development, integration and human rights, environment, regional development, economic crime, total defence and youth politics (Ekonomistyrningsverket 2003:18-20) The majority of these policy fields concerns all parts of public administration. They are fields that often are situated in the borderland between development and welfare politics, that is, they can be seen as a part of the welfare production, or as a development projects. Montin names them "the policy fields of the third generation". The first generation policy fields concerned the establishment of a working state power, the second addressed the first formation of the welfare state, and the third is being characterized by a holistic perspective on development and values (2010). In this third generation, we can thus distinguish another level of welfare work. The policy fields in the third generation are usually seen as a part of an overall politics on development and visions, because the approach to them is differing from the party-governed and sectorised welfare production. The policy fields of the third generation have according to Montin four distinctive features: 1) they are based on the idea that collaborative and pooled resources will generate a better result; 2) that the previous cohesion in the public sector is replaced by administrative pluralism, with more independent

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1 "Det finns ingen enhetlig definition av vad som är att betrakta som en tvärsektoriell fråga eller ett tvärsektoriellt område. De flesta politikområden eller frågor är i någon bemärkelse tvärsektoriella. Grundtanken är dock att tvärsektoriella frågor eller områden är sådana där det krävs insatser inom flera olika myndighetsområden och regelkomplex, som i sin tur ligger inom andra politikområden, för att de eftersträvade målen inom det tvärsektoriella politikområdet ska uppnås. Ibland används också begreppet horisontella frågor" (Statskontoret 2006:11)
actors; 3) the policy fields are to a certain extent disconnected from the parliamentary chain of steering, and organizational chain of command, and are instead more focused on partnerships and collaboration; and 4) they tend to a high extent to be characterized by projects, where temporary projects are expected to generate institutional learning. (Montin 2010) This is the case for several of the topics that are listed as general demands on Swedish authorities. These demands have increased over the years. In the state regulation (verksförordning) between 1988 and 1995, the number of general demands was 3. In the regulation from 1996 to (...) the number was five explicit general demands, and additionally there was national programs for seven more, in total 12 policy fields that held some kind of direct or programmatic general demands. They differ somewhat in their practical use, since the required action varies, and also the level of judicial binding.

Required action: some of the demands are characterized by demands of value-mainstreaming, acknowledgement of and attention to conditions. Others have specific requirements on implemented measures.

Judicial binding: Some of the demands are general demands from the state regulation. These are formal and judicial binding demands that all authorities have to take into consideration. However they are open in that measures and actions aren’t specified. Others are general demands based on the strategy for the administration (En förvaltning i demokratins tjänst). These demands are also directed towards all authorities, but lack the formal judicial binding. This means they more hold the character of guidelines. (Ekonomistyrningsverket 2003:18).

The Swedish Agency for Public Management points out following characteristics of that the cross-sectorial policy fields: 1) they have focus either on individual or collective performance, most of them are more related to the first category; 2) They can have either internal or external focus, or both, that is, the main focus can be internally in the organization, or externally towards society. I prefer to make this division in terms of indirect or direct societal focus, since all aspects of public administration to a certain aspect have society’s best as overall goal, even though the direct focus of the work performed may be the organization or surrounding society; 3) The local level is crucial, since the strong and local governance in the Swedish context is responsible for an extensive part of welfare services; 4) the cross-sectorial fields are strongly interconnected, both with each other and with other policy fields. This sometimes leads to agenda crowding, and difficulties of definition; 5) Some of the cross-sectorial fields are value-based, and thus requires a change of norms and values from all actors in society; 6) some sectors are more affected than others by the general demands, and thus will face multiple cross-sectorial perspectives; 7) Even though the general demands are directed towards the whole
administration, they vary in terms of distance to the core business to the different authorities; 8) Effects are hard to measure for the cross-sectorial fields; and 9) some of them can be described as “meta”-policy fields, with a direct focus on visionary societal development. This “meta” and visionary character in turn generates vague and long-term goals (Statskontoret 2006:42-46)

The general demands thus differ somewhat in character. If we take a closer look at them, we see that they can be divided in categories based on the three pillars of sustainability:

**Table 2. General demands** (Ekonomistyrningsverket 2003:18-20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Ecological</th>
<th>Developmental</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Integration politics</td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Regional development</td>
<td>Total defence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Youth politics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td></td>
<td>Economic crime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Gender equality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Integration and human rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Politics of disabled</td>
<td>Sustainable development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Public health</td>
<td>Children's politics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Global development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The environment perspective has been sorted under ecological demands, and so has the sustainable development perspective. Sustainable development is broader than environment, but still holds a lot of focus on the ecological aspects. It could however have been placed under developmental demands, but the argument for dividing them like this is related to the framing of sustainable development in practice. The social category is the one of relevance, when discussing the visionary work within the frames of social citizenship. As was previously discussed, they are also the most interesting ones to study, in terms of complexity. A study by Hege Hofstad (2013), of environmental sustainability and public health in urban planning, showed that there is a difference in the degree of institutionalization between these two perspectives. Environmental sustainability is to a higher extent structured and institutionalized in the different areas of urban planning, than public health. This is an empirical example of the theoretical discussion of the relationship between the sustainability pillars, that shows that they pillars vary in the ways they have become accepted and internalized.
Another aspect that makes the social general demands interesting in terms of complexity is that the policy fields they constitute to a high extent are interconnected. They all became explicit demands, in the shape of national programs directed towards all authorities, from 1995 and onwards. However, these policy fields existed before they became explicit general demands. The current tendency of the social cross sector work is to frame it within the human rights discourse. That is, what used to be seen as separate policy fields are now more and more considered to be different aspects of human rights. To clarify this development, the following section discusses the process of three of the social cross-sector policy fields: gender equality, public health and integration/human rights.

**Evolution of social cross-sector policy fields**

**Gender equality**

Equality between men and women has been on the political agenda during most of the 20th century. During the first half of the century, focus was on the formal equality, the formal rights to vote, participate in higher education and the right to practice professions. From the mid-1980s focus turned to informal obstacles for equality, relating to norms and conflicts (SKL 2008). Since the middle of the 1970s, there has been a strong political consensus on equality, and during this period, the legislation of gender equality has been strengthened. In 1972 an advisory committee on gender equality was appointed, and this was placed in the office of the Prime Minister. The minister on gender equality is formally responsible. In 1979, the Act on equality between women and men was enacted. The goal of this act was to prohibit discrimination and it requires employers with more than 10 employees to actively pursue equality (Pincus 2002).

In 2009, the Act on equality between women and men was replaced by the Act on Discrimination. The same year, the government agency Equality Ombudsman was established. This was done by merging the four other anti-discrimination ombudsmen into one. The former ombudsmen were: The Equal Opportunities Ombudsman (JämO), that dealt with gender-based discrimination; the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination (DO) focused on discrimination related to ethnicity, religion or other belief; the Disability Ombudsman (HO) was responsible for combating discrimination relating to disability; and the Ombudsman against Discrimination because of Sexual Orientation (HomO), that monitored compliance with the rules prohibiting discrimination due to a person’s sexual orientation. The political objectives on discrimination are:

- reducing discrimination and promoting equal rights in society, irrespective of sex, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation, transgender identity or expression, and age;
- ensuring that there is a strong awareness of the prevalence and extent of discrimination in society, and knowledge of the mechanisms behind discrimination;
- ensuring that employers have knowledge of discrimination legislation and that they are working to prevent discrimination; and
- creating the conditions for work to combat racism and similar forms of intolerance

(http://www.government.se/sb/d/15052).

Although the acts and the ombudsman on discrimination merged into one act and one agency, the political objectives on discrimination and gender equality are still considered separate policy areas. The ministry and the minister of employment are responsible for carrying out the goals against discrimination, and the ministry of education and research, together with the minister of gender equality, are responsible for carrying out the politics on gender equality. The objectives on gender equality are

- Equal division of power and influence. Women and men must have the same rights and opportunities to be active citizens and to shape the conditions for decision-making.
- Economic equality. Women and men must have the same opportunities and conditions as regards education and paid work which give economic independence throughout life.
- Equal distribution of unpaid housework and provision of care. Women and men must have the same responsibility for housework and have the opportunity to give and receive care on equal terms.
- Men’s violence against women must stop. Women and men, girls and boys, must have the same right to, and possibility of, physical integrity.

(http://www.government.se/sb/d/4096/a/171700)

Since 1994 and the bill on Shared power shared responsibility (prop 1993/94:147 Delad makt delat ansvar), the strategy to reach the objectives on gender equality is gender mainstreaming. There are several definitions on what this, and although they are fairly similar, they stress different things: In the OECD definition, focus is on economic growth and competition, while in the UNDP is stressing organizational change. In Sweden, the most commonly used definition comes from the European Council (SOU 2007:15):

Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making. (Council of Europe 1998)
Gender mainstreaming was adopted as strategy also in the UN in 1995, at the UN Conference on Women in Beijing. Basically, it means that a gender perspective should be included in the core business, and in Sweden, it rests on two pillars: One is the focus on the internal organizational affairs, which is equality in work places, universities and schools. The other is the focus on equality in the external work, the services to the citizens (SOU 2007:15).

In 2011, a group of academicians and practitioners working with gender equality and gender mainstreaming published a book on implementation of gender politics and gender mainstreaming. Current problems in work were discussed, such as the paradoxes of executing sustainable gender work in projects, resistance and power relations that affects the work on gender equality, and the trade-off between working with gender equality in the chain of command, or doing it as a development unit on the side. One aspect that is put forward in the book is that in the performance measurement discourse of New Public Management, the work with values such as gender equality doesn’t really fit, since it’s difficult to find clear and accurate measures (Callerstig, et al. 2011).

**Public health**

The first emergence of a politics for public health can be related to mercantilism and its emphasis on increase of population, the ideals of the enlightenment and the scientific development. (Rosén 1993) In Sweden, the public health politics followed this development. In the Swedish context, three specific characteristics came to affect the further development. The strong central state, the professionalization in the health care sector, and the strong local and common political anchoring, created the foundation for a broad and intense public health work in Sweden, at all levels and with actors from different sectors (Elander, Eriksson & Fröding 2009). The aim of public health policy is to improve the public health and to equalize differences between social groups. The policy for public health is thus separated from medical care, which is focused on treatment more than prevention. However, one could argue that since the development of medical treatment didn’t really start until the middle of the 19th century, the actual health and medical care until then was work that fits within the definition of public health. However, once the scientific development started to emerge, focus became treatment before prevention in medical care. And that’s when the division between medical care and public health took place. During the middle of the 20th century, the health and medical care is thus decoupled from other politics, much due to the medical technological development. This decoupling, and the focus on treatment, eventually led to a raising concern of preventive health work. In 1982, the Medical Services Act (Sjukvårdslagen) is renamed to Health and Medical Services Act. In the bill on development of health and medical service (prop. 1984/85 Om utvecklingslinjer för hälso- och sjukvården m.m. ) the government and parliament for the first time explicitly mentions a
cohesive public health politics. In the bill, it is stressed that health is determined by several factors, and because of this, there is a need of cross-sectoral work. In 1991, the bill on specific public health issues (prop. 1990/91:175 *Om vissa folkhälsofrågor*) mentions that increasing the equality should be the overall goal for the public health politics. In this bill, the notion of sustainable development was introduced, and this put in direct connection to equity, and thus sustainable development should be a part of the public health work. In the government missive in 1994 (*regeringens skrivelse Investera för hälsa-prioritera för hälsa* 1993/94:247), it’s stressed that good health is important both for the individual and the society, and the main task of the public health politics should be to create the necessary conditions for each individual to reach this (SOU 1998:43).

The politics for public health has thus become a policy field that explicitly is expected to address other policy fields. It has become an overall perspective. In 2003, the government decided on a national goal for public health, with 11 areas. (prop. 2002/03:35 *Mål för folkhälsan*). These areas were societal participation, economic and social security, good and safe upbringing conditions, increased health in the work life, sound and safe environments and products, a more health promoting health and medical care, protection against contamination, safe and secure sexuality and a good reproductive health, increased physical activity, good eating habits and safe food, decreased use of tobacco and alcohol, a society free from narcotics and doping, and decreased damage from excessive gambling. The areas were rephrased in 2007, and the words “increased” and “decreased” were dropped (prop. 2007/08:110 *En förnyad folkhälsopolitik*). In this bill, it was stressed even further that the politics of public health is the responsibility of all sectors, and the connection social inclusion/exclusion was also put forward.

There is a tight connection between welfare politics and public health. The perspective on roles and responsibility has changed throughout history. In the framing of the public health politics, much focus has been on the individual, and the individual’s responsibility for a healthy life. In the Swedish context, this has been expressed through discussions on life styles and risks. But consequently with the general welfare politics that has been characteristic of Sweden, the public health politics has also focused on general actions, not on specific groups (Elander, Eriksson & Fröding 2009). The focus on individuals, although from a general perspective, has been characteristic of the public health work. The current tendency seems to be a slight departure from this, where public health is seen within the frames a social inclusion and equity. As such it also becomes clearly related to other cross-sector policy fields.

**Integration and human rights in the Swedish context**
In the listing of general demands (Ekonomistyrningsverket 2003:30), integration and human rights together are sorted as one demand, that is, one policy field. But this is regarding the general or cross-sectorial aspects of these areas. However, in the current description of governmental policy fields, they are divided in asylum, migration and integration as one policy area, and human rights are included in the policy area of democracy, gender equality and human rights. However, when looking at the overall goal for the integration politics, the relation to the general demand of human rights is made clear:

The goal of the integration policy is to ensure equal rights, obligations and opportunities for all, irrespective of their ethnic and cultural background. Integration issues are related to many different policy areas; initiatives have been taken within labour market policy, educational policy as well as in anti-discrimination policy. Integration policy is primarily directed towards general measures that reduce exclusion in society.

(http://www.government.se/sb/d/2188/a/19443 2013-04-24)

Focus is thus on social exclusion. This focus in the integration politics goes back to 1997-1998 and the propositions Development and Justice- a politics for cities in the 21 century (Utveckling och rättvisa- en politik för storstaden på 2000-talet, prop 1997/98:165), and Sweden, the future and the diversity (Sverige, framtiden och mångfalden, prop 1997/98:16). The main goals expressed in these propositions were a better procurement of human resources and a focus on equal rights, opportunities and obligations regardless of ethnic and cultural background. It was also clearly expressed that the integration politics should have a mainstreaming perspective, and this was also made clear in the government missive Integration politics for the 21st century (Integrationspolitik för 2000-talet, Regeringen 2002) (Andersson 2011). With the explicit connections made between integration, rights, opportunities and obligations, social exclusion, and democracy, the relation to the human rights perspective is obvious.

Human rights are sometimes seen as equal to anti-discrimination. However there is a difference in these two perspectives: human rights can be violated without any discrimination, because the violation hits everyone equally. And something that is normally not considered to be included in the human rights, for example the possibility to participate in certain activities, can become an issue from a human rights perspective, if the prohibition affects groups differently. (SOU 2010:70).

Human rights can basically be seen as a contract between the state and the individual. The state is responsible to secure the rights of every individual, in the relation between individuals and in the relation between the state and the individual. On the Swedish government webpage, it is stated that:
Sweden makes respect for international law and human rights a top priority. For a small country like Sweden, respect for international norms is a prerequisite for our foreign policy action.

Concern for international law and human rights permeates Sweden's actions, both multilaterally in the United Nations, regionally in the EU and other bodies, and bilaterally with individual states. (http://www.government.se/sb/d/3104 2012-11-28)

Sweden has ratified the Charter of the human rights. This charter was first established in 1948, and has been extended during the 20th and 21st century. Two central conventions have been developed with the first charter as a background: the UN convention on economic, social and cultural rights, and the UN convention on civil and political rights. They became binding in 1976. At the United Nations World Congress on human rights in 1993, a declaration and action program was approved, where the obligation of the states to promote respect and protection of the human rights, in all states, according to international documents, was established (SOU 2010:70:90). The Action program stated that the economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights are mutually dependent, concurrent, and indivisible. The congress encouraged the member states to consider the development of national action plans. This has been done by about thirty states, among them Sweden. Sweden has presented two action plans (En nationell handlingsplan för de mänskliga rättigheterna skr. 2001/02:83, En nationell handlingsplan för de mänskliga rättigheterna 2006-2009 skr. 2005/06:95). One of the measures taken was the establishment of a delegation for human rights. The task of the delegation is to support state authorities and municipalities in their work with human rights, and the delegation has the status of an authority of its own. The task is not to replace other authorities’ human rights work, but to be a consultative support to other. (SOU 2010:70)

Each member state is obliged to take the actions necessary to secure the rights in the charter that aren’t yet realized. It’s also up to each state to decide how this should be done, and two distinct ways are used. 1) monism, which means that conventions automatically become national law, and 2) dualism, which means that the conventions are remade into national law, so that they become a part of the national legislation. Sweden is following the second model, and the methods of doing so are called incorporation, transformation and search for norm harmony. Incorporation means that it’s stated in the national law that the convention is valid as law. Transformation means that the convention is remade into national law, and if the national legislation lack rules like those in the convention, or if the national law is contrary to the convention, the convention is applied. Norm harmony is established when a state decides that the conditions of a convention is consistent with the national legislation, and doesn’t require any other commitments. The European legislation has a special status, in that certain acts get direct application in Sweden once they are accepted on the EU-level. (SOU 2010:70)
A term that is often used when discussing the policy process and human rights is human rights perspective. One method to implement a human rights perspective is to integrate this perspective in the budget processes. This is similar to how gender mainstreaming is used. To work with a human rights perspective means, according to a statement made by several UN-bodies in the aid-sector, that the main principles of human rights, like for example anti-discrimination, should be the guidelines through the entire process, that evaluations should be made, and that public bureaucrat should be given the possibilities to make sure that human rights are strengthened (SOU2010:70). A study of the work with human rights in 16 Swedish municipalities concludes that it’s important to include the human rights in central steering documents, because this shows that there is a political will to work systematically with the human rights perspective. The study listed four methods that can be used to reach this, that address issues related to the human rights work. 1) One method is to integrate human rights as an overall perspective. This means that processes always has a human rights perspective at the forefront, that documents might be structured according to the rights, and that consequence analysis on human rights are made adjacent to decisions. 2) The connections between other overarching cross-sector perspectives, like gender equality, diversity, the rights of children and so on, and human rights can be established, in order to ease cohesion and coordination. 3) The connection between already existing notions and paragraphs in the steering documents, and human rights can be established. This will make is easier to distinguish how the current work is related to human rights. 4) Establishing connections between different fields of work, or sectors, and human rights, can be one way of stressing the cross-sectorial perspective of human rights (SOU:2012:70 Bilaga 8). What becomes clear from these methods is that the overall dilemma with human rights is to define and distinguish them in relation to other aspects. For example, the youth politics and the children’s’ perspective directly can be sorted under the human rights umbrella, but at the same time, they are policy fields of their own. The youth politics is mainly directed by the proposition Power to decide- the right to welfare (Makt att bestämma- rätt till välfärd prop. 2004/05:2), and the overall national goal that states that all young people between 13 and 25 should have real influence and a right to real welfare. This is also a guiding principle for the national children’s politics, within the frames of the Convention of the rights of the child, which states that not only should it be made sure that a children’s perspective is applied, it is equally important with children’s active participation in decision making. The Convention of the Rights of the Child is an international commitment between states, and therefore it should not only be seen in the national light, according to the proposition Strategy for Realization of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child in Sweden (Strategi för att förverkliga FN:s konvention om barnets rättigheter i Sverige prop 1997/98:182). Thus, the multi-level character of the policy field is stressed.
To integrate human rights as an overall perspective is a way of stressing the specificity of the human rights perspective. But establishing connections, between other cross-sector perspectives, notions and paragraphs, or fields of work and sectors, is indirectly to state that human rights don't' stand on their own as a specific field of policy. The cross-sector perspectives are connected, which means that it's difficult to separate them in the implementation. However, the socially related cross-sector perspectives can easily be sorted under the human rights perspective, regardless of whether they are framed like that from the beginning. Other policies, and fields and sectors, might not have an explicit social cross-sector character at all, but might still be of absolute relevance for the implementation of them. This causes breaking points, between the vertical and horizontal steering, and in these breaking points we find the value-strategists. This is even more true when it comes to the local government, because here, the distance between the sectors and also between the responsible actors is shorter.

And in local governance

As showed above, the sectorization takes place on every level in the model. The focus in this study is the local level. The argument for this is that this study aims at investigating paradoxes of the visionary work related to human rights. The first paradox is related to the role of the bureaucrats assigned the visionary work: their position as neutral public bureaucrats in the local government, and at the same time responsible for international regulation. The second paradox is related to the vertical and horizontal steering, which creates a crowded arena of considerations where both the sector-based tasks and several aspects of visionary work have to fit. The municipal level thus offers an interesting arena of study, because its position in the multi-level steering chain could be expected to hold a high degree of complexity, both in vertical and horizontal terms. The local governments hold a strong autonomy in relation to the state, and are also responsible for a large extent of the welfare production. This makes it an interesting object of study, in terms of the relation between vertical and horizontal steering.

The work with human rights and social developments takes place on many scenes. The role of local and regional government in this work has been pointed out as being extraordinary important in this work, since the welfare services that are delivered on these levels are closely connected to human rights and social investment. The multi-level character of this work also highlights the principle of subsidiarity, a founding principle of the European Union (European Union March 2010). Also The Council of Europe highlights the importance of local self-government, via the European Charter of Local Self-government, ratified by Sweden in 1989 (Council of Europe 1985). The important role of municipalities and regions was stressed in a joint declaration from SALAR (Swedish association of Local Government and Regions), the
Congress of the Council of Europe and the Commissioner for Human Rights 2008. (SKL 2008). However, the correlation between human rights and local government has not been deeply investigated and many of the local authorities don’t have plans and steering documents for their work with human rights (ibid.). A report from the delegation of human rights in Sweden recommended that the human rights perspective to a higher extent should be highlighted in central documents in local government, and also that the law regulating the authority for municipalities and regions should be revised, to include a paragraph on the responsibility for human rights (SOU 2010:70). In the evaluation of the Government National Plan of Action for Human Rights 2006-2009, it is repeatedly pointed out that the work with human rights is in need for a more systematic approach concerning the relation between national government and local government, and two of the proposals put forward are systematic cooperation and the establishment of special local bodies monitoring the situation of human rights (SOU 2011:29).

This is an interesting point in relation to the public bureaucrats working as strategists of different human rights-aspects, and highlights the paradox of neutrality in the visionary work. The strategists in the municipal administration hold a position where they to a certain extent are expected to perform both the monitoring and the executing tasks, but the formal mandate they have is related to their role as public bureaucrats executing political decisions. Thus, they don’t have the formal authority to impose sanctions, creating new regulation or even on their own behalf giving binding recommendations.

Another paradox that becomes visible when looking at the work with human rights and social investment is that although the social investment paradigm has become prominent also at the local level, it’s actually not legal, in terms of municipal budget regulation. According to the law regulating municipalities (Kommunallagen 1991:900), investments can only be made for material goods, such as buildings and machines. Long-term social investments thus aren’t within legal frames. However, this is something that some municipalities have chosen to ignore, due to their stressing of the need of these kinds of investments. This deliberate disregard of existing legal framework highlights the clash between the social investment perspective, where investments for the future should be the main focus, and spending in current time should be limited; and the contemporary welfare state perspective, where investments for the future consist of goods, and social spending is done due to current needs. And like mentioned before, it’s in the clash between these two logics that we find the value strategists.

2.3 The actors-value strategists

The actual actors performing the work with all these social aspects are public bureaucrats assigned the task of monitoring, initiating and promoting this work in the
Who and how many these people are in the Swedish public administration are not possible to distinguish, due to lack of comprehensive statistics. They normally don’t have a clear description of their positions; they have varying titles, and also varying tasks. What we do know is that they exist. Their formal positions are called strategists or coordinators, with varying prefixes. Sometimes the title is directly pointing towards a social aspect; sometimes it’s a more vague general title:

### Direct titles
- Gender equality strategist/coordinator
- Environment strategist/coordinator
- Sustainability strategist/coordinator
- Safety strategist/coordinator
- Integration strategist/coordinator
- Youth strategist/coordinator

### Indirect titles
- Quality strategist
- Development strategist

Hidden under the vague titles can sometimes precise tasks be formulated, for example as “development strategist for gender equality and human rights”. Or the reversed is also possible, the title is precise, but in it, several perspectives are hidden. The first evidence of the existence of this group is thus the overall observation of them: when browsing the webpages of the municipalities of Sweden, these people show up every now and then. However, the varying titles and tasks make it difficult to distinguish something more systematic about their positions.

A second and more systematic evidence, is the existing professional networks, gathering public bureaucrats working with different kinds of values and general demands:

The Network for Gender Equality gathers around 200 gender equality coordinators стратегисты, and contact persons for gender equality and other related aspects within municipalities and regions. The network has meetings, and also an internet based platform for exchanging experience, thoughts and information. There is also a development group at The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, consisting of experienced gender equality strategists in the municipalities. This group has been developing an education for strategic work for gender equality. In the development of this education, the basic foundation was to discuss gender equality integration as a strategy, and to problematize the profession of gender equality work and the professional gender equality workers.

The Network for Diversity and Human Rights gathers public bureaucrats from about 25 municipalities, plus the Boards of the County Administrative Boards (Länsstyrelserna).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender equality strategist/coordinator</th>
<th>Quality strategist</th>
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<tr>
<td>Environment strategist/coordinator</td>
<td>Development strategist</td>
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<td>Youth strategist/coordinator</td>
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Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, and the union SKTF (SKTF is a national trade union for publicly and privately employed salaried employees who work within municipalities, county areas and the church). They arrange meetings in member municipalities three times a year, and have contact with each other between the meetings, if there is a question that need support. The thought is that it should be working network, where the exchange is going on frequently. There is also a working party that goes deeper with certain questions. In addition to the network, The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, also keep a development project focusing on the municipal work with human rights. The participants in this project are coordinators/strategists for human rights (often they also organize other cross-sectorial perspectives) from municipalities where this work has been successful, and also where it is politically acknowledged. The purpose of this project is to support the municipalities with their work, and produce and spread good methods.

The Network for strategic public health work gathers public health coordinators from 21 municipalities. There are plans on extending it, since there is a big interest in joining. The network has meetings twice a year, and also has an internet based platform where the members have chance to exchange information and experiences. The network is also used for remittance. In the network, the questions of how peculiar the coordinators for public health an be considered to be, and how their perspective is overlapping others, have been discussed. Many of these coordinators are, just like in the cases with the other network, responsible for several other general demands.

The National Network for Youth influence gathers around 70 municipal public bureaucrats and others who are working with youth related topics. The mission of the network is to stimulate and support youth participation in societal development. The network cooperates with several authorities that have influence of the young as part of their mission. The most important steering of these are the national youth politics, the national children politics, the national goals for public health, the school curriculums, and the EU regulation.

These networks are signals of a professionalization tendency of the horizontal value work. There are also studies that shed light on some aspects of this. PO Norell is asking the question, whether we can see a “new” type of public bureaucrat in the Swedish municipal administration. The group he is referring to is a group of public bureaucrats that differ from the traditional public bureaucrat by the fact that they don’t have their low-profile public bureaucrat role as their main line of guidance. Instead, they are, and hold their positions for this exact reason, focused on promoting a certain value or group. They usually don’t have any formal authority, but can still possess power resources, for example by leaning towards different policies decided by the local...
government, and through their relations to politicians. In the light of empirical material from 1975, 1985, 1995 and 2005, Norell asks the question why these roles of public bureaucrats have developed, and suggests factors such as globalization and that the local government to an increasing extent is an actor on the international arena, that the number of political dimensions and special groups to pay attention to increase, and that local politicians appear to be more demanding and impatient. That's why “new” types of public bureaucrats, which have their base of expert knowledge in a specific and often complex question, are hired. They also get fairly loose descriptions of their task, in that they shall be able to on their own formulate their role. The question is how these new public bureaucrats best can get integrated within the organization (Norell 2008).

The group of public bureaucrats studied by Norell consists of public bureaucrats holding varying positions. The value strategists are included in this group, but their specific characteristics are not highlighted. There are a couple of studies focusing on groups of value strategists; one well known is Pincus’ study of gender mainstreaming bureaucrats. In her dissertation, she is studying what happens and what doesn't happen when initiatives on gender equality are operationalized on the local level. She asks what lessons can be drawn about possibilities and obstacles which arise when gender equality work is initiated in this kind of organizations. More specifically, she is investigating what men in managing positions are doing to prevent or promote gender equality initiatives. The research question arose when Pincus was involved in an evaluation of a state initiated pilot project about gender equality in municipalities. She uses material from the evaluation combined with other material, and follows the gender equality work in three municipalities under a period of 15 years. To analyze this, Pincus uses an elaborated version of Bachratz & Baratz model for power relations. By doing so, she concludes that implementation of gender equality policy is a political process, where power resources and creation of boundaries is crucial. In the study, several techniques to prevent gender equality work is distinguished, such as stigmatization, harassment, legitimacy-reducing and withholding of resources. Besides this, she also puts forward five matters of importance for the gender equality work: 1) the relations between local and central level, 2) the risk that gender equality becomes a policy of symbols, 3) the influence of the labor market organizations, 4) the NPM-reforms, and 5) the dominance of men in leading positions and the gender relations in which this is rooted (Pincus 2002).

Another study that sheds some light on the horizontal value-work in the Swedish context is the work by Tahvilzadeh on representative bureaucracy and the advocacy of bureaucrats who come from ethnic minority groups (Tahvilzadeh 2011). This study stresses the importance of agency and personal commitment in the advocacy of certain aspects. The importance of agency and
commitment in the advocating and integrative work in the Swedish local level is also investigated in Bartholdsson’s study of committed bureaucrats in the fulfillment of environment goals (Bartholdsson 2009).

The conclusion of this review is that there is that the group of bureaucrat, who we from empirical observations know to exist, is a group that only to limited extent has been the target of investigation. The studies that exist focus on one aspect of the visionary work, but not on the visionary work as one distinct and cohesive phenomenon. I argue that in order to distinguish what the visionary work really is about, we can’t separate them into separate fields. Instead, they have to be investigated as building blocks forming an overall paradigm of welfare politics, with bearing on practical realization of the social citizenship. This paradigm, in combination with the structure made up by the organizational setting, and agency of the bureaucrats, all have to be included to analyze what constitutes, defines and frames the work of the responsible bureaucrats.

3. Research problem and research questions

The problem that this study aims at investigating is illustrated in the following model:

Figure 2.
The global paradigm of sustainability and equity, visionary work, is the driving force of the rise of the new public bureaucrat, here referred to as the value strategists. This paradigm lands in an administrative setting, which is recognized by its NPM-oriented organizational ideals. The administration is sector-based, to maintain the sufficient expertise in each area, and there is an expected separation between politics and administration, where the bureaucrat should be neutral executors and experts, and politicians should formulate the goals. The combination of a global paradigm and given setting generates a solution that fits within the existing frame. In this case, the NPM-oriented organization adjusts to the discourse of integrated sustainability and equity by creating a new group of public bureaucrats, the value strategists. These are supposed to work horizontally, and to be experts in their fields. In this role, they face two paradoxes, created by given context: 1) the paradox of the horizontal vs. the vertical steering, that is, the integrative horizontal work that should be performed across the vertical sectors; and 2) the paradox of the instrumental expert administrator vs. the role of a political promoter and integration. These paradoxes are likely to affect to role of these bureaucrat. What will be examined is thus a piece of the big global discourse, and it will be done by taking a closer look at the work and conditions of this particular group of bureaucrats, to answer the question: what is going on in the last box? The overall research question is:

*How can this group of public bureaucrats be understood as a method of steering in the contemporary public administration of the welfare state?*

In order to answer this question, four research questions are constructed:

**RQ1:** What are the normative foundations of this group of public bureaucrats?

**RQ2:** What characterizes these public bureaucrats and what are the conditions of their work?

**RQ3:** What factors explain the perception of strategies for success/failure, from the perspective of value-mainstreaming bureaucrats?

**RQ4:** How can they be generalized as one group of public bureaucrats, based on the complexities they are facing?

These questions aim at shedding lights on the situation of the value-mainstreaming bureaucrats. The visionary work holds, as has been shown in this review, a very general and sometimes vague approach and the actual realization of it is still much of a mystery.
The overall argument of the study is that these bureaucrats, despite their different areas of responsibility, are one specific kind of bureaucrats, who have emerged as a response to and part of, the evolution of the overall paradigm. That is, they are an expression of the value-driven social development paradigm on the local level and in practical public administration. And by studying them, we can learn a lot about this paradigm, and the steering and implementation of it.

In order to investigate the research problem at hand, how this group of public bureaucrats can be understood as a method of steering in the contemporary public administration of the welfare state, several kinds of data should be used. The design of the study is a mixed methods design, hybrid approach to content analysis.

3.1 Research design
When the financial crisis in 2008 became a fact, people asked “how is this possible, why didn't someone stop this development?”. One attempt to answer this question was made by Karen Ho (Ho 2009), who had spent the years before the crisis conducting participating observations inside Wall Street investment banks. She points out how the elitist perspective, the unsecure work situation, the bonus system and the quick cycles leads to a bubble of short short-term perspectives that eventually burst. What she actually does in this study is making a huge phenomenon possible to study, by focusing the actors performing work. She points out that that she is not adding them individual responsibility for what happened, but uses the study of their work and the culture shaped within the companies to contribute to a better understanding of the gigantic phenomenon of the financial crisis. I am taking the same approach in this study. By studying the actors assigned to work horizontally with social perspectives, I hope to contribute to a better understanding of the societal phenomenon of social development. The argument of the study is that these bureaucrats who are responsible for different aspects relating to the paradigm, constitute one specific group of bureaucrats. In order to test it, and to explore the work performed by them, a abductive mixed-method approach will be used.

The following table illustrates the mixed-methods design of the study:
### Figure 3. Design and procedure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research procedure</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td>Developing a basic theoretical framework and a research questions.</td>
<td>A theoretical foundation for conducting study 1: job advertisements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td>Conducting study 1: classical content analysis of job advertisements, based on the boundary spanner-theory</td>
<td>Knowledge to develop a more refined theoretical model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3</strong></td>
<td>Conducting study 2: semi-structured interviews, by using thematic content analysis based on the developed theoretical model</td>
<td>Answering research question 1,2,3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 4</strong></td>
<td>Using the results to develop and conduct a survey, as study 3. Analysis by using descriptive and inferential statistics for prescriptive content analysis</td>
<td>Answering research question 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 5</strong></td>
<td>Adding all the results together.</td>
<td>Conclusion on overall research question.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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